

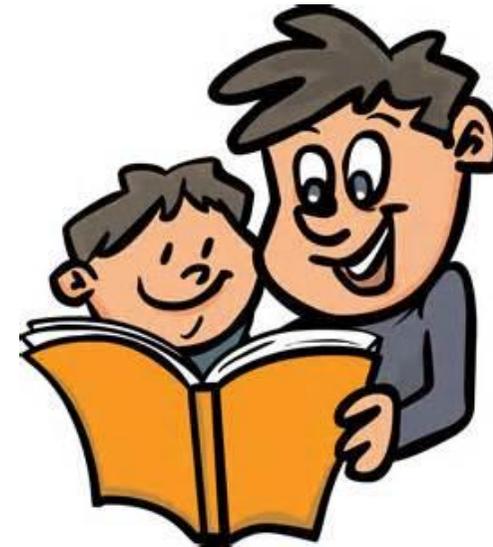
- Make up stories together. You can start by telling stories that are familiar to both of you, then add a new twist (such as bringing yourself in to the story) or you could invent a new story using the same basic structure.
- If his granddad or other male relatives live far away, get them to make a CD of stories or video him reading stories.
- Never stop responding to his questions, or he may just stop asking them.

Encouraging Reading

Reading helps boys succeed in endless ways so it is important to develop a love of reading. A lot of boys only see older males reading newspapers or instruction manuals and may only have seen females reading fiction. Consequently some boys begin to think fiction is something really only for females. Boys would often do better in school if they slowed down and reflected more on their learning. Reading fiction, rather than just flicking through non-fiction fact type books, really helps this.

- Books need to be around from the word go!
- Make reading time a very regular, special fun-filled time for all of you - bring characters to life with actions and voices.
- Have a wide variety of books prominently and attractively displayed in the house.
- Make visiting the library and bookshops a regular part of his routine.
- Make your own books together, using holiday photos to retell incidents.
- Discuss stories before (based on the cover) during (predicting what is going to happen) and afterwards (reviewing the story).
- Give books as presents and rewards.
- Don't stop reading to him just because he can read!

Meadowside Parent/Carer guide to helping boys succeed



Younger Boys



Nationally girls outperform boys in nearly all areas of the Early Years Curriculum and the KS1 National Curriculum. Some of the largest gaps are in areas to do with language - reading, writing and communication. There can be multiple barriers as to why many boys under achieve at school and of course no two boys are ever the same. In this guide we want to give you some practical ideas how you, as parents or carers, can support your son in fulfilling his potential.

Before starting school

Before starting school there is a fine line between providing support and applying too much pressure. The chart below may give you some ideas of where you can take the foot off the pedal in one sense but drive purposefully in the right direction in another to prepare your son for school.

It doesn't matter if	But it would help if...
... he can't hold a pencil yet.	... he developed fine motor skills by threading, doing jigsaws and playing with construction toys.
... he can't write his name yet.	... he recognised his name written down.
... he can't read books yet.	... he were read to. He was excited by stories, he could retell stories and join in chants from familiar stories.
... he can't draw a recognisable picture yet.	... if he used different materials to draw circles and lines.
he can't recognise letters of the alphabet yet.	...if he can hear the initial sounds in words.

Supporting Independence and Responsibility for his own Learning

It is known that in education there is a significance correlation between being independent and being an effective learner. Self-esteem also develops as a result of being able to do things for ourselves.

- Teach him how to put on his coat and change for PE by himself.
- Let him carry his own book bag to and from school.

- Be specific about each task you want him to do when asking him to tidy up e.g. "Put your books on the shelf."
- Encourage him to take responsibility for specific jobs around the house appropriate to his age.
- When asking him to keep his bedroom tidy be specific! Chunk the information. "Tidy your room" is too vague; try "Put all your dirty clothes in the basket." "Pull the cover on your bed straight."

Encouraging Talk

Girls naturally use between ten and thirty times more language in their play than boys so it is great to encourage his language skills:

- Don't put him under pressure to name things but if he does, give him lots of praise.
- Older children and adults, both male and female, need to read to him extensively and talk about the reading (and don't stop when he begins to read for himself).
- Play imaginatively together, talk about what you are doing as you do it and encourage him to do the same. Develop characters' voices as you play and encourage him to do the same. The more excited and 'into to it' you are, the chattier and more engaged he'll become.
- Talk about what you are doing as you carry out everyday activities.
- Play board games together.
- Find opportunities to talk about films or programmes watched together on television.
- Limit leisure time spent passively in front of screens.
- Eat together as regularly as you can, creating a habit of sharing thoughts and feelings about the day as you do it.
- Wash up together.
- Enjoy rhymes and songs together.
- Point out all things you see around you.
- Look at him as you are talking - it shows that you value him. If he says something incorrectly, don't correct it; just say it back to him in the correct way.
- Use sing-song or funny voices for characters when you read.
- Point to pictures and use props such as characters, related toys or wizard hats.