February 22nd 2016

Kindergarten Home Reading Program

Dear Parents,

Kindergarten students will commence home reading this week. Students will be given two books on Monday and Wednesday. Home Reading folders must be returned to school every Wednesday and Friday please. It is recommended students spend 10-15 minutes reading to you each day.

This information sheet will provide you with some strategies to assist you in supporting your child’s home reading program.

Here are some hints to ensure home reading is a positive, rewarding experience for you and your child:

In the beginning...

- Encourage one to one correspondence- remind students to use their ‘pointing finger’ and point to a word when they say a word. This is particularly important in the initial stages of literacy development.

- Images support understanding. Discuss pictures and use visual cues to help predict words. It is important pictures are not covered up and children are not discouraged from using the visual cues.

- While your child is still developing their reading skills, encourage your child to look for letters and words they are familiar with, even if they are unable to read whole words or an entire sentence of text.

- Mimicking adults is an important part of the learning journey for early readers. By reading with them or to them to support early understanding, students are developing their concepts of text patterns and reading behaviours. As your child develops skill and confidence they will naturally take on a more independent role and will develop problem solving skills to decode the words on the page.

- Encourage the development of a ‘have a go’ attitude. Mistakes are a part of learning and our aim is to build reading confidence so that children will attempt unknown or ‘tricky’ words.

- Always ask questions about the book to encourage comprehension and develop a child’s ability to recall important information from the texts they read. Even when discussing beginner home readers encourage your child to tell you what happened in the book in the correct sequence of events.
As your child gains independence...

- When your child comes to an unknown word use the Pause, Prompt, Praise approach:
  - Pause: Give them time to think about the word.
  - Prompt:
    - Go back to the beginning of the sentence, or read past the difficult word to the end of the sentence.
    - Look for a clue in the picture or the words.
    - Look at the first letter and think about what the words could be.
    - Ask “Does this make sense?”
    - Try to sound out the word.
    - If necessary, tell your child the word (this should always come after your child has tried to problem solve independently).
  - Praise your child even if they have made mistakes or have needed assistance to read the word.

- Discuss familiar and unknown punctuation and how this helps form meaning.

- Discuss new and interesting vocabulary you encounter.

- As your child’s ability progresses, encourage them to read with expression and to develop their ‘story telling voice’.

- Remember that home readers are one part of a child’s experience with literacy and should complement other opportunities for reading at home. Continue to read quality books aloud to your child. This builds a child’s reading comprehension, understanding of language and vocabulary and fosters a love of reading for pleasure.

- Continue to discuss the books you are reading together to build comprehension skills and reinforce the message that we read for meaning. Encourage your child to make predictions about the book before reading and discuss the plot, characters and themes during and after the book.

- Help your child monitor his or her understanding and encourage them to continually ask themselves whether they understand what they’ve read.

We look forward to supporting you and your child on this exciting literacy journey. Please feel free to contact us if you have any further questions.

The Kindergarten Teachers