

## The Barnehurst Federation of Schools

### How you can support your child's reading at home

This handout gives suggestions on how to read at home with your child and ways of helping them decode unfamiliar words. It highlights the importance of sharing books with your child and that reading should be a pleasurable experience for children to encourage a love of reading.

- Find a place to sit together that suits you both.
- Try to read together every day and once over the weekend. Encourage it to be a pleasurable experience.
- Start with the title, look at the front of the cover and briefly chat about what you might find inside, check the back of the book for a blurb and read this too.
- At the bottom of each page, encourage your child to predict what might happen next.
- If your child gets stuck, ask what word would fit best, ask them to sound it out (if appropriate), or simply supply the word yourself.
- What happened in the story? Does this remind them of anything in their live or anything they have read before? Did they think the book was funny? Did they spot any interesting words or phrases? Did they enjoy the book?
- Read to your child every day, if you can. You can help your child to understand the emphasis of particular parts of the story.
- Encourage your child to retell the story you have just shared. This will give you an idea of how much they have understood.

Do NOT say the book is 'too easy' or 'too hard'. Children need a range of reading materials. A familiar book helps them to relax with reading. A difficult book can be read to your child. Both are important. The most important thing is that your child gains enjoyment from their reading.

#### **If your child is stuck on a word you can help them by:**

- a. Pointing to the picture if it is relevant.
- b. Asking a question to remind them of the context, e.g. 'Where did they say they were going?'
- c. Re-reading the sentence up to the unknown word to remind them of the context.
- d. Saying or pointing to the first letter of the word
- e. Telling your child the word to avoid losing momentum
- f. If the word can be read easily by sounding out the letters, encourage them or help them to do this.

### **After reading**

Talking about the book with your child at the end will help your child in their enjoyment and understanding of the book.

- Did they enjoy the book? Why? Why not?
- Who was their favourite character? Why?
- Which part of the story did you like the best? Why?
- Was there any part of the story you didn't like? Why?
- Would you choose this book/story again?

### **Which books are best?**

1. Books your child likes.
2. Books sent home by the teacher.
3. Books your child chooses from a library or bookshop that they want to read.
4. Never be afraid of re-reading books.

### **What other texts can you share/read with your child?**

- Comics
- Magazines
- Instructions/recipes
- Information books
- Newspapers
- Poems
- Taped/CD/Recorded stories
- Shopping lists

### **Why is it important to sign your child's reading record?**

- Your child's reading record is your direct link with your child's class teacher about their reading.
- It will allow the teacher to see whether your child needs additional reading time in school.
- It also allows the teacher to give positive praise where your child has worked well at home.

All children are assessed in reading using a Benchmark assessment system. This tracks both fluency and comprehension. Children need to progress in both in order to move through the levels. It is important that children are confident before moving on to the next level book. Soon children will have a page pasted in the back of their reading records showing the colour levels. Teachers will sign off / date when children progress on to the next level. We will be updating our colour banded books so that it corresponds to this so please be aware that some of the books might have different colours as they come from different schemes. ( Tree tops, Oxford reading tree, Rigby Star and so on).

## **Strategies for support**

### **Pink level (repeating sentences)**

- Prompt your child to point to the words as they read.
- Practise reading words in and out of order.
- Write these words on paper and see if your child can read them without the support from the images.

### **Red level**

- Prompt your child to sound out words they don't know.
- If they cannot sound it out (tricky word), tell them the word.
- Encourage your child to look at the pictures to read for meaning.

### **Yellow Level**

- Encourage your child to follow the words with their eyes and only use their fingers to point to difficult words.
- Ask your child... Does it look like another word you know?
- Give your child thinking time.
- Encourage your child to start thinking about some punctuation. ( . , ! ? )

### **Blue Level**

- Prompt your child to look for words within words
- Children should start self-correcting when their reading does not make sense.
- Tell your child to leave out difficult words and read to the end of the sentence. Re-read to see what word would fit.

### **Green level and above**

- Children should use punctuation to enhance the meaning of their reading.
- Look at parts of non-fiction books (contents, index)
- Ask your child questions about the story where the answer might not be directly in the text.
- Look at variety of spellings of words
- Ask your child to summarise what they have read.