

# ADVICE ON SUPPORTING BOYS' READING

## Introduction

High levels of literacy have a significant role to play in boys' educational success.

Research has shown that reading for pleasure outweighs every social advantage, including parental income, in the future success of the child. (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study - PIRLS, 2011)

Standards of literacy underpin wider academic attainment. Literacy supports progress in all subjects.

This is why we have a carefully designed programme outlined below to develop boys' literacy at all stages of their education.

We work to maximise each boys' literacy to produce boys and young men who:

- Have high levels of literacy that allow them to maximise their wider intellectual and academic abilities to do well in all subjects
- Read for pleasure and enjoyment across a range of texts
- An appreciation of the use and power of language in all its forms

We hope that the following information will help support and guide your son on his reading journey at Newcastle School for Boys from 3 to 18.

## EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

### Looking at books

Boys who come to school knowing about books and stories, and who regard books as a source of enjoyment, excitement and information, will already understand the purpose of reading. Through enjoying books, boys learn the fundamental facts about reading. They learn that words convey meaning, that sentences are made up of several words and that there is a vital link between the spoken word and black squiggles on paper.

### Sharing stories with our friends

'Story time' forms an important part of our Early Years' curriculum. Stories promote language development and listening skills. They also develop and enrich boys' desire to read. Through stories - fact and fiction - we can introduce ideas and topics. Thinking about stories and encouraging reflection and questions, helps boys

gain a better understanding of language. Discussing a shared story helps a boy to distinguish between the imaginary world of story, and the real world. Bed-time stories are a wonderful way to share and enjoy a book with your son, discussing what is happening in the pictures and spotting words that he may know.

### **Playing with words**

We introduce letters, words and sentences to explain the nature of writing. The 'large sentence making approach' lends itself to explaining these terms, and allows boys to handle words and make sense of print.

At this stage, boys begin making their own reading books by cutting and sticking words and pictures. Through the stages mentioned, your son will have learned to:

1. Think about what he wants to say
2. Express thoughts in a precise form
3. Transfer the above into a sentence using the available words.

These processes develop the skills boys need for reading and writing and encourage confidence in the handling of words. To keep you involved with what he is doing at School, your son will bring his words home in order that you can support and share his learning.

### **Learning about letters and sounds**

Our boys are taught letters and sounds using a multi-sensory approach, based on games, activities and most of all fun! The letters are taught in a specific order and they begin to blend sounds to form simple two and three letter words. They are also taught to segment words.

The boys begin to recognise pairs of letters that form single sounds such as 'sh', and, by the end of Reception, most boys can build and spell a wide variety of words using their emerging phonic skills.

### **INFANTS (Years 1 and 2)**

Throughout their time at school, the help you give your son with reading is very important. The more opportunities he has to enjoy reading at home the better. Little and often usually works best, so we would ask that you hear your child read or share a book with them every day.

- Choose a quiet time away from distractions like the television or computer games.
- Sit with your son and make it an enjoyable experience. If your son is obviously tired, then it is better to choose another time.
- Give lots of praise and encouragement to boost your son's confidence.
- If your son mispronounces or misses some words, try not to interrupt too quickly. Give him a chance to self-correct.
- Talking about and being able to understand what has been read is just as important as reading the words accurately.

- Read anywhere - make the most of any times your child has to sit and wait and bring a book with you.

If your child can't read a particular word, you could:

- Help them with the initial sound.
- Help them to blend the sounds together.
- Let them work out the word from the context.
- Read the word for them, especially if it is a character's name or unusual vocabulary.
  1. Pause first, to give them time to work it out.
  2. Prompt as suggested above and then...
  3. Praise them for trying even if they don't quite get it right.

### **Which books can my child choose?**

We use both reading scheme and 'real' books which are organised into colour bands. Class teachers will advise in reading records on the appropriate level of reading for your son.

### **JUNIORS (Years 3 to 6)**

There are many ways to help encourage junior aged boys to keep reading with passion and interest. Through the junior years you will see your son develop as a reader but also see him develop preferences, tastes and opinions. This can be a critical time in developing a lifelong love of reading and the following will help.

- Keep giving your son opportunities by visiting libraries, book shops, using e-readers, subscribing to a football magazine or comic and encouraging family members to give books as gifts at Christmas, birthdays and as rewards.
- Respect your son's reading choices. He may read books which you think are silly, poorly written or in dubious taste. Try and ignore these feelings and trust his judgement. He will turn to more "worthy" books as he matures but if you force him too soon, then he might be put off the reading experience.
- Keep listening to him read as he goes through the Junior School. By the time he is in Year 6, he might not want mum or dad reading to him in bed but there are other opportunities in the day. Reading the sports pages with mum or dad at home is perfect family time.
- Let him see you read and hear you discussing books that you have enjoyed. Take books seriously and encourage a family culture that puts as much value on reading as you do watching television, seeing films, going to restaurants or playing sport at the weekend.
- Use films and movies as a motivation to read widely. Graphic novels are not cheating and are well paced, lively and exciting. They have the same visceral feel as a movie. Many junior boys crave intense visual experiences as they are entertaining and exciting. They can be a great way in to reading.

## SENIOR SCHOOL (Years 7 to 13)

The gift of reading enables us to become better communicators and listeners and to engage with the wider world more fully. Boys who read for pleasure perform better across the curriculum. Their language and comprehension skills are stronger because they are used to seeing words in a variety of contexts.

Within the English subject area, we encourage reading for pleasure by having a weekly library visit in Years 7 to 9 during which the boys bring a book they are currently reading at home.

According to the age of your son you can help promote reading at home in a number of ways:

- Share reading. Most, if not all, of our boys enjoy reading with an adult. Listen to your son read, or take turns reading. Talk about books with your son and read the books he recommends to you.
- Have fun. Turn reading into play by hunting for key words or having one reader read the dialogue in a story while the other reads the narration.
- Allocate time for reading. Build a set time into your routine, free of distractions, for your son to sit down and read.
- Encourage your son to read around a topic of interest. Boys develop language through subject-specific reading.
- Model reading. Boys are more likely to read if they see a male role model reading.
- Download E-readers are a popular and effective way of exposing reluctant readers to a variety of subject matter. Many classic tales that appeal to boys such as Sherlock Holmes and the stories of HG Wells are available for free online.

**We hope that the following list of recommended reads is helpful in supporting your son as he develops a lifelong love of reading.**

### **Nursery and Reception**

*Hairy Maclary* by Lynley Dodd

*The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle

*The Gruffalo* by Julia Donaldson

*Harry and the Dinosaurs* by Ian Whybrow

*Kipper* by Mick Inkpen

*Percy the Park Keeper* by Nick Butterworth

*We're Going on a Bear Hunt* by Michael Rosen

Traditional Tales

Nursery Rhymes

## **Infants**

*Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak

*Anything* by Julia Donaldson

*The Story of Babar* by Jean de Brunhof

*Captain Flinn and the Pirate Dinosaurs* by Giles Andreae

*Ping Pong Pig* by Caroline Jayne Church

*Hairy Maclary* by Lynley Dodd

*How to Catch a Star* by Oliver Jeffers

*Peace at Last* by Jill Murphy

*The Enchanted Wood* by Enid Blyton

*The Sheep Pig* by Dick King-Smith

*Just William* by Richmal Crompton

*The Just So Stories* by Rudyard Kipling

Any Roald Dahl book, but particularly *The Twits*, *Fantastic Mr Fox* and

*George's Marvellous Medicine*

*Captain Underpants* by Dave Pilkey

*Diary of a Wimpy Kid* by Jeff Kinney

*Flat Stanley* by Jeff Brown

*Horrid Henry* by Francesca Simon

## **Juniors**

*Roman Mysteries* series by Caroline Lawrence

*The Firework-Maker's Daughter* by Philip Pullman

*Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr Seuss

*Kensuke's Kingdom* by Michael Morpurgo

*Kasper in the Glitter* by Philip Ridley

*Asterix and Obelix* by Goscinny and Uderzo

Anything by Roald Dahl

*The Famous Five/Secret Seven* by Enid Blyton

*Harry Potter* by J.K. Rowling

*How to Train your Dragon* by Cressida Cowell

*Gangster Granny* by David Walliams

*The Tripods Trilogy* by John Christopher

*Swallows and Amazons* by Arthur Ransome  
*His Dark Materials* by Philip Pullman  
*The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupery  
*Rikki-Tikki-Tavi* by Rudyard Kipling  
*The Indian in the Cupboard* by Lynne Reid Banks  
*The Snow Spider* by Jenny Nimmo  
*The Eagle of the Ninth* by Rosemary Sutcliffe  
*The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett  
*A Series of Unfortunate Events* by Lemony Snicket  
*The Hobbit* by J.R.R.Tolkien  
*The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S.Lewis  
*The Silver Sword* by Ian Serailier

### **Senior School**

*The Catcher in the Rye* by JD Salinger

*The Outsiders* by S E Hinton

*Fever Pitch* by Nick Hornby

*Touching the Void* by Joe Simpson

*Around the World in Eighty Days* by Jules Verne

*1984* by George Orwell

*Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury

*All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Maria Remarque

*Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens

*The Great Gatsby* by F Scott Fitzgerald

*A Monster Calls* by Patrick Ness

*Maze Runner* by James Dashner