

## Reading with your child

If you are not a Manx speaker, *it's fine to focus on English books for your home reading with your child*. Reading is a transferrable skill. We will initially be teaching reading skills through Manx, but when your child has learned to read they will be able to apply their reading skills to English. The two languages share an alphabet and have similar phonetic rules and irregularities .

Children will need to develop a range of strategies to become successful readers. Before they become fluent they may over-rely on one strategy.

Using **phonic skills**, or 'sounding out' is a well-known early reading skill, although, in isolation, it won't work for lots of words in Manx or English.

To begin with, a combination of **initial letter-sound recognition** plus using **context** to predict what word makes sense can get children started. Sometimes parents are worried that their children are 'guessing' the words, but using context to predict a word is an important strategy.

As children become more fluent, **breaking a longer word into phonetically recognisable 'chunks'** can also be helpful

**Remembering patterns** is very important when learning to read. Again, lots of parents worry that their children are 'cheating' by remembering a repeated phrase rather than phonetically decoding it on each page, but the ability to remember a repeated pattern is an important reading skill. One of the best ways you can help your child learn to read is by regularly reading aloud to them. It's really great if you repeat favourite books until phrases are learnt by heart. Repetition, rhythm and rhyme are fun, and essential ingredients!

The more '**sight words**' children are able to instantly recognise, the more fluent their reading will become. This is a skill that varies from child to child. You may find that your child only needs to see a word once or twice to remember it. However some children will need lots of repetition before they can recognise new words. You can help your child build their sight word vocabulary at home with methods such as flashcards and 'look, cover, write,check.'

As children begin to read longer texts they will encounter more unfamiliar words. Reading can become stilted as children get stuck on an unfamiliar word, unable to decode it despite repeated attempts. Encourage them to **return to the start of the sentence and read back** until they reach the word again. Re-emphasising the context of the word within the sentence may give the reader the cue they need to realise what the word might be. Help them build a persistent mindset; 'that strategy isn't working for me, what else can I try?'

**Comprehension skills** can be developed by making time to talk about books. Pausing to discuss what has happened so far, what might happen next and why characters have acted in a particular way, can all help deepen understanding. Discussing authorial choices and what has worked for them as a reader will strengthen children's own abilities as writers. (What's your favourite bit? Why?)

Children learn to read at different rates, but they all enjoy stories. Positive reading experiences at home and school will support them in becoming confident, fluent readers.

