



Kents Hill School

Time to read - a guide for parents

Dear Parent

Kents Hill School believes that children learn to read best when they feel happy and confident about what they are doing.

We offer children a wide variety of experiences and provide an atmosphere in which we guide and support them while they learn to read.

This booklet has been made to help you understand more about reading in our school and how you can help at home. We hope you will find it useful.

Helen Anderson

"So what can we do to help?"

Each day your child will bring home a book to share, in a book bag which also includes a Reading Record. Please help by reading the book to, and with, your child. This is one of the ways you can support our work at school.

It is important to set the scene for reading.

Where? Somewhere warm and comfortable.

When? A suitable, regular time when you both feel relaxed.

How often? Try to make reading part of your daily routine.

Aim for a quiet time with brothers and sisters occupied, television and music switched off.

What is the best way to share a book?

There are many methods to help children develop a love of books and to take their first steps towards learning to read.

Step 1 - You read to your child

- * Let your child tell you about the story using the pictures
- * Point out the title of the book and who wrote it.
- * Follow the print with your finger as you read.
- * Talk about the story and the pictures with your child.

Step 2 - You and your child read a familiar book

- * You and your child point to the words as you read together.
- * Talk about what the pictures show and predict what might happen next.

Step 3 - Your child reads a familiar book

- * Encourage your child to try by him/herself. Your child will use the pictures and storyline to help re-tell the story from memory. Ensure your child can always see the pictures.
- * Accept appropriate word changes (e.g. mat for rug, stream for river).

Step 4 - Your child attempts to read an unfamiliar book

- * The clues pictures give are very important.
- * To begin with, read quietly alongside your child.
- * As their confidence grows, let them read to you, supplying unfamiliar words as they are needed.

Step 5 - Your child begins to read text independently

- * The pictures and storyline are still used by your child.
- * They will have developed a bank of words they recognise by sight.
- * Encourage your child to look at the first sound of words your child doesn't know.
- * Encourage your child to add some expression to their reading as fluency develops. You may need to read it with expression first to show your child.

At all times make sure you tell your child how well they are doing.

Children are keen to please. If they think you are pleased with their efforts, they will want to try harder.

Praise and encouragement are the key to confident readers.

Reading Record

At Kents Hill School each child has a book bag in which they will bring home a reading book and their reading record. Our aim for the reading record is to set up a partnership between home and school - a two-way dialogue with your child contributing at any time. Each time you read with your child we ask you to add a comment next to the title of the book you have shared. The comment may be as short or as long as you wish and may take the following format.

1.10.02 Owl Babies

We enjoyed sharing this book together. (Your child's name) was keen to point to the words and recognised the word 'mummy' by himself. (Your name).

At any time your child may wish to draw an illustration about their book or write a short comment about their likes or dislikes.

We do hope you will enjoy using the Reading Record.

Reading materials in school

In school we have a wide variety of reading materials, both fiction and non-fiction, from which the children will select the book they bring home. These books help to provide the breadth of experience and language to enable them to become more confident, independent readers. As your child's reading skills develop, they can enjoy books of a more challenging nature.

The majority of books have been colour coded, according to their different reading levels. This grading by colour is to enable the teacher to guide your child in selecting a book appropriate to their reading skills and development.

Please value the book your child brings home as it has been chosen by your child for his/her enjoyment.

Things to think about when buying a book for your child.

1. Has your child expressed an interest in this book?
2. Do you know the author or have you had them recommended?
3. Does the cover look interesting?
4. Does the summary on the back sound good?
5. Is the print a suitable size?
6. Are the pictures appealing?
7. Is the book a suitable length?
8. Is the subject suitable?
9. Is there a good balance between text and pictures?

Try to buy the book with your child present, after allowing him/her plenty of time to browse in a good book shop.