



Hadleigh Infants and Nursery School Academy

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Dear Parents/Carers

Reading at home from September 2020.

From the beginning of September 2020, a number of changes are being made to help your child with their reading at home. This will ensure that your child develops their reading skills in a systematic way so that they can practice new skills which they have been taught and consolidate skills that they have already learnt.

Why have these changes been made?

At the beginning of 2020, we began to review our reading books in light of current research and expectations. We identified that it would be beneficial to change the way that we banded the books so that the books in each colour band (at the earlier levels) support the learning of specific phonics skills and as the children moved through the book bands the books supported them to develop their ability to work out unknown words in a more systematic way. Alongside this we have reviewed how we teach comprehension skills and introduced reading comprehension characters to support the children with this.

When Ofsted visited in February they said:

Leaders foster a love of reading and pupils see reading as an enjoyable activity. The phonics programme is well sequenced and consistently taught. Teachers and teaching assistants encourage pupils to develop confidence, fluency and understanding. Most pupils quickly gain the skills they need to become fluent readers. Pupils who fall behind get support to catch up. However, the books pupils use to practise their reading are not always well matched to their phonic knowledge closely enough.

Ofsted also acknowledged that:

Work has recently begun to ensure that reading books are more closely matched to pupils' phonetic ability ... and the school has further work to do to enable pupils to read books that are closely matched to the phonics knowledge that they are taught when they are learning to read.

The books your child brings home will mirror their phonics knowledge and support them to use their phonics skills more independently at the early stages of their reading journey. Your child will also learn other strategies to work out unknown words. Throughout their reading journey your child will also develop their understanding of what they have read using a range of skills.

What will be different?

We have invested in a new reading scheme called Collins Big Cats. The books are banded into colours and in each colour there are two sections. Books in the first section say "For Letters and Sounds" in the top left hand corner and give your child the opportunity to practice using specific phonics knowledge. The second section of each band has books which reinforce these skills and also give your child the opportunity to use other skills to work out new words such as using the picture or reading the rest of the sentence and seeing what would make sense.

Once your child has secured their phonics knowledge the books are colour banded and become progressively more challenging in terms of phonics application and in developing comprehension skills.

The book banding colours are different from our previous scheme so please do not be alarmed if your child has been given a book from a different colour band from what they previously bought home. There is no correlation in colours from the previous banding and our new banding. During the past few weeks, your child's phonic ability has been assessed. Using this information your child's teacher would have decided on the correct book band for them. This will be reviewed regularly.

One of the biggest changes you may notice is that your child will read the same book more than once. This will help them to build their confidence and skills. On the first read it is likely that they will need to sound out most of the words. On the subsequent reads they should be able to remember an increasing number of words and you can help them by pointing out that they have read a word on previous page. You can remind them / ask them to remember what the word was on the previous page. When they read the same book again they will be working towards reading it fluently and keeping the sounding out to a minimum. Encourage them to point to the words so that they are reading the words rather than simply reciting them from memory.

When can my child change their book?

As before we ask that each time your child reads at home you make a note of the date, the book title and, where appropriate, which pages they have read. For the lower level books where the whole book can be read in one sitting it would be beneficial for your child to read the book again on another day before changing it at school to begin to develop their fluency in reading. They can then work on another book and revisit the first one later to continue to build fluency and confidence.

With longer texts it may be that, as before, you read a section / chapter / number of pages in a session and it takes several days to complete the book. Re-reading these books would also be beneficial so your child becomes a fluent and confident reader. Also when they can read the book more fluently it is easier for them to answer more questions and give opinions about the book. Talking about what they have read and answering questions about it remains important at every level.

Your child's teacher will discuss Reading in more detail during the upcoming curriculum meetings.

Yours sincerely

Miss. K. Ryan