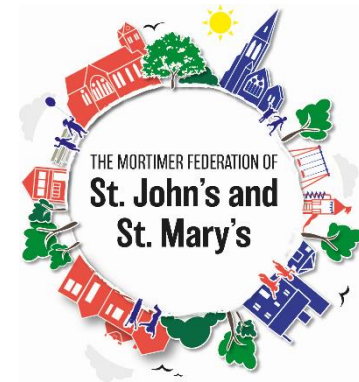


The Mortimer Federation of St. John's and St. Mary's



Helping your child
achieve in Reading

A booklet for parents

Practical Tips

- Always talk about the book before and after reading it.
- Ask questions that encourage your child to predict what will happen next, to express opinions about the plot and the characters and to check understanding.
- If a child misreads a word without changing the meaning, e.g. 'dad' for 'father', don't correct them because they will lose momentum and fluency.

If your child is 'stuck' and is unable to read a word, you can help by:

- Pointing to the picture if it is relevant.
- Look at the first letter in the unknown word and then refer to the picture.
- Read the sentence again – what would make sense?
- Read on past the problem word - what would make sense?
- Say the letter sounds in short words – c-a-t.
- Say the first sounds in longer words – c-r-o-c-odile. What could the word be?
- Look for small words in longer words that your child may know.
- Look for root words – dislike, playing.

Encourage and model reading with fluency and expression. Encourage your child to attempt to correct mistakes themselves.

Always remember your child's class teacher cares about your child and wants them to succeed. If you are worried or concerned and are unsure what to do, talk to your child's teacher who will be happy to help you.

Learning to Read

The Mortimer Federation of St. John's and St. Mary's recognises the importance of involvement of both home and school in helping children to develop a love of books. We hope this booklet will be of assistance – to promote reading together for **enjoyment** and **understanding**.

Reading Scheme

At the Mortimer Federation of St. John's and St. Mary's the **Individualised Reading Scheme** is used. This grades books from a variety of reading schemes into different levels of difficulty to extend and broaden the children's experience. Children are given the opportunity to read a variety of styles of writing from fiction to non-fiction and poetry.

Different Stages of Reading

Initially your child may have a **picture book, without any words**. This is a very important stage in your child's development; it teaches them how to hold a book, which way to turn the pages and to look at the picture for understanding. You can encourage your child to include lots of detail in their story by asking relevant questions and modelling the story telling process yourself.

Your child will then be given **First Word books** which will have a couple of words on each page. A common word that will appear on each page such as 'me', 'the', 'a' and a word associated with something in the picture, such as bowl, scissors, ladybird etc. To de-code these words your child will need to say the initial letter sound and then look at the picture for something starting with the same sound. The pictures are **essential** clues provided to help your child read. **Never** cover up the pictures.

Once your child is confidently reading first word books they will be given books with **simple sentences**. These books have a lot of repetition in and allow children to become familiar with common words such as 'and', 'play', 'come'. You can help your child by encouraging them to find matching words in their book and other story books you might read to them.

Questions

These are some of the questions frequently asked about reading with children:

When and how often?

Any time which suits you and your child. Ideally, you should hear your child read every day, in a quiet and relaxed environment. You don't have to spend a long time reading everyday- quality is more important than quantity. We want it to be a positive experience for you both

Who can my child read with?

Anybody can hear your child read as long as they are able to guide and support them. It can be an older brother/sister, relative or a friend of the family as well as parents.

What should my child read?

As well as school reading books, children should be encouraged to read other materials that they find interesting. These could include:

Comics	Fiction (story books)
Non-Fiction (information books)	Picture Books
Newspapers	Magazines
Poetry	Rhymes

There are plenty of opportunities to see and recognise letters and words, on food packets, road signs, birthday cards, buses, shops, computer games and so on.

Print is all around – help your child to see it!

What can I do to help my child?

- Always be positive – encouragement and praise is essential to build your child's confidence. Be specific with your praise. What part of their reading was really good today?
- Share reading with all the family.
- Continue to read to your child regularly – even when they can read proficiently. This could include full length novels as well as picture books.
- Read yourself – read your own books and magazines. Get the message across that reading is valuable and an enjoyable activity for everybody. It's not something you only do in school.
- Don't compare your child's progress with anyone else's, it undermines their confidence and de-values their achievements. All children develop at different rates.
- Don't rush through a reading book. Give children time to understand what they have read. Discuss the book with your child and ask them questions to help develop their understanding.
- Join your local library, which will have a variety of books and reading materials available. These can be accessed all year round including the school holidays.
- Play letter sound games with your child at home such as, alphabet snap and I-spy.
- Help your child to learn the letter sounds or sight words that are sent home from school.
- Point out any words in the environment eg road signs, in shops, cereal packets etc. Can they spot any letters or words that they know?
- **Listen to your child read every day and write a comment in their reading record each time.**