



# **BISHOPSWOOD INFANT SCHOOL**

## **How to help at home – Foundation Stage Literacy**

This document aims to give you some information about literacy in Year R, our expectations and how to help at home. We teach phonics daily at school and this is how children learn to read (blend) and segment (spell). During each phonics session your child will learn a new sound, using cued articulation, practise writing the letter and then use it to blend and segment words.

### **Cued articulation**

Cued articulation teaches the children how to say the pure sound, such as “t” rather than saying “terrrr” or “r” as “rrrr” not “ruh”. It also incorporates an action that demonstrates how the sound is made. A sheet with all the resources on is attached in the ‘resources pack’ in your child’s book bag today. There is also a video link in this pack which shows you how to pronounce all the sounds.

### **Red phonic sound books**

Each week your child will be introduced to new letter sounds through the use of “cued articulation”; a strategy which helps the child understand how the sound is made through their mouth, nose and throat. Your child will learn the letter sound, an action to go with the sound and how to write it. We will collect their red phonics books on a Thursday to prepare and return on a Friday so that you can practise saying the sound, the action and writing the letter. This will help strengthen their knowledge and start their reading and writing process. Please practise these regularly during the course of a week.

### **Reading books**

Your child now has 2 reading books, which will be changed weekly.

#### **Scheme reading books**

This book is read with the adults at school weekly and follow a colour system so that the book progresses and matches your child’s reading ability. Even though there are no words, the first books are important to help them practise becoming a reader without having to worry about reading the words. Suggested activities include:

- modelling telling the story.
- asking your child to retell using the pictures.

-ask them questions about the story such as who, why, what, where, when? The answer might not be in the book, but it will encourage your child to use their imagination or clues in the pictures.

As we progress with the letter sounds they will learn how to blend the words together to read them:

Eg c-a-t

t-e-n

d-o-g

Once your child is beginning to blend we will introduce books with words and simple sentences, most of which they should be able to read themselves by blending.

### Phonics reading books

This second book has been introduced to help support their learning in phonics. They might not match the colour of the scheme book but it correlates to the phonics we are teaching daily.

Please practise reading with your child **daily**. We understand the children get tired after a day at school, however it is important to incorporate reading and the sharing of books as part of your daily reading routine. Please record every time **your child reads to you** in the monkey book.

### Reading Race

To encourage children to want to read at home, we have a whole school competition called the 'Reading Race'. By increasing the amount of time children read at home they become more confident in their reading, allowing them to decode with more accuracy and read more fluently.

The percentage of children who have **read at home 3 or more times during the week** (Friday evening until Friday morning) is worked out and the winning 3 classes move their car on the display in the hall. (The winning class moves three spaces, the second class moves two and the third moves one) At the end of the half term, the class who has moved along the track the furthest is awarded with a non-school uniform day or similar. You should have received a letter on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> about the reading race however if you have any further questions please speak to your child's class teacher.

### Singing songs

Singing songs and rhymes is another great activity you can do at home. This was sent home in your communication pack in October. It strengthens children's vocabulary and helps develop a love of language.

## **Bug club**

You should have received a letter today explaining about an online reading tool that we have introduced to support additional reading at home. Your child's log on codes are stuck in the front of their monkey book.

## **Pre-writing skills**

Children need to develop good fine motor (small movements) and gross motor (large movements) skills to help them with their writing. These are just as important as the actual writing process. Being outside, throwing balls, playing in the park and riding their bikes all help with gross motor development.

Activities to help with fine motor development include:

- Threading beads
- Manipulating playdough
- Practising cutting skills with scissors
- Using tweezers to pick up beads, seeds and other small objects
- Lego and other construction toys

## **Handwriting rhymes**

We use handwriting rhymes to help children remember how to form the letters through a multi-sensory approach. These are attached in the front of your child's phonics book. We have also attached the handwriting rhymes sheet, as well as the letter shapes we use, in the resources pack in your child's book bag today.

Suggested activities to help with letter formation include:

- Using white boards and wipe pens
- Chalks outside on the pavement
- Paint brushes, rollers and sponges with water to practise outside
- Trays of rice, sand or glitter to practise forming letters in

## Definitions

1. Phonics - a method of teaching people to read by correlating sounds with symbols in an alphabetic writing system.
2. Blending - Phonics blending is **a way for children to decode words**. With phonics blending, children join together the individual sounds in a word. Then, they slowly blend those sounds together (“jjjaamm”). Finally, they read the word (“jam”).
3. Segmenting - Segmenting is **the ability to break up spoken words into their separate sounds**. For example, as we spell the word 'fish', we segment it into its three sounds, also known as phonemes.
4. Phonemes - A phoneme is **the smallest unit of sound within a word**. They are taught to children when learning phonics, the study of sounds. There are 44 phonemes in the English language, with 26 letters that are used individually and combined to represent them.

We hope this helps but if you ever have any questions please see your child's teacher.

The Early Years Team,