

Reading at home can make such a difference!

Reading is a skill that your child will need throughout life; by reading at home you are helping your child consolidate what they learn at school. Furthermore, it helps them to develop better communication skills, improves their concentration and develops their imagination and spelling.



Ten tips for reading at home with your child:

- 1) **Choose a quiet time:** Set aside a quiet time with no distractions.
- 2) **Make reading enjoyable:** Sit with your child and try not to pressurise if he or she is reluctant. If your child loses interest then do something else.
- 3) **Maintain the flow:** If your child mispronounces a word do not interrupt immediately. Instead allow opportunity for self-correction. It is better to tell a child some unknown words to maintain the flow rather than insisting on trying to build them all up from the sounds of the letters.
- 4) **Be positive:** If your child says something nearly right to start with that is fine. Use a 'Let's read it together' approach and point to the words as you say them. Boost your child's confidence with constant praise for even the smallest achievement.
- 5) **Success is the key:** Parents anxious for a child to progress can mistakenly give a child a book that is too difficult. This can have the opposite effect to the one they are wanting. You could use the five finger rule. Open the book to any page and ask your child to read. Put a finger up every time your child does not know a word. If you have put up more than five fingers before the end of the page, the book is too hard for your child. Remember 'Nothing succeeds like success'. Until your child has built up his or her confidence, it is better to keep to easier books.
- 6) **Visit the Library:** Encourage your child to use the public library regularly.
- 7) **Regular practice:** Try to read with your child on most school days. 'Little and often' is best.
- 8) **Communicate:** Try to communicate regularly using your child's reading record; it helps your child to see that you are interested in their progress and that you value reading.
- 9) **Talk about the books:** There is more to being a good reader than just being able to read the words accurately. Just as important is being able to understand what has been read. Always talk to your child about the book; about the pictures, the characters, how they think the story will end, their favourite part, etc. You will then be able to see how well they have understood and you will help them to develop good comprehension skills.
- 10) **Variety is important:** Remember children need to experience a variety of reading materials e.g. picture books, hard backs, comics, magazines, poems and information books.