

Dear Parents and Carers of Pupils in Hazel Class

### **Development of our phonics phase reading books and approach to reading at home**

As you are aware in January 2020 we introduced our new reading books and scheme for pupils in Early Years and KS1. Our new phonics phase reading books (replacing our previous colour banded reading books), arrived at the end of the autumn term and were categorised by the teachers into phonic stages – each stage also sub categorised in to a, b and c. All books are based on ‘Letters and Sounds’ which is the systematic synthetic phonics programme that we use in school.

**Synthetic phonics** is a method of teaching reading. Children are taught to read letters or groups of letters by saying the sound(s) they represent. Children start to read words by blending (synthesising) the sounds (phonemes) together to make a word. **Systematic synthetic phonics** is key to teaching children reading and writing. It provides them with strategies to decode words, which is especially important because English is such a difficult language to learn as there are many different ways to make the same sound from different letters or combinations of letters. This means that all of the reading scheme books that we use in school are decodable and will follow the groups of phonemes being learned by the children. ***Therefore your child’s book will match the phonic level they are working on in school.***

We all know that reading opens the door to all learning. A child who reads a lot will become a good reader. A good reader will be able to read challenging material. A child who reads challenging material is a child who will learn. The more a child learns the more a child wants to find out. Both Ofsted and DfE recommend that all children bring home a phonetically decodable book to be shared with adults. Currently, pupils in Hazel class bring home books matched to their phonetic learning. Pupils are asked to read at home to an adult at least 3 times a week; this can be recorded onto the Go Read app which is checked weekly by adults in Hazel Class.

***At Sutton Benger, our expectation is that pupils read a book at least 3 times with an adult before being changed.*** Each read should follow the pattern below:

1. **Decoding;** this is the ability to apply knowledge of letter-sound relationships, including knowledge of letter patterns, to correctly pronounce written words.
2. **Fluency and prosody;** this is the ability to read with pace without the need to sound out including the ability to use expression, timing, phrasing, intonation and emphasis.
3. **Understanding and comprehension;** this is the skill of deriving meaning and making links from text or pictures.

This may mean that your child will have a book for the whole week or longer. *Books will be changed when an adult is able to see that the above criteria has been achieved and the child is ready to move on.*

Many thanks again for all the support you give the children with their reading at home; it really does make a difference. I am planning a reading workshop for adults during the Autumn term which will also be put onto our class pages. In the workshop I will go into more detail about the importance of reading for decoding, fluency and understanding. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Many thanks

Mrs Magson KS1 English and Phonics lead

