



Dear Parents,

Thank you for the responses to the reading survey that was sent out in the spring term. There was a good uptake for this survey across all year groups and it allowed us to gain an understanding of what you think works well and think about how to build on suggestions you had. In this letter I will take some of the key themes from the survey and explain any changes/developments that we are implementing.

What is going well?

Based on your feedback, the majority of children are reading four times a week at home and enjoying it. This is great! Regular reading opportunities both in school and at home accelerate children's progress. We want our children to develop a love of reading. Many of the children reported enjoying the books and Bug Club. The teacher comments in reading diaries were useful to parents, along with the stickers, sound mats and tricky word bookmarks that go home. We will continue all of these things and we are glad you find them so useful.

What reading happens in school and when can my child change their book?

In Early Years children read a minimum of once a week with a teacher/teaching assistant. This is usually when we will change children's books, to ensure the book they have closely matches their phonic knowledge. You will notice they move through 'sets'. Children also participate daily in whole class shared reads of the phonics book of the week. In KS1 children move into guided reading groups, where they work with a teacher and read as part of a small group each week. They continue to have shared reads in phonics sessions using the book of the week. In KS1 we begin to develop independence with book changing and several times a week adults set up an opportunity for books to be changed. Please remind your child before going into school if they need to change their book.

We really like the sound/tricky word stickers and find them useful

The stickers were introduced into Early Years last year and have progressed to Year One this year. We will continue to use these and aim to do so more regularly in Year One. Some weeks there may not be a new sound, due to recapping prior learning. These weeks there will still be a book of the week for you to share at home. Some of the phase 5 sounds covered in Year One can be confusing due to being alternative spellings of previously taught sounds. Some parents would like more clarity on how to pronounce these and what order they come in, which is a very valid point. Going forwards we will send home a phase 5 sound mat which contains alternative spellings in the order in which they are taught.

How can we be more involved?

The library is open each week Tuesday straight after school for children to choose books and share with their parents. We will also have iPads available in the library for accessing Bug Club with your child during this time if you would like support with this. We are also always looking for volunteers to spend an hour a week listening to children read – we cannot thank those who help us enough! If you or a family member would like to volunteer please chat to your child's teacher.

How can we help our child at home?

There are currently online workshops for phonics phases 2 and 3 on our website. Feedback has been really positive about these and we are extending these to include a phase 4 and 5, as well as a 'Reading Tips' workshop which will be live soon on the 'Learning Resources' section of our website. This will then encompass phonics and reading throughout the whole school.

In addition to this we will trial a parent drop in session each half term. Dates will be communicated in September and your child's teacher will be available during this time to answer any questions you have about reading, or to demonstrate methods of decoding with your child.

How do I know my child's next step in reading, once they move into guided reading groups in KS1?

Teachers in KS1 look at the reading diaries each week, and will always endeavour to help with any queries or questions you have written. In order to ensure that you are aware of how your child is doing and what their next step is; staff will now write in the diary after your child's guided read, with a comment that is individual to your child and based on that read. They will continue to answer any questions and celebrate home reading.

Sometimes my child is not motivated to read at home

This is common and many children will go through this phase. Remember that each read does not have to be the full book; you could take it in turns with your child to read a page each or read a few pages at a time. We aim to foster a love of reading and home reading should be fun, teachers can help with ways to engage your children or break down the book.

Bug Club

We know that Bug Club works very well for some families and children enjoy the range of books, which are often more modern than some of our physical books. On Bug Club there are always several books available to choose from that match your child's reading level. Bug Club is not intended to replace real books, it is however a way of offering more variety and ensuring all children have access to the Book of the Week, as we do not have 60 copies of each book. As is often the case with technology, we know that some families find it tricky to navigate. We will always endeavour to help if we can. School budgets are stretched extremely tight and Bug Club currently provides the best value for money for us as a school.

School Books

The books we have in school vary both in reading scheme and age – we know that some of them are very old! We simply cannot afford to replace all of the books in school in one go and we have been prioritising the phonics readers over the last two years, in order to allow for progression for all children through the phases. Our next priority is to replace some of the higher level colour banded books which children access in Year One and Two. We ask that water bottles are kept away from the books as it's surprising how quickly a brand new book can get tatty if it gets wet.

Please keep an eye out for drop in dates and notification of the new online workshops. As always – if you would like any advice to help you support your child read please see your child's class teacher. Thank you for your support,

Ruth Halbauer

Deputy Headteacher