

## Helping your child to read in the Early Years Foundation Stage



Learning to read is a complex process which involves many skills such as recognising letters and the sounds they make, blending them together to read words as well as being able to distinguish different letters and words.

It is also important that children have the opportunity to listen to, talk about and act out stories to help them develop their imagination, prediction skills and vocabulary.

The following tips may help in explaining how you can help prepare your child for learning to read.



### \*Read lots together!

The library has a wonderful selection of books in English and other languages, as well as story CDs that you can borrow for FREE! They also have a wide choice of non-fiction books that you can use to find out some interesting facts. Boys, especially, seem to like these types of books.

### \*Talk about what you read

When reading, ask your child questions such as 'What do you think will happen next?' or 'How do you think they feel?'

Comment on the illustrations by saying, 'He looks grumpy. Why do you think that is?'



### \*Make up & act out stories

Stories don't always have to come from a book.

Use your imagination to make up your own stories, such as going to the moon, being a fire fighter or having an imaginary tea party.

Large boxes make excellent boats, rockets or fire engines, for example, whilst old scarves and saris make brilliant capes or robes for superheroes, kings and queens.



### \*Story time can be anytime!

Make up stories at bath time, round the dinner table or on journeys. Give your child some sentence starters to help them e.g. *Once there was a ... He lived in a...One day... etc.* Bring your stories to life by using different voices e.g. a high pitched voice for Baby Bear or a deep, growly voice for a Giant.



### \*Look at how books work

Help your child to understand how books work by showing them how to hold them up the correct way as well as turn the pages in the right direction. Model pointing to the words as you read so your child gets to know that in English we read from left to right and top to bottom.



### \*Writing is all around...

Look at letters and words on shop signs, logos and road signs, for example. Children will start to recognise the words they see on a regular basis e.g. their name, shop signs like 'Tesco,' or the Cbeebies logo. The letters in these words will become familiar to children and they will start to recognise them in other words they can see in the environment.



### \*Make lots of noise!

Make sounds for toys, objects and animals as you play. For example, 'brmm,' for a car, 'zzzzz,' for a bee or 'boing' for a bouncy ball. Making noises will help your child to practise mouth shapes as well as build up muscles in the mouth and tongue which are necessary for saying letter sounds later on.



### \*Play listening games

Play games that will help your child to tune into different sounds such as listening to and identifying sounds around the house and on the journey to school. This will help prepare your child to distinguish between similar sounding letter sounds such as 'm' and 'n' or 'b' and 'd,' for example.



Most of all, have fun! Children are more likely to succeed and will learn more when they are interested and excited about what they are doing.

## Helping your child once they start reading words

Children are normally ready to begin to read words in Reception, once a lot of pre-reading skills have been taught. At first they will learn to recognise letter shapes and the sounds they make and then start to blend sounds together to read a word.

For example:

Saying the sounds p-a-n together makes the word 'pan.'

Once children can blend sounds and recognise some key words they will be given a reading book.

## Helping your child when they get stuck on a word in their reading book

- Be patient! Praise all efforts made by your child
- Look at the beginning sound of the word
- Say all the sounds in the word e.g. d-a-d
- Look at the picture for a clue
- Encourage your child to think of a word that would make sense in the sentence