



Barrowby Church of England Primary School

Dear Parent/Carer,

We use a systematic synthetic phonics programme called Essential Letters and Sounds to teach daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1. A key element of developing early reading is ensuring that your child has the opportunity to practise their new phonic knowledge on a daily basis, through the decodable texts that they read.

Over the last term, we have assigned these texts through Oxford Owl. We are pleased to inform you that we have now received the phonics texts in school and we will no longer be setting phonics homework online. From Friday 18th March, your child will receive two phonics books; these books are clearly labelled as **ELS Phonics Book**. The texts that are assigned each week have been carefully matched to support the teaching and learning taking place in school and your child's phonic ability. We will only ask your child to read books independently when they can decode these by themselves.

To best support us in teaching your child/ren how to read we ask that you read these phonics books four times across the week. This will allow your child to re-read each text several times, building their confidence and fluency. Spending 10 minutes a day reading with your child will support them in their journey to becoming an independent reader.

We will continue to send Oxford Reading Tree texts home once a week. These texts, that are not designed to be phonically decodable, will be **reading for pleasure** books. We do not expect your child to read these independently. These books feature a range of different genres, including fiction, non-fiction and poetry, which will enable your child/ren to engage with different types of texts. Sharing these books with your child will help to instil a love of reading from the very beginning of their reading journey. Reading goes beyond simply using and applying phonics and our core reading scheme, Oxford Reading Tree, allows children to develop other fundamental reading skills include book orientation, prediction, character traits, word recognition whilst developing additional reading strategies such as contextual elements that aid comprehension and enjoyment.

Please note that the phonics books have been carefully aligned with the ELS phonics scheme that we use in school so that children can practise and embed the phonics teaching and learning that is taking place in lessons. Children will continue to be assessed in other areas of the reading curriculum and will receive core ORT scheme reading books that are matched to their reading ability by stage/level. The phonics books are provided by the same publishers as our main scheme and you will recognise the stages/levels printed on the books. Please do not worry if the reading stage of the phonics book is higher or lower than the reading stage/level of their core reading book. The books are allowing the children to develop key reading strategies in different ways.

We apologise for the delay in being able to send hard copy phonics texts home but appreciate your understanding and patience during the past term. The children are very excited about bringing their phonics books home on Friday. We cannot stress the importance of reading these books with your child four times a week. We ask that all school books remain in your child's reading folder and that their reading folder is brought to school each day. We will continue to change reading books from the main scheme of a weekly basis but to accommodate the additional reading that we require children to do at home we will now only send two books home from the main scheme. Two phonics books will be sent home every Friday and the previous week's books removed from their reading folder. Your child should have four reading books a week: two phonics books and two scheme books.

Thank you for your ongoing support with reading and phonics.

Yours sincerely

Mr L Batey
Head teacher

