



Learning to read



Information for parents

At Bickley we aim not only to teach your child to read, but to read for pleasure and enjoyment. We want to help children to see reading as an integral part of learning for life and parents play a vital role in these aims and aspirations.

### Parental support

This is essential if your child is to learn to read fluently and for enjoyment. By praising and encouraging your child and developing a daily routine of reading together you will support your child's progress not just in reading but in all curriculum areas.

Children need to encounter a *wide range* of books with varied structures which will enable them to apply their skills and knowledge of reading. Keep a variety of books available so your child can choose and feel a sense of power over his/her own reading.

### Reading support

- Reading a little and often is the best idea (KS1 -5-10mins per day/KS2- 10-15mins per day).
- Help your child by telling a story using only pictures.
- Let your child talk to you about the picture - this gives them clues to the story.
- Give your child lots of encouragement and praise - don't get cross if they get stuck!
- If your child wants to read a book again, or read an easy book, let them! This will help them enjoy reading and they will see themselves as good readers.
- Magazines and comics can make a refreshing change from story books.
- Try reading poems, songs, rhymes and even riddles.
- Read to get information such as recipes, games instructions etc.
- Discuss other aspects of the texts - the cover, the title, the author etc.
- Ask your child what might happen next in the story.
- Ask them to tell you about the characters and which part of the book they liked best.
- Reading every word correctly is by no means essential. Always let your child finish the sentence if it still makes sense.

- Encourage your child to read on to the end of the sentence if they get stuck and then return to the unknown word. It is sometimes possible to guess correctly what fits in. If this does not help, tell your child the initial sound or tell them the word and re-read the whole sentence. If your child is struggling over too many words, then the book is too difficult.
- Look for little words in longer words.
- Read while you are out - shop labels, garage and road signs, posters, adverts, street names etc.
- Use the library - introduce your child to a wide range of books and other materials and this is a good opportunity for them to make their own choices.
- Remember children never get tired of bedtime stories!
- When children see their parents reading for pleasure it encourages them to do likewise.
- *Storytelling* is just as valid, if not more so, for developing creativity and understanding of the structure of stories



### Reading Scheme books

Through the Oxford Reading Tree and other reading schemes we teach the mechanics and strategies needed to become a fluent and efficient reader. These books are structured from the start to include repetition of keywords and phrases and to introduce and develop particular phonics and sounds which the children gradually build upon as their reading develops.

Your child's class teacher will send home one or two books per week for your child to read with you *at least once*. It is helpful if they can read them more than once as the children should be able to retell the story, talk about the characters and give opinions about the text as well as increasing fluency and expression.

Reading scheme books have quite heavily controlled vocabulary which enables them to progress but the children may have difficulties transferring their skills to non-scheme books. This is the reason why we

would encourage parents to read not only 'scheme' books but other fiction and non-fiction texts including poetry.

Your child moves through the reading scheme at their own pace and the class teacher will move them on as their comprehension skills and general fluency increases and progresses.

It is not a race to reach the end of the scheme. Do we ever stop reading? Does finishing a scheme mean we are a complete reader? Definitely not!

**Contact books** - we love to hear how your child is reading at home and a brief comment in your child's contact book is always welcome and helpful. It enables us to make a more informed evaluation of your child's reading ability, progress and enjoyment. We are also keen to do the same when your child reads with us at school.

**School Library** - your child will have an opportunity to borrow a book from the school library every week. They can choose from a variety of books and these are for you to share with your child whenever possible. Don't worry if they choose to return to favourite stories - re-reading familiar books is very helpful in developing comprehension, confidence and fluency.



We hope the above information is useful and gives you some new ideas for supporting your child with reading at home. Above all we wish to reiterate the following, even when your patience is wearing thin,

**reading should be fun!**

