



“Nurturing curiosity and inspiring imagination”

Top Tips for Sharing Stories and Nurturing a Love of Reading

At Sandy Lane Nursery and Forest School we want every child to develop a life-long love of reading. Developing language and sharing stories with your child is the key to helping them learn to read and the first step to igniting their passion for books. Through our learning environment and direct teaching, staff ensure children are immersed in rich literacy experiences. Our reading and phonics curriculum builds on the knowledge and skills children acquire, providing them with opportunities to apply new learning and regularly share books they enjoy.

Staff at Sandy Lane Nursery and Forest School are passionate about reading and we want to share some ‘top tips’ on how you can continue to foster this love and learning with your child at home.

Sharing Stories



Regular story times introduce your child to the world of reading and benefits them in important ways..

- It inspires a love of books and enthusiasm for reading, and learning to read
- Makes children aware that the marks on the pages have meaning
- Shows them how a book ‘works’ – for example, that we read a book from front to back and text from left to right
- Opens up subjects to talk about, enhancing their language skills and vocabulary
- Lets them make links to – and develop their understanding of their own experiences

You don’t always have to read the words in books, looking at and talking about picture books is a great way to encourage your child to enjoy stories. When you’re sharing a book have fun:

- Talk about the books cover and point out the title
- Let your child hold the book and turn the pages
- Encourage them to talk about the pictures, characters and events
- Use different voices for the characters, you could add sounds too like splashing in puddles, car horns beeping
- Use book related vocabulary, words like beginning, end, blurb, title, words, pictures, front cover and support your child to use these words too

Did you know ??

Children often want to read a favourite story over again and again. This helps them learn the word order and link the written words to the story – which is the first step in learning to read!!

Children who are read to regularly at home perform better in maths, spelling and vocabulary tests when they are older than those who don’t have these experiences.

Your child comes home each week with a book they have chosen from our school lending library. You are more than welcome to change these books more frequently. Just speak to your child’s key worker who will be happy to help

Reading the Signs

Print is everywhere!!

Children live in world full of print and see messages, logos and signs everywhere. Recognising their favourite place to eat, road signs or supermarket logo are the first steps in learning to read and write so point these out at every opportunity.



When you are out and about with your child, things like walking to nursery, looking at the signs, symbols, logos and words you see. Encourage your child to point these out too and talk about any letters that are in their name or familiar words and help them to read them.

Signs of Learning

Your child is on the path to becoming a reader if they are:

- Looking at a book from front cover to back cover in the right direction
- Turning pages
- Recognising the print on the page
- Understanding that print carries meaning
- Tracing their finger over words from the top to the bottom of the page, in lines from left to right
- Talking about the pictures in books
- Recognising, or ascribing their own meanings to, signs, logos and other environmental print

While sharing books with your child is vital, their path to becoming a reader is also helped by engaging with 'environmental print'. This relates to words and symbols that we encounter in our everyday lives. For example:

Road and street signs.

Symbols such as arrows.

Logos for familiar brands.

Labels on items such as baked beans.

Draw your child's attention to these words and symbols in a fun, interactive way as they help your child to understand that print has meaning, and provide an opportunity to discuss letters and their sounds

Did you know ??

The more your child sees you read the more they will want to read too!

Point out to your child when you are reading messages, magazines, recipes, instructions or books and tell them why you are doing it.

We have also written guidance on the teaching of phonics which includes activities you can support your child with at home. This can be found on our school website and paper copies are available upon request.

If you have any questions about your child's reading experiences or need any additional support to help your child at home please speak to your child's key worker who will be happy to help