

SEND News – Looking forward...and reading!



Hello everyone,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the children and young people and their parents and carers in Acorn Education Trust for their superb efforts to navigate the lockdown period and all the changes surrounding the Coronavirus pandemic. I have loved hearing the stories of what you've been up to. I know that this time has been challenging on occasion and you've all worked incredibly hard.

I would also like to thank all the SENCOs in the Acorn Team who have worked tirelessly during this period contacting parents and carers, completing risk assessments, conducting meetings online, planning provision and ensuring things are all ready for when the school opens to more children and all the other usual things they've been doing too. Heads, teachers, support staff have also made a significant contribution to ensure that our children are safe, happy and well.

September will be another new start for us – schools have been busy preparing the transition back and planning an exciting curriculum to enthuse and inspire all children. We are so looking forward to seeing everyone again.

If your child is primary age and a bit worried about coming back to school, please see this link where I've recorded a short social story about the return to school - <https://www.loom.com/share/565ae6221d3f424186f3cf261366014a>

Have a restful summer break when it comes. Let's hope the nice weather returns. Best wishes, Sue Fulbrook (SEND Director)

Summer Lego Challenge –

'My Lego World' challenges you to create a place that you would like to visit or to build a place that is very special to you. It can be a real place or total fantasy! Record your build with a photo, video, powerpoint or drawing.

Send your pictures to
vhg@kingdown.wilts.sch.uk

Some useful web links for the summer:

Wiltshire Early Help support for children with emotional and mental health difficulties – www.onyourmind.org.uk

Ideas for summer activities –
www.letsgowiththechildren.co.uk/events/wiltshire/

Activities indoors - <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/activities/indoor-activities>

Nature activities -
<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2020/03/kids-nature-activities-self-isolation/>

The Joy of Reading

Reading should be a fun, relaxing activity that children can do anywhere. At home, at school, on a train/bus/car etc. However, some children, including those with special or additional educational needs (autism, dyslexia and ADHD etc.) can find reading challenging. This can make the reading experience a battle rather than a joy. I have found that those children feel less confident and are often reluctant to read. Here are some ideas to make the experience fun.



Model the joy in reading

Read to your child every single day. Hearing someone else read has the amazing possibility of sparking creativity and interest and also offers a chance to work on comprehension without the battle of decoding the text. Reading books to your child

(or listening to audio books) allows him or her to get into books that his peers are reading.



Choose a good interesting text

When reading with your child, start with books that they are interested in and that have lots of colourful pictures. This could be fiction and non-fiction. Use the pictures to support their understanding and talk about what is going on in the picture before you begin with the text. This will provide children with the context and can help them predict the words in the text.

Shared reading

This means alternating between you and your child so your child can copy your expressions and tone of voice when reading a story.

Don't forget to consistently praise your child, especially if they have made a mistake and then corrected it themselves. This is where the learning is happening!



Small steps are the key to success

As for all of us there are going to be days where children feel disinterested and disengaged with reading. That is Ok do not force the situation as it can lead to negativity about reading.

Encourage your child to share read or choose a different text or talk about the story, perhaps asking questions to improve comprehension, this way the children are still engaging with the text.

Explore different types of texts

Avoid limiting your child's exposure to a single type of book. Clearly books need to be age appropriate but that should be the only limitation. Visit your local library to see what is available:

Fiction, non-fiction, picture books, wordless books, comics, graphic novels, poetry, books connected to TV programs and so on.

Online reading resources

Free resources from Barrington Stoke:

<https://www.barringtonstoke.co.uk/blog/2020/03/23/free-resources-from-barrington-stoke/>

A load of free on line children's e-books including non-fiction

<https://www.worldbookday.com/world-of-stories/#picture-booksMzA2Mjp1cw==>