



Sandford Primary School

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Monday 18th September

Dear parents/guardians,

With the start of a new year, I wanted to draw your attention to the aids we use to develop our children's reading comprehension skills. The 'Totally Pawsome Reading Gang' will be used in each class during guided reading and comprehension lessons. Each dog looks at a different element of comprehension and helps children to unpick each skill in order to develop and consolidate their learning. There are 5 dogs in KS1, which are developed and added to in KS2.

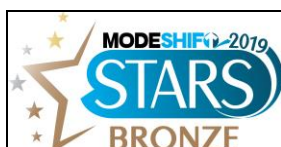
KS1: Vocabulary Victor, Rex Retriever, Predicting Pip, Inference Iggy and Sequencing Suki

KS2: Vocabulary Victor, Rex Retriever, Predicting Pip, Inference Iggy, Summarising Sheba, Arlo the Author and Cassie the Commentator

In the next few weeks, your child will be given a bookmark with question ideas for each of the different dogs. You will hopefully recognise this from last year, but the questions are different for each year group as the expectations of comprehension develop through the school. Whilst reading with your child, try to choose one question from each section. You could ask more than one type of question per page. This will check that your child really understands what they are reading and could lead you into further conversations about the book. You do not need to do this every time, but any opportunity to question their understanding and comprehension of what has been read will benefit their reading in the long term.

On the reverse of this letter, you will find the **National Curriculum expectations** for your child's year group as well as a few other suggestions for ways you can help your child with reading at home.

The reading books for our KS1 classes are closely linked with their phonics lessons and will be **fully decodable**. Children will have this book for the **whole week** to ensure their phonetic understanding, but also to develop their **fluency** and encourage **prosody** (having a 'storyteller' voice). They will have a book that is matched to the relevant phonic phase they have shown a knowledge of – children will not move to a new book stage until they can recognise and blend the next set of phonemes. In addition to this, each child will be able to pick a '**sharing book**'. This will most likely not be decodable, but it is something that they are interested in and is for them to share with you and discuss. These might be non-fiction, poetry or fiction books. Those in KS2 that require decodable books will be able to choose from ones that are more age appropriate, but still help them to develop their phonics.



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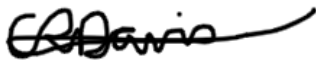


Our **Laureate Award** system continues to offer a range of book suggestions for children in each year group. We are gradually building up our collection of these in our school library, and have managed to add to it last year through the help of the PTA and our sponsored Readathon. The Laureate lists can be found in classrooms and on class pages on our website, and the Laureate books are located in the Library. When your child has read one of the Laureate books, please make sure they communicate this to their teacher (either verbally or in the Reading Record), so we can keep a record of how many have been read. Some of the books on the list may be above your child's reading level, so they can be used as the sharing book or one that can be read to them instead.

We also launched our 'Birthday Book' initiative last academic year. We would like to encourage children to donate an age appropriate book to their class or school library on their birthday. It could be a book that they really enjoyed and want to share with others, or it might be one related to a topic the class is studying that year. It could be from the Laureate list too! Each book will have a sticker showing who has donated the book, and will be kept in their class' reading area or the library. This is an optional birthday donation – the book also doesn't need to be brand new, just in a good condition to be read. (Charity shops are a treasure trove of wonderful books!) Some of the current topics on our 2 year cycle: Romans, Aeronautic Explorers, Vikings, WW2, Rainforests, Rivers, Stone Age to Iron Age, Natural Disasters, Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece, Victorians, History of Toys, Pirates, Royalty, Exploration (Poles), Mountains.

If you would like more information about comprehension or how we teach reading at Sandford, please ask your child's class teacher or myself.

Many thanks for your co-operation and continued encouragement of your child's reading.



Chloë Davis
English Co-ordinator

National Curriculum Expectations – Year 1

Children need to develop pleasure in reading, motivation to read, an increased vocabulary and an improved level of understanding. They will do this by listening to, and discussing, a wide range of poems, stories and non-fiction texts at a level beyond that which they can read independently. By frequently listening to stories, poems and information texts that they cannot yet read for themselves, children begin to understand how written language can be structured in order, for example, to build surprise in narratives or to present facts in a non-fiction piece. By reading together, children can also be shown some of the processes for finding out information within a book, e.g. modelling the use of a contents page or index.

What This Means for Parents

- Initially, reading with your child is about reading to them. Model clear reading with fluency and expression. Model how to read unknown words.
- Read a range of different texts – recipe books, nursery rhymes, instruction manuals, leaflets for places you wish to visit, traditional tales.
- Show your child how to find information in a book rather than quickly finding it for them.



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