



PURBROOK INFANT SCHOOL
ALDERMOOR ROAD EAST, PURBROOK PO7 5NQ
Telephone: 023 9261 0761
Email: adminoffice@purbrook-inf.hants.sch.uk
Headteacher: Lisa A de Carteret
Assistant Headteachers: Zoe Bailey and Paul Stray
School Business Manager: Hazel K Dean



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Dear Parents/Carers

This week your child will have brought home their first reading book. The government requires children to take home books which meet their 'phonetic decoding' ability; this means that they are able to identify every sound written in the book and read it independently. These books are for practising and consolidating, instead of learning new sounds and words. These books are known as 'Learn to Read' books and will follow a colour banding system, and children can only be moved onto the next band once they have been taught every sound and word in the book at school. Repetition and practise are key parts of word reading and we ask that you look at these books at home regularly with your children. They will be changed twice a week once the children are in full time.

As your child has learned a new set of sounds and moves onto a new book colour, they will also bring home a set of Bumblebee cards. These are not assessed within school as the children have already been exposed to the words within phonics, but are there for children to practise reading, play matching games and hunt for the words in books at home.

Since the 'Learn to Read' books must be phonetically decodable, they sometimes lack a detailed storyline for children to practise comprehension and inference. The school has therefore also invested in a large bank of 'Love to Read' books which will be sent home with your child as well. These will always have a black sticker and are not banded based on difficulty; they are designed for you to read with your child and talk about the story, building a love of reading instead of just focusing on the act of decoding words. These books will be changed once a week, normally on a Thursday.

Children will also have the opportunity to choose a library book in school once a week, normally on a Thursday. In the near future, the school will be open one day after school and normally two mornings before school for parents to come in and share a library book with their child. Further details of this will be sent out shortly.

To give your child the best chance to progress with their reading skills we encourage you to practice reading at least five times per week. This can be a Learn to Read book, a Love to Read book, a library book or a favourite book that you have at home, however we do ask that you read their Learn to Read book (the one with a Lilac, Pink, Red, etc sticker) several times a week to progress their phonic knowledge.

Please write in their reading record book every time you read even if you are not reading a school book (although you only need to fill in one line per day); this will ensure that your child can take part in our Reading Challenge and earn rewards and prizes with their class. Every Thursday your child's reading record book will be collected in and checked to see if they have completed a page of reading (this won't happen every week because there are 8 rows of boxes). If they have, they will be added to a class raffle where the teacher will randomly choose one child to receive a biscuit (their adult also gets a special treat). After 10, 15, 20, etc pages complete, there are different prizes for your child. These can be found on a sticker on the back of their reading record book. The class with the most reads per week is given a certificate, and the class with the most certificates at the end of the year receives a further treat.

Please find attached a list of questions and ideas to support you when reading with your child at home.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs C Craig
Early Years Phase Leader

Example questions to ask when reading a book with your child...

Before reading the book

- Can you point to / read the title? What do you think this book will be about?
- Have a look at the blurb – are there any more clues? Do you like the sound of this book so far?
- Look at the author / illustrator. Have you read any of their books before?

When reading the book

- Can you spot any sounds / words you know?
- I wonder what that word might mean?
- Can you think of a better word they could have chosen?
- Why do you think they said / did / felt like that?
- What choice would you have made?
- Have you learnt anything new so far?
- Does this remind you of another story / something that has happened in your life?
- Who do you think is telling the story?
- Can you pick your favourite describing word on this page?
- Which word tells you that...?
- I wonder what the author was thinking when they wrote that?
- Can you think of a word to describe the...?
- Why do you think it is laid out like this?
- How are the pictures supporting the story? Are they showing you anything new?
- Why did they choose that punctuation? How did it change how you read the sentence?

After reading the book

- Did you enjoy this book?
- Would you read something else by this author / illustrator?
- Would you change anything about the book?
- Which was your favourite character? How did the author make you like them?
- What is your opinion about...? Can you back it up using the book?
- Did this story have a moral or a message? What would it be?
- Can you tell me what happened in the story? How much can you remember?