



READING AND PHONICS AT ST. PHILIPS

PHONICS

At St Philip's RC Primary School we help your child to get ready for learning to read and write using phonics by developing their understanding that spoken words are made up of different sounds. Your child will take part in a high-quality phonics session every day in Nursery, Reception and Year 1 and 3-4 times a week in Year 2. These sessions are active and fun-filled with an emphasis on teaching the skills your child will need for reading and writing. The programme that we use to help us to plan and teach high quality phonics sessions is called Letters and Sounds. This is a Government recommended scheme.

Parent workshops on phonics are hosted yearly. The link on the curriculum page of our website will take you to a copy of our phonics presentation for parents.

COLOUR BANDED READING SCHEME – EXPLANATORY LETTER TO PARENTS

Book Banding Information for Parents

Dear Parents,

We have reorganised our reading scheme to make it easier for the children to have increased autonomy and control of their choice of reading books, which should in turn encourage their love of reading.

By colour banding our books, we have been able to put a bigger variety of different scheme books in one level, providing children with a greater choice of text and genre. As reading books from across several schemes have been placed together, it is important to understand that there will of course be some variation in style and challenge within the same band. When reading with your child, please look at the coloured sticker on the book, not the original printed level number. It may appear that children drop down or go up levels as different schemes work to different numbers and banding.

Your child will be given a new reading book on a colour band based upon the reading level they reached at the end of their last academic year. When they need to change their reading book they will then be allowed to choose another book themselves from the appropriate coloured band. This means they are given control of their own reading within a controlled range. Once your child is assessed and deemed to be confident in this coloured band, they will be moved onto the next colour band.

Below is a copy of the order of book band colours. Each time your child moves to a new book band, the teacher will send home information to provide you with reading strategies to support your child within this book band.



Book Band Colour
Lilac
Pink
Red
Yellow
Blue
Green
Orange
Turquoise
Purple
Gold
White
Lime
Silver
Dark Blue
Free Readers

Children in key stage 2, who have demonstrated their ability to use all the reading strategies, will move on to a 'free reader' scheme, where children will have access to a range of fiction and non-fiction books.

Due to the restructure of our reading scheme, your child may not receive their colour banded reading book until later on in the week. They will, however, have the opportunity to borrow a book from their class library until this point. Please treat this as you would a normal reading book and record reading completed in their planner as appropriate. May I take this opportunity to remind you that all children are required to read each evening and the planner should be signed by parents.

HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD THROUGH THE READING SCHEME

How to support your child reading Lilac level books

Your child is just beginning to discover the excitement of books. Although these books have no words, they are an important introduction to reading. Please encourage your child to:

- Look at the pages in order, and talk about what is happening on the left hand page before the right hand page.
- Talk about what is happening on each page, rather than just talking about what they see in each picture.
- Tell you who or what the book is about.



How to support your child reading Pink level books

Your child is beginning to learn to read. As they read, please help them to:

- Read the words carefully. Ask your child to sound out and blend only the words they can't read yet, not every word. Eventually almost all words will become part of your child's 'sight memory', and they won't have to sound out at all.
- On second and third readings of the book, encourage them to read with more pace and with less focus on sounding out the letters in each word.
- Make a story out of a whole book, rather than focusing just on what is happening on each page.
- Tell you about something that happened in the book, or about something they found out in the book.

How to support your child reading Red level books:

Your child is beginning to learn how to read. As they read, please help them to:

- Read the words carefully. Most of the words can be recognised or sounded out. Ask your child to sound out and blend only the words they can't read yet, not every word. Eventually almost all words will become part of your child's 'sight memory', and they won't have to sound out at all.
- On second and third readings of the book, encourage them to read with more pace and with less focus on sounding out the letters in each word.
- Make a story out of a whole book, rather than focusing just on what is happening on each page.
- Tell you about something that happened in the book, or about something they found out in the book.



How to support your child reading Yellow level books

Your child is now beginning to read with more confidence. As they read aloud, you can help them by:

- Giving them time to sound out words they don't know. If they still struggle, encourage them to try sounding out the whole word first, rather than guessing from the pictures or from the first letter.
- Giving them time to recognise and correct their own mistakes.
- Asking them to talk about what's happening in the book, encouraging them to make links to events on previous pages.

How to support your child reading Blue level books

Your child is now developing into a more confident reader. Encourage them to select from books at the library or bookshop as well as those from school. As they read, you can help by encouraging them to:

- Sound out quickly – and silently – inside their heads, if they need to sound out words.
- Look at the punctuation marks. You may want to model how to read a page of writing, paying attention to punctuation, such as full-stops and question marks.
- Tell you about what the characters in the story are doing and why they are acting in that way.

How to support your child reading Green level books

Your child is now developing into a more confident reader. Encourage them to select from books at the library or bookshop as well as those from school. As they read, you can help by encouraging them to:

- Sound out quickly – and silently – inside their heads, if they need to sound out words.
- Look at the punctuation marks. You may want to model how to read a page of writing, paying attention to punctuation, such as full-stops and question marks.
- Tell you about what the characters in the story are doing and why they are acting in that way.
- Show you how they can find particular things that interest them in non-fiction books.



How to support your child reading Orange level books

Your child is now beginning to read with more independence. They should be feeling more confident and will rarely need to sound out words. You can help them by:

- Listening to them when they read aloud. If they make mistakes, but they keep the sense of the text, don't interrupt. You can revisit that page at the end of the session to check certain words.
- Reminding them of useful strategies if they can't read a word, for example:
 1. Sounding the word out silently, under their breath
 2. Dividing a longer word into syllables, or looking at the word without an -ing or an -ed ending

Don't allow them to worry about a word. Tell them what it says and revisit the word once you have completed the book.

- Encouraging some use of expression, especially for character-speech in fiction books. You may wish to model reading some pages aloud for your child to copy.
- Talking about how characters are feeling.

How to support your child reading Turquoise level books

Your child is now beginning to read with more independence and their books are getting longer. You can help them by:

- Encouraging them to read some pages silently, inside their heads.
- Listening to some pages read aloud, encouraging the use of expression and paying attention to punctuation marks.
- Talking about how events in the book relate to each other and helping your child to understand how the story builds up in a longer book.
- Asking them to tell you about interesting things they found out and showing you where the information is in the book.



How to support your child reading Purple level books

Your child is now beginning to read with more independence and their books are getting longer. You can help them by:

- Encouraging them to read some pages silently, inside their heads.
- Listening to some pages read aloud, encouraging the use of expression and paying attention to punctuation marks.
- Talking about how events in the book relate to each other and helping your child to understand how the story builds up in a longer book.
- Asking them to tell you about interesting things they found out and showing you where the information is in the book.

How to support your child reading Gold level books

Your child is now reading longer books with fewer illustrations, so they continue to need your help to ensure they are getting the full meaning and enjoyment from the text. They may prefer to read one chapter or section at a time, rather than reading the whole book in one session. You can support them by:

- Asking them to read some pages of the book aloud to you so that you can enjoy hearing them reading with expression and pace.
- Asking them to find parts of the text which describe a character or place and talking about the words used in the description.
- Asking for regular updates as to what is happening in the book, so that you know how the different chapters or sections link.
- Talking about how much they enjoy a book, or a type of book. Encourage them to look for more books of the type they enjoy.



How to support your child reading White level books

Your child is now reading longer books with fewer illustrations, so they continue to need your help to ensure they are getting the full meaning and enjoyment from the text. They may prefer to read one chapter or section at a time, rather than reading the whole book in one session. You can support them by:

- Asking them to read some pages of the book aloud to you so that you can enjoy hearing them reading with expression and pace.
- Asking them to find parts of the text which describe a character or place and talking about the words used in the description.
- Asking for regular updates as to what is happening in the book, so that you know how the different chapters or sections link.
- Talking about how much they enjoy a book, or a type of book. Encourage them to look for more books of the type they enjoy.

How to support your child reading Lime level books

Although your child is now taking off as a reader, it is still important that you read with them and talk to them about their reading. This reassures them that their reading is still important to you, as well as giving you an opportunity to share an enjoyment of books. You can still help them by:

- Asking them to read aloud some parts of the text which they particularly enjoy. This may include action or description. Talk about how the writer made those parts so enjoyable.
- Talking about how characters develop or how they react to different people, places or events.
- Reading the book yourself so that you can talk together about the smaller details of the book.

Children reading at Silver should be able to:

- interpret more sophisticated word-play and puns
- distinguish the narrator's voice in a fiction story from the characters' voices through figurative, idiomatic and literary language
- understand a story that is told through dialogue and action to 'show' instead of 'tell' the plot



- explain a character's motivations
- discuss the points of view of the character and the narrator
- better understand a range of narration styles

Your child may well not want to read aloud to you anymore because they probably enjoy silent reading more. This is fine as long as your child continues to read actively and not just pass their eyes over the words.

You can help them by:

- continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions, and reading your book while your child reads.
- Establishing an expectation of a conversation at the end of each reading session: can they tell you what's happening in their book?
- Ask questions which make your child go back to the book to find answers.
- Support your child as they develop skills in skimming and scanning to find the information to answer your question.
- Continuing to read aloud to your child at bedtime. This shows them the importance you place on reading as well as developing their language, vocabulary and love of story.

Children reading at Dark Blue should be able to:

Children reading at Dark Blue level will be able to gather information from more than one place in the text and use inference based on what is shown rather than being told. This allows for greater complexity in building character and setting. They will be able to synthesise information from different places in a text. They are beginning to recognise how layers of meaning allow for the build-up of humour or tension and are able to discuss how the author has achieved the effects.

How to support your child reading Dark Blue level books

The books at this level are written in a much subtler way than in previous levels which means that it is important that the reader is fully engaged with the process of reading and alert to the language and vocabulary the writer is using. This level is more advanced than many books that are sold to adults but these stories are not intended to be just 'leisure reads'. Although your child



should enjoy them, the books need the reader to be fully alert and willing to learn.

You can help them by:

- continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions, and reading your book while your child reads.
- Suggest that your child invites friends who are also reading the book to a 'Book Group'. If you skim-read the book first, you can prepare some questions for the book group to discuss.
- Before a reading session, ask your child to find and note down some particular information. It could relate to the plot or it could be something like: a really good descriptive passage; three words which are adventurous; two words you want to use in your next piece of writing; an example of something typical a character does or says; how one character's reaction to another shows their relationship ... There are lots of questions you can ask which don't mean you have to know the book yourself, but just serve to alert your child to its possibilities.