



Reading books

Dear parents/carers

This week, your child will bring home their new reading record and their reading material. The purpose of this letter is to inform new parents and remind existing parents about our reading systems in school.

Book banding system

You will notice that your child's reading book has a colour coded sticker on the back or spine. This is because we use a colour coded book banding system in line with other Cambridgeshire schools. This is to help combine the many different reading schemes that we use in school. You may find that some Oxford Reading Tree books, although in the same stage, may be in a different colour coded book band e.g. one stage 3 book may be in yellow band whilst another is in blue book band. This is because some of these books were published prior to the coloured book banding system. If your child brings home a book that they have already read or is at a lower 'stage' than they had last year, please don't worry as it is probably because it is now in a different colour band. If you have any concerns about your child's reading material, please speak to your child's class teacher or the Reading Coordinator; Mrs Johnson. The following website contains more information on book banding in schools that you may find useful:

<https://www.readingchest.co.uk/book-bands>

Choosing and changing reading books

Children will have the opportunity to change their reading books once or twice per week but will choose 2 or 3 books each time that they keep for the whole week. It is important that these reading books and their reading record comes into school every day so that your child's class teacher can record when they have read in school. In Reception and KS1, children may have their reading books chosen for them, until they are ready to make those choices independently.

Reading in school

Children will read in a guided group every week and assessment notes made in teacher's folders. Teachers will record when your child has been heard read by an adult, in their reading records. Depending on your child's ability, they may be heard more frequently on an individual basis by a teacher, teaching assistant or volunteer. All children also have the opportunity for reading activities in their daily phonics and English sessions and also in topic lessons.

Reading at home and reading for pleasure

We would encourage you to try to hear your child read every day, even if for only 5 or 10 minutes. When you have read with your child, you can record this in their reading record by writing the title of the book, page number and a brief comment if you wish. Older pupils can of course sometimes read alone but we would encourage parents to countersign when they have read independently and read with them regularly.

We would love it if you could take the time to **read to your child**. This could be a bedtime story or a favourite comic or magazine. Perhaps most importantly, is to make sure your child sees a variety of reading material; books, comics, magazines, newspapers. Research shows that children who read for pleasure perform better at school and that other benefits include: text comprehension and grammar, positive reading attitudes, pleasure in reading in later life, increased general knowledge as well as increased well-being and empathy for others.

Why is this all so important?

1. In school, we ask children to read things and find out what's important – 'browsing'. It is very hard to teach browsing. The best way to learn browsing is going to a bookshop, going to a library or sitting with a pile of books or magazines and choosing what you want to read.

2. In school, we ask children to think about difficult ideas. This might be about, say, why or how things happened in history. It might be when we ask children to think about 'if' and 'why'. If children read lots of different kinds of books, they will start to think about such things as part of their reading.

3. In school, we ask children to think beyond themselves, to think about why or how other people think and behave. If children read lots of different kinds of books, they will start to think about such things as part of their reading.

4. In school, we want children to ask questions, wonder about things, be curious and interested. Again, if children read lots of different kinds of books, they will be children who do just that: ask questions, wonder, be curious and interested.

5. Like adults, children are full of feelings and thoughts. Like adults, these sometimes boil over and the children don't always know what to do with them. Reading books often show us people facing up to problems and finding ways to deal with them. This means that reading books helps children find ways of dealing with their feelings and thoughts.

Michael Rosen

Useful websites to support reading at home:

<http://www.wordsforlife.org.uk/>

<http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/>

<http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/>

<http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/>

We are hoping that children will be very excited as they get to move up the coloured book bands and receive a new coloured sticker to put in their reading record as their reading progresses!

If you would like to volunteer to hear children read or read to small groups of children in school, please speak to the office staff or Miss Smith; our Deputy Head, and they will take your details.

Thank you for your support

Kind regards

Mrs K. Johnson
Reading Coordinator