

Dear Parents,

Here are some suggestions as to how you can help your child with early reading and work in partnership with your child's pre-school and school:

<p>(1) <u>Understanding the contents of a book:</u></p> <p>You can share a book even with babies and toddlers by reading to them and talking in detail about the pictures, characters and storyline. This increases the child's stock of words (vocabulary) and develops his/her general understanding (oral comprehension). Sharing a book is a pastime which can go on for years even when your child can read successfully by him/her self.</p>	<p>I share a book with my child several times a week. Sometimes it is a favourite book read many times and sometimes it is a new book:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I read to my child and we talk about the contents of the book together.• We share different types of books including fiction and non-fiction.
<p>(2) <u>Understanding how the book works:</u></p> <p>Finger-track the text as you read it, modelling that you read from the top of the left page and by tracking words from left to right. Talk about different types of books, for example, <i>fiction</i> 'storybooks' and <i>non-fiction</i> 'information books'. Point out the title, the author and illustrator, how the contents page works and how books differ.</p>	<p>I model how I read a book to my child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I point out the title and the author and illustrator.• I track the words that I am reading with my index finger.• We talk about different types of books and how they can be used differently including fiction books (stories, poetry) and non-fiction books.
<p>(3) <u>Learning how to read the words of a book:</u></p> <p>This starts with learning how the alphabetic code of our English writing system works. Children are taught to recognise letters and letter groups and the 44+ spoken sounds these represent. They learn the skill of sounding out and blending all-through-a-word (starting with simple words) so that they can hear and say the target word. The children can only be expected to read books by themselves with letters and letter groups that they can recognise and when they can <i>blend</i> the sounds together and 'hear' the word. It is important that children do not resort to guessing words because the words in the book are too hard for them to sound out and blend independently.</p>	<p>I support the school in helping my child to practise learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the letter/s-sound correspondences to automaticity• how to sound out and blend all-through-the-word to 'hear and say' the word• to say the letter <u>sounds</u> confidently and how to blend them <i>before</i> learning the letter <u>names</u> (to avoid confusion)• If a grapheme in a reading book has not yet been taught (or learnt), say, "In that word, those letters represent the sound /or/. Sound it out with /or/". <p>Note: I understand that my child is also learning to identify the sounds all-through-spoken-words for spelling, and how to hold a pencil with the tripod hold and form the letter shapes correctly.</p>