



St Matthew's CE Academy

A Member of St Chad's Academies Trust



Lightwood Road. Rough Close. Stoke-on-Trent. ST3 7NE
Tel: 01782 394890 email: stmatthew@stmatthewsacademyce.org.uk
WEB: <http://www.stmatthews.stoke.sch.uk/>



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Dear Parents,

At St Matthew's, we are continually striving to ensure that your child/ren receive the best possible education across the curriculum. Reading, spelling and handwriting are some areas of priority that we feel benefits enormously from parental support. I hope to provide some clarification on how reading, spelling and handwriting are tracked in school, and how this can be supported at home.

How often should I read with my child?

We hope that every child can benefit from 10 minutes worth of reading with a parent/carer every night. As reading should be enjoyable experience, this can be their school reading book, magazines, newspapers, comics, Ipad texts or websites. We also encourage children to read a wide variety of texts, so please continue to read their favourite bedtime stories, library books & books of their choice. Please do not feel that your children need to read a whole book every night: quality understanding far outweighs quantity.

How often will my child read at school?

Reading is a transferable skill. At St Matthew's, we believe that reading should be embedded into all elements of the curriculum as this helps pupils to read and understand meaning in context. This means that, **every day**, an element of reading is taught.

Before the end of this week, your child will receive a school reading book. This book has been issued by your child's class teacher and is based on current assessments of your child's reading ability. This ability is based on reading fluency and comprehensive understanding. This reading book will be changed on a **weekly** basis (less frequently for longer books/novels). It is important that your child can read this text fluently, and has a secure understanding of its meaning.

Reading fluency & comprehension

Whilst it is important that children of all ages have good word recognition, there is also a high priority on comprehension and understanding. During your 10 minutes reading time, please ensure that you spend time questioning and discussing the text & illustrations/pictures, as this develops the children's understanding of texts.

St Matthew's are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.



Some examples:

How many balls are there on the playground?

How many boys/girls are there?

What colour is the slide?

Why are the children smiling?

If you were at that playground, what would you be doing?

What time of year do you think it is? How do you know?



Spelling and Handwriting

As with reading, at St Matthew's, we believe that spelling and handwriting are transferable skills: this means that we utilise every subject of the curriculum to develop spelling and handwriting skills. Spelling and handwriting are key priorities to every lesson during the school day.

How can I help my child with spelling and handwriting?

At the front of your child's homework book, you will find a statutory word list. This list has been issued by the Department for Education, and contain words your child is expected to be able to spell **at the end of Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6**. Before the end of this week, your child will receive their first spelling list of 10 words. We encourage pupils to practise these spellings each week, in preparation for your child's weekly spelling test. It is during this practise that handwriting and letter formation can also be supported.

Spelling Tests

Your child's class teacher will inform you of on which day the weekly spelling test will take place. Each test will consist of between 11 and 20 spellings: 10 from the spelling list received, and the additional words being taken from the statutory word list. The number of additional spellings your child receives will be based on their academic ability and well-being.

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