

Reading Together at Home

Remember that there is no right or wrong way to read with your child, as long as you are relaxed and positive about it.

- Make yourselves comfortable and cosy during reading times, try to become completely involved and give your undivided attention.
- Choose a time for reading when there is nothing else you would much rather be doing e.g. watching a favourite television programme.
- Keep your reading sessions short (10 – 15 minutes) and stop if either of you is too tired.
- Use lots of positive praise and encouragement, try not to be critical, angry or make a fuss about mistakes.
- Discourage any feelings of competition with other children at home or school.
- If the book seems too hard, read it through and talk about the parts that seemed interesting to your child. If the book seems too easy remember that everyone likes to relax sometimes with an easy read and this builds up confidence.
- Sometimes children want to re-read a book (maybe several times over) and this should not be discouraged. Children will learn from anyone who shows an interest in their development. So encourage brothers, sisters, cousins, grandparents, aunts and uncles to join in.

Helping Your Child to Read the Text

- Sit so that you can both see the words and pictures the right way round regardless of who is reading at the time.
- Look at the pictures and briefly discuss the book before reading the words. Use the pictures to help your child predict the story.
- Encourage your child to guess at unknown words and be pleased if they make a sensible guess, even if it is not exactly right.
- Help your child to break words down into sounds and work at 'sounding them out'. The first sound in an unknown word is a particularly useful clue to guessing the word.
- Don't correct every word they read incorrectly, particularly if their mistakes don't affect the overall meaning or story. If however they are really struggling, offer to take over the reading and praise them for their efforts.
- Once you have finished reading the book, encourage your child to make comments about the book or to ask questions by doing so yourself e.g. *what do you think will happen next? What do you like about this book?*
- Try to read regularly with your child (rather than every day one week and then not at all the next). Try to read at least two or three times a week if every day is difficult for you. Don't forget that the opportunity for your child to read is all around you as well as in books. Food packaging, shopping lists, road signs, birthday cards, catalogues etc all offer a chance for you and your child to read together.