



SHORTSTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Dear parent / guardian

Head Teacher: Mrs D Cottam

Research shows, students that regularly read for pleasure tend to perform better academically than those that don't - with quantity and quality of reading being the single biggest indicator of academic success across all socio-economic groups.

<http://www.readingzone.com/index.php?zone=sz&page=fullnews&id=1340>

OFSTED have endorsed this research and identified outstanding practice in schools who embrace the reading for pleasure philosophy.

The schools all took reading for pleasure seriously. Teachers read and talked with enthusiasm, recommending books and planning opportunities for pupils to read independently outside the curriculum. Their success was seen in good test results and in children's enthusiasm for reading beyond the classroom.

Press release: Good English teaching must be supported by an innovative curriculum - Ofsted 13 May 2011

As a school we support all children academically and work hard to ensure they make good progress. However, we are also interested in providing life skills and enabling children to enjoy school and their learning.

We have invested in new books for each classroom and will be making a change to the traditional daily Reading book scheme, in order to promote reading for pleasure and develop confident, enthusiastic and motivated readers in our school.

The books are banded for each class and have levels within the books. They are real books and the children will be encouraged to choose texts which appeal to their interests and share their reading at home and begin to recommend books to their peers. The children can change their own books as often as they please. They may choose easier books or more challenging books, picture books and they may choose the same book over again. This is good.

1. If they choose an easy book - they are developing their confidence in their ability to read independently.
2. If they choose a challenging book - share the book with them and read to them. This enables children to become familiar with more complex text and language patterns.
3. Choosing the same book - they may enjoy the story and will be consolidating language patterns and story sequencing. Each time they choose the book they may learn something new. They develop confidence and begin to categorise their likes and dislikes associated with different texts. They can talk about favourite books and share their reading experiences with others.
4. Choosing picture books - reading stems from speaking and listening. Sharing the intricacies of images and developing their own stories through pictures supports their understanding of how books work, adds to their vocabulary and helps their overall reading ability and their creative writing.



The additional benefits at home should see children wanting to read daily rather than 'having to read'. Children being able to access books on a more regular basis and books linked to what they want to read. There will be less focus on having to get the words right more about encouraging the love of reading, sharing books and spending time with a book.

In school we will continue to teach children how to read, decode, predict and interpret text. This is done through daily phonics teaching applying synthesis skills (how to read a word), sharing class books and extended stories, daily Guided reading which focuses on all aspects of reading, daily 1:1 reading as required, encouraging free reading opportunities and sharing books with peers and younger children, listening to stories and writing their own stories to be read in class and through the school. These methods have proven successful as reflected in our results.

We encourage all children to choose a variety of fiction and nonfiction books, poetry, newspapers, comics and magazines to enjoy and develop their love of reading.

The reading for pleasure books will be kept in the classroom and children will have access to the library scanners for recording books taken out and brought back. There is a new Home School Record book which replaces the old reading diaries. These can be used for children or adults to record the reading experiences and comment on the books. There is also space for other communication and reminders.

We hope this system will be a success and look forward to hearing the children enthuse about their reading at home experiences.

Thank you for your support. If you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact the class teacher or speak directly with me.

Yours sincerely

Denise Cottam
Head Teacher



