



*St Francis of Assisi*  
*Church of England Primary School*  
*“Live, love and learn together in the light of Christ.”*

**Reading Books – Years 1 and 2**

Dear Parents/Carers,

Due to DfE guidance on the teaching of reading and phonics, we have changed the way we are sending ‘Home Reader’ books from September 2021. The updated guidance states that children who are accessing phonics teaching (predominantly Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils) must read books at home that match the phonics they have learnt recently. We teach phonics across Early Years and KS1 daily. The children will therefore only bring home books which are phonetically decodable, and which will only contain the phonemes they have already learned.

Your child will be bringing home a reading book to read to you at home. They should be able to read the entire book by themselves using phonics as the only strategy to read the words and without using other skills such as prediction or picture cues. It may appear to you that the books are too easy for your child: this is deliberate as reading at home should be for practice only. Your child will access more challenging books/texts at school as part of reading and phonics teaching sessions. The book your child brings home as ‘Home Reader Practice’ book will have a sticker on the front cover to indicate that it is a phonics book.

When hearing your child read at home, we would ask that you encourage them to use phonics to read the words: this means sounding out the words and blending the sounds together to read the word. Your child should recognise all the sounds from their phonics lessons in school. For simple words such as ‘cat’, your child should be able to break down the three sounds c-a-t, sounding them as ‘pure sounds’ and then blending them together to read the word ‘cat’. For words which contain vowel digraphs such as ‘soil’, your child should recognise the sounds as s-oi-l, rather than s-o-i-l.

It is always beneficial for a child to re-read a book in order to build up their fluency and word recognition skills. Your child may have the same book for a number of days so that they can re-read for further practice. **Children should read a little every day wherever possible.**

Whilst we recognise that learning to read phonetically is the primary strategy for the teaching of early reading, we also want to foster a love of reading amongst our youngest pupils. Sharing a book together at home which an adult reads to/with the child, chatting about the story, making predictions and discussing events all help to develop a love for books and reading, and also develop children’s personal interests. We may send home ‘reading for pleasure’ books with your child alongside their phonic/decodable reader. These books will not have a phonics sticker on them and can be shared with your child simply as an opportunity to read for pleasure. Your child is not expected to be able to read these books themselves although may be able to decode some of the words containing the phonemes they have learned.

We appreciate any support that you can offer with reading at home. Please contact your child’s teacher if you need anything else.

Kind regards.  
Mary Davies  
(English Leader)

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