Learning to read is a complex process. For children to read well, they need to develop a range of reading strategies. Reading and writing are closely connected. When children learn to read and write, they learn about how language is used for different purposes and different audiences.

**Stage 1 – In Kindergarten to Year 2 children learn gradually to:**

- understand that written text has meaning
- read literary texts such as stories, and factual texts that give information such as procedures, eg recipes, instructions
- recognise the letters of the alphabet and the sounds that they make
- use terms associated with books, such as author, illustrator, cover, title, page, contents, index, glossary
- predict what a text will be about using such things as cover, title, illustrations and photos
- read their own writing to others
- blend sounds to produce a word, eg `d-o-g'
- break words into syllables, eg teach/er
- recognise words, full stops, capital letters and spaces between words
- recognise a number of sight words
- use appropriate vocal pitch, intonation and pace when reading aloud
- talk about illustrations and diagrams, and how these add to the meaning in texts
- read silently for short periods of time.

**Stage 2 – In Years 3 to 4 children learn gradually to:**

- read and retell a variety of texts read and/or viewed
- use knowledge of letter patterns to read new texts
- break words into syllables
- 'sound out' unfamiliar words
• correct mistakes in reading by pausing, rereading and/or reading on
• prepare, rehearse and read aloud stories, poems and scripted drama
• use appropriate pause and emphasis when reading aloud
• read and retell literary texts such as stories, folktales, traditional and contemporary fairytales
• adjust their reading strategies for different texts, eg read for pleasure, scan texts to find information
• make comparisons between the ways information is presented in TV documentaries, news bulletins, encyclopedias and newsletters
• explore character and gender stereotyping in texts
• discuss point of view in texts
• make comparisons between what they are reading and their own personal experiences
• read silently for an extended period of time.

Stage 3 – In Years 5 to 6 children learn gradually to:
• read aloud using appropriate pitch, pause, emphasis and intonation
• read and view a wide variety of texts
• consider characters and events in texts from different characters' points of view
• identify patterns in factual texts, eg instructions, editorials and essays
• identify patterns in media texts such as newspaper articles, radio drama and soapies
• explore how technology shapes media texts such as talk-back radio, television news and newspaper articles
• discuss the role of advertising in shaping texts
• use strategies such as skimming and scanning to find information
• use self-correcting reading strategies such as rereading and reading on
• use library technologies such as subject, keyword *author searches, data bases and CD-ROMs to locate resources
• evaluate information from different sources for accuracy and appropriateness for intended audience
• read silently for a sustained period of time.

Reading should be enjoyable for you and your child. If your child becomes distressed or loses interest when reading at home, take a break from reading and try again later.
All children, regardless of age, like to be read to. Make a special time whenever possible for reading with your child away from interruptions. You can help your child in reading when you:

- show your child that you value reading by reading whenever you can
- provide a variety of texts for your child to read to you, eg stories, comics, poems, plays, cartoons, reference books, magazines, children's recipebooks
- point out words on street signs, packets and labels
- encourage your child to predict what a book is about from the cover and illustrations
- reread favourite books
- talk about the different purposes for reading a picture book, a novel, a TV guide, a newspaper, a telephone directory, a recipe book, an encyclopedia
- point out the different size and shape of words
- point out the first sound of a word and encourage your child to think of other words that begin with the same sound
- encourage your child to read books for enjoyment as well as for information
- praise your child when they are reading, eg `well done - that was a difficult word'
- encourage a positive attitude to books
- encourage your child to talk about characters and events in texts
- encourage your child to make sound effects for the characters and events
- ask your child to think of possible beginnings and endings for stories read and heard
- praise your child when they are reading
- `sound out' difficult words and/or give clues to the meaning of difficult words
- encourage your child to have a go at reading words that are unfamiliar
- ask your child to read on past the unknown word to gain clues from the rest of the sentence
- show your child how to find the meanings of unfamiliar words in dictionaries
- encourage your child to watch films and videos of books they have read
- talk about the ways in which a film version of a book compares with the print version
- encourage your child to borrow books from the library.