



Welcome to our first Literacy newsletter, in which we hope you will find some useful ideas for ways in which you can support your child in literacy at home.

In 'Literacy News' this term our focus is reading. We look at ways in which you can help your child with their reading and how our reading scheme works.



# Literacy News

## How can I help my child with reading?

There is no one best way to help your child with his or her reading. In the classroom, the teacher will use a variety of approaches to stimulate an interest in books and to teach children the skills of reading. The approach that you choose with your child at home will depend on your child's level of reading ability and the type of reading experience you want to share with them. *A combination of these different approaches is usually most beneficial...*

### 1. Shared Reading

Using this approach, the adult reads the story and the child joins in. You can encourage your child to join in by:

- Looking at the pictures and front cover and asking them to tell you *what do they think the book will be about? Why characters acted in a certain way? Who their favourite character is? Have we read a book like this before?*
- Running your finger under the print as you read.
- Suggesting they join in by reading any recognisable words.
- Reading some sentences together at the same time.
- After reading the story, help them to re-tell the story or describe the content in their own words.
- Re-read favourite books again and again!



### 2. Supported Reading

This approach encourages the child to read to the adult. It is important to gauge whether the child is able to read most of the book on their own and for the adult to be prepared to support them. Here are some suggestions to help:

- Select two or three words to talk about, for example words that are repeated or the names of the story's main character.
- As the child reads, encourage them to point to words if this is helping them.
- Give praise when a child corrects a word.
- Encourage them to work out unknown words, and give them time to do this.

### 3. Reading to a Child

This helps to improve listening skills, broadens interest in book and improves vocabulary. It helps them to access books that may be beyond their own reading experience.

#### **Should I ask my child questions about the book?**

Questions can help them to think about a book, but don't overdo it, reading isn't a test. Talk about the book together, and let the children ask questions too. Think about asking 'what if...' or 'what might...' questions to develop inference skills. Discussion about texts is crucial - it enables children to move beyond simply decoding words. A good reading session may involve 2 minutes of actual reading and 10 minutes of talking about what they have read!

#### **What should I do if my child doesn't want to read to me?**

- Don't force them. You won't get far if reading becomes stressful.
- Maybe they are worried about getting it wrong or can sense that you are anxious about their reading. Think of ways to make reading fun for you both.
- Take time over books. Find 'real' books (non-scheme books) that they will enjoy. Perhaps non-fiction books about their favourite subjects or a magazine.
- It is better to encourage your child to read a lot of easier books, than a few books that are too difficult.
- Be realistic about their progress. Think in terms of how they have improved in their approach to reading rather than how many words they can read or how difficult they are.

## Our Reading Scheme

Your child may be bringing home one of our colour coded reading books, but how does our reading scheme work?

Our school reading scheme aims to match appropriate books to the children's reading capabilities. Each book banding contains books suitable for children of a particular reading level. These levels are in line with those from the current National Curriculum. The scheme starts with books with a grey sticker for children working towards Level 1. There are currently 14 levels, finishing on the brown sticker which corresponds to a Level 4a. Recent research highlights the importance of children reading 'real books'. Our school reading scheme is therefore made up of some 'real books' (everyday story books and picture books from a range of publishers) and some 'scheme' books e.g. Oxford Reading Tree, in which words and characters are often repeated in order to develop some familiarity.

The most important aspects of our reading scheme for parents and children to understand are firstly that it is **not** a ladder to be climbed. Instead the books across each band should be explored at their fullest extent. The bands contain a broad variety of books and children are encouraged to read different genres of text. Neither is teaching reading just about decoding words. Rather it is developing a thorough understanding of how words and sentences are put together to convey meaning. The books in each band also contain texts which are most suitable at each level for doing this. This in part will be deciphering words using the strategies the children have been taught, but as they develop as readers it might also be:

- \* Looking at why certain words have been chosen in sentences and finding alternatives.
- \* Exploring how writers convey suspense and what techniques they use for doing this.
- \* Examining inferred meaning, why characters behave in a certain way, what characteristics can be ascertained from the way they behave or speak.
- \* Predicting what might happen next, retelling a story and adding additional chapters.
- \* Analysing how speech is used and developing expression and intonation when reading aloud.

Through on-going assessment, teachers match children to a level of book which will enable them to work on the reading skills they currently need. The children move on when they are ready to work on the next level of reading skills. Good readers can even be taught advanced reading skills through very short texts. Some year 6 literacy lessons revolve around picture books which can be used to teach level 5 literacy skills.

**The books that your child brings home from school aren't the only ones they can read. Join Ashford library and be able to take home lots of books to read together each week!**



## *Try it at Home*

**Getting things in the right order is an important part of reading.** It helps your child to know that stories have a beginning, middle and end. Cut up pictures from picture books bought at a boot fair, or from magazines. Ask your child to put them into an order and make up a story together about them.

#### **For Older children...**

**Read All About It--**Introduce your child to the many kinds of information in the daily newspaper. Ask your child to find the pages containing news about current affairs, celebrity news, weather reports, TV listings and opinions. Discuss how to use this information.

**Follow the News -** As a family choose an important news event to follow for a day or two. Ask each person to find as much information on the topic as possible-- read newspapers, listen to the radio, and watch TV news. Then talk about what everyone learnt.



# Godinton Reading Events

As a school we would like to raise the profile of reading for purpose and pleasure. On this page you will find an outline of the reading events planned to take place in school over the next few months.

## 'Read For My School' Y3-Y6

**Read For My School** is a national competition running from 27<sup>th</sup> January to 28<sup>th</sup> March 2014 for pupils in Years 3 to 8. The competition website [www.readformyschool.co.uk](http://www.readformyschool.co.uk) is hosting a free online library of over 100 books. All children in Years 3 to Year 6 at Godinton are taking part in the competition, choosing to read either the online books or books in print which are not part of the online library. The goal is to read as much as possible.

Pearsons, the organisers of the competition, have recently ironed out the technical problems that many were having when attempting to access the online books. Please let us know if you are still experiencing difficulties in either accessing the above website or viewing the online books available.

Congratulations to the following pupils who have already visited the website and logged the books they have been reading since the competition start date:

Zach Morgan	Philip Piper	Madison Smith
Victoria Wilkinson	Owen Kinghorn	Madeline Haji
Toby Kelly	Olivia Foreman	Katie Bowden
Stella Stewart	Oliver Nash	Josie Martin
Eve Stewart	Niranj Marar	Jessica Monks
Shreanee Gurung	Mingso Limbu	Jessica Firth
Sajana Dewan	Millie Allan	Harry Burrell
Rhys Devall	Millie Anthony	George Staples
Rebecca Howard	Maisy Powell	Finlay Bushell
Charlotte Johnson	Abigail Barber	Amy Lund
Bethany Caldwell	William Herbert	Mark Wilmer
Tom Devonshire	Rowan Shardlow	Lauren King
Katie Goldsmith	Joshua Crowfoot	Jack Williams
Isabelle Cole	Henri Morgan	Harley Bowles
Finley Samson	Skye Holmes	Emily White
Elisa Kannur	Darcie Metcalfe	Courtney Prior
Cameron Heslop	Amy Wood	Adelina Miguel
Sienna Roberts	Gabriella Woodham	Kyle Pelling
Madeline Ross	Joseph Wallis	Harvey-Lee Eaton
Erica Bracken	Benjamin White	Jett Pelosi

The children can log *any* book they have read since 28<sup>th</sup> March and this will count towards their overall reading total.

## Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February: Author Visit

Following on from the success of our visit from the children's author Ann Bryant in the autumn term, we are lucky enough to have secured a free visit from another children's author, David Fuller.

David is the author of the popular Alfie Jones series. Throughout the day, David will be leading workshops with each year group from Year 3 upwards and will also be sharing his books in a whole school assembly. David will then be selling and signing copies of his books at the reduced rate of £4.50 in the hall from 3.20p.m. to 4.00p.m.



## World Book Day Activities Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2014



### **Book Character Dress-up Day:**

Calling all Harry Potters, fairytale princesses, Captain Hooks or Rainbow Fish! There is no particular theme for our dress-up day, other than come as a book character and enjoy the day.

A £5.00 Scholastic Book Fair voucher will be awarded to the best dressed child in each year group. **The Book Fair will be held in the hall after school from Monday 17<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March.**



### **Godinton Book Swap Event:**

To celebrate World Book Day, we are also holding a **Children's Book Swap** in school on **Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March**. We would like every child to bring in a book for their age group which they have read and would like to donate to the Book Swap. Throughout the day, each class will then visit the Book Swap Shop in the hall and the children can then choose a book from the donations to keep and take home to read. The children may donate more than one book if they wish, although to ease the organisation of the event each child will only bring home one book. As a rule of thumb, we are asking that books donated should be in reasonable condition and suitable for the age of the donor.

**Please send book donations into your child's class from Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February to Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March.**

### **Reading Evening for Parents:**

In the autumn term we delivered a Phonics Evening to parents and this was a huge success. We would like to offer a similar evening on the theme of Reading on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March from 7.00p.m. to 7.30p.m in the school hall.

During the evening, we will explain how we teach reading at Godinton and also offer advice on the different ways children can be supported with their reading outside of school.

**If you would like to attend the Reading Evening, please complete the attached slip and return it to school by Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March.**