

Supporting your child's reading at home

A guide for parents to support early reading and phonics.

St Oswald's Catholic Primary School

Reading at home

Try to find a quiet ten minutes every day to look at a book with your child. The more you read and talk about stories, the more confident your child will feel about handling books. Remember children need to experience a range of reading materials, so try to vary the things that you share with them e.g. story books, comics, magazines, poems, and information books.



Books without words

Initially, your child may be given a book without words to bring home. This is an important part of the reading process as it sets the foundations for reading, helping to develop your child's ability to gather information from pictures and tell stories. As you look at the book with your child, encourage them to say what they see and describe what is happening on each page. You can support the story telling process by asking questions, for example:

- *What is happening?*
- *How do you think this person is feeling?*
- *What do you think will happen next?*
- *If you were in the story, who would you be? Why?*
- *How do you think the story will end?*
- *Was it a happy / sad / funny / scary story?*
- *What was your favourite part?*



These type of questions are also important when reading books with words, as they will help you to see how well they have understood what they are reading and will help to develop good comprehension skills.

Letter names and letter sounds

During the year your child will be taught the 26 letters of the alphabet. Although they will learn that each letter has a name, the emphasis will be on the sound that each letter makes. As the year goes on they will also learn that some sounds are represented by more than one letter e.g. 'ch' has two letters, as in chin, but it makes one sound, 'igh' has three letters, as in ight, but makes one sound.



Blending simple words and word cards

As they learn the sounds, your child is also taught to **blend** simple words and will soon start to develop a bank of words that they can recognise on sight. At this time, they will be given a set of word cards to bring home that enable you to reinforce the work they are doing in school. Invite your child to tell you some of the sounds on the card, if they can confidently do this, ask them to say all of the sounds in one word, show them that by saying the sounds very closely together, they blend to make a word.

Once they have started to gain confidence in blending sounds to read words, and they have developed a bank of basic words that they recognise on sight, they will be given books that have simple words or sentences. The pictures in these books are as important as those in the

wordless books and your child should still be encouraged to tell the story from them. Once they have told you about the pictures, look at the words and support your child with blending the sounds. Encourage them to point to each word as they try to say it.



Tricky words

At the same time as learning how to blend, the children will be introduced to some 'tricky' high frequency words. The children cannot use their 'sounding out' skills to read them. They need to be recognised on sight. Children should look at the word then say it. The words will also appear on your child's word card for you to reinforce at home and they will be highlighted in a different colour. The main ones covered in Reception will be: *the, to, I, no, go, into, he, she, we, me, be, was, my, you, her, they, all, said, so, do, have, like, some, come, were, there, little, one, when, out and what.*

Pause, prompt and praise

If your child gets stuck, **pause** before telling them the word or correcting a mistake. Give them a chance to get it right themselves. **Prompt** your child by encouraging them to sound out the word and use clues in the story to help them guess what the word is. Pictures can help give clues to words as well. Part of learning to be a better reader is being able to guess what new words mean and how they sound. Use **praise** every time your child reads, even if they don't get everything right first time. Praising them for trying to sound words out, using the pictures as clues and talking about the story is just as important as praising your child for getting a word right. Remember reading is a process that every child goes through at their own pace. Praise your child and focus on what they can do, not what they cannot. There is nothing better than a 'well done' from Mum, Dad, Nan or Granddad to boost your child's confidence!



Games to help your child at home

Sound/letter recognition

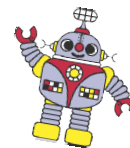
- Put some toys or objects in a bag and pull one out at a time. Emphasise the first sound of the object by repeating it, e.g. 'c c c c-car, p p p p-pen, h h h h-hat'
- Teach tongue twisters like 'Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers'.
- Say things together that use the same initial sound like, 'Harry likes to hide horrible hats.'
- Sound groups - collect some objects or pictures that begin with the same sound and make a card with this letter on it. Make another group of objects starting with a different sound and a card to go with those. Show your child the letters and talk about the different objects. Mix the objects up and ask your child to put each object near the sound that it starts with.



- Odd-one-out - use objects and pictures as above but place one object in the wrong group. Say the object names emphasising the initial sound and ask your child to find the odd one out.

Oral Blending

Robot Talk - say different words out loud by breaking them down into separate sounds e.g. c-a-t=cat and see if your child can blend them together to work out what you are saying. Start with objects that have three sounds. This can be linked to an I spy type game e.g. "I spy a m-u-g, I spy a d-o-g." You could also link the robot talk to instructions such as "Touch your f-ee-t." "Put your h-a-t on your h-ea-d." As your child becomes familiar with this robot talking, see if they can say words in robot talk themselves.



Magnetic Letters



Make little words together by placing magnetic letters on the fridge or a tin tray. Start with two letter words like it, up, am and then build up to simple three letter words like tip, ran, mop. As you select the letters, say them aloud: 'a-m - am', 'p-e-g - peg'.

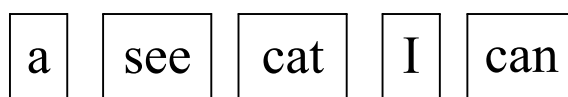
Learning high frequency/tricky words

- **Snap** - make two sets of individual cards with the words on from your child's word card and play snap.
- **Pairs** - make two sets of cards as above and lay them face down on the floor or table. Take it in turns to pick up two cards and see if you can find a matching pair. As well as helping your child to recognise the words, this game will help to develop their concentration and memory skills!
- Help your child to find or highlight the words in old newspapers, comics or magazines.
- **Bingo** - make bingo cards and play bingo using the high frequency words.
- Make large scale words and decorate them using glitter or relevant pictures.
- **Hide and seek** - hide the high frequency words around the room. You can ask your child to find a specific word or they can find a word and bring it to you and read it.
- **Rhymes** - make little rhymes to help your child remember the words.



Sentence games

Children will often learn stories off by heart so that they seem to 'read' a book. This is normal and means your child is well on the way to becoming a reader. However, they also need to focus on looking for clues from the words as well as the pictures. Sorting jumbled words in a sentence can help to resolve this. After reading the book a few times with your child choose a sentence to work on. Copy it out on a strip of paper then cut up the sentence into the individual words. For example:



Ask your child to make the sentence, "I can see a cat." using the cards. Support them initially by showing them what to do and talking through what you are doing e.g. "First I need to find the word I." "Now I need to find the word that says can - c-a-n." When they have made the sentence ask your child to read it to you and encourage them to point to each word with a finger. You could then repeat using some more of the sentences from their book but don't go through every one as you don't want your child to lose interest.