

10 top tips for hearing your child read.

As parents you are your child's most influential teacher with an important part to play in helping your child to learn to read.

Here are some suggestions on how you can help to make this a positive experience.

Choose a quiet time

Set aside a quiet time with no distractions. Fifteen minutes is usually long enough in KS2.

Maintain the flow

If your child mispronounces a word do not interrupt immediately. Instead allow opportunity for self-correction. It is better to tell a child some unknown words to maintain the flow rather than insisting on trying to build them all up from the sounds of the letters. If your child does try to 'sound out' words, encourage the use of letter sounds rather than 'alphabet names'.

Be positive

If your child says something nearly right to start with that is fine. Don't say 'No. That's wrong,' but 'Let's read it together' and point to the words as you say them. Boost your child's confidence with praise.

Success is the key

Parents anxious for a child to progress can mistakenly give a child a book that is too difficult. This can have the opposite effect to the one they are wanting. Remember 'Nothing succeeds like success'. Until your child has built up his or her confidence, it is better to keep to easier books. Your child's teacher will have assessed their reading level and provided a suitable text. Struggling with a book with many unknown words is pointless. Flow is lost, text cannot be understood and children can easily become reluctant readers.

Make reading enjoyable

Make reading an enjoyable experience. Have a 'reading time' when you sit comfortably with your child and are not distracted. Try not to pressurise if

he or she is reluctant but make it clear that learning to read fluently and with understanding is very important.

Regular practice

Try to read with your child on most school days. 'Little and often' is best. Although extra provision is in place to help your child make progress, KS2 Teachers have limited time to help your child with reading.

Communicate

Your child will most likely have a reading diary from school. Try to communicate regularly with positive comments and any concerns. Your child will then know that you are interested in their progress and that you value reading.

Talk about the books

There is more to being a good reader than just being able to read the words accurately. Just as important is being able to understand what has been read. Always talk to your child about the book; about the pictures, the characters, how they think the story will end, their favourite part. You will then be able to see how well they have understood and you will help them to develop good comprehension skills.

Variety is important

Remember children need to experience a variety of reading materials eg. picture books, hard backs, comics, magazines, poems, and information books.

Visit the Library

The public library is free. A visit together, hearing your child read a selection of books, can be very enjoyable. Try to choose books that your child can read but that will provide a few challenging words and ideas for you to discuss.