



Literacy – pre-reading – information for parents

Dear parents,

The educational programme in the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework states:

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words.

Early reading is not about putting a book in a child's hands and asking them to read it – they might be able to guess the odd word from the pictures, but there are many pre-reading skills which we need to focus on before we ask a child to phonetically spell out a word and blend and segment.

To understand (comprehension), your child needs to be able to listen and pay attention to what is said to them. We need to use lots of different words, phrases and sentences, in story books, songs and rhymes, storytelling, general conversations, non-fiction books, role play, flyers and leaflets, comics, poetry books etc. The more words they know, the better they can start to imagine a world beyond their own – they need this imagination for reading.

Pre-reading starts with baby babbling to you – in the setting and at home, we need to build on this natural desire to communicate by playing with sounds, singing songs and rhymes, reading books, going on listening walks, playing with animal noises etc. By the time they are pre-school, your child will be starting to recognise rhythm, rhyme and alliteration – it's a long, slow plod towards the end goal.

In our early years setting, we have a wide range of books. We would also like to know what books your child enjoys reading at home, so we can build on their home learning when they are here. Then, when we start a new topic or your child has a new interest, we will let you know what books we have linked to this so you know what new vocabulary we are using with your child and you can repeat it at home.

If you have any questions about how we support your child's early literacy or you have concerns about your child's progress, please ask. Thank you.