

Reading

Reading is one strand of the Literacy area of learning in the EYFS. The other is writing. Becoming a fluent reader is a really important life skill and also one of the most complex tasks any of us will ever manage. In the nursery we are offering opportunities which help children to get started on the journey towards becoming readers. It is useful to know the processes involved in developing as a reader.

Phonics

Letters are associated with sounds and being able to decode words by blending the sounds of the letters is a useful skill. This method gives the accurate pronunciation of some words but not others, and if children rely entirely on phonics they can struggle to read with fluency. At nursery level we do lots of work on listening skills and auditory discrimination. We introduce children to letters and focus on the initial sound of words. Check with staff about how to say the different sounds (known as phonemes)

Sight vocabulary

Children have to be able to be really good at spotting the similarity and differences between letters. They have to use different fonts, capital and lower case letters. Some children are particularly good at remembering the shape of a word once they have seen it enough times. A good sight vocabulary is really useful as it allows children to read words quickly without having to decode them. It also means that they can read words which do not follow phonic patterns like 'cough' or 'some'. In nursery children are given lots of examples of words which they may get to know from the shape and pattern, particularly their names. Print in the environment can have a huge impact offering repeated familiar logos and labels which carry information.

Whatever their phonic knowledge, most children in Shipley can read this sign



Context

A huge help in reading is to make a good guess about what a word might be based on the clues from the other words around the one which is unknown. Picture books are also vital for providing a context and familiar books offer a way of retelling the story as if decoding the words. Research suggests that children who are frequently read to by adults are the quickest to become readers.

Motivation

Knowing that print conveys meaning is a huge part of the journey into literacy. If a child can see that a book, a text, a website, a sign, a menu has something of interest or relevance to them, then they are far more likely to engage with reading. Offering a range of reading materials is a key to stimulating a positive approach.