



**How can I help my
child to read?**

It is crucial that young children receive a positive introduction to reading and are not pressurised to read the printed word too soon. Learning to read must be an enjoyable experience.



- ◆ Let your children see you reading, not only books, but magazines, newspapers, street signs, supermarket signs, recipes, instructions etc.
- ◆ Read aloud to older children as well as younger ones. If they wish to read aloud to you, encourage clarity and expression, but don't force them to read aloud.
- ◆ Reading gives them an ideal opportunity to talk about stories, poems or fiction books. Relaxed, enjoyable discussion is very important if a child is to learn to love books.
- ◆ Discuss the illustrations, the characters, the author. Help children to establish favourite authors.

- ◆ Tell your children stories – ones you've made up or ones about your own childhood. Maybe they will be encouraged to make up stories to tell you!
- ◆ When they can and want to, silent reading should be encouraged. Sometimes it might be a picture book or comic – fine!

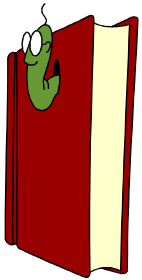
If you help your child in these ways, you will be reinforcing the attitudes we are trying to establish towards reading at school. At Oak Cottage, we believe that the link between the home and school is the crucial link in the educational partnership.

Your children still need your support when reading, even when they are older.

Even when your child can read fluently, they still need your encouragement and support if they are to stay booklovers for the rest of their lives.

You can help them by:-

- ◆ Going to the library and giving them plenty of time to browse
- ◆ Showing them how to find books in the library and how to use reference books, from an early age
- ◆ Never pushing them into choosing books which are too difficult. They may be able to read the words, but the story could be far too demanding and this puts children off reading. Certainly make suggestions and offer your help, but do it with your child.
- ◆ Make sure that you have a wide range of books in your home – fiction, poetry, non-fiction



Introduction

Parents are eager for their child to learn to read and to help in school. At Oak Cottage we value the contribution made by parents in all areas of the curriculum, but especially in the area of reading.

The foundations laid in these formative years can affect children's attitudes towards books and literacy for the rest of their lives. We want all our children to become readers, not just for the skill of reading, but to enable them to develop a love of books and literacy for the future. Many a child has been put off reading because their reading experiences have been repetitive and boring.

At Oak Cottage we aim to make reading fun and expose children to a range of books, so that they can appreciate the wealth of knowledge, fantasy, drama and life experiences between the covers.

With your support, we hope to develop an apprenticeship approach to reading. With parents and teachers working together, we aim to build your child's confidence and teach skills in order to develop a love of reading which will last a life-time.

Learning to read is a complex process and all children learn at a different rate. We want children to be real readers – capable of reading a range of literature. For this they need a range of skills which we teach in school:-

- ◆ Phonetic awareness and phonic knowledge
- ◆ Word recognition and graphic knowledge
- ◆ Grammatical awareness
- ◆ Contextual understanding

Each of these is equally important and it is essential that children are taught and encouraged to use a range of strategies when reading.

Children learn to talk because they experience the meaningful talk of others and then, subconsciously bring their own learning strategies to bear upon the process that is going on around them.

Children learn to read in very much the same way. They must enjoy books and see a purpose in them and want to learn. This means they must have a full and meaningful experience using a range of texts as well as strategies to encourage them. This begins at an early age when children are exposed to books and the written word.

If a child finds pleasure in listening to stories and sees *you* using and enjoying books, this will encourage them to follow your example.



How to help

Boost confidence

Be patient

Encourage

When your child first brings home a book, please try to find some time to share the book together. The book will be their own choice from the appropriate book band. The idea is to share the book and enjoy it together, in order to foster that love of books. It may be that your child wants you to read the book to them and this is quite acceptable, as they will begin to take on the conventions of a book.

It may help to bear in mind the following points:-

- ◆ Sit somewhere comfortable and quiet, where your child can relax without interruptions.
- ◆ Make sure your child can see the pictures and print. If there are words, point to them as you read.
- ◆ Use the pictures to tell the story, talk about them and look for additional information about plot, characters and humour. Look for conventions of narrative, (eg once upon a time) or appropriate punctuation such as speech marks in a book with words.
- ◆ Show your child that you enjoy reading together. Discuss the book and encourage prediction of the story.
- ◆ If your child wants to read the story alone, then give all the praise and encouragement you can.
- ◆ Do not worry if your child's reading is not word perfect. If he is making sense, it does not matter if he reads "*house*" instead of "*home*". In your discussion at the end of the story or chapter, you may point out any mistakes like this and ask your child to say the word correctly.
- ◆ Do not introduce the idea of 'testing' or 'failure'. Always be ready to read on with the story yourself if necessary. Don't apply pressure and don't insist on absolute accuracy. The sense is the chief consideration.

Praise
Stay calm
Be enthusiastic

If your child is tired or reluctant to join in, do not force participation. Offer to read the story yourself in a relaxed and enjoyable way.

When your child 'reads' to you, praise all his or her attempts even if you know the child is reciting by heart or making up the story from the pictures. **This is a very important stage.**

Reception children change their 'Home Reader' twice a week. This book is especially for you to share at home. Children also have weekly guided reading with their teacher.

Please sign your child's reading diary and if you want to comment on your child's reading, please feel free to do so. Encourage your child to comment via:- 😊😐😞 .

If your child particularly likes a story or wants to hear it or 'read' it over and over again, this should be encouraged. Enjoyable repetition helps children learn.

It is also important to teach nursery rhymes, jingles and songs from an early age.

Encourage your child to value books. Show him or her how to look after and take care of books.

Gradually, your child will read with less and less help from you.

From reading simultaneously, your child will progress to independent reading. If he or she wants to try reading alone, let your child do as much as possible. Only help or correct when the child is in real difficulties. Allow your child time to predict or puzzle out the text by making sense of the story.

There may be times when your child may choose a book from the library that he or she cannot manage alone. When this happens, return to earlier activities and read aloud to your child. The richness of language and plot, which they will gain from hearing you read and tell stories to them will help, not only their reading skills, but also their creative work later.

