

The Berkeley Academy

Reading with your child at home

The Parts of a Parent Reader



Why is reading so important?

Research proves that children who enjoy reading do better at school in all subjects.

Reading improves all of a child's literacy skills and can offer them a lifetime of enjoyment and learning. At The Berkeley Academy we aim to promote a love of reading and feel that children discovering books and how to use and enjoy them is crucial to their development.

Reading with your child at home is a crucially important way to support their learning. Reading books together, reading to your child, hearing them read, discussing reading technique, stories, poems and non-fiction texts are all key ways to will help your child to develop into an able and accomplished reader and writer.

Here are some general tips for reading and a resource bank of ideas for questions that may help you with sharing books and talking with your children about what they are reading at home.

Remember that children need to read a variety of texts such as stories, reports, information texts, poems, etc. They also love being read to by adults, particularly if you can do the voices!

If you feel you need more support with appropriate texts, find that your child is reluctant to read or is finding reading difficult you should arrange to meet with their class teacher.

Sharing a book with a child

Make sure your child has a comfortable, quiet place to sit. Distractions such as TV can make it difficult for children to concentrate. Give the book to your child for five minutes so they can look at it alone. This allows the child to investigate and explore the text and pictures independently before starting to read. Read the title together and ask them to tell you about the story and any questions they may have before beginning. Remember talking about books is as important as reading them. Children need to have enthusiasm for texts so allow them to choose their own from the library as well as their school reading books.

Reading aloud

It is important that children, particularly in the Early Years and KS1, are given the opportunity to read aloud to an adult as often as possible. It improves their decoding and listening skills. Help your child to sound out and blend any unfamiliar words. If they are still unsure, tell them the word and explain what it means. Then read the sentence again together. Remember to use praise a lot and tell them why they have done well i.e. "I really enjoyed listening to that sentence because you made it sound so exciting!"

Reading with older children

Older children may feel that they enjoy reading on their own more and prefer to read in their head instead of aloud to an adult. This is usually evidence that they are enjoying the reading experience and are skilled and independent enough to read alone. The focus for a parent at this point should be more on discussion of comprehension and fostering an environment where sharing reading experiences and opinions about books is valued at home.

Comprehension

One of the most important parts of reading is comprehension. If a child decodes fluently, but does not fully understand the story or text, then they struggle to enjoy or appreciate books. It is therefore essential that children have opportunity to discuss what they are reading. One of the more crucial parts of reading is being able to conclude and infer ideas. Open ended questioning such as; 'why do you think that happened?' or 'what makes you think that?' will help with this.

Asking children to tell you why or show you clues in the text/pictures can improve their inference skills dramatically. We enclose a list of potential questions that could be used in a discussion with a child about a book. This is not an exhaustive list but should hopefully give some starting points for discussion that will help children to unpick and fully understand what they are reading.