

In their reading, your child begins to show preferences, simple likes and dislikes, and begins to reflect upon events in the stories they've read. They are also able to talk about major events in the story in a concrete confident way. At this stage, their predictions are appropriate and sensible as to what will happen next. A further indication of reading with understanding is that your child reads with inflection (intonation and expression), and realises that this makes their reading more enjoyable for their audience - whether it be one person or a whole group.

From this second stage in reading development, your child will naturally progress - though we must remember that all children progress at different rates. Of course, we can greatly encourage and facilitate this development by supporting, nurturing, valuing time with our children with books and *always* enjoying reading!

Wormley Primary School presents

The Big Read

A guide to support parents in supporting their children to become successful, confident, independent learners with a love of reading



A Guide to Reading

This short booklet is written as an overview of our ethos regarding reading at Wormley Primary School. We hope you find it helpful as we work in partnership with you in equipping your child with the skills s/he needs to become a happy and independent reader.

Teaching reading, or giving children the skills they need to read, is something many parents and teachers hotly debate, yet often still disagree on! Partly, this is because most of us adults don't actually remember the process we went through ourselves to learn to read. Also, it is because, if we are *successful* learners ourselves, we cannot understand how our children could possibly be struggling with acquiring these skills. Many, however, do struggle, whilst others progress slowly, in the wake of their seemingly excelling peers.

This guide is simply to show the progression of acquiring skills and the indicators of where our children are in the journey to become independent, confident and enthusiastic readers. It is by no means exhaustive and is not meant to serve as a 'prescription to success' – it is just a sharing of ideas and the methods we, in school, use to teach the skills needed to become successful, life-long, lovers of reading.

Above and beyond any of what follows, the single most important thing *we* can do is to model a love of reading to our children. We, with you, aim to be good role-models, to demonstrate our enjoyment and share it.

- Can hear sounds in oral language
- Can hear sound pattern in rhyme
- Can read some words consistently (the/was/not).

At this early level, in responding to the text, children will comment in some way on the characters' favourite event, for example. Through discussion, they will communicate an interest in books and will talk about aspects they like in non-fiction, in stories and in poems, so cultivating their enjoyment and interest in books of various styles and genres.

As further skills are taught in Guided Reading sessions *throughout* primary school life, still more strategies are acquired enabling children to access increasingly demanding texts. At this second level of development, children:

- Know the alphabet
- Know the sounds of names of the letters of the alphabet
- Can use phonics to build words
- Can use phonics to blend sounds
- Read for meaning, substituting words to sustain meaning where a word is not known
- Use picture cues to help make predictions
- Have a growing number of words recognised on sight
- Can read with some fluency
- Know the basic features of print, e.g. capitals, full stops
- Can read familiar signs and captions
- Begin to use alphabetical order
- Understand that books can be used to find things out

Each week, Guided Reading sessions take place, where the children in the Foundation Stage are taught skills for reading which they have previously seen modelled by adults at home and at school, including their teacher. They are taught about characters as having feelings and reasons for doing certain things; they are taught about plots in stories and encouraged to question what might happen next; text is looked at in terms of how it is set out on the page and how we read it; key words (words occurring frequently) are discussed and sounded out and learnt as high frequency words; pictures are looked at as tools for helping us understand the words. Children quickly begin to understand that reading words is about understanding, enjoyment, predicting and forming views - not simply about completing a book before being allowed to move on to another. They are, therefore, learning skills for *life* - even at this early stage in their learning.

Soon, as our children progress in reading, we see *them* demonstrating the following skills, many of which you will be able to 'tick off' long before others:

- Can recognise particular books
- Understands that print carries meaning rather than thinking that the picture tells the story and the reader makes up the words.
- Can separate letter/word/line order (was/saw, on/no)
- Can name or sound out some letters
- Can decode a range of 'key words' (the/a/in/at/etc) rather than sharing memorised knowledge of text read to them
- Can match some signs

Indicators along the Journey....

As young babies and toddlers, even before any 'formal' pre-school learning takes place, we need to create an environment for our children where stories, text and books are a strong feature. The journey to becoming a reader has begun!



Cloth books, plastic bath time books and chew-friendly (!) hard books have already taught our children that story books are fun and enjoyable.

Our children have learnt that stories can make us laugh, create wonderful adventures in our minds and calm us into a soothing sleep.

Already, our toddlers have established that books have a right and wrong way up! They know that bringing a book to a parent, grandparent, auntie or uncle will result in a cosy cuddle with colourful pictures to look at and funny character voices to listen to. Reading, so far, is fun.



Starting School....

This is a vital time for your child and for you, as parents, which we at school recognise. We, like you, want your child's transition to school to be easy. We want your child to love coming here. We want to build on all the wonderful experiences you've previously given your child..... However, amongst all of this, reading quickly becomes an area of concern for some parents when a 'reading scheme book' isn't quickly seen to be coming home! This is because this 'formalisation' of learning can put pressure on children who previously loved books and can lead to them becoming reading-anxious.

Our aim, is therefore, to continue to develop the children's interest in books in a fun, exciting, spontaneous and varied way. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, fairy-stories, true stories, non-fiction, fables, adventure stories, poems and rhymes are listened to, read, acted out in drama and role-play and re-enacted in puppet shows, illustrated and played through. Through all of these exciting activities, stories are brought to life, imaginative skills are stretched and developed and the children eagerly ask when they are next going to do these activities! They learn, alongside this, to share their ideas with their peers in role-play and drama, to take turns, to present their 'productions' and to listen respectfully to each other.

Many children also have a *natural* interest which can be developed through non-fiction, non-scheme, reading. For example, a child with an interest in wild animals may select a non-fiction animal book which could lead to wonderful conversations with you discovering elements of science in

talking about habitats. Maths concepts can be explored in counting legs, and elements of Literacy looked at in how sentences are structured. You sharing a book with your child will be incredibly valuable. It will generate enthusiasm and an excitement for the next instalment, particularly if you share your child's enthusiasm.

In the Foundation Stage we teach 'Letters and Sounds', a comprehensive reading and writing programme, in which children learn the basics of phonics, the 'sounds' we can break words down into in order to 'sound them out'. These sounds are then blended together again to form the word, e.g. c-a-t = cat! When your child has sufficient phonic knowledge to be a successful reader, they will be given a book from our 'reading scheme'. This is meant to supplement the other reading activities you and your child are engaging in, not to replace them.



Running parallel with all of this, in literacy sessions, much other learning takes place during the Foundation Stage. Weekly, there are Guided Writing sessions, in which the children work as a small group to create a story which is scribed onto a white-board by their teacher. At other times, the children work in pairs and take turns to scribe with words they know and with emergent writing (scribbles and attempts at writing letters). Later, they work individually at creating their own stories which are annotated by their teacher. The children can begin to see *themselves* as story-tellers, as authors and as having valid and valued ideas to share. This greatly boosts their confidence, as you'll imagine.