

Dear parents and carers,

The Department for Education recently published a document, 'The reading framework: Teaching the foundations of literacy' in July 2021 in which it offers guidance to schools and parents on how best to support the development and the enjoyment of reading as a life-long skill. It is a detailed document and a link to it can be found on Cavendish CofE Primary School website.

The Rt Honourable Nick Gibbs, MP, Minister of State for School standards writes. 'The reading and writing of Standard English, alongside proficient language development, is the key to unlocking the rest of the academic curriculum.'

The guidance states:

*Developing children's spoken language*

*Becoming a fluent, skilled and attentive reader starts at the earliest stages, before children encounter a book for the first time, partly driven by the quality of their parents' talk with them that expands their vocabulary.*

*All talk is useful, especially when directed to the child specifically. For instance, children expand their language and vocabulary when they listen to or join in with a story or rhymes in a well-scripted children's television programme, but an adult talking about it with them adds benefits. However, talk about books brings particular advantages.*

*First, parents who engage their children in books prepare them to become committed and enthusiastic readers: they can transform their attitudes to reading. Their children learn to focus and share the enjoyment of the story; they learn how stories start and finish, and how a plot unravels and is resolved; they learn that books can transport them elsewhere. Without this, as Wolf said, they cannot experience 'the exquisite joys of immersion in the reading life.'*

*Second, book-related talk introduces children to language that they might not hear in ordinary conversation, especially the vocabulary of the book itself. This primes them to understand what they read later, in their leisure reading and across the curriculum.<sup>1</sup>*

Mrs Clarke and I are sending home a guide for parents and carers with suggestions of how you might spend the time with your child enjoying and

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<sup>1</sup> DfE [The reading 2021 framework: Teaching the foundations of literacy July 2021](#)

reading a large variety of books, singing songs, saying or singing nursery rhymes and poetry.

Reading books and library books will come home in the children's book bags each Monday from school. Together with our guidance and the guidance advocated in the afore mentioned document, we would like to share with you the following.

### ***How to read a story to your child***

*If you can find the time beforehand, read the read-aloud book to yourself first, so you can think about how you're going to read it to your child.*

*On the first reading:*

- *Make reading aloud feel like a treat. Make it a special quiet time and cuddle up so you can both see the book.*
- *Show curiosity about what you're going to read: 'This book looks interesting. It's about an angry child. I wonder how angry he gets...'*
- *Read through the whole story the first time without stopping too much. Let the story weave its own magic.*
- *Read with enjoyment. If you're not enjoying it, your child won't. Read favourite stories over and over again.*

*On later readings:*

- *Let your child pause, think about and comment on the pictures.*
- *If you think your child did not understand something, try to explain: 'Oh! I think*
  - *what's happening here is that...'*
- *Chat about the story and pictures: 'I wonder why she did that?'; 'Oh no, I hope*
  - *she's not going to...'; 'I wouldn't have done that, would you?'*
- *Link the stories to your own family experiences: 'This reminds me of when ...'*
- *Link stories to others that your child knows: 'Ah! Do you remember the dragon in ....? Do you remember what happened to him?'*
- *Encourage your child to join in with the bits they know.*
- *Avoid asking questions to test what your child remembers.*
- *Avoid telling children that reading stories is good for them.*<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> DFE **The reading 2021 framework: Teaching the foundations of literacy July 2021**

In the same way that we all try to eat our 'Five A Day' portions of fruit and vegetables, we are aiming to encourage and support our children at Cavendish CofE Primary to enjoy 5 'pieces' of literature, song and poetry each day. At school we plan to read two to three stories a day, sing songs during Collective Worship and class singing and reciting poetry or nursery rhymes each day. We would like to encourage you to read with your children daily, not only the books that they bring home from school but also from their 'home libraries' and books from the other libraries.

Reading is a wonderful skill and we would like to share with you the words of Walt Disney, *"There is more treasure in books than in all the pirate's loot on Treasure Island."*

Kind regards

Mrs E Clarke and Mrs A Lewis

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