

Home reading

Parent/Carer information



Supporting your child at home

Why do we need to do reading at home?

Children need a lot of practice to develop their reading skills to the point of fluency. Ten to fifteen minutes of daily reading at home with a supportive adult can make all the difference. This will enable children to apply their letter-sound knowledge to reading simple text. Reading at home should be a successful and positive experience for your child. If it is turning into a very stressful time, please do consult your child's class teacher for advice.

What kind of readers will my child bring home and why?

You will be able to access InitialLit e-readers to support your child with reading at home. Each student will be given their own unique code to access readers that are appropriate to their reading level. The readers that your child will have access to will contain words that they can 'sound out'. This will enable children to use their knowledge of letter-sound relationships that they have been taught in class. You will notice that the vocabulary in these books is very controlled. This is because at this early stage of the reading process, words need to follow regular sound- symbol patterns (e.g., dog, fan, sheep) so that children are given opportunities to work out the words for themselves, with your support. As children learn more about spelling and the ways different sounds are represented, they will be able to read more words.

Over the year, and with practice, your child will begin to read with more fluency. Guessing words from a picture or from context should not be encouraged. Instead, encourage your child to look at the letter and letter combinations and think about the sounds they represent. Some words are irregular or 'tricky'. These 'exception' words cannot be sounded out in the usual way and should be previewed or simply provided.

If your child is a confident and independent reader, any age and content appropriate book, chosen by your child, can be read. The levelled take-home readers will still be available for your child to take home as a physical book, however, please keep in mind that the e-readers are aligned with the InitialLit program taught within the classroom.

When is the best time to do home reading?

Provide a quiet place at home with no distractions so both you and your child can focus on the task at hand. It is a good idea to provide a rest or snack immediately after school, prior to commencing home reading so that your child is well rested and fresh. Try not to rush the session or leave it too late in the day. Creating a positive reading experience is vital.

How should I support my child when reading at home?

When your child gets stuck on a word, encourage him/her to have a go at sounding out the word. If necessary, demonstrate what this looks like first. Remember to praise with abundance when your child is successful at working out a word or when your child goes back to have another go. Never tell your child to 'guess' a word or use the picture to help them. Always keep the focus on letters and sounds. Learning to read initially requires a lot of effort for many children and at this early stage much patience is required. It is important to build up confidence and allow them to enjoy success as they work out words with your help.

If your child stumbles over a tricky word that can't be sounded out, simply give him/her the word and ask him/her to repeat it.

Check that your child has understood what has been read. Once your child is reading more confidently, encourage him/her to think about comprehension and to self-correct if something does not make sense.

How often should my child read with me in a week and for how long?

The class teacher will provide access to the appropriate texts to support their reading progress. Books can be read several times to build confidence and fluency. Your child should spend at least ten minutes reading with you, about four times a week.

Will we continue to use the yellow home - reading diary?

Yes. Please continue to use the yellow reading diary to record the nightly reading.

What else can I do to support my child at home?

There will be many, many informal opportunities to develop your child's language at home. This work can be done, and is just as beneficial, in English or in your home language. Talk to your child, using interesting vocabulary. Join a local library and borrow books to read to your child daily. Talk about the stories you read to your child, providing a good model.

Restrict screen time and replace it with opportunities to develop oral language. Help develop your child's curiosity about language and the sounds within words by playing word and sound games, e.g., I spy or reciting nursery rhymes. Revise the sounds for the letters that they are learning and help them work out words using their sounds. As the year progresses, practise the tricky words that they have learned. The most important thing is to keep it light and playful but purposeful.