

### **What is Paired Reading?**

Paired reading is an evidence-based intervention which aims to improve children's reading accuracy, fluency and motivation. By reading together with a reading helper, children's reading experience is modelled and supported without attention being drawn to their errors. The child is given the opportunity to choose any book, story, magazine or comic they would like for the paired reading session, if it contains age appropriate themes. It does not matter if the reading material is easier or harder than their current reading level.

### **Who can use Paired Reading?**

The pair in a Paired Reading session is a target child and a reading helper. The helper can be anyone with more advanced reading skills than the target child. Therefore, this can be a member of school staff (e.g. a teacher or teaching assistant), a parent or sibling, or a peer from school. Groups of older children can be trained to implement this with younger children although this is more difficult with current social distancing procedures in place.

### **What is a Paired Reading Session?**

The intervention consists of two key phases:

- **Simultaneous Reading:** The helper and child begin by reading the book aloud together at the same time. If the child does not know how to read the word, encourage them to attempt each word. When the child makes a mistake, or hesitates for more than 5 seconds, the helper should say the word. The child then repeats the word correctly. The helper does not need to say anything else; avoid asking the child to 'sound out' words or highlighting their mistakes. The children then continue to read together.
- **Independent Reading:** When the child is ready to read independently, they make a signal (e.g. knocking on the table). At this point, the helper goes silent and the child continues reading alone.

Correcting Errors:

- If the child makes a mistake or fails to say a word within 5 seconds, then the helper gives the child the word and they repeat the word back correctly. The helper continues reading with the child simultaneously until they signal that they would like to start reading independently again.

### **Key Principles**

Aim to read 5 times per week, for 5-15 minutes. Do not carry on beyond 15 minutes unless the child wants to. Keep a diary to record when you have been able to read together.

- Choose a comfortable, quiet place to read together
- Try to avoid choosing a time when the child would prefer to be doing something else
- Remember to praise the child regularly, particularly when they choose to read independently or sound out a difficult word.
- Take time to discuss the book together.