

2026-2027



HOME LEARNING AT CARRON

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

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Home Learning at Carron

A Guide for Parents and Carers

Thank you to everyone who took part in our homework survey in February 2025. We had a great response, and your feedback is incredibly valuable. We have analysed the results alongside evidence-based research from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) to create a new, clear approach to homework for our school.

Key Survey Findings

- ❖ **Positive Perceptions:** The majority of parents (71%) believe that homework is an important part of school life and that it positively impacts their child's learning (72%).
- ❖ **Feedback:** Many parents were unsure whether their child receives feedback on their homework from teachers.
- ❖ **Preference for Paper:** A significant majority of parents (75%) expressed a strong preference for a return to paper-based homework to improve ease of access and communication of weekly tasks.
- ❖ **Balance and Enjoyment:** Parents had mixed feelings about the amount of homework, with 43% feeling it was "just right." Many noted that their child's enjoyment of homework depends on the task's format and content.
- ❖ **A Call for Independence:** The survey highlighted that many children (39%) require support to complete homework independently, and for some families, it can cause stress.

What the Research Says (EEF) The EEF's research on homework highlights a few key points that align with your feedback:

- ❖ **Quality Over Quantity:** The EEF shows that the quality and purpose of a homework task are more important than the amount of time spent on it.
 - ❖ **Feedback is Essential:** For homework to have the greatest impact, pupils must receive high-quality feedback that helps them to improve.
 - ❖ **Impact Varies by Age:** Research indicates that the impact of homework is smaller for primary pupils compared to secondary pupils, suggesting that for younger children, homework should focus on simple practice and consolidating core skills.
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Our Approach to Homework

Based on your feedback and EEF guidance, we are introducing a new, differentiated approach to homework. The focus will be on purposeful tasks that align with the needs of our pupils at each stage.

We will provide clear instructions and, where possible, offer differentiated tasks or optional scaffolding to help children who need extra support. If homework is causing stress, please communicate with your child's teacher so we can work together to find a solution.

❖ **Primary 1 - Primary 5**

To address your clear preference for improved accessibility, all homework for pupils in P1 to P5 will be issued in a bag drop. Your child's teacher will provide home learning opportunities each week to practise and consolidate core skills within:

- ❖ Literacy (phonics and spelling)
- ❖ Reading
- ❖ Numeracy and Maths
- ❖ Optional Cross Curricular Competitions

Note: Google Classroom ([Google Classroom Guide](#)) will only be used for pupils in P1-5 in the event of school closures due to adverse weather or other unforeseen circumstances.

❖ **Primary 6 - Primary 7**

Our P6 and P7 pupils, with their 1:1 authority-issued iPads, will receive their homework weekly via Google Classroom ([Google Classroom Guide](#)). This will help them develop the independent digital literacy and organisational skills they will need for secondary school.

Homework will include:

- ❖ Numeracy and Maths
- ❖ Literacy (spelling)
- ❖ Reading
- ❖ Optional Cross Curricular Competitions

Literacy & English

For spelling, we use a blended approach that incorporates both digital and traditional resources to support learning at home. In school, our teaching is aligned with the NL Active Literacy programme ([P1-3 Active Literacy Guide](#) and [P4-7 Active Literacy Guide](#)), and this is reinforced at home through our assigned homework tasks.

As a Gold Reading School, fostering a love for reading both at home and in school is a top priority. Over the past few years, we've worked tirelessly to build core literacy skills and a strong reading culture within our school, and we extend this passion for reading into your home. Each week, your child will bring home a reading book, and their teacher will guide them on which pages or chapters to read throughout the week.

In Primary 1 and 2, pupils engage with StoryWorlds ([StoryWorlds Guide](#)), a printed reading programme *. For Primary 3 - 7, we transition to a mix of print and digital resources, such as Bug Club ([BugClub Guide](#)). Our more independent readers in Primary 5 to 7 also use Accelerated Reader, which allows them to select books at their own reading level and take quizzes to check their comprehension ([Accelerated Reader Guide](#)). This varied approach ensures children are consistently challenged and engaged with texts appropriate for their stage.

* Note: we are streamlining our learning tools by replacing Story Worlds with Bug Club. Beginning with Primary 1, this will be complete by session 2027-2028.

We strongly encourage you to set aside time each day to read with your child. The benefits of this shared reading time are profound - helping to develop their literacy skills, nurture imagination, and foster a lifelong love of reading. Your involvement is crucial in supporting their reading journey and ensuring that the love of books becomes a vital part of their learning.

Numeracy and Maths

Across Primary 2 - Primary 7, we use Sumdog as a key resource for practising numeracy, maths, and core skills at home. This engaging, adaptive game-based digital platform is tailored to each child's level, helping them build confidence and fluency in their mathematical abilities in a way that is both effective and fun ([Sumdog Guide](#)).

Carron Primary School Website

Our [school website](#) is designed to make curricular information, parent guides and online resources easily accessible for our families. It provides everything you need to supplement and enhance learning at home—all in one convenient place! This can be used if you're looking for extra tasks to reinforce learning or challenge your child.

'Home Learning at Carron' ensures that homework is purposeful, manageable, and aligns with the needs of our pupils at each stage of their primary school journey. Thank you for your continued support.

Active Literacy Stage 1-3

A Guide for Parents



This guide is designed to provide you with information about how your child is taught phonics, spelling, reading, and writing at our school using the NL Active Literacy programme. It also offers suggestions for how you can support your child's learning at home. The Active Literacy programme aims to make learning active, enjoyable, and fun, fostering collaborative working among children.

Principles of the Programme

The Active Literacy programme at Stages 1-3 takes a **holistic, synthetic, and integrated approach** to phonics learning. It promotes daily Listening and Talking, Reading, and Writing across the curriculum. The reading and writing aspects of the programme adopt an integrated approach, directly linking to the spelling and phonics programmes. Children are taught to apply their knowledge of spelling and phonics within the context of reading and writing.

Phonics

Phonics focuses on understanding the sounds of language.

What is a Phoneme? A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound that can alter the meaning of a word. This can be in the form of a single letter or a joined phoneme. For example:

- Single Phoneme: 'p' in 'pin' / 'b' in 'bin', 'a' as in 'apple', 'd' as in 'dog'.
- Joined Phoneme: 'ch' in 'chop' / 'sh' in 'shop', 'sh' as in 'shop', 'ch' as in 'church', 'igh' as in 'light'.
- Split Phoneme: 'a_e' as in 'lane', 'i_e' as in 'line'.

In Class Phonics is taught with **one main focused lesson in the week**, followed by short daily activities to reinforce the learning.

- Initially, in **Stage 1 (Term 1)**, two sounds (specifically two single phoneme sounds) are taught per week.
- This is then followed by **one taught phoneme sound per week** (which could be a joined or split phoneme in Stages 2 and 3).
- The teacher introduces each sound in a context, such as a story or action. This might involve a Jolly Phonics song, Geraldine the Giraffe (YouTube), or Alpha Blocks (Cbeebies).

- The teacher demonstrates letter formation and **word building** using a magnetic board and letters. Children are provided with a magnetic board to mirror the taught lesson and work independently or with a partner.
- Children are taught to work with a partner, a method called **reciprocal teaching**, to consolidate the lesson. They take turns guiding each other through the word building, reading, and writing process. This involves encouraging their partner to **say, make/break, blend, read, and write** each word. They then check each other's work for correct formation and accurate spelling.
- The **Five Step Strategy** is used and modelled when teaching a new phoneme. For example:

 **SAY:** Say the word out loud together e.g. 'train'.

 **MAKE / BREAK (segmenting):** Use magnetic/cut-out letters to build the word, then pull the sounds apart e.g. 't-r-ai-n'.

 **BLEND:** Push the letters back together, sweeping a finger under them.

 **READ:** Read the completed word aloud.

 **WRITE:** Cover the word and write it from memory.

- By Stages 2 and 3, children begin to use **Elkonin Boxes**. These are a series of boxes allowing children to investigate and record a word by identifying and recording each sound (phoneme) within it. For example:

Word "SHIP" (3 sounds: /sh/ - /i/ - /p/)

[sh] [i] [p]


-----> (Slide finger along arrow to blend). Note that digraphs (two letters making one sound, like 'sh' or 'ch') sit together in a single box!"

It is important to note that Elkonin boxes are only used for words that can be sounded phonetically; they cannot be used with common/tricky words or words containing split phonemes like 'aeroplane'.

- **Phoneme Stories** are also used, which contain words from the taught phoneme word list.
- Other in-class activities include using alphabet cards/sound books/posters, singing the alphabet (P1), dictation, and whiteboards and pens.

At Home You can support your child's phonics learning at home by:

- Helping them use new sounds to **make words** in the same way they would with magnetic boards in school.
- Encouraging them to **find, read, and write words containing the taught phoneme** within their reading books, newspapers, magazines, or environmental print. Your child's teacher may provide a phoneme word maker sheet for support.
- Taking turns to **dictate simple sentences** containing the phoneme words, and acting as the 'teacher' to check each other's work.
- Children can also try **writing their own phoneme story** using words from their spelling homework.

- **Active Spelling Suggestions** (detailed below in the Spelling section) can also be used to reinforce phonics learning.
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Spelling

Spelling and phonics are taught separately at this stage, with a different methodology adopted for each.

In Class

- Spelling is taught with **one main focused lesson in the week**, followed by short daily activities to reinforce the learning.
- The words from the taught lesson are known as **common words**. These are the words children are most likely to encounter when reading simple texts and will use in their writing.
- Children have opportunities throughout the week to work with a partner using **reciprocal teaching**. They take turns to dictate words and sentences, and then check their partner's work for correct letter formation and accurate spelling.
- Children are taught **Strategy Spelling**, which helps them problem-solve and spell **tricky words** – words that do not always follow patterns or rules.

Assessment Children are not assessed purely on the basis of a single word spelling test. Teachers make judgments about a child's ability to spell words by placing them in context, such as a dictated sentence. Children receive continuous assessment and feedback from teachers and peers, as well as opportunities for self-assessment. Dictation is also used for assessment purposes.

Spelling Strategies The following strategies are taught to help children spell words:

- **Using Phoneme Knowledge (sounding out)**: Breaking words down into their individual sounds. This can include using Elkonin boxes for phonetically soundable words.
- **Syllabification**: Breaking words into syllables. Children can clap out words to identify syllables, for example, go-ing or An-drew. Each syllable will contain a vowel.
- **Word Shape**: Looking at the letter shape, size, and identifying ascending and descending letters.
- **Tricky Letters**: Looking at the position of tricky letters as an aid to spelling.
- **Compound Words**: Breaking compound words into their simpler parts, for example, 'into' becomes 'in' and 'to', or 'breakfast' becomes 'break' + 'fast'.
- **Mnemonic**: Using an aide memoire or memory device, such as "Big Elephants Can Add Up Sums Easily" for 'because'. Other examples include 'necessary' (one collar, two sleeves) or 'could' (o – oh, u – you, l – lucky, d – duck).
- **Using Analogy**: Applying knowledge of how to spell one word to spell similar words. For instance, if you can spell 'hill', you can spell 'mill', 'will', 'fill'; or if you know 'hen', you can spell 'then', 'when'.

At Home To support spelling at home:

- When your child brings home a list of common words, **discuss with them which strategy they would use** to help remember how to spell each word.
 - To reinforce learning, they can use the **Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check method** to practice words.
 - You could also **take turns to dictate simple sentences** containing the common words, and take turns being the 'teacher' to check each other's work.
 - Our school provides **Active Spelling Homework Grids** with a variety of suggested activities for Primary 1-3. These include:
 - **Primary 1:** Creative Letters (cutting from newspapers), Play Doh, Air Write, Hangman, Big Writing, Chalk Spelling, Crayon Spelling, Felt tip pen Spelling, Paint your Words, Finger Tracing, Messy Spelling (shaving foam/sand/dirt), Pasta Words, Torch Spelling, Picture Words, Speedy Spell, Sentences, Practice Test, or creating their own activity.
 - **Primary 2:** Creative Letters, Squiggly Writing, Vowel Words (different colour), Hangman, Big and Small Writing, Pyramid Spelling, Rainbow Spelling, Felt tip pen Spelling, Rhyming Words, Finger Tracing, Stencil Words, Capital Letters, Connect the Dots, Alphabetical Order, Speedy Spell, Silly Sentences, Sentences, Practice Test, or creating their own activity.
 - **Primary 3:** Snap!, Squiggly Writing, Consonant Words (different colour), Hangman, Reverse Alphabetical Order, Pyramid Spelling, Other handed words, Cheerleading Words, Syllable Words, Scrambled Words, Find the Words, Forwards/Backwards, Chant, Short Story Words, Speedy Spell, Silly Sentences, Sentences, Practice Test, or creating their own activity.
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Reading

The reading programme aims to develop **reflective readers** who understand and can apply comprehension and word attack strategies.

In Class

- Children are taught to read using the **Guided Reading approach**. This involves using a **variety of quality short texts** from a range of publishers, rather than a traditional 'reading scheme'.
- Books are organised into levels known as '**banding**', with each band represented by a different colour and matched to expected age and stage. Within each band, there is a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts to expose children to many styles of writing.
- The teacher provides an overview of the text, known as a '**walkthrough**', having read the book prior to the lesson and identified key vocabulary (common words).
- The teacher helps children read topic words by drawing their attention to **picture clues**.
- Time is dedicated to teaching various **comprehension strategies** to help children better understand the text. Key strategies include: monitoring understanding,

answering questions, pupil generated questions, recognising story structure, summarising, and using pictures and word plans.

- Children also learn **word attack strategies** to enable them to decode difficult words.
- After the initial walkthrough, children have opportunities to **read aloud** in a group setting or with a partner, with the teacher circulating to listen and provide feedback.
- A wide variety of books are used to develop both comprehension and fluency.

Word Attack Strategies If your child encounters a tricky word, they are taught to use the following strategies:

- **Look at the first letter.**
- **Sound out the first few letters.**
- **Break the word into syllables.**
- **Look at the last letters.**
- **Read the sentence again.**
- **Look at the picture.**
- **Look at the shape of the word.**

At Home When your child brings home a reading book:

- **Encourage them to read aloud.**
 - Help them to make use of the **word attack strategies** if they encounter a tricky word.
 - You can also help them make links to their spelling and phonics programme by encouraging them to **find, read, and write common words and words containing their phoneme** within the reading book.
 - Useful websites for reading support include: www.activelearnprimary.co.uk.
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Writing

The writing programme aims to ensure children **have fun with writing, develop a positive attitude**, and **see themselves as writers**. It provides daily opportunities to write for different purposes and in cross-curricular contexts.

In Class

- There is **one taught writing lesson per week** that focuses on a particular genre.
- **A range of writing genres are taught** and children have opportunities to write personal and imaginative pieces each term.
- Children also have **daily opportunities to write** for a variety of purposes and reasons across the curriculum.
- Taught lessons help with grammar and composition.
- Children have regular opportunities to discuss their writing and celebrate success.

The Writing Process The writing process in class follows four stages:

1. **Preparing to write** – which involves 'the big conversation'.
2. **The writing process** itself.

3. **Conferencing, reading, checking, and improving** their work.
4. **Evaluating, next steps, publishing, and celebrating success.**

At Home While there isn't a specific 'At Home' advice for writing separate from reading and spelling, the integrated nature of the programme means that many activities you do to support reading and spelling will also support writing. Encouraging your child to:

- **Write words and sentences** as part of their phonics and spelling homework.
- **Create their own phoneme stories.**
- **Engage in creative writing tasks** from the spelling homework grids, such as writing silly sentences or short stories.
- **Discuss their reading books** and express their ideas verbally will also strengthen their writing skills.
- Useful websites for writing support include: the BBC Schools KS1 Bitesize literacy sections on sentences and punctuation.

We hope this guide provides you with a clear understanding of our Active Literacy programme and empowers you to support your child's learning journey at home.

Active Literacy Stage 4-7

A Guide for Parents



This guide is designed to provide you with information about how your child is taught phonics, spelling, reading, and writing at our school using the NL Active Literacy programme. It also offers suggestions for how you can support your child's learning at home. The Active Literacy programme aims to make learning active, enjoyable, and fun, fostering collaborative working among children.

Principles of the Programme

The Active Literacy programme at Stages 4-7 builds upon skills taught in Stages 1-3. It adopts an **integrated approach**, meaning there is a direct link between the spelling, phonics, reading, and writing programmes. Children are taught to apply their knowledge of spelling and phonics within the context of reading and writing. The programme is designed to ensure children are not learning in isolation but through **collaborative working** in pairs and trios, making tasks active, enjoyable, and fun. It also promotes **daily Listening and Talking, Reading and Writing across the curriculum**.

In Class

Phonics and Spelling (Stage 4-5) At this stage, **spelling and phonics are taught together**. The instruction occurs in a **four-week block**, with two weeks focusing on phonemes and their representations, one week on strategy spelling, and one week on spelling rules.

- Children continue to use the **SAY, MAKE/BREAK, BLEND, READ, and WRITE structure** they learned in Stages 1-3. They also continue to work with a partner and use **reciprocal teaching** to support each other.
- The first two weeks focus on teaching the **different representations of a phoneme sound** (e.g., the 'ee' sound can be made by 'ee', 'e', 'ea', 'ie', 'e-e'). Children participate in independent and partner tasks to consolidate their phonological awareness.
- On day six of the ten-day phoneme programme, children are introduced to **diacritical marking**, which involves investigating words to recognise and identify the phonemes they contain. This involves listening carefully and enunciating words accurately.
 - **Single Sounds/Phonemes** are marked with a dot under each sound (e.g., the word 'c-a-t' has three sounds).
 - **Joined Phonemes** are underlined with a line (e.g., the word 'sh-i-p' has three sounds).

- **Split Phonemes** (formerly 'magic e' words) are marked with a joining loop above the vowel and the letter 'e' (e.g., the word 'm-a-k-e' has three sounds).

Symbol	Name	How It Works	Example Visual
Dot (•)	Single Sound	Under single letters	c a t • • •
Line (—)	Digraph / Sound Button	Under two letters making one sound	sh i p — • •
Loop (^)	Split Digraph	Curved bridge connecting vowels	m a k e • •

- Children continue to use **Elkonin boxes** to break/segment words into phonemes or individual sounds and record them. However, Elkonin boxes are only used for words that can be sounded phonetically and cannot be used with common/tricky words or words with split phonemes.
- Week three focuses on **strategy spelling**, using a 'Thinking Strategies Approach'. Children use common word units or create personal spelling word banks. The strategies taught include:
 - **Using Phoneme Knowledge** (sounding out).
 - **Syllabification** (breaking words into syllables, e.g., go-ing, An-drew).
 - **Words within words** (looking for known words inside new words).
 - **Spelling rules** (looking for known rules).
 - **Compound Words** (breaking them into simple words, e.g., 'into' makes 'in' and 'to').
 - **Mnemonics** (using an aide memoire, e.g., 'because – Big Elephants Can Add Up Sums Easily').
 - **Using Analogy** (if one word is known, similar words can be spelled, e.g., 'hill' helps with 'mill', 'will', 'fill').
- Week four involves learning and using a **spelling rule**, which requires children to select and revisit problem-solving phonics into spelling and thinking strategies.
- Assessment is no longer purely based on a single word spelling test; teachers make judgments based on a child's ability to spell words in context, such as a dictated sentence or paragraph.

Spelling (Stage 6-7) At Stages 6 and 7, spelling is taught in two main ways:

- Children are taught **common words** appropriate to their stage, interdisciplinary learning, writing genre features, or current school events. **Spelling strategies and spelling rules** continue to be a focus, with children working with partners to problem-solve how to remember word spellings. The strategies taught include:
 - **Using Phoneme Knowledge** (sounding out).

- **Syllabification** (breaking words into syllables, e.g., go-ing, An-drew).
- **Word Shape** (looking at letter shape, size, ascending and descending letters).
- **Tricky Letters** (looking at the position of tricky letters as an aid to spelling).
- **Compound Words** (breaking them into simple words, e.g., 'into' makes 'in' and 'to').
- **Mnemonics** (using an aide memoire, e.g., 'because – Big Elephants Can Add Up Sums Easily').
- **Using Analogy** (if one word is known, similar words can be spelled, e.g., 'hill' helps with 'mill', 'will', 'fill').
- The second part of the spelling programme focuses on **word building**. Children are taught about **affixes and root words** and their meanings, which helps them understand grammatical elements and deepen their word understanding by investigating root words, adding prefixes/suffixes, and understanding how these affect meaning.
 - Example: From the root word "consider," adding the prefix "re-" (again) creates "reconsider" (think about again), and adding the suffix "-ate" (state of) creates "considerate" (showing thought).
- Children are also taught about **homophones** (words that sound the same but have different spellings and meanings, e.g., 'ate' and 'eight') and **confusions** (similarly sounding or spelled words often mixed up, e.g., 'conscience' and 'conscious').
- Children continue to use **Elkonin Boxes, Diacritical Marking, Spelling Strategies, and Active Spelling Activities** to learn their spelling words.
- Assessment involves teachers making judgments about a child's ability to spell words in context, such as a dictated sentence or paragraph, rather than just a single word test.

Reading (Stage 4-7) Children are explicitly taught through a **four-day reading programme** comprising:

1. **Fluency**
 2. **Comprehension**
 3. **Writing linked to reading/novel**
 4. **Talking and Listening linked to reading/novel**
- The programme uses a **multisensory, problem-solving approach** that is well-structured and interactive. Reading books are selected as **quality texts** that provide opportunities for reflection and discussion, moving away from traditional reading schemes to expose children to a wider variety of authors, styles, and contexts.
 - The Stage 4 and 5 programme particularly highlights the importance of developing children's **higher-order thinking and critical literacy skills**. These are developed through teaching six comprehension strategies:
 - **Prior Knowledge**
 - **Metalinguistics** (Tricky Words)
 - **Visualisation**
 - **Main Idea**
 - **Summarisation**
 - **Inference**

For example:

 **Inference:** "Be a clue finder! Look at the pictures and text—how is the character feeling and why?"

 **Visualisation:** "Close your eyes. What movie is playing in your mind during this page?"

 **Metalinguistics:** "Spot a tricky word! What clues around it help us figure out what it means?"

 **Main Idea & Summarising:** "Can you tell me what happened on this page in just 3 key words?"

- During fluency activities, children continue to refer to and use **Word Attack Strategies** when they encounter unfamiliar words. These strategies include:
 - **Look at the first letter**
 - **Sound out the first few letters**
 - **Break the word into syllables**
 - **Look at the last letters**
 - **Read the sentence again**
 - **Look at the picture**
 - **Look at the shape of the word**
- The four-day programme stresses the need for children to be **talking and writing about the quality text** they have read to improve their ability to identify and comprehend the main messages within the text.
- For Stages 4 and 5, there is a specific focus on **poetry** and higher-order skills such as analysing, evaluating, and investigating texts.

Writing (Stage 4-7) In school, children are taught writing in various ways and across a variety of contexts, linked to ongoing learning.

- Children have **daily opportunities to write**, as well as a weekly 'taught' lesson. Daily writing tasks are often linked to the novel being read, spelling, school events, or current affairs, and can take various forms such as paragraphs, note-taking, visual aids, or lists. Daily writing involves aspects of composition, grammar, and punctuation or serves a further purpose.
 - During the '**Taught**' **writing lesson**, children are taught specific features and vocabulary for writing across a number of genres. Normally, three genres are covered per term.
 - At **First Level**, six genres are taught: Narrative, Persuasive, Explanation, Report, Recount, and Instructional.
 - At **Second Level**, a seventh genre, Discursive, is added.
 - Children explore a '**model**' **text** to break it down into the features and vocabulary that make it a good example of the genre. They then use specific genre features and **success criteria** to write their own text and evaluate their success. Children also provide and receive feedback from peers and their class teacher.
 - **Interdisciplinary learning** is an important element, connecting 'taught' writing skills with their usefulness in different curricular areas.
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At Home

Parents can significantly support their child's Active Literacy development at home:

- **Encourage Sustained Reading:**
 - Encourage your child to **read at home for sustained periods**, ensuring they cover the chapter(s) identified by the school that week.
 - **Check their understanding** by asking them about what happens in the chapters they have read.
 - For P4-7, encourage them to engage with **poetry** and practice analysing, evaluating, and investigating texts.
- **Utilise Word Attack Strategies:**
 - If your child encounters an unfamiliar word or is unsure about its pronunciation or meaning, encourage them to use the **Word Attack Strategies taught in school**. These include:
 - **Looking at the first letter.**
 - **Sounding out the first few letters.**
 - **Breaking the word into syllables.**
 - **Looking at the last letters.**
 - **Reading the sentence again.**
 - **Looking at the picture.**
 - **Looking at the shape of the word.**
- **Develop Comprehension Skills:**
 - Encourage your child to think about the **six comprehension strategies** (Prior Knowledge, Metalinguistics (tricky words), Visualisation, Inference, Main Idea, Summarisation) when discussing texts.
 - Emphasise **talking about the texts** they read to help them identify and comprehend main messages.
- **Link to Phonics and Spelling Programmes (P4-5 Specific):**
 - Help your child **identify words that contain different representations of a phoneme** (e.g., the 'ee' sound can be made by 'ee', 'e', 'ea', 'ie', 'e-e').
 - You could ask them to **diacritically mark words** containing the phoneme representations or dictate sentences/paragraphs containing them.
 - When your child comes home with a list of common words, **discuss with them what strategy they would use to remember to spell each word**.
 - They continue to use the **SAY, MAKE/BREAK, BLEND, READ, and WRITE** structure, which you can mirror at home.
 - Encourage them to **look for words containing focus phonemes** in "Phoneme Stories," newspapers, or books, or even write their own.
 - Utilise the **Active Spelling activities** suggested in homework grids, such as rainbow spelling, scrabble letters, and hangman.
- **Link to Spelling Strategies and Word Building (P6-7 Specific):**
 - When your child brings home a common word list, **discuss different spelling strategies** that could be used to help remember how to spell the words. These strategies include phoneme knowledge, syllabification, word shape, tricky letters, compound words, mnemonics, and analogy.
 - You could also **play games with words by seeing who can make the most words from a root word**(e.g., help, helpful, unhelpful, helpfully, helpless,

helplessly), and discuss how each word differs in meaning. This reinforces learning about affixes and root words.

- Discuss **homophones** (words that sound the same but have different spellings and meanings, e.g., 'ate' and 'eight') and **confusions** (similarly sounding or spelled words often mixed up, e.g., 'conscience' and 'conscious').
- Encourage the use of **Active Spelling activities** (found in homework jotters or provided as guidance) to practice spelling words.
- **Support Writing Activities:**
 - You could **talk to your child about what genre they are working on** at school and what they know about the features of that genre.
 - When children are completing written homework tasks, encourage them to **check that they have met their success criteria** and, if not, help them find ways to do so.
- **Create a Reading-Rich Environment:**
 - Having **texts at home or visiting the library** can greatly support your child's reading and writing development across all stages.

Reading at Home with StoryWorlds

A Guide for Parents



At our school, we use the **StoryWorlds** reading programme to help our pupils develop into confident and independent readers. This guide provides you with a clear, step-by-step approach to using the print books you receive to support your child's reading at home.

1. The StoryWorlds Book: Before You Read

Before you begin reading, take a moment to look at the book with your child.

- **Look at the cover:** Ask them to describe what they see. What do they think the story will be about?
 - **Discuss the title:** Read the title together. Does it give any clues about the story?
 - **Picture walk:** Flip through the pages, looking at the illustrations. Encourage your child to predict what will happen next. This builds comprehension skills and helps them connect with the story before they even start to read.
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2. The First Read: Decoding the Words

The goal of the first read is to decode the words and build fluency.

- **You read first:** For new or challenging books, you may want to read the story to your child first. This helps them hear the rhythm and flow of the language.
 - **Listen to your child read:** As your child reads, listen for their efforts to sound out unfamiliar words.
 - **Encourage and support:** When they get stuck, prompt them to use a variety of strategies:
 - **Phonics:** "What sound does that letter make?"
 - **Picture clues:** "Look at the picture. What word would make sense here?"
 - **Context:** "Read that sentence again. What word would fit?"
 - **Praise their effort!** Reading a new book can be a big challenge. Acknowledge their hard work and praise their attempts to problem-solve.
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3. The Second Read: Building Comprehension

The second read is where the magic happens! This is about understanding the story and developing a love for reading.

- **You read together:** Take turns reading pages or sentences. This helps build fluency and allows you to model expressive reading.
 - **Discuss the story:** Stop and ask questions as you go.
 - **Characters:** "How is the character feeling on this page? Why do you think that?"
 - **Plot:** "What happened at the beginning of the story? What's the problem in the story?"
 - **Vocabulary:** "That's an interesting word! What do you think it means?"
 - **Connect to their world:** Ask them to relate the story to their own experiences. "Have you ever felt like the character in the story? What would you have done?"
-

4. The Finished Book: What Next?

Once you have finished the book, the learning doesn't have to stop.

- **Ask questions** using 'What...? Where...? When...? Who...? Why...? How...?'
- **Retell the story:** Ask your child to retell the story in their own words. They can do this by using the pictures as a guide.
- **Explore new words:** Look back at any new words and use them in a sentence together.
- **Encourage independent reading:** Keep the book in your child's school bag so it is always accessible at school and home. The more they revisit familiar stories, the more confident they will become.

Reading at Home with Bug Club

A Guide for Parents



Bug Club is a fantastic resource designed to make reading fun and engaging for children. It offers a wide range of captivating books, both in print and online, that are carefully matched to your child's reading level. As a parent, you play a crucial role in fostering a love of reading. This guide will help you navigate the Bug Club resources and support your child's independent reading journey at home.

1. Understanding the Bug Club Reading Programme

Bug Club uses a progressive system to help children build their reading skills.

- **Book Bands:** The books are colour-coded into "Book Bands." These bands are a guide to a book's difficulty and are a standard way for schools to track reading progress. Your child's teacher will assign them to a specific band.
 - **Print Books:** These are the physical books your child will bring home from school. They are chosen to match their current reading level.
 - **Online Books (My Books):** Your child will have a personalised online account where they can access a collection of e-books. These e-books are also matched to their reading level and often include interactive features.
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2. Using the Print Books at Home

The print books are a key part of the Bug Club experience. Here's how you can make the most of them:

- **Establish a Routine:** Encourage your child to read for a short period each day. Even 10-15 minutes of quiet reading time is incredibly beneficial.
- **The "Book Chat":** Before your child starts reading, talk about the book. Look at the cover and title. Ask questions like:
 - "What do you think this story might be about?"
 - "What do you see on the front cover?"
 - "Who do you think the characters might be?"
- **Don't Just "Listen":** As your child reads, listen for a few minutes, but resist the urge to correct every single mistake. If they get stuck on a word, offer gentle prompts:
 - "Sound it out."
 - "Look at the first letter."
 - "Read the sentence again and think about what would make sense."
- **Asking Questions During and After Reading:** This is the most important part! It encourages comprehension and critical thinking.

- **During Reading:** "What's happening in this picture?" "How do you think the character is feeling?"
 - **After Reading:** "What was your favourite part of the story?" "Who were the main characters?" "Can you tell me the story in your own words?" "What did you learn from this book?"
-

3. Navigating the Online Books (My Books)

The online platform offers a dynamic and fun way to read.

- **Accessing the Platform:** Your child's teacher will provide a username, password, and school code. You can access the platform from a web browser on a computer, tablet, or smartphone.
 - **"My Books" Area:** Once logged in, your child will see a selection of e-books in the "My Books" section. These are the books assigned by their teacher.
 - **Interactive Features:** Bug Club e-books are more than just static pages. They contain "Bugs" – interactive pop-up questions or activities to assess comprehension.
 - **Encourage the "Bugs":** The "Bugs" are designed to check your child's understanding and encourage them to think critically about the text. They may ask them to find a word, answer a comprehension question, or sort items.
 - **The Reward System:** When your child correctly answers a "Bug," they are rewarded with virtual coins. These coins can be used to "buy" items for their online tree house, which acts as a great motivator.
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4. Troubleshooting and Tips

- **"My child says the books are too hard/too easy."** Talk to your child's teacher. Reading. As well as reading and understanding the book, children should be able to read with fluency and expression. They can adjust the book bands and online book selections to better match your child's needs.
 - **"My child only wants to read the online books."** While the online books are great, it's important to use both. Print books help develop fine motor skills (turning pages) and allow for a different kind of focus without the distractions of a screen. Try to balance the two.
 - **"We don't have internet access."** Don't worry! The core of Bug Club is the print books. Use this guide to focus on the "Book Chat" and comprehension questions with the physical books.
 - **Make it a Special Time:** Turn reading into a cozy, positive experience. Snuggle up on the sofa, read in bed, or create a reading nook. Your enthusiasm for reading is contagious!
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Remember: Reading is a journey, not a race. Celebrate every milestone, from sounding out a difficult word to retelling a whole story. Your support and encouragement are the most valuable

resources of all. Happy reading!

Reading at Home with Accelerated Reader

A Guide for Parents



Accelerated Reader is a popular reading management programme used in schools to encourage and track independent reading. It provides a structured way for children who are independent readers to choose books that are at their "just right" reading level and then assess their understanding through short quizzes. Your role as a parent is crucial in helping your child succeed and build a lifelong love of reading.

1. Understanding the Key Terms

To help your child, it's good to understand the terminology used in the AR programme.

- **Book Level (BL):** This number indicates the difficulty of a book. It is a score based on factors like vocabulary, sentence length, and complexity. For example, a book might have a BL of 3.5.
- **Reading Range:** Your child's teacher will assess their reading ability and assign them a specific "reading range" (e.g., 3.0 - 4.2). This ensures your child is choosing books that are challenging enough to help them grow, but not so difficult that they become frustrated.
- **Points:** Each AR book is worth a certain number of points, based on its length and difficulty. Longer, more complex books are worth more points.
- **Quiz:** After finishing a book, your child takes a short, computer-based quiz. This quiz tests their comprehension. Most quizzes have 5, 10, or 20 questions.
- **Reading Practice Quiz (RP):** The most common type of quiz, which checks a student's understanding of a book they have read.
- **Average Percent Correct:** This is the average score your child gets on all the quizzes they have taken. The school will set a target for this, often around 85-90%, to ensure your child is reading with good comprehension.
- **Points Goal:** The teacher will set a point goal for a specific period (e.g., a term or a half-term). The aim is for your child to earn their target points by reading and passing quizzes.

2. Guiding Your Child's Book Choices

Choosing the right book is the first step to success.

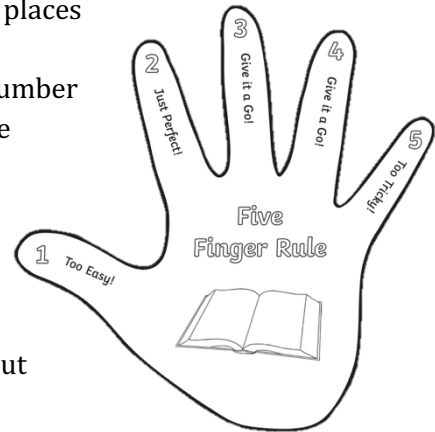
- **"The Five-Finger Rule" (A low-tech way to check):**
 1. Have your child open a book to any page.
 2. As they read, they put a finger up for every word they don't know or struggle with.
 3. If they have fewer than five fingers up on a page, the book is at a good level. If it's more than five, it might be too difficult for them to read independently.

How the Five-Finger Rule Works

1. **Choose a Book:** Pick a book that looks interesting.
2. **Turn to a Page:** Open the book to a full page near the middle.
3. **Read and Count:** Have the reader read the page. Hold up one finger for every word they do not know, cannot pronounce, or do not understand. (Proper nouns like names of people or places usually do not count).
4. **Evaluate the Count:** Check the total number of fingers held up at the end of the page

Finger Count Guidelines

- a. **0–1 Finger:** The book is likely **too easy**.
- b. **2–3 Fingers:** The book is **just right**, offering a comfortable challenge without causing frustration.
- c. **4 Fingers:** The book is **challenging**; the reader may need adult support.
- d. **5 Fingers:** The book is **too difficult** for independent reading right now; save it for later or read it together with a buddy



- **Using the AR BookFinder:** You can use the **AR BookFinder website** (search for "AR BookFinder" or arbookfind.com) to look up books and find their book level and point value. This is a great way to check books you have at home or at the library.
- **Encourage Variety:** While they should stick within their reading range, encourage them to read different genres—fiction, non-fiction, biographies, poetry, etc.
- **It's Not a Race for Points:** Remind your child that the goal is to read for enjoyment and understanding, not just to accumulate points quickly. Reading a longer book and scoring high on one quiz is more valuable than rushing through many easy books with low scores.

3. Supporting Your Child as They Read

Your involvement is key to their success and enjoyment.

- **Talk About the Book:** The best way to help your child prepare for a quiz is to discuss the book with them as they read. Ask questions like:
 - "Who are the main characters?"
 - "What do you think will happen next?"
 - "What was your favourite part and why?"
 - "Can you tell me the main idea of this chapter?"
 - "How did the main character change in the story?"
- **Encourage Note-Taking (if needed):** For longer or more complex books, your child might benefit from a simple reading journal or jotting down notes on a piece of paper. This helps them remember key plot points and characters for the quiz.
- **Reading Aloud to Them:** Don't stop reading aloud to your child just because they are on the AR programme. Reading more complex books to them can improve their listening

comprehension, expand their vocabulary, and introduce them to genres and authors they might not be able to read on their own yet.

4. Taking the Quiz at School

Quizzes must be taken at school on a computer or tablet.

- **Preparation is Key:** Remind your child to take the quiz as soon as they finish a book, while the details are still fresh in their mind.
 - **Talk About Quiz Results:** When they get their results, celebrate their successes. If they score low, talk about why. Was the book too difficult? Did they rush the reading? Did they forget to pay attention to details? Use it as a learning opportunity.
 - **Troubleshooting Low Scores:** If your child is consistently getting low scores, it's a sign that the books they are choosing may be too difficult. Work with them to find easier books within their reading range and reinforce the importance of reading for comprehension.
-

Remember: Accelerated Reader is a tool to help children who are independent readers on their reading journey. Your support and encouragement, whether by reading together, talking about stories, or simply helping them find the perfect book, are what truly make a difference. Happy reading!

Sumdog

A Guide for Parents



We use **Sumdog** as a key digital resource to support and consolidate the core skills taught in class. This fun, game-based platform helps children practise and build confidence in numeracy and maths. This guide will help you support your child's use of Sumdog at home.

1. Logging In

- **Access:** Your child can log in to Sumdog using their unique username, password, and the school code provided by their teacher.
 - **Where to find it:** Sumdog can be accessed on a computer, tablet, or smartphone via a web browser or the Sumdog app.
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2. How Sumdog Works

Sumdog's technology is designed to adapt to your child's individual learning needs.

- **Curriculum-Aligned Tasks:** Our teachers select specific **Experiences and Outcomes** from the curriculum to ensure that the tasks set on Sumdog directly align with what your child is learning in class. This guarantees that their home practice is purposeful and reinforces classroom lessons.
 - **Personalised Practice:** When your child completes their assigned tasks, Sumdog automatically assesses their skill level and adjusts the questions to be at just the right level of challenge. This ensures they are consistently practising what they need to improve.
 - **Motivation through Games:** The platform uses engaging games to motivate children to answer questions correctly. This makes learning feel less like a chore and more like a reward.
-

3. Supporting Your Child

1. **Encourage Regular Use:** Short, regular sessions on Sumdog (e.g., 10-15 minutes, 3-4 times a week) are more effective than one long session.
2. Use concrete and visual representations to support your child's mental math ability. using **concrete** and **visual** representations to support thinking. Keep sessions fun and balanced. For example:

1. Ten Frames

Ten frames help children "see" numbers as quantities rather than just counting single items or using fingers. Ten frames show children how many spaces are filled and how many are empty, helping them instantly recognise amounts without counting every dot. They build a strong foundation for number bonds to 10 and 20. For example:

Target: Number Bond to 10 ($7 + 3 = 10$)

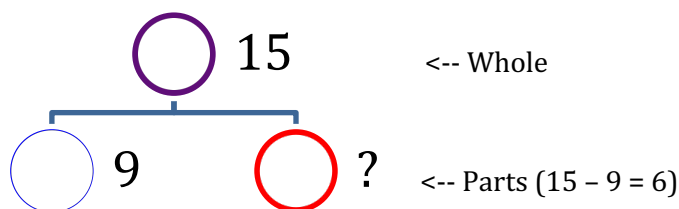
3. 	4. 	5. 	6. 	7. 
8. 	9. 	10. 	11. 	12. 

7 Red + 3 Blue = 10

2. Part-Whole Model

Also known as a "cherry diagram," this model shows how a whole number can be split into smaller parts (or combined from parts). Instead of guessing whether to add or subtract, ask your child: 'Do we know the Whole number, or are we looking for a missing Part?' It works for addition, subtraction, and missing-number problems. For example:

Problem: "I have 15 apples. 9 are red, the rest are green. How many are green?"



3. Empty Number Line / "Jump" Strategy

Instead of traditional vertical column addition, children learn to "jump" along an empty number line in friendly amounts (tens first, then ones). We jump to 'friendly numbers' (multiples of 10) first to make mental calculations faster and reduce errors. For example:

Calculation: $37 + 25 = 62$ $37 + 25$ (2 Tens + 3 Ones + 2 Ones) = 62

+20 (Jump 2 Tens)	+3 Ones	+2 Ones
+-----+	+---+	+---+
[37] [57]	[60]	[62]

4. Arrays for Multiplication & Division

Arrays arrange items into equal rows and columns to show the link between multiplication (repeated addition) and division. For example: arrays show that 4×3 is the same as 3×4 , and help children visualise division as sharing total items into equal rows.

Calculation: 4×3 (4 rows of 3)

☆☆☆ (Row 1: 3)

☆☆☆ (Row 2: 3) --> 4 rows of 3 = 12 total

☆☆☆ (Row 3: 3) $12 \div 4 = 3$

☆☆☆ (Row 4: 3)

5. The Bar Model

The Bar Model is a visual problem-solving tool used across upper primary for word problems, fractions, ratios, and percentages. Draw a bar to represent the total. Split it into equal boxes based on the bottom fraction number (denominator), then count the boxes you need (numerator). For example:

Problem: "Find $\frac{3}{4}$ of 24"

24			
6	6	6	6

Total = 24

Divide 24 into 4 equal parts ($24 \div 4 = 6$)

|-----|

3 of 4 parts = 18 ($6 + 6 + 6$)

- **Check on Progress:** You can see your child's progress by logging in as a parent. This allows you to celebrate their achievements and understand which areas they are working on.
- **Don't Overdo It:** While Sumdog is fun, it's important to keep a healthy balance with other activities. Encourage your child to play other games and explore other subjects as well.
- **Stay in Touch:** If you have any questions about how to use Sumdog or your child's progress, please do not hesitate to contact their teacher.

Google Classroom

A Guide for Parents



At Carron Primary, we use Google Classroom as a powerful tool to support your child's learning. This platform allows teachers to communicate with pupils, share resources, and set and receive work, providing a secure and familiar environment for digital learning.

This guide outlines how we use Google Classroom across different stages and how you can support your child's use of it at home.

1. How We Use Google Classroom

Our school uses Google Classroom for two distinct purposes:

For Primary 1-5 Pupils: Remote Learning in the Event of Adverse Weather

In the event of school closures due to adverse weather or other unforeseen circumstances, Google Classroom will be our primary platform for remote learning. Teachers will learning activities and resources for pupils to engage with from home. This ensures that your child's education can continue seamlessly, even when they can't be in the classroom.

For Primary 6 & 7 Pupils: Weekly Home Learning

For our older pupils, Google Classroom is an integral part of their weekly home learning routine. Using their school-managed 1:1 iPad, teachers will post assignments, tasks, and resources for them to complete. This helps prepare them for secondary school by developing their independent learning skills and digital literacy.

2. How to Log In (Your Child's Access)

Your child will access Google Classroom through their **Glow Scotland** account. The login process is simple and secure.

Option 1: The Easiest Way - Via the Glow Launch Pad

1. **Open a web browser** (we recommend Google Chrome) and go to the Glow login page.
2. Your child should log in using their **Glow username and password**. Their username begins with 'gw...' and is unique to them.
3. Once they are on their personal Glow Launch Pad, they should look for the **Google Classroom tile** and click on it.
4. This will automatically sign them into their Google Classroom account, where they will see their class.

Option 2: Using the Google Classroom App on a Tablet/iPad

This is the preferred method for our P6 & P7 pupils with their 1:1 iPads.

1. Ensure the **Google Classroom app** is installed on the device.
 2. When asked to sign in, your child must use their **Glow Google username**. This is their Glow username with **@fa.glow.scot** added to the end. For example, if their Glow username is gw123456, their Google username will be **gw123456@fa.glow.scot**.
 3. Their password for this is the **same as their Glow password**.
 4. The app should keep them logged in, making it quick and easy to access their work each week.
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3. Navigating Google Classroom

Once your child is logged in, they will see their class page. There are two main sections to be aware of:

- **Stream:** This is like the class noticeboard. The teacher will post important announcements, messages, and reminders here. It's also where you will see notifications when new assignments have been posted.
 - **Classwork:** This is the most important section. All assignments and learning resources are posted here. Your child can click on an assignment to see the instructions, view any attached files (such as documents or videos), and submit their completed work.
-

4. Supporting Your Child at Home

Your role is to encourage and help your child navigate the platform, not to do the work for them. Here's how you can help:

- **Establish a Routine:** For P6/7 home learning, agree on a set time each week to check Google Classroom and complete the work. For remote learning days, try to follow a routine that mimics the school day.
 - **Encourage Independence:** For P6/7 pupils especially, encourage them to read the instructions carefully and attempt the work on their own. This is about building responsibility.
 - **Troubleshooting:** If your child is struggling to log in, first double-check the username and password. If the issue persists, contact the school office for help.
 - **The "Hand In" Button:** When your child completes a task, remind them to click the "Hand In" or "Mark as Done" button. This notifies the teacher that the work is ready to be reviewed.
 - **Stay Safe Online:** Remind your child that all communication on Google Classroom is monitored by their teacher and must be respectful and related to their learning.
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Important Reminders:

- **This is not a substitute for the parent's role in education.** It is a tool to facilitate learning and communication.
- **If you have questions about an assignment,** please contact your child's teacher via the usual school communication channels. Parents do not have their own login to access Google Classroom.
- The school is committed to the safe and responsible use of digital technologies. All use of Google Classroom falls under our school's Digital Safety Policy.

We are confident that Google Classroom will be a valuable asset to your child's education. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.