



St. Columbas Catholic Primary School

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"I have come that they may have life and have it to the full" (John 10 : 10)



Oxford Owl and Reading Tips for Parents

The online reading books on the 'Oxford Owl' site are to be used **in conjunction** and **alongside** the reading books sent home from school. Every week the teacher will continue to send books home in the usual way. Nothing here has changed as real books are extremely important and their value must not be ignored. Your child's class teacher formally listens to 6 children read per day so each child has a session with their teacher in the week; the children also have reading lessons in school and writing lessons to support this. I cannot stress enough the importance of parents being partners in the reading journey.

Parents are asked to read with their child (**every night**) in order to support learning. Reading is complex and there is a lot to remember; by reading every night at home you are allowing your children to develop further and support their memory, their learning of sounds or words and their meaning.

Children who read every night at home make significantly more progress than those who do not so the reading age of your child (unless they have needs) is literally in your hands.

Some children will be desperate to read and some may not: Oxford Owl can be used to support both types of children. If they are keen, then you can use the site to support them to read other books at the same level so that they get lots of practise. If they are not keen, then use it to allow them to pick their own books (at the right level) that look exciting.

Tips for the younger children when helping them to read

- Sounds must be said correctly: Listen to the videos on the school website or Tapestry to help your child say them correctly. If you say them incorrectly then your child will add extra sounds and then struggle to blend letters to make a word.
- Put up the tricky words around your house so the children can see them. If children are starting on their reading journey the tricky words are extremely important as they appear in lots of sentences.
- Read the book first with your child in an exciting voice so they are interested and then let them try to fill in certain words. Build this up
- Recap the sounds regularly with your child
- Look for the sounds or words when driving or walking home from school.
- Read other books to your child too that are not school books. Point out sounds or tricky words in these books
- Choose a time to read that suits your child (my child has 5 books before bed and he is keen to do this as he is delaying going to bed!!!) I would not ask him to read when I know he is desperate to play. You know your child best.
- Play games with sounds and words and see who can say the sound first to win a point.
- Read daily with your child
- Log your child's reading **once a week** on Tapestry, Dojo or the Google Classroom 'reading record' so your child's teacher can see what they have read. Tell them about how they have done with sounds, tricky words, expression and fluency. Tell them what books you have read.

Tips for older children

- Once your child can read they still need an adult to develop their learning. A child in the juniors should read to their parent and show expression, discuss punctuation and why it is used in a certain place.
- Adult modelling is still important. Read some bits of the book aloud to your child and talk about it
- Discuss the meaning of new words and try to use them in a sentence in your home so the children hear them and they become a part of their vocabulary.
- Make sure your child is reading material that is challenging enough (the reading scheme supports this) They can of course read other things too but their reading age, language and vocab will only improve if they are exposed to material that challenges them.

There will be much focus in school on reading over the next few months but your child will move forward quicker with parental support. I cannot stress this enough.

Next steps

- Staff are assessing reading and will put your child on the correct level reading book
- Books will be sent home
- Reading takes place in school
- Parents read at home with their child and use Oxford Owl to enhance and extend
- Log a reading record weekly with your child's teacher

If you need any further support, then do not hesitate to get in touch with me or your child's teacher.

Thank you and good luck.

Mrs O'Donnell

