

# A Guide for parents to help with reading

## How can I help my child with reading?

As a parent you are probably helping your child with reading much more than you may realise. If your home contains books, magazines and catalogues and your child sees you reading, if you read to your child and talk together about familiar stories and if you also use printed materials to find things out, then your child already has a head start in this area.

- Remember that **talking** about reading is very important, so if your child is sometimes reluctant to read aloud, discussing a book will also help to develop reading skills.
- Concentrate on **enjoyment** and grasping the meaning rather than absolute accuracy.
- Keep reading time **relaxed**, comfortable and pleasurable, in a quiet corner, with the television turned off.
- Talk about the cover and read the title before rushing your child into the text, asking questions such as: what do you think it will be about; what sort of book is it; have you read one like this before?
- Look through the book, noticing interesting pictures and words, then read the opening together.
- Don't correct too quickly. If your child makes an error suggest having another go, searching the pictures for a clue, sounding out the first letter or reading on before you 'tell' the problem word.
- If your child is really struggling, take over the reading yourself and let the teacher know.
- When your child brings home a book that has been read before ask for a summary before reading it again, then discuss the book at a deeper level than last time.
- As your child progresses, talk about authors, characters and plots or what new information has been learnt.
- If your child reads silently ask her to re-tell the part that has been read and encourage the 'pointing out' of relevant sections in the text.
- Join your local library and use it regularly. Watch out for storytelling events, summer reads and reviews of new titles.