

A Guide to Active Literacy



Stage 1 – 3

Reading and Spelling

Introduction

The aim of this leaflet is to provide you with information about how your child is taught reading and spelling at school and to give you information to allow you to support your child at home.

Reading



At School

Your child is taught to read through the process of guided reading. We use the Bug Club reading scheme which includes a variety of different texts both fiction and non-fiction. The reading scheme is supplemented with other texts linked to interdisciplinary studies to contextualise learning.

All children learn in different ways and at a different pace therefore teachers continuously assess progress to make judgements about when children are ready to move on.

In class there are initially 3 reading sessions per week which are structured as follows:

- Day 1 is an introduction to the text and discussion about content and themes
- Day 2 is a word and sentence building session
- Day 3 is a discussion and evaluation of the text

As pupils progress through the reading scheme a greater focus is placed on reading and discussing a text along with supporting written activities. Please note that children may be set the whole book to read or selected pages/chapters.

At Home

Although books have been introduced in school and children have completed related tasks, it is important that reading is reinforced at home. Here are some suggestions as to how you can use your child's text:



- Talk about the front cover and how this relates to the text
- Discuss the title, author, illustrator and spine.
- Read the text with your child and decode the text using the pictures.
- Talk about characters, their feelings and the story setting.
- Ask questions about events or characters – what links can they make to their own life or past experiences?
- Discuss child's favourite part of the book or favourite illustration and ask them to say why.
- Talk about punctuation such as full stops, capital letters, question marks and exclamation marks.
- Can your child give a verbal summary of their book?

Spelling



At School

On a weekly basis (or more often in Primary 1) a new phoneme is introduced by the teacher. A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound that can alter the meaning of a word. This can be a single letter or a group of letters that together make a sound for example:

- the word 'pin' has 3 separate sounds – p / i / n
- the word 'chip' also has 3 sounds - ch / i / p - as 'c' and 'h' together make 'ch'.

Some weeks are revision weeks. During these weeks children will be given up to five phonemes to revise.

Letter formation and word building are demonstrated using magnetic board and letters. This is reinforced throughout the week by:

- Working with partners to read and write words and dictated sentences and then check these.
- Using magnetic boards to mirror the taught lesson either individually or with a partner.
- Taking part in a range of spelling activities.
- Working with a partner to say, make/break, blend, read and write each word from a phoneme list.



Your child is taught to problem solve using spelling strategies to spell tricky words. Children are no longer assessed purely on the basis of a single word spelling test. Instead the teacher makes judgements on a daily and weekly basis about your child's ability to spell words in a variety of contexts eg. working with a partner to write dictated sentences, transferring words into topic work and looking closely at taught writing.

At Home

As part of their homework your child will complete activities based on phonemes and/or common and tricky words. These activities will range from traditional approaches such as writing words out in a jotter to more fun spelling activities. Research has shown that these fun spelling activities are as beneficial as traditional approaches. You could also encourage them to find, read and write words containing the phoneme in any story book, signs within and outwith the home, in newspapers etc. You could also take turns to be the 'teacher' and write simple sentences using words with the phoneme.