

## Resource for Parents

This week, we are sharing with you the importance of children developing their vocabulary in their early years and beyond. Some of the ideas are taken from an article on the following website

<https://schoolsweek.co.uk/the-importance-of-early-language-development/>.

The changes in expectations in the year 6 SATs, including the key stage 2 reading test that hit the

headlines in 2016 for being “unduly hard”, and the demands placed on the new GCSEs, have underlined just how important language and vocabulary are from these early beginnings.

Evidence shows that there is a clear link between early childhood experiences and later attainment. From this research, it would seem that early childhood language development is critically dependent on the

interactions with caregivers at all stages, including pre-verbal. The evidence presented by Feinstein et al (2006) suggests that children who start school with more advanced oral language skills fare better in

learning to read successfully. As the child moves through the school, vocabulary at age five is a very strong predictor of the qualifications achieved at school leaving age and beyond.

The 30 million word gap between children in a language-rich home environment and children in a language-deficient home environment was identified in 1995, courtesy of a study by Hart & Risley.

The study found that “the more parents talked to their children, the faster the children’s vocabularies were growing and the higher the children’s IQ test scores at age three and later”.

A child with “talkative” parents heard 45 million words spoken to them during their first four years, while a child with “taciturn” parents heard 13 million words, resulting in a cumulative 30 million word gap after four years.

There is something known as the Michael Effect, whereby individuals who have advantageous early educational experiences are able to utilise new educational experiences more efficiently.

The idea that the more you know, the easier it is to learn.

As a school, we ensure that vocabulary is a key focus of our curriculum. We would like to thank you for your support with discussing new vocabulary when reading with your child or completing work at home. It is vital! As Dr Seuss put it: “The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.”

