

## HELPING YOUR CHILD TO READ

- It is very important to be positive and praise your child's attempts. We want children to view reading as a pleasurable experience.
- Before reading the book, look at and discuss the cover, pictures and endpapers. Your child will then understand that these are just as much part of the book as print.
- Read the whole story to your child before s/he attempts to read it independently. Knowing what a book is about helps a young reader to tackle it confidently.
- Talk about the story. Reading is much more than just reading the words. Children need to understand the book and begin to be able to express ideas and opinions about what they have read.
- Help your child to understand that the words you are saying aloud are the same words that you can see on the page. Run your finger under the words as you read. As children begin to learn to read encourage them to do this for themselves.
- Allow children to take an active part when you are reading together, i.e. holding the book, turning the pages, discussing the things that interest them.
- When children first begin to read independently they may struggle over some words. The best way to help at this stage is to say the word, so that the meaning of the sentence is not lost due to hesitation, or to offer the first sounds so that they might be able to make an informed guess from the meaning of the sentence. As your child learns more sounds encourage them to build the words using these sounds.
- Your child's reading book will not be changed every day. An important part of learning to read is having the confidence to tackle a whole book by reading it in stages or more than once. Fluent reading builds confidence and provides the opportunity for reflection.
- Children will move through the levels of reading material at a rate appropriate to their development. The class teacher will ensure that your child is able to read, understand and discuss the books at each level before moving on to the next stage. Understanding what is being read, however simple the text may appear, is infinitely more valuable to the reader than any amount of struggling through a difficult passage.

Successful and confident readers are generally children who have been heard to read regularly at home with praise for their efforts and without pressure to move through the reading scheme too quickly. Helping a child become a reader is to give them a skill which will enhance their potential and remain with them throughout their life.

## ACTIVITIES TO ENCOURAGE READING

Children learn to read from many different activities. The following will greatly support your child in learning to read.

- Read to your child as often as possible.
- Re-read favourite stories chosen by your child even when you become bored and want to change!
- Talk about the stories and encourage your child to predict what might happen next.
- Sing and say rhymes, songs and jingles with your child and encourage them to join in so that they know them by heart.

- Point out print in the environment eg: signs, shop names, advertisements and packaging.
- When possible buy books with your child. Choosing and owning a book can be a great pleasure. Joining the school book club is the ideal way for your child to save for a book over a couple of weeks.
- Regularly visit the school library with your child or ask the teacher to ensure that your child's book is changed.
- Make use of the local library. Choose some books yourself and let your child choose others.
- Sometimes your child will choose books that you might not have selected. Learning to choose books is an important part of becoming a reader.
- Listening to stories on CD provides another way for children to access books.
- By reading yourself in front of your child they can see the importance and relevance of developing reading skills. Read newspapers, letters, cookery books, instruction manuals and magazines with your child to demonstrate that reading is not just limited to stories.
- When you watch television or a video with your child, talk about the characters, setting and plot.