Ashmead Combined School

"Ashmead gives its children t ıgs... one is roots, the other wings"

Head Teacher Michael Pearse

September 2026

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are very lucky to have a wide selection of exciting books for the children to read at home and school and to encourage reading for pleasure. As we begin a new school year, we have put together some frequently asked questions about 'Reading at Home' which will, hopefully, help support your child on their reading journey in Year 1. There is also lots of additional information stuck inside the front and back covers of your child's Reading Records.

What days are my child's books changed in school?
Your child has two different books to enjoy reading and sharing with you each week.

Tuesday – children choose a 'bedtime story' book to share with you (returned on Friday)
Friday – Little Wandle school reading book is sent home to read with you (returned on Tuesday)

Please ensure that children return books back to school on the correct day, as they will not be able to take another reading book home until they have returned the book they already have. It is essential that children take care of their books at home – there will be a charge to the cost of any lost/damaged book.

My child can't read their bedtime story book. What should I do?
There is no expectation from us for your child to be able to read their bedtime story book to you. This is a book, chosen by each child, for them to share with you at home. They may be able to talk about and answer questions about the pictures and what has been read, read some of the words/sentences or you can simply read the book to them. It is a book for you to enjoy sharing together.

How often should I be reading with my child?
Information at the front of your child's Reading Record explains how we organise reading in Year 1. We recommend that children read for at least 5 minutes a day and it is important to try to read their book ***more than once*** to really develop their understanding of what they are reading as well as develop confidence, fluency and expression. One read a day is counted towards reading badges.

Do the children still earn Reading Badges?
Each daily read is added up and recorded each week and is then counted towards achieving Bronze, Silver and Gold Reading Awards across the school year. When the children reach these milestones, they will be awarded a reading badge to recognise their achievements**.** As an extra incentive to encourage regular reading, we are currently able to reward each child with a book of their choice to keep, along with their reading badge. This will continue for as long as our supply of books lasts.

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Insignis Academy Trust

What type of reading counts towards the 'one read a day'?
We encourage and value the importance of reading for pleasure and look forward to hearing about what the children have been reading at home with you, what they have enjoyed and what they have read/found out from their books. All types of reading can be counted towards their reading badges, so please do write down in their reading records anything they have read. This could be a book from school or home, leaflets, on a tablet or kindle, a newspaper, magazine or comic - we value all types of reading.

Why does my child's book seem too easy for them to read?
We regularly assess and listen to your children read and this informs which books they should be reading and the appropriate level required for them to confidently apply their phonic knowledge. Children should be reading their Little Wandle book almost fluently, with 95% of the words within the book being read automatically. It may seem like the book is too easy but this is what we are aiming for! This shows that the book is correctly pitched at the right level for your child to read fluently and will enable them to be able to develop their comprehension skills further whilst reading confidently for meaning.

How can I challenge my child more at home?
In your child's Reading Record, you will find useful questions to help you support your child to read at home and to further develop their understanding of what they are reading through questioning and discussion. It is really important that children are reading for meaning and these questions correspond to the type of questions we are also asking in school. They will be really helpful for you to use to challenge your child and to develop their deeper understanding of the texts they are reading. It is important that they can apply these skills to different types of texts, for example, fiction and non-fiction or poetry.

Reading a small amount ***every day*** has an immeasurably positive impact on all areas of your child's learning and also on their well-being. We really hope that you and your child enjoy and take genuine pleasure and excitement from their reading at home this year.

Thank you very much for your continued support. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

The Year 1 Team