

Early Years Foundation Stage: Parent's Guide to Reading



How do we teach children to read in Early Years Foundation Stage?

Here at Holy Family we believe that it is very important for children in EYFS to develop a love of books and enthusiasm for reading. As a parent/carer you are their first teacher and once your child starts school you can play a vital role in the partnership between home and school by supporting your child's learning. The aim of this booklet is to explain how we teach reading in school and how you can help your child read at home.

What we do in school

The children in Reception are exposed to a print rich environment of signs, labels, books, key words, displays and role play areas that give opportunities for reading, all of which the children are encouraged to notice and learn to read. There is a book area in each class that supply a range of books that children are able to share and listen to freely.

More formal teaching of reading is carried out through a number of activities, as follows:

Read, Write Inc

Through the Read, Write Inc programme children are taught in small groups in 15-20minute sessions each day. Children learn how to 'read' sounds in words and how these sounds can be written down. This is essential for reading, but it also helps children learn to spell well. We teach the children simple ways of remembering these sounds and letters. The children also practise reading (and spelling) what we call 'tricky words', such as 'once,' 'have,' 'said' and 'where'. The children practise their reading with books that match the phonics and the 'tricky words' they know. They start thinking that they *can* read and this does wonders for their confidence.

Shared reading

In our topic focused lessons children will share with the class teacher an enlarged text, on the Interactive Whiteboard or from a big book. This allows children to learn

- how books work,
- about different genres
- about authors and illustrators
- how to discuss sequences of events

Play based activities are also used to support this learning and are carried out at various times throughout the day. These may include role play, using puppets, sequencing pictures and also guided activities such as drawing or writing. The text may become the focus of a topic and the children will become very familiar with it.

Story time

This is a time for sustained listening and enjoyment of a book that may have been chosen by the teacher or the children. The text shared will be beyond that of the children's capability but may have phrases that children can join in with and will enrich children's imagination, supplying them with the ideas and phrases that they may use themselves in their play or writing.

Home reading book

Towards the end of the first term in Reception children will be given their first home reader. The book will be appropriate to their stage of reading development and will be taken home weekly in their reading bag. They will include a reading record book that will have space for comments, each time they read with a parent. This may include some ideas for elements to focus on at home.

Individual reading provides Reception staff with the opportunity to monitor the child's independent reading skills, the suitability of the book and their readiness to progress onto the next book.

Children will read their home reader in school once a week. Parents will be informed of their day and children will be required to bring their home reader into school on this day only.

The benefits of revisiting texts

Research confirms the schools underlying philosophy that repetition of reading a book leads to greater learning of vocabulary because the children pick up new information with each reading. Children are given their home reader that may only contain a few words and they seem to 'finish' the book quickly. There are many skills that your child needs to develop as a reader and with repeated readings you can focus on different skills. (see further guidance below). In this way children will become fluent readers who can not only decode words but can understand and enjoy a variety of texts.

Common exception words

At some point in Term 2 or 3, in addition to their home reader, your child will bring home a list of words that are quite tricky to read. These words will be appropriate to their reading development. Some children may be given specific letter sounds to practice at home.

How can I help at home?

What you can do to help

We hope that you will be able to help your child with their reading at home through a number of activities. It is important that your child enjoys reading with you and that it is not a chore. There are many

activities that you can do together to help them. Try and use a variety throughout the week. The skills that they are developing are as follows:

Reading skills to develop (taken from EYFS profile, arranged in developmental order from 30 months onwards)

Reading home readers together

- Let the reading time be short (about 5-10 minutes), enjoyable and stress free for both you and your child.
- Choose a time when your child is willing and is not too tired.
- Sit close together in a relaxed atmosphere and let your child take their time.
- Talk about the book and the pictures.
- When your child first brings home a reading book, do not expect them to know all of the words.
- Model the reading by reading it to them at first. Many first books have a repeated phrase which you can help them to anticipate by reading up to the word that varies, for example 'I like to paint, I like to.....swim.'
- Remember that much of the early reading your child does is memorising. It is more important that they read the whole book remembering the sequence of the story than that they recognise each word and what it says. With repeated readings the memorised words will start to become familiar as text.
- Encourage your child to use the pictures to help guess the words.

- It is fine to tell your child what an unknown word is and explain its meaning. As he/she progresses you may encourage him/her to use the picture or the first letter of a word to help them.
- Do not make your child think that they are in competition with anyone else. Children reach different levels at different stages and many factors play a part. Your child's reading will be regularly assessed by teaching staff, enabling us to decide whether your child is ready to move on.
- Above all always use plenty of praise and encouragement!

As your child progresses encourage your child to...

- Help your child to sound out the letters in words and then to 'push' the sounds together to make a whole word. Try not to refer to the letters by their names. Help your child to focus on the sounds. You can hear how to say the sounds correctly at this link: <http://www.ruthmiskintraining.com/teacher-support/61/index.html>
- Point to each word as is read.
- Suggest how the story might end.
- Cover a word and think of another word that would make sense.
- Discuss characters; what are they like, how are they feeling etc.
- Pay attention to the punctuation -question marks, exclamation marks, speech bubbles and so on.
- Use the correct terminology such as author, illustrator, contents, index.
- Express opinions about the book and who they would recommend it to.

- The theme of the book to write their own version, perhaps using a different setting or characters.

Reading in real-life contexts

Let your child see you read, and share it with them, for example reading a recipe, reading the newspaper, reading the destination on the bus, reading shop signs and labels on items in the shop.

Use the internet

There are many sites available where children can play phonics games, such as <http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/alphablocks/> and read audio books.

There are also useful sites for parents with advice for helping your child with reading.

http://rwp.excellencegateway.org.uk/readwriteplus/family_reading_campaign

