



# Reading at Bearwood Primary and Nursery School

LEARNING, ENJOYING,  
& SUCCEEDING  
TOGETHER!

Reading is key to a child's learning and we know how important it is to work in partnership with parents and carers to help children to develop their confidence in this area. Reading together at home is one of the easiest but most important ways in which you can help your child. As you share books together, you will help to develop your child's reading skills and also show them how enjoyable and important reading is. Thank you for your support – it really makes a difference.

## **What reading skills and strategies do we teach at school?**

Phonics is the key strategy which we teach in order to enable children to read the words they see. We follow the Letters and Sounds program. By using the phonics skills that they have learnt, children will be confident to tackle new words and go on to become fluent readers.

In Phonics, children are taught to

- Recognise the sounds that each individual letter makes
- Identify the sounds that different combinations of letters make – such as 'sh' or 'oo'
- Blend these sounds together from left to right to make a word
- Sound out words and blend them together (e.g. c-a-t)

As fluency develops, we focus increasingly on the children's understanding of what they have read and their responses to the text. We encourage children to

- Describe or retell what they have read
- Answer simple questions about the text
- 'read between the lines' and look for clues to gain a deeper understanding
- Consider how texts are organised and how language is used effectively
- Think about the writer's viewpoint
- Make links between different texts

## **When do we teach reading at school?**

All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are taught Phonics in a structured way for 15- 20 minutes every day. It is the most effective way of teaching young children how to read. From Year 3 onwards, Phonics continues to be taught in small groups to children who are not yet confident.

Children are taught reading skills in class through using high quality texts which are often linked to the curriculum topics. Each child also reads in a small group with their teacher on a regular basis. This is a time when children have the opportunity to practise the skills they have learned and to talk about the book in more detail.

Children may also read individually with the class teacher, a teaching assistant or a parent helper. The frequency will depend on the child's individual need.

Children also have many other opportunities to read and enjoy texts as part of the wider curriculum, for example reading their own or a partner's work in class, carrying out research as part of a project, preparing for and presenting class assemblies or during a visit to the library. Your child's teacher will take advantage of opportunities to make links between reading sessions and other activities so that the children can practise their skills in context.

### **What do the children read?**

Children will choose their individual reading book from our reading scheme which is colour banded. Your child's class teacher will ensure that your child knows the colour band that they are reading. This book needs to be taken home each day and can be changed when it is finished. As well as stories and information books, children also enjoy many other types of texts such as comics, newspapers, magazines, poems, plays, e-books, internet pages, audio stories, recipes, instructions, TV guides, travel brochures, sports reports.... We have opportunities in school for children to read many of these.

How are the Reading Records used?

All children will start the year with a Reading Record which will need to be in school each day and taken home each evening. An adult will write in the diary when your child has read in school and we would ask you to write in the diary when your child has read at home and to sign/initial it.

### **How can you help your child?**

We would ask that you find time to read with your child every day at home. The session does not need to be too long – 10 minutes is fine. The support you can offer in this will be of great benefit to your child. Children also enjoy sharing books with other adults or older siblings....

Top Tips.

- Try to make reading time fun wherever possible. Aim to do little and often, but not when your child is tired.
- Make sure that the reading material is at the right level of difficulty.
- Blending – encourage your child to break words down into a series of sounds, eg c-r-a-sh. Run your finger under each sound in turn to encourage your child to blend the sounds together.
- Identify some key letter groups in the story and ask your child to spot them as they read.
- Encourage your child to look at any picture in the reading book to get an idea of what it is about. Discuss the pictures with your child.
- Help the reader to 'work out' words which can't be blended by looking at the other words in the phrase of sentence or at the pictures.

- Talk about the book as much as possible, ask your child to explain what has happened, ask questions about the story.
- Occasionally read the book or some of the pages aloud before you ask your child to read. This will help with understanding and gives them a chance to hear the sounds first. It will also show them what fluent reading sounds like.
- Draw attention to punctuation marks and help them to read with feeling, eg “HOORAY” they shouted.
- Play games, eg find a word that rhymes with fish.

Your child should bring their colour banded book home every evening. Please let your child’s teacher know if they are regularly forgetting. If your child would like to read something else instead sometimes, that is fine – please write it in their Reading Record too. As long as they are reading and enjoying it, they are developing skills which they will carry into the future.

If your child is reluctant to read, don’t force them or make an issue out of it. Talk to your child’s teacher so that you can work together. Read to them as much as possible, try taking turns to read a page each, make up a game eg read each part using a different voice, use a favourite book to develop confidence before moving onto a less familiar one, try different types of texts such as comics or children’s newspapers.

If your child reads aloud with confidence and fluency, don’t insist on reading aloud all the time but at this stage you can help them to develop their understanding by talking to them about the meaning of any new words and by asking them to tell you about what they have read.

You could also....

Let your children see you reading – newspapers, magazines, catalogues, letters, books... - this will help them to understand that reading is an important skill. Encourage children to join you in reading the print which is all around us – labels, cereal packets and signs are all valid reading material!

Join the local library and make use of the facilities it offers. As well as providing a fantastic selection of books, many libraries run events and competitions to encourage a love of reading. Don’t give up on the bedtime story, even if your child is a good reader. The more stories they hear, the more they will want to read!

The purpose of reading with children is not only to develop reading (decoding) skills, but also to improve comprehension(understanding).

There is a temptation to progress quickly through books, however the most valuable approach to reading is to spend quality time looking at a book in detail and enjoying it with your child.

The most important role you can play is to model good listening - showing interest and enjoyment in the reading process.