

Reading at Rounds Green Primary School

Information for Parents/Carers



At Rounds Green Primary School, we are working hard to provide an increasing range of reading opportunities with the aim of encouraging all children to ultimately become readers and to enjoy reading for pleasure. We have invested a huge amount in a new reading scheme which is largely based on books from Oxford Reading Tree. Our reading books are graded by difficulty by reading levels known as Book Bands. Each Book Band has its own colour, and the ways in which you can support your child at each stage are outlined in the pages which follow.

Book Bands are intended to support each child as a reader, and enable teachers to carefully check what each child can do and what their next steps are. They should not be used to make comparisons between children; nor is it a race to 'get to the end'. At Rounds Green, we read for pleasure, and we continue to learn, even as adults – there is no 'end'!

We all know how vitally important it is for children to read and be read to at home. Equally, we know how difficult it can be to know how to help. Below, you will find ideas for supporting your child's reading, whatever Book Band they are choosing from. At the end, there are some helpful questions for you to ask, too.

Many thanks for all of your support.

The Staff at Rounds Green

Lilac

Lilac level books are wordless books that tell a story through pictures alone. They help children to develop speaking and listening skills through creating and telling stories.

Your child is just beginning to discover the excitement of books. Although these books have no words, they are an important introduction to reading. Please encourage your child to:

- Look at the pages in order, and talk about what is happening on the left hand page before the right hand page.
- Talk about what is happening on each page, rather than just talking about what they see in each picture.
- Tell you who or what the book is about.

Pink

Pink level is the very first level of reading books which has words. The number of words increases slightly as your child progresses through the reading level.

Your child is beginning to learn to read. As they read, please help them to:

- Read the words carefully. Ask your child to sound out and blend only the words they can't read yet, not every word. Eventually almost all words will become part of your child's 'sight memory', and they won't have to sound out at all.
- On second and third readings of the book, encourage them to read with more pace and with less focus on sounding out the letters in each word.
- Make a story out of a whole book, rather than focusing just on what is happening on each page.
- Tell you about something that happened in the book, or about something they found out in the book.

Books at this level that you can easily find in your local library or book shop:

Do you want to be my friend?	<i>Eric Carle</i>
Spot books	<i>Eric Hill</i>
Rosie's Walk	<i>Pat Hutchins</i>
Baby Sleeps	<i>Janet & Allan Ahlberg</i>
Ketchup on your Cornflakes	<i>Nick Sharratt</i>
Food	<i>Jan Pienkowski</i>



Red

All bands aim to consolidate learning from previous bands. Red level books have a slightly increased number of words, pages, along with slightly more complex story lines.

Your child is beginning to learn how to read. As they read, please help them to:

- Read the words carefully. Most of the words can be recognised or sounded out. Ask your child to sound out and blend only the words they can't read yet, not every word. Eventually almost all words will become part of your child's 'sight memory', and they won't have to sound out at all.
- On second and third readings of the book, encourage them to read with more pace and with less focus on sounding out the letters in each word.
- Make a story out of a whole book, rather than focusing just on what is happening on each page.
- Tell you about something that happened in the book, or about something they found out in the book.

Books at this level that you can easily find in your local library or book shop:

Quack Quack	<i>Patricia Casey</i>
Mog and Me	<i>Judith Kerr</i>
The Ball Bounced	<i>Nancy Tafuri</i>
Do Pigs have Stripes?	<i>Melanie Walsh</i>
Monday, Run Day	<i>Nick Sharratt</i>
Undersea Adventure	<i>Paul Harrison</i>
Jumping Josie	<i>Paul Harrison</i>
Toms Tortoise	<i>Jillian Powell</i>

Yellow

Yellow books require some inferencing skills from the reader – reading ‘between the lines’ - and have more variation in sentence structure.

Your child is now beginning to read with more confidence. As they read aloud, you can help them by:

- Giving them time to sound out words they don't know. If they still struggle, encourage them to try sounding out the whole word first, rather than guessing from the pictures or from the first letter.
- Giving them time to recognise and correct their own mistakes.
- Asking them to talk about what's happening in the book, encouraging them to make links to events on previous pages.

Books at this level that you can easily find in your local library or book shop:

Each Peach Pear Plum	<i>Janet & Allan Ahlberg</i>
The Great Food Robbery	<i>Jill Atkins</i>
Bear at home	<i>Stella Blackstone</i>
The School	<i>John Burningham</i>
Oh Dear	<i>Rod Campbell</i>
What's the Time, Mr Wolf?	<i>Colin Hawkins</i>
Have you seen the Crocodile?	<i>Colin West</i>
The Green Queen	<i>Nick Sharratt</i>

Blue

Blue books have a slightly increased number of words and some variation in sentence beginnings. They may use different punctuation. The story lines are more complex, including more than one event, and the stories are less dependent on picture cues.

Your child is now developing into a more confident reader. Encourage them to select from books at the library or bookshop as well as those from school. As they read, you can help by encouraging them to:

- Sound out quickly – and silently – inside their heads, if they need to sound out words.
- Look at the punctuation marks. You may want to model how to read a page of writing, paying attention to punctuation, such as full-stops and question marks.
- Tell you about what the characters in the story are doing and why they are acting in that way.
- Show you how they can find particular things that interest them in non-fiction books.

Books at this level that you can easily find in your local library or book shop:

Dear Zoo	<i>Rod Campbell</i>
Kipper's Rainy Day	<i>Mick Inkpen</i>
Kipper's Sunny Day	<i>Mick Inkpen</i>
It's My Birthday	<i>Helen Oxenbury</i>
Home Sweet Home	<i>Maureen Roffey</i>
Ten in the Bed	<i>Penny Dale</i>
Is it because?	<i>Tony Ross</i>
T'wit T'woo	<i>Maddy McLellan</i>

Green

The number of words increases slightly in Green level books. Stories have a wider variety of characters and events which develop over a number of pages. Sentences may include lists of things or actions, and adverbs are used frequently to begin sentences.

Your child is now developing into a more confident reader. Encourage them to select from books at the library or bookshop as well as those from school. As they read, you can help by encouraging them to:

- Sound out quickly – and silently – inside their heads, if they need to sound out words.
- Look at the punctuation marks. You may want to model how to read a page of writing, paying attention to punctuation, such as full-stops and question marks.
- Tell you about what the characters in the story are doing and why they are acting in that way.
- Show you how they can find particular things that interest them in non-fiction books.

Books at this level that you can easily find in your local library or book shop:

- Fast Dog Goes Crazy Slow *Allan Ahlberg*
- Slow Dog's Nose *Allan Ahlberg*
- The Baby *John Burningham*
- Titch *Pat Hutchins*
- We're Going On A Picnic *Pat Hutchins*
- Baby Sleeps *Janet & Allan Ahlberg*
- Not Now Bernard *David McKee*
- Where's My Teddy *Jez Alborough*
- Pass the Jam, Jim *Urmansky Kaye*

Orange

In Orange books, the page count increases to challenge and encourage reading stamina. There is an increased use of dialogue to encourage reading with expression. Orange books introduce some complex sentences (use of 'if', 'so' and 'because') and include italics to show emphasis. Slightly more literary language is used. Children are increasingly encouraged to infer meaning from the text in order to gain full enjoyment from the story.

Your child is now beginning to read with more independence. They should be feeling more confident and will rarely need to sound out words. You can help them by:

- Listening to them when they read aloud. If they make mistakes, but they keep the sense of the text, don't interrupt. You can revisit that page at the end of the session to check certain words.
- Reminding them of useful strategies if they can't read a word, for example:
 1. Sounding the word out silently, under their breath
 2. Dividing a longer word into syllables, or looking at the word without an -ing or an -ed ending

Don't allow them to worry about a word. Tell them what it says and revisit the word once you have completed the book.

- Encouraging use of expression, especially for character-speech in fiction books. You may wish to model reading some pages aloud for your child to copy.
- Talking about how characters are feeling.

Books at this level that you can easily find in your local library or book shop:

The Very Hungry Caterpillar	<i>Eric Carle</i>
This is the Bear	<i>Sarah Hayes</i>
Goodnight Owl	<i>Pat Hutchins</i>
Little Kipper Books	<i>Mick Inkpen</i>
We're Going on a Bear Hunt	<i>Michael Rosen</i>
Oscar Got the Blame	<i>Tony Ross</i>
Ten Little Crocodiles	<i>Colin West</i>
Autumn	<i>Monica Hughes</i>
Changing Seasons	<i>Sian Smith</i>
Pear Under the Stairs	<i>Christine Moorcroft</i>

Turquoise

Turquoise books include an increasing range of adjectives and more descriptive verbs to replace 'said'. There is an increased proportion of space allocated to print rather than pictures.

Books include words chosen for appropriateness and impact rather than decodability, with more extended descriptions. Paragraphs begin to develop and more unusual and challenging vocabulary is included.

Your child is now beginning to read with more independence and their books are getting longer. You can help them by:

- Encouraging them to read some pages silently, inside their heads.
- Listening to some pages read aloud, encouraging the use of expression and paying attention to punctuation marks.
- Talking about how events in the book relate to each other and helping your child to understand how the story builds up in a longer book.
- Asking them to tell you about interesting things they found out and showing you where the information is in the book.

Books at this level that you can easily find in your local library or book shop:

- Funnybones *Allan Ahlberg*
- Mrs Jump the Jockey *Allan Ahlberg*
- Cuddly Dudley *Jez Alborough*
- Chicken Licken *Jonathan Allen*
- The Ugly Duckling *Ian Beck*
- Would You Rather? *John Burningham*
- Big Red Balloon *Anne Fine*
- Pirate Patch and the Great Sea Chase *Rose Impey*
- When Sheep Cannot Sheep *Satoshi Kitamura*
- Little Bear *Martin Waddell*

Purple

Purple books include an increased proportion of longer sentences, with a more challenging vocabulary. Some Purple books have short chapters to challenge and encourage reading stamina. They include longer and more complex sentences with the inclusion of complex (i.e. 'when') and simple (i.e. 'and') conjunctions.

Story features such as plot, character and setting are developed in more detail, and the text in the non-fiction books is presented in a variety of ways.

Your child is now beginning to read with more independence and their books are getting longer. You can help them by:

- Encouraging them to read some pages silently, inside their heads.
- Listening to some pages read aloud, encouraging the use of expression and paying attention to punctuation marks.
- Talking about how events in the book relate to each other and helping your child to understand how the story builds up in a longer book.
- Asking them to tell you about interesting things they found out and showing you where the information is in the book.

Books at this level that you can easily find in your local library or book shop:

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| • Mr Gumpy's Motor Car | <i>John Burningham</i> |
| • Hairy Maclary | <i>Lynley Dodd</i> |
| • Don't Forget the Bacon | <i>Pat Hutchins</i> |
| • Elmer | <i>David McKee</i> |
| • Where the Wild Things Are | <i>Maurice Sendak</i> |
| • Peace at Last | <i>Jill Murphy</i> |
| • Owl Babies | <i>Martin Waddell</i> |
| • Poppy & Max & The Sore Paw | <i>Sally Grindley</i> |
| • A Tiger for breakfast | <i>Narinder Dharmi</i> |
| • Animal Crackers | <i>Rose Impey</i> |
| • Birds Go Facts | <i>Paul McEvoy</i> |

Gold

Gold books include more sophisticated and challenging vocabulary, including word play and the introduction of figurative language (e.g. similes and metaphors). Some Gold books have longer chapters for more sustained reading.

Children reading at this level are confident independent readers who can tackle increasingly complex language, story structures and text layout.

Your child is now reading longer books with fewer illustrations, so they continue to need your help to ensure they are getting the full meaning and enjoyment from the text. They may prefer to read one chapter or section at a time, rather than reading the whole book in one session. You can support them by:

- Asking them to read some pages of the book aloud to you so that you can enjoy hearing them reading with expression and pace.
- Asking them to find parts of the text which describe a character or place and talking about the words used in the description.
- Asking for regular updates as to what is happening in the book, so that you know how the different chapters or sections link.
- Talking about how much they enjoy a book, or a type of book. Encourage them to look for more books of the type they enjoy.

Books at this level that you can easily find in your local library or book shop:

The Gaskitt stories (series)	<i>Allan Ahlberg</i>
Princess Smartypants	<i>Babette Cole</i>
Digging for Dinosaurs	<i>Judy Waite</i>
Willy the Wizard	<i>Anthony Browne</i>
Rosie's Babies	<i>Martin Waddell</i>
A piece of cake	<i>Jill Murphy</i>
The Giant Jam Sandwich	<i>John Vernon</i>
The Best Pet	<i>Penny Matthews</i>

White

In White books there is a more sophisticated use of narrative voice. Clauses in longer sentences are separated by commas to encourage developing intonation. Some books have longer chapters for more sustained reading.

The stories included at White level encourage children to empathise with the characters and consider why they behave as they do, and how they change during the course of the story. The non-fiction books are divided into sections that require more sustained reading and there is increased challenge in the layout of the information.

Your child is now reading longer books with fewer illustrations, so they continue to need your help to ensure they are getting the full meaning and enjoyment from the text. They may prefer to read one chapter or section at a time, rather than reading the whole book in one session. You can support them by:

- Asking them to read some pages of the book aloud to you so that you can enjoy hearing them reading with expression and pace.
- Asking them to find parts of the text which describe a character or place and talking about the words used in the description.
- Asking for regular updates as to what is happening in the book, so that you know how the different chapters or sections link.
- Talking about how much they enjoy a book, or a type of book. Encourage them to look for more books of the type they enjoy.

Books at this level that you can easily find in your local library or book shop:

Dogger	<i>Shirley Hughes</i>
The Last Train	<i>Kim Lewis</i>
Captain Underpants	<i>David Pilkey</i>
Horrid Henry	<i>Francesca Simon</i>
Football Books	<i>Martin Waddell</i>

Lime

Lime books include a wider range of writing styles and an increased variation in sentence structure.

Children reading Lime books will be able to understand more sophisticated word play and puns.

Although your child is now taking off as a reader, it is still important that you read with them and talk to them about their reading. This is a great opportunity to share with them your love of reading. You can support them by:

- Asking them to read aloud some parts of the text which they particularly enjoy. Talk about how the author made them so enjoyable.
- Talk about how characters develop or how they react to different people, places or events.
- Asking for regular updates as to what is happening in the book, so that you know how the different chapters or sections link.
- Reading the book yourself so that you can talk together about the smaller details of the book.

Books at this level that you can easily find in your local library or book shop:

Titus Rules OK	<i>Dick King Smith</i>
The Owl Who Was Afraid Of The Dark	<i>Jill Tomlinson</i>
The Otter Who Wanted To Know	<i>Jill Tomlinson</i>
Winnie Shapes Up	<i>Laura Owen</i>
Monster Story Teller	<i>Jacqueline Wilson</i>
I Wonder Why? (Series)	<i>Kingfisher Publishing</i>
Astronaut Living in Space (DK Level 2 books)	<i>Deborah Lock</i>

Brown

Children reading Brown books are able to:

- interpret more sophisticated word-play and puns
- distinguish the narrator's voice in a fiction story from the characters' voices through figurative, idiomatic and literary language
- understand a story that is told through dialogue and action to 'show' instead of 'tell' the plot

Your child may well not want to read aloud to you anymore because they probably enjoy silent reading more. This is fine as long as your child continues to read actively and not just pass their eyes over the words. You can help them by:

- Continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions, and reading your book while your child reads.
- Establishing an expectation of a conversation at the end of each reading session: can they tell you what's happening in their book?
- Ask questions which make your child go back to the book to find answers. Support your child as they develop skills in skimming and scanning to find the information to answer your question.
- Continuing to read aloud to your child at bedtime. This shows them the importance you place on reading as well as developing their language, vocabulary and love of story.

Grey

Children reading Grey books should be able to:

- explain a character's motivations
- discuss the points of view of the character and the narrator
- better understand a range of narration styles

Your child may well not want to read aloud to you anymore because they probably enjoy silent reading more. This is fine as long as your child continues to read actively and not just pass their eyes over the words. You can help them by:

- continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions, and reading your book while your child reads.
- Establishing an expectation of a conversation at the end of each reading session: can they tell you what's happening in their book?
- Ask questions which make your child go back to the book to find answers. Support your child as they develop skills in skimming and scanning to find the information to answer your question.
- Continuing to read aloud to your child at bedtime. This shows them the importance you place on reading as well as developing their language, vocabulary and love of story.

Dark Blue

Children reading Dark Blue books will be able to gather information from more than one place in the text and use inference based on what is shown rather than being told. This allows for greater complexity in building character and setting.

The books at this level are written in a much more subtle way than in previous levels which means that it is important that the reader is fully engaged with the process of reading and alert to the language and vocabulary the writer is using.

You can help them by:

- continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions, and reading your book while your child reads.
- Suggest that your child invites friends who are also reading the book to a 'Book Group'. If you skim-read the book first – or ask your child's teacher – you can prepare some questions for the book group to discuss.
- Before a reading session, ask your child to find and note down some particular information. It could relate to the plot or it could be something like: a really good descriptive passage; three words which are adventurous; two words you want to use in your next piece of writing; an example of something typical a character does or says; how one character's reaction to another shows their relationship ... There are lots of questions you can ask which don't mean you have to know the book yourself, but just serve to alert your child to its possibilities.

Dark Red

Children reading Dark Red books are beginning to recognise how layers of meaning allow for the build-up of humour or tension and are able to discuss how the author has achieved the effects.

The books at this level are written in a much more subtle way than in previous levels which means that it is important that the reader is fully engaged with the process of reading and alert to the language and vocabulary the writer is using. This level is more advanced than many books that are sold to adults but these stories are not intended to be just 'leisure reads'. Although your child should enjoy them, the books need the reader to be fully alert and willing to learn.

You can help them by:

- continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions, and reading your book while your child reads.
- Suggest that your child invites friends who are also reading the book to a 'Book Group'. If you skim-read the book first – or ask your child's teacher – you can prepare some questions for the book group to discuss.
- Before a reading session, ask your child to find and note down some particular information. It could relate to the plot or it could be something like: a really good descriptive passage; three words which are adventurous; two words you want to use in your next piece of writing; an example of something typical a character does or says; how one character's reaction to another shows their relationship ... There are lots of questions you can ask which don't mean you have to know the book yourself, but just serve to alert your child to its possibilities.

Remember: If you have any questions, concerns or celebrations at any stage of your child's reading development, please speak to their class teacher.



Reading with your child

Some questions to ask your child whilst reading together.

- Look at the front cover. What could the book be about?
- Who is the author?
- What is an illustrator? What do they do?
- What does that word mean? Read the words around it to help you figure it out (context).
- How can you read an unfamiliar word? Can you sound talk and then blend?
- Who are the main characters?
- What do you think will happen next?
- How do you think that character feels? Why? How would you feel in that situation?
- Can you predict how the book will end?
- Who is your favourite character? Why?
- Is there a hidden message in the story? What is it?
- Can you retell the story in your own words?
- Do you like how the story ended? Can you think of another way the book could have ended?