What are adverbs?

Adverbs are words that tell us more about verbs - they add information to the verb.

(A verb is a ‘doing’ word or a ‘being’ word: eg walk, feel.)

Using adverbs makes your sentences more interesting. Any verb you use can have an adverb added:

- The girl smiled nervously.
- The boy grinned sheepishly.
- The light shone feebly.

We use adverbs:

- To say how something happens: The family walk (how?) quickly.
- To say where or when something happens: I met him (when?) yesterday.
- To say how often something happens: She gets the bus (how often?) daily.
- To make the meaning of an adjective, adverb or verb stronger or weaker: Dave eats (degree?) more slowly than his wife.

Adverbs are often created from adjectives (describing words that tell you more about nouns) by adding -ly to the end of the adjective: For example:

- slow becomes slowly: Joe is a slow person. He walks slowly.

Certain words change when they become adverbs. If an adjective ends in a ‘y’ you need to change the ‘y’ to an ‘i’ before adding ‘-ly’. For example:

- happy becomes happily
- heavy becomes heavily