



ST IGNATIUS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Supporting Your Child's Reading at Home

Guidance for Parents and Carers

Learning to read

At St. Ignatius Catholic Primary School, our aim is to support children along their way to becoming lifelong readers. The purpose of this booklet is to provide you with information which will enable you to support your child's reading at home.

Learning to read takes time. Decoding the text and being able to read the words on the page is only the first step. Children need time to understand what they are reading and to enjoy books as well as developing their fluency. Given the time to learn at their own pace, children will develop resilience as readers and will develop the lifelong skills they need to make them confident and enthusiastic in their reading abilities.

Your child will experience a variety of reading activities in school. Below are some examples:

- Individual reading scheme books (dependent on child's reading ability, understanding and level of fluency)
- Reading with the whole class during English lessons
- Reading with the teacher or teaching assistant in a group/whole class during guided reading/reading comprehension lessons.
- Quiet reading sessions, reading individually or with a partner
- Reading during other curriculum areas

Choosing what to read

At St. Ignatius, children are expected to read regularly at home in order to develop their reading skills. Children will bring home 'reading scheme' books that are carefully selected to ensure they are appropriate to your child's level of reading. Once your child becomes a competent and fluent reader, they will no longer bring home reading scheme books but regular reading is still expected, with children choosing from a range of books within the classroom/books they have brought in from home.

In order to develop a love for reading, it doesn't just have to be school books you read with your child. Listed below are other suggestions:

- Read stories, poems and other texts aloud to your child (even fluent readers enjoy being read to!)
- Let your child see you reading for purpose and pleasure
- Visit the library/bookshops to choose their own books
- Choose books that appeal to your child (e.g. information books on hobbies/interests such as football or animals)
- Read with older and younger siblings and family members
- Listen to recorded stories
- Give reading a purpose – TV guide, recipes, game instructions, signs, catalogues etc

Tips for encouraging your child's reading

- Find a quiet, relaxing place away from distractions such as TV.
- Ask lots of questions about the book before, during and after reading.
- Try to hear your child read every day.
- Little and often is more beneficial than a long session once a week.
- Limit how long you are reading for - the amount of reading time should match your child's span of attention. Never make reading a chore!
- Choose your timing carefully - it's best not to embark on a reading session when your child is tired.
- Try to be supportive and positive during the reading time – use lots of praise!

Strategies to help your child develop their reading fluency

Every time when your child reads in school, there will be an emphasis on the understanding of what they have read, as well as fluency. It is also important this is encouraged at home. Children should read books with a 90-95% accuracy. If children read a reading scheme book that is too hard for them, they cannot practise and secure different reading strategies. It could also lead to children becoming disengaged with reading because they are putting so much effort into figuring out individual words that they lose the overall meaning of the text.

Early readers:

- Look at the title with your child and then give your child time to look through the book first, particularly focusing on the pictures. This enables your child to already have started developing an understanding of the book, prior to decoding the words.
- Whilst your child is at this early stage of reading, encourage your child to point under each word as they say it. This helps to develop one-to-one correspondence (i.e. that every written word corresponds to one spoken word). It also helps focus the child's attention on the words they are reading.

- Encourage your child to look at the picture on each page before decoding the words as this will help them with words that are unfamiliar. Please don't cover the pictures! They are a very valuable reading strategy and help children to gain understanding of the story.
- Using pictures and initial sounds
Although your child will be working very hard to develop their phonic skills, sometimes (particularly with longer words) it is not necessary to sound out the whole word. Children's phonic skills may not be sufficiently developed to sound out these longer words and the word can often be worked out by looking at the initial sound and the picture.
- Using phonic knowledge
Help your child to use their phonic knowledge. Words can be broken down into the sounds they're made up from and then these sounds are 'blended' together to make the word. E.g. d-o-g = dog.
(It is the sound the letters make that is important at this stage and not the letter names.)
- Using the context
Children can often 'work out' words using their knowledge of the story to help them. Prompt them to think about what has been happening in the story to help them work out an unfamiliar word.
- Recognition of 'tricky words'
Your child will encounter non-decodable words and these need to be learned on sight as a whole word as they can't be sounded out. (E.g. I, the, no, go, my) Regular reading with your child will help your child start to learn and remember these words.
- Recognising high frequency words
High frequency words are commonly occurring words. Most of these words are decodable which means they can be worked out by sounding and blending (using phonic knowledge). Daily reading of these words will help children recognise them quickly so they become able to read them 'on sight'. (E.g. If, in, at, on, mum, dad)
- Draw your child's attention to repeated words – encourage them to read them by sight, recognising the word is the same as a previous word rather sounding out it out again.
- Read on and then re-read
Encourage your child to read on to the end of the sentence. The context of the sentence will often then help them work out a word and enables them to independently problem-solve for themselves. They can then re-read the sentence, putting in the new word.

Suggested questions to help your child develop their understanding

When hearing your child read, it is important to ask them questions about texts as they are reading. Encourage them to look back at the pages of the book to find information.

Reception & Key Stage One

- What do you think the story is going to be about?
- What do you think might happen in the story?
- Who is in the story?
- Where is the story set? When does the story take place?
- Can you use the pictures to tell part of the story?
 - How do you think the story will end?
- What will happen next?
- Do you like the characters? Why?
- What sort of character is...? How could you describe them?
- What happens in the story? What did the characters say? Why?
- How did a character scare, upset or help another character? Has this ever happened to you? How did you feel?
- Why did that character do....[give an event or action in the story]?
- Did the story make you think of something that has happened to you or someone you know?
- Can you put the main events in order?
 - How would you feel at this point in the story?
 - What would you do [at this point in the story]?
 - How do you think a character feels? Why?
 - Why did a character say [.....] in the text?
 - How did a character in the book help/upset etc another character in the story? Why?
 - What advice would you give the characters?
 - Could there be another adventure after this one? What might the character do next?
 - What does this word mean? Can you think of another word that means the same?
 - What word have we just read that means....?
- [At the end of the book] Did you like this book? Why? (Encourage your child to develop their opinion about books by encouraging them to explain their reasons.)
- What was your favourite part and why?
- What was the most exciting/interesting part of the book? Can you find it? Why have you picked this part?

Lower Key Stage Two

- Can you explain why you think a character did [...] in the story?
- What does this word/phrase tell you about the character/setting?
- What words/phrases tell you the character is feeling scared/anxious/excited etc?
- What does the word 'X' tell us about 'Y'?
- Can you find two ways in which the writer tells you about an event/setting/character/theme?
- Can you list the main events in the order they happened?
- In the story [...] is mentioned a lot. Why?
- What other words/phrases could the writer have used?
- What do you think the writer meant by writing [...]?
- What does the phrase [...] tell the reader about [...]?
- Tell me a phrase that tells the reader [...]?
- Do you think [...] is a hero? Give two reasons for your answer.
- Does the author care about [...]? How do you know?

Upper Key Stage Two

- What did that character mean when they said [...]?
- Are the character's actions a surprise or what you expected? Why?
- Why did they character react in that way?
- Explain the character's actions or reactions to events in the story.
- What clues are there in the story to show that that character is happy/angry/sad/excited etc?
- What do you think this character thinks or another character? Why?
- How did the writer make you think this?
- Has the writer been successful in creating a setting/mood/character/theme? What else could they have done?
- What was the atmosphere like before [...] and after [...]?
- Describe different characters' reactions to the same event.
- Who is the 'voice' in the text?
- Which character does the writer want you to like or dislike? How have they done this?
- What do you think will happen because of a character's actions/dialogue/thoughts?
- How do you know [...]? What evidence is there in the text to support this?

- What word/phrase tells us [...]?
- What do the words...tell us about [...]?
- How do the words [...] make the reader feel about the character?
- What does the word [...] mean? What is a different word that has the same meaning as this?
- Based on what you have read, what does the last paragraph suggest might happen to the [...] next?

Supporting independent readers at home

Independent readers still need your support in order to continue developing as readers. Listed below are some suggestions to help you support independent readers at home.

- Discuss books with your child – try reading the same book so you can talk about it.
- Ask your child to prepare a section to read aloud to you.
- Encourage your child to ask you if they come across new words.
- Ask your children some of the questions listed above to help develop their understanding.