

Dear Parents,

Reorganisation of Home Reading Books

We've been looking at making further improvements to the way we support children moving from reading scheme books as home readers to reading 'real books.' For this reason, we had the reading corner books in Years 2, 3 and 4 professionally 'book banded' in 2015. The aim was to support the children by using book bands as a more structured transition from Oxford Reading Tree (ORT) Stages.

While this had a certain measure of success, we were still concerned about the gap between a 'Stage 12 reader' and a truly 'free' reader. However we are not able to finance substantial additions to the reading scheme.

Our solution has been to decide on a complete switch from ORT stages to a progression through book bands for all home readers. This has allowed us to integrate a range of new materials to the home reading resources; more phonic-linked books, previously under-used former guided reading books, and others. It extends the structure beyond Y2 into Y4 or Y4, offers greater breadth of materials, including non-fiction and poetry, and more fully integrates the banded books in each class library. Some of you may be relieved to hear that Biff, Chip and Kipper do not feature among the new additions...

From September 2017, children will be given home-reading books from within a colour band rather than an ORT Stage. This may appear odd initially as some ORT stages spread into different bands - for example some stage 4 books are in yellow band, some in blue and some in green. We'll start Y1, Y2 and Y3 children from the book they last took home and progress within the relevant band. Where this leads to a child encountering a book they read previously, we'll miss that book out. The intention is that children will now have a structure at least towards the end of Year 3. We will continue to use existing Reading Records or recording/monitoring systems for the time being.

Mr Jarvis will run a reading curriculum meeting for parents of Y1, 2 and 3 children on Thursday 7th September at 2.30-3.15pm. The meeting will be repeated at 6-6.45pm for those parents unable to make the earlier session. This will give the opportunity to discuss early reading in greater depth and answer any questions.

A guide to the levels is shown here, however it should be used with a degree of caution as children can become accustomed to the style and rhythm of the ORT books and find it less comfortable when reading books whose structures and language are more varied.

Book Bands		
Band	Colour	Label
0	lilac	
1	pink	
2	red	
3	yellow	
4	blue	
5	green	
6	orange	
7	turquoise	
8	purple	
9	gold	
10	white	
11	lime green	
12	brown	
13	grey	

If you have any questions about this, please try to attend the reading meeting, ask your child's teacher - or contact me.

Yours truly,
C Jarvis