



**A Guide for  
Practitioners**



# Story Explorers: A Guide for Practitioners

## More information about the programme and what you can do to support

### Programme Overview

*Story Explorers* aims to support bonding and attachment between carers and children by creating meaningful moments of connection through the power of shared reading. Through monthly book packages and emails, and the additional support available on the Story Explorers Online Hub, the programme offers regular opportunities for family bonding, promotes emotional well-being and helps establish a reading routine.

### Who It's For

The programme has been designed with and for families, including those providing foster care, adoptive care, or kinship care. These families often face unique challenges, and *Story Explorers* is designed to offer support through the joy of reading together, which can help build trust, encourage communication, and strengthen relationships.

### How It Works

Each month, families will receive thoughtfully curated parcels with books and activities designed spark moments of joy. Each kit is themed around a different way of using books and stories together – from taking books outdoors to using music and voices to bring the stories to life – helping families find a way of reading together that works for them.

Each kit contains:

- Expertly-selected books appropriate for the child's developmental stage.
- Resources to use alongside the books, based on the kit theme.
- Further engagement resources, such as activity suggestions and reading tips to make the most of story time.

The first kit also contains:

- A Welcome Guide, introducing families to the Story Explorers programme.
- A 'Book Buddy', selected by the child before the programme starts to boost engagement.



Picture: Welcome Kit 1

We have also created a Story Explorers members' area where families can find more tips and advice to get them started, as well regularly-updated activities and competitions to keep the fun going beyond the kits. Here, you will also find our dedicated Practitioners' area, which includes resources, tips and advice to help families make the most of the programme and support your day-to-day work with families.

### **Family Engagement & Benefits**

Shared reading is a powerful tool for promoting emotional connections between carer and child, as well as a sense of familiarity and security. Research shows that reading together helps children develop their sense of identity, and empathy, while also providing a safe space for conversations about feelings, experiences, and the world around them.

With every book delivery, families are encouraged to:

- Spend dedicated time reading together.

- Use the included resources to engage in open-ended discussions.
- Create family rituals around story time to build stronger emotional bonds.

## **Role of Practitioners**

As a practitioner, you play a key role in supporting families throughout their *Story Explorers* journey. Your guidance can help families make the most of the materials and foster a love of reading in their homes. You can support them by:

- Encouraging families to integrate the books into their daily routines, through letting caregivers know the benefits of reading with the child in their care and offering advice on how to create a positive reading environment.
- Modelling reading for families, and showing them how the different ways they can use the books – and how fun sharing a story can be!
- Checking in with families periodically to see how the programme is working for them.
- Providing additional tips or resources if needed, such as how to engage reluctant readers or how to tailor story time to the child's unique needs.

More materials to support you in doing so can be found on the Story Explorers Practitioners' area.

