



SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Federation of Abbey Infant and Junior School

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Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to explain a small change in how we are selecting reading books for children across the school. When choosing a reading book, we consider not only **what a child can decode (their reading age)**, but also **how fluently they can read**. This means that, on occasions, your child may bring home a book that appears easier than you might expect. This is intentional.

A book that a child can read accurately and confidently provides an excellent opportunity to develop **fluency**. Fluent readers read smoothly, at an appropriate pace, with expression and with less effort spent working out individual words. Developing this skill is an important part of becoming a confident reader and also helps children to focus more easily on understanding what they read.

How can you help at home?

Model fluent reading. Read a section of the book to your child, showing them how a fluent reader uses expression, pauses at punctuation and changes their voice to reflect meaning.

Read the same section more than once. Re-reading is not a sign that a book is too easy. In fact, repetition is very useful for developing fluency. Each time a child rereads a passage, their reading can become smoother, more accurate and more expressive.

Take turns reading. You could read a paragraph or page first and then ask your child to read it back to you, encouraging them to copy your pace, expression and phrasing.

Talk about the book. Ask questions about what has happened, what a character might be thinking or feeling, and what your child thinks might happen next. Reading fluently is important, but understanding and enjoying the text remain at the heart of reading.

Praise smooth, expressive reading. Encourage your child when they read with expression, rather than focusing only on how quickly they can finish a page.

We hope this helps to explain why your child may sometimes bring home a book that feels familiar or relatively easy. These books are not intended to limit your child's reading; rather, they provide an opportunity

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to practise and strengthen the skills that fluent readers need.

Most importantly, please continue to **read regularly, read together and enjoy books**. Your involvement and enthusiasm make a significant difference to your child's development as a reader.

Thank you for your continued support.

Kind regards,

Martin McGowan
Assistant Head Teacher

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