



St John's Church of England Academy

Belonging Believing Becoming



September 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Reading at St John's

Your child should now have come home with a number of home/school reading books. At St. John's Church of England Academy, we prioritise learning to read as we know that being able to read enables each child to fully access the curriculum we offer.

Reading skills develop throughout the time your child spends at St John's:

- **Phonics** is used to teach children the sounds (phonemes) each letter or combination of letters (graphemes) make. Children then learn to push these sounds together to blend to read words. They also learn some words cannot be decoded (sounded out) and so they just need to be learnt by sight/remembered (tricky words and common exception words) This is started as soon as children begin Reception Class.
- **Comprehension skills** – through reading different texts, meaning is made from the words. Books can be used to find out information, to understand events or for fictional stories and tales. The children develop comprehension skills by answering questions about what they have read, checking they are reading for sense and understanding the word choices and meaning the author has created. There are also opportunities for children to explore their opinion and emotions linked to what they read.
- **Fluency** – reading and rereading text and books is an important part of reading in order for reading to become automatic, fluent and to really understand what is read. Children may bring the same books home over a period of time – revisiting these books is important to ensure the children are able to read familiar texts, can recall events and the sequence of the story and read the words with increasing speed and accuracy, not needing to stop and break down words/ decode through phonics. Every child should be tracking the words as they read using their finger or a ruler (adults, please don't do this for the children!)
- **Books are carefully matched to your child's reading stage.** This means that if they rely on phonics to be able to read they will have phonically decodable books. Coloured book bands are used to ensure the children are introduced to progressively harder decodable words and tricky/common exception words.
- **Free –Reader books** are also carefully staged to ensure each child is exposed to a wide variety of books, genres and authors. We ensure the books children read are appropriate in content in line with their age.

- **Reading for pleasure**, to relax, to learning something new are all skills we encourage our children to develop at St John's. Every class, every day will STOP, DROP and READ with teachers reading a variety of texts to the children for them to enjoy. As the teacher is reading the book, all children are encouraged to participate in discussions and enjoying the book, regardless of their own reading ability.
- **Children with SEND** - Children who have barriers to reading are exposed to their age related expectations during whole class reading/phonics lessons which happen daily. However, their additional needs are supported through a range of targeted interventions that may take place on a 1:1 basis or in a small group. This may include guided reading groups, targeted reading, extra phonics or extra reading comprehension groups.

The key to success in reading is practicing little and often. Phonics skills need repetition so daily reading for 5-10minutes is the best way to support children as they learn to read. As children become more confident phonic readers, the focus changes to developing fluency which again means regular reading is needed to develop a stamina for reading. Please support your child by listening to them read at home, read some of the text/book to them, share the story and discuss what is being read. Every time your child reads at home please sign their Reading Record and look at the comments staff in school have written – these will give you pointers on how to support your child with their reading skills.

This year, regular reading at home will be linked to House Points and points mean prizes!

**The more that
you read,
the more things
you will know.
The more that
you learn,
the more places
you'll go.**

Dr. Seuss



Class Teachers will be more than happy to provide you with more information about Reading for each year group, but for now let's get this year off to a great start by reading every day and find out the places our books can take us!

Thank you for your ongoing support,

Miss Griffiths
English Subject Leader