



13th October 2020

Home Reading – Year 2

Dear Parents and Carers,

At St. Gabriel's, we believe reading is the most important skill children learn during their time in school. We are very grateful for your support in helping our children become confident, fluent readers who both understand and love what they read.

Since returning full time to school, we have been impressed with children's enthusiasm for reading and how hard they are working to develop their skills. As a team we are working hard to understand the gaps in children's reading attainment and have in place additional learning opportunities to support their development as readers. We are continuing to use Storytime Phonics to teach our children to read in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 whilst using a banded system of reading books in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Let me apologise in advance for the lengthy letter but I wanted to write to update you on our approach to home reading as there are a number of exciting developments taking place over the next few months.

We are fortunate enough to be able to invest in a brand new library system which will be up and running in November. This system will allow us to track what children are reading more effectively and have clear quarantine procedures in place for returned books to ensure everyone's safety. We have also invested in an assessment package for Key Stages 1 and 2 that will help us to identify each child's strengths and areas for development as readers. This package means we will be able to allocate a certain reading band to each child once they have completed our phonics scheme.

Prior to these new systems being fully operational and to ensure children continue to build on the progress they have already made, we have a number of interim measures to support reading at home.

Outlined below are our interim plans for **Year 2** along with how their reading will be supported at home once our new library system is in place.

Year 2:

At St. Gabriel's, we teach children the correct technical vocabulary during their phonics lessons to support them in learning to read.

Phoneme	A single unit of sound. There are 44 in the English language. For example, the word 'hat' has 3 phonemes - /h/ /a/ and /t/
Grapheme	A symbol used to write down a sound. Graphemes can be made up from 1 letter (/p/ as in 'pig'), 2 letters (/ch/ in chair), 3 letters (/tch/ in 'stitch') or 4 letters (/ough/ in 'cough').
Blending	Linking sounds together to read a whole word. For example, /c/ /a/ /t/ can be 'sounded out' and they'll blend it to read 'cat'.
Diagraph	A combination of two letters representing one sound. For example, /sh/ in shut or /ai/ in 'rain'.
Trigraph	A combination of three letters representing one sound. For example, /igh/ in 'night' or /ure/ in 'pure'.

This video explains a little bit about the scheme we use in school to teach children to read:

[Story Time Phonics](#)

For help on how to pronounce these sounds please see:

[Guide to pronouncing phonemes](#)

[Pure Sounds](#)

To help you understand how to support your child to use their phonics knowledge to blend sounds together to read words, please see:

[How to blend sounds to read words](#)

To help children remember each sound and grapheme, we use **Caption Action Cards**. Children are taught a caption and an action to go with each sound/grapheme combination to help make them memorable. Please [click this link](#) for the cards that we are using.

Our children in Year 2 will be bringing home a paper Phonics book **each Friday** which they are welcome to keep. We have purchased a **bank of e-books** for children to also read. Please see the attachment to this email, for how to access these.

Once our library system is installed, children will stop bringing home a paper phonics book and instead will bring home **two books** a week to have a go at reading independently with your support. These will need to be returned on a **Monday** and a **Thursday** when they will be swapped for a different one. In addition, children will be bringing home a 'free-choice' book on a **Friday** to share and enjoy with their family over the weekend which also needs to be returned on **Monday**. These books are not for children to read independently but to be shared with their families to support their love of reading.

Over the coming months, we look forward to helping you understand more about how you can support your child's reading skills and develop their love of books. Once again, let me reiterate how grateful we are for your support and how impressed we are with the children's efforts with reading so far this year.

Yours Sincerely,



Mrs Roberts

Assistant Headteacher



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