

Supporting Early Reading at Home

Before moving onto a structured synthetic phonics (SSP) programme, pupils need to secure their ability to be able to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding to use and discriminate between auditory, environmental and instrumental sounds.

Pre-phonics development focuses on pupils being able to:

- listen attentively
- enlarge their vocabulary
- speak confidently to adults and other children
- discriminate between different sounds including phonemes
- reproduce audibly the phonemes they hear in words

Ideas for home:

Offer books that provide sensory experiences – textures, sounds, pictures eg feely books, board books.

It's OK to read the same book several times.

Use lots of exciting voices, intonation and gestures when reading and telling stories. Let the children know you are enjoying yourself too!

Use rhymes and familiar songs to engage with children through shared enjoyment. Add props into the songs e.g. using ducks in the bath.

Encourage children to handle books and draw their attention to pictures, pointing to different parts, naming them or what is happening, to tell the story without reading through each page.

Make vocal sounds and say words as you explore books together. Leave pauses to encourage children to experiment with repeating the words and sounds they hear.

Use props and puppets to bring stories to life. These can be realistic or abstract e.g. using a spray bottle of water to represent rain.

Provide opportunities for exploring sounds with drums, instruments, pans, pots, buckets and beaters and spoons.

Ask your child to 'read' a familiar book to you. Allow them to make up their own words to describe pictures/story. They don't need to be able to read the words accurately.

Copy children's rhythms and 'taps', and demonstrate simple rhythms leaving pauses for them to try these for themselves.

Visit the local library. They often offer free story times including in school holidays. They also do holiday reading challenges.

Point out words and labels, signage, and symbols in the environment and in books to help develop children's understanding of what words mean.

Point out sounds in the environment e.g. aeroplane, a person sneezing etc.