



Reading as a Priority

Reading is at the heart of everything we do at St Alban's. It is so much more than being able to read what is written on a page. Reading equips children for a place in the world. It feeds their imagination and develops their creativity. It can take them to new places and discover new things. It can forge the identity of their personality and shape the person they become.

It is our intention that every child will be a reader and our ambitious curriculum has been intentionally designed to achieve this. We have a systematic approach to phonics from the moment a child steps foot in our school. As soon as a child is ready, they move onto our comprehension teaching where their understanding of texts is deepened. Underpinning all of this, is nurturing a child's love of reading; ensuring they have high-quality texts, carefully chosen to engage the children.

"At St Alban's, children learn to read then read to learn for the rest of their lives"

Early Years & Phonics

As soon as a child enters our early years, they are taught phonics immediately as no time is wasted sending each child on their reading journey. Our pupils learn to read and write effectively and quickly using the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme.

The programme is for:

- Pupils in Year R to Year 2 who are learning to read and write
- Any pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 who need to catch up rapidly
- Struggling readers in Years 5 and 6 follow Read Write Inc. Fresh Start.

In Read Write Inc. Phonics pupils:

- Decode letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic knowledge and skills
- Read common exception words on sight
- Understand what they read
- Read aloud with fluency and expression
- Spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words

In addition, we teach pupils to work effectively with a partner to explain and consolidate what they are learning. This provides the teacher with opportunities to assess learning and to pick up on difficulties, such as pupils' poor articulation, or problems with blending or alphabetic code knowledge.

We group pupils homogeneously, according to their progress in reading rather than their writing. This is because it is known that pupils' progress in writing will lag behind progress in reading, especially for those whose motor skills are less well developed.

See our separate Phonics policy for more detail at <https://tinyurl.com/mrx54fks>

"Reading gives me joy" – Ronnie Y2

Teaching Comprehension

Phonics is the building blocks to reading; the tools the children need to decode words. Comprehension is the understanding of the words they are reading.

Once a child has mastered phonics, they are moved onto the scheme Cracking Comprehension. We deliberately chose this as it has high quality texts from such authors as Dick-King Smith, Michael Morpurgo and William Shakespeare. The software also enables teachers to visually explain the process of scanning through a text to find evidence and how to convert that into a full answer.

There are 18 units for each year group that are taught over two weeks. During each unit, children will read the text aloud, read it silently, read it with a partner, echo read, listen to the teacher read and listen to the software's audio version. A large portion of time is spent looking at new or challenging vocabulary and giving the children strategies to comprehend these words.

The 2016 National SATs introduced eight content domains by which children would be assessed.

We decided that explicit teaching of these content domains would equip our children with the disciplinary knowledge needed to develop as readers and deepen their understanding. Each half term there is a whole school focus on each of these content domains with teachers using the DSAT Teach Simply model as the pedagogical approach.

Gangsta Granny by David Walliams

To Ben, all the diamond rings looked pretty much the same. However, Granny seemed to know each of them as if they were her oldest friends. "Such a little beauty," she said as she brought the ring up to her eye for a closer inspection. "This is the first one I stole, back when I was a nipper."

"I grew up in a small village and my family was very poor," continued Granny. "And up on top of the hill was this grand country house where a lord and lady lived. Lord and Lady Davenport. It was just after the war and we didn't have much food in those days. I was hungry, so one night at midnight, when everyone was asleep I crept out of my mother and father's little cottage. Under the cover of darkness, I made my way through the woods and up the hill to Davenport House."

Listening questions

Why do you think Granny told Ben how poor and hungry she was?

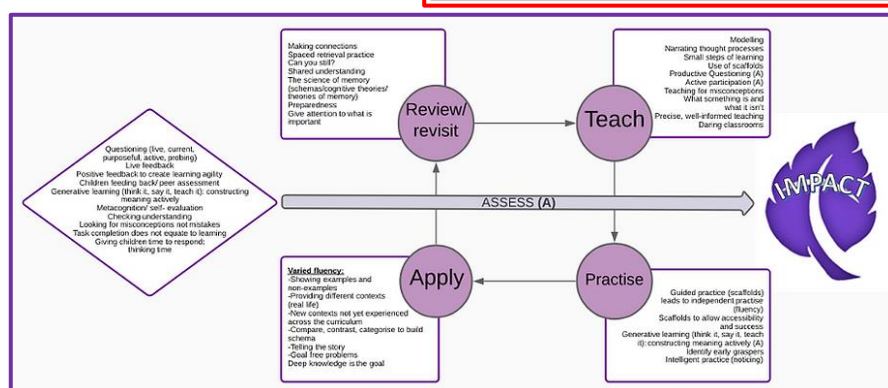
How did Granny get into the house?

The book is called *Gangsta Granny*. How does this text support the book's title?

Listen

0:00 / 2:23

Content domain reference	
2a	give / explain the meaning of words in context
2b	retrieve and record information / identify key details from fiction and non-fiction
2c	summarise main ideas from more than one paragraph
2d	make inferences from the text / explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text
2e	predict what might happen from details stated and implied
2f	identify / explain how information / narrative content is related and contributes to meaning as a whole
2g	identify / explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases
2h	make comparisons within the text



Teacher also use resources from HeadStart Reading. We chose these activities because they felt they were well designed and thought; they test and extend the children's understanding of each content domain.

"Reading is fabulous, we do it every day!" – Lexi FS2

A Love of Reading

RWI and Cracking help our children learn to read and understand what they read but to truly develop the love of reading, we believe in our reading principles:

- **Adults as reading role models.**
 - Children look to the adults within schools as their role models. They should see us as readers and we should engage with the children and share our reading habits and our love for reading.



- **Engage parents in reading with their child:**
 - We have carefully designed home reading activities to allow all parents to engage with their child's reading at home.
- **Celebrate children's reading successes:**
 - Racing Reading charts are filled in weekly and (bronze, silver, gold and governor) awards are handed out.
 - Free books are given as rewards for achieving the Governor's Award.
- **Keep reading high profile all year round:**
 - Regular assemblies are run by Carmel House Ambassadors where children share which classroom library book they are currently reading.
 - Racing Reading charts are filled in weekly.
- **Offer a broad reading diet:**
 - Children are not going to enjoy every book they read. It is essential we offer a wider range of books that children have access to. We strongly believe there is the right book for even the most reticent of readers.
- **Time to read:**
 - In KS2, children read independently every morning for 20 minutes.

"I love reading the new books. They make me feel at home and if I'm having a bad day, they cheer me up" – Annie Y4

Our Books



Book Banded Books:

We have a large selection of banded books that children have access to during their morning reading time. These are the main set of books the children take home in KS2



RWI Books:

Each book links with the phonics level they are presently at. Children the story at school and take a copy home to build their confidence and fluency.



Mrs Gurner's Self Help Books:

These are on display in Mrs Gurner's office. They cover issues like bereavement, mental health and depression. Children request these books or have them recommended by staff.



Reflecting Our World Books:

Each class has a selection of carefully chosen books that reflect the nine protected characteristics and other diverse and cultural issues. Teachers read these to the class regularly.



Bibles:



From Year 2, each child is given their own personal bible. Children are given time throughout the week to read these as well as R.E. lessons and collective worship.



Classroom Library Books:

These books were carefully selected by St Alban's specifically to engage and promote the love of reading. They are from popular authors, award winners or are culturally diverse.

A sample of Long-Term Planning to show how the reading diet is taught in a half term.

<div></div> <div>St Alban's CofE Primary School</div> <div>Year 4 Reading Long Term Plan 2021-2022</div> <div></div>			
Autumn 1 – Content Domain Focus: 2a Vocabulary			
Cracking Comprehension	Unit 1 - The Children of Green Knowe By Lucy M. Boston - Fiction	Unit 2 - War Boy By Michael Foreman - Fiction	Unit 3 - Knight Survival Guide: By Anna Claybourne - Non-Fiction
Headstart Comprehension	Words in Context	Explaining Words in Context	Test A (in-class)
Pathway Reading into Writing	Gorilla by Anthony Brown		
Whole Class Book	Kensuke's Kingdom by Michael Morpurgo		
Reflecting Our World	Julian is a Mermaid by Jessica Love	Little People Big Dreams: Anne Frank	
Home Reading Task	Vocabulary: Children to choose a word that is new, interesting or challenging and write in Reading Diary		
Home Comprehension	Cracking Assessment 1 & 2 in Home Comprehension Book		
Arbour Assessment	Words Per Minute	Book Band	RWInc.

Reading into Writing (Pathways)

Pathways to Write is a proven methodology, built around unit of work which develop vocabulary, reading and writing substantive and disciplinary knowledge through the mastery approach. We believe strongly that reading is the most effective vehicle to produce high-quality writing. Each year group has six well chosen and inspiring texts that are studied in great detail. Each unit has suggestions to other high-quality texts that complement the one being studied.

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
F S 2						
F S 1						
Y 1						
Y 2						
Y 3						
Y 4						
Y 5						
Y 6						

Reading Assessment

RWI Phonics

This is what we expect our children to know by the end of Foundation, Year 1 and Year 2.



	YR children can:	Y1 children can:	Y2 children can:
End of Autumn 1	Read single-letter Set 1 sounds	Read Purple Storybooks; read some Set 2 sounds	Read Blue Storybooks Read all Set 2 and 3 sounds
End of Autumn term	Read all Set 1 sounds; blend sounds into words orally	Read Pink Storybooks; read all Set 2 sounds	Read Blue Storybooks with increasing fluency and comprehension
End of Spring 1	Blend sounds to read words; read short Ditty stories	Read Orange Storybooks; read some Set 3 sounds	Read Grey Storybooks
End of Spring term	Read Red Storybooks	Read Yellow Storybooks	Read Grey Storybooks with fluency and comprehension
End of Summer 1	Read Green Storybooks; read some Set 2 sounds	Read Yellow Storybooks; read all of Set 3 sounds	Access RWI Comprehension and Spelling programmes
End of Summer term	Read Green or Purple Storybooks	Read Blue Storybooks	Access RWI Comprehension and Spelling programmes

For those on the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme, we record their starting date and entry point on the tracker to monitor the rate at which they are making progress. We can also easily identify those who joined the programme later.

In addition, we use a standardised NTS reading test (year 2) so that we can ensure that the gains our pupils are making are age-appropriate.

Benchmarking



Once a child has progress beyond RWInc. They are regularly assessed using the PM Benchmark Kit to see whether they need to move up a book band. Children begin this journey on turquoise book band. This process involves assessing a child's decoding, summary and comprehension substantive knowledge. Using this kit ensures we have an accurate and consistent method of assessment.

NTS Tests:

We use the National Test-Style Assessment from Hodder Education as an accurate and informative summative assessment. These tests give us standardised scores we



can compare against national standards. It also produces detailed intervention units for children who have struggled on the test to ensure they catch up to their peers.

YARC:

For children who need further support with their reading, we use the York Assessment for Comprehension as an entry and exit assessment. The class teachers then administer a tailored six-week intervention programme for those children that centers around fluency and oral reading.

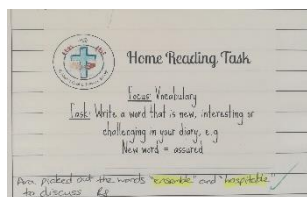
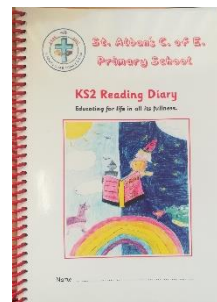


Home Reading

When a child turns 18, they will have spent between 9-13% of their waking life in a classroom. For every hour we have a child in school, their parents have them for ten. The importance of children reading at home is crucial to their development as readers.

Reading Diaries:

At St Alban's we had our own reading designed and tailored our needs. The expectation is our children read at least three times a week at home and record it in their diaries. As children progress through the school, more ownership is placed on the children to record this independently.



Every half term, a Home Reading Task is added to the diaries. These are open ended activities, linked to the content domains, that parents can be involved with.

In KS2, whenever a child reads a book during the morning independent read, they record it in their diaries. Whenever a child is benchmarked, has a YARC assessment, Toe-by-Toe intervention, the adult will record it in their reading diary. Parents are also encouraged to write in the diary but we expect this less as they become more independent readers.

Diaries are checked every week by the class teacher. Every time a child has read at home that week (maximum of three), the teacher records in on the racing reading track in the diary. Once a child has read 25 times at home they receive a bronze reading award. Silver is 50. Gold is 75 and there is a special Governor's Award (110 reads) where the children receive a book and a special certificate is an assembly at the end of the year.

Parent Partnership:

We highly value the parents and carer within our community. We know they want the absolute best for their children and will help anyway they can.

Training Videos: Because of this, we offer regular RWInc. training for parents to help them support their children at home. The sessions are recorded by the class teachers so parents can access at a time convenient to them.

Virtual Schools: Once a week, the classroom teachers share a video online with parents that shows the sounds they have been learning that week. These videos are produced by RWInc. and they are of an incredibly high quality. Children are expected to watch one of these videos a week at home with a parent.

Sharing Assessments: As we see parents are partners, we want to celebrate the progress the children are making. Every time a child is assessed, this is shared with the parents (along with any necessary jargon-busting).

Home Activities: Each half-term, an activity is stuck into each child's reading diary. This activity has been carefully constructed to allow parents to engage with their children's reading. The reading lead makes a video at their launch to explain to parent's what is expected.

***"Reading is like reality. Anything can happen, anyone can happen. At any time or place
– Alfie Y5***

School Library

Our school library is a warm, welcoming place. It holds a vast array of books organised into subject areas. Teachers and pupils can take books from the library to serve their needs. It is also a central storage for all of the colour banded books. Lots of reading, interventions are held in the library such as toe-by-toe, phonics and benchmarking. The main display shows what our staff's favourite books are, acting as reading role models for our children and sharing our love for reading.

Classroom Library:

How Books are chosen

We chose books that we believe are worth reading and re-reading – stories that children will love. We began with old favourites and then moved on to more recent literature. We also searched for stories that reflect different realities, so that our books are mirrors and windows for our children. Mirrors are books that contain story lines, characters, and experiences our children can see themselves in. They can make personal connections and feel seen and heard after reading a book. A book that is a window helps children to see into the life or experience of someone else.

All of our books are recommended by CLPE or have won literature awards. The books are age appropriate but can also be read at different emotional levels.



Why are they so important?

Reading stories broadens children's vocabulary and supports their wider understanding of language. Voracious readers can overcome inauspicious beginnings and drive their own learning. They increase their vocabulary and their knowledge. They understand the books they choose to read independently, because their good vocabulary supports. Such children have a significant advantage- we want all of the children at our school to have this advantage!

Our Library system

Class Librarians will show the children how to borrow books. Classroom library books have a sticker on the back of the book. This helps school keep the books in order. Children can borrow a book for as long as they wish. One of our school rules is 'Be Responsible,' so we do expect books to be returned to school in good condition. If a book is not returned to school then there is a £5 charge.

The books are not decodable and children in foundation and key stage 1 are not expected to read these books independently. RWINC. scheme books support our children to learn how to read. Once children have completed the RWINC. scheme and can read fluently, they should be able to read the library books independently.

Challenge

We challenge our children to listen to, or read all of the books in their classroom libraries. Inside their reading journal is a list of books. Every time a child reads one of their class books, librarians will sign their book. If in a year, a child reads every book in their classroom library, then they will receive a special certificate to mark this achievement. At our school, we want to know for sure that all of our children have experienced quality literature - nothing will be left to chance!

Library Visits

Throughout the year, each class will take several trips to the school library. We feel libraries are often a forgotten resource in modern Britain and we intend to instil their importance in our children. Going to the library encourages children to become part of the wider community. It builds skills and routines that are needed once they leave our school.

As children mature and grow towards secondary school, their interests begin to diverge greatly. We do a fantastic job of meeting those needs. However, we have found that the vast range of books our local library has to offer can engage even the most reticent of older readers. We believe that the perfect book is out there for every child.

The Wider Curriculum

The Minister of state recently stated in the Reading Framework, "Pupils who struggle to read struggle in all subjects and the wonders of a knowledge-rich curriculum passes them by unread." This is a view we deeply share at St Alban's where we are very proud of our wider curriculum and where Reading fits within it.

To ensure children receive high-quality, age appropriate texts in every area of the curriculum, not just Reading, we researched and chose a fiction and non-fiction text for each subject within each year. These books are used for a variety of reasons:

- Whole class reading
- Direct teaching of comprehension skills
- Pupil research
- Vocabulary introduction

Protected Characteristics

We value diversity and equality at St Alban's and care deeply about the nine protected characteristics. So much so that we have embedded them into every layer of our curriculum. They are represented in Reading by each class having several age appropriate books within their library which are read to the class on a regular basis.

When I read, it feels like I'm taking a break from the real world. Sometimes it's nice to hear someone else's world and get away from the stress – Sapphire Y5

There has been a large amount of research carried out in recent years surrounding vocabulary with some very troubling outcomes.

- 65% of young offenders have been found to have unidentified speech, language and communication needs.
- The quality and quantity of children's vocabulary at age five is a strong predictor of how well they will be doing aged 30.
- Children with larger vocabularies achieve more academically and display better behaviour.
- Children with a wider range of vocabulary allows them to better share something of themselves - their feelings, ideas and experiences.

Home Reading:

We want our children to have a hunger for words, new words and finding out what new words mean. One of the half-termly home reading activities focuses on this. Every time the children read, they are asked to pick out one word that is new, challenging and interesting. Teacher's then discuss these in class and consider ways these words can be used.

Foundation Subjects:

In each foundation subject, the leaders have designed vocabulary-rich, spiral curriculums. These intentionally chosen words are explicitly taught to the children and not left to chance. Each year's vocabulary builds on the words of the previous year.

Stem Sentences:

Stem Sentences are a proven method to help improve pupils' language proficiency, in turn, improving their communication and writing. They improve fundamental language skills as well as higher-level thinking skills, familiarising students with sentence structure, linguistic ability and lesson content all at once. Every subject in the curriculum has their own stem sentences.

Tiered Words:

At St Alban's, we believe in the Tiered Vocabulary approach where words are categorised into three tiers. These tiers are based on frequency, complexity and meaning. As teachers, we know that a robust vocabulary supports reading comprehension and reinforces understanding of new and difficult texts. Using a tiered approach to vocabulary instruction assists the development of language acquisition and promotes a strong foundation for literacy across content areas.

- Tier 1 Words: Basic words that are commonly used in spoken language.
- Tier 2 Words: Academic Vocabulary appearing frequently across content areas.
- Tier 3 Words: Low frequency words that occur within specific domains.

Our language rich displays around school show tier 2 and tier 3 words.

Pathways:

Alongside key writing disciplinary knowledge, Pathways to Write also builds in extensive opportunities to develop and apply vocabulary. Vocabulary boxes are in every unit and give guidance on the tiered vocabulary that is developed within that unit – as well as which statutory words are appropriate for that unit.

NC Word List – Years 3 and 4		Developing Vocabulary	
appear	material	impatient	big top
describe	occasion	lantern	lantern
disappear	popular	fidget	braid
famous	regular	twitch	barrel organ
favourite	sentence	swish	carousel
guide	special	lurch	mechanical
heard	although	awkward	handkerchief
heart	through	applause	pantaloon trousers
imagine	various	astonishment	lute
		majestic	

Comprehension:

During the two-week cycle of studying a text, vocabulary is always a focus – even if the content domain focus is not. This is done at the beginning of the unit when introducing the text to the children. They are taught how to decipher the meaning of a word without a dictionary or asking for help using a variety of strategies:

- **Proper Nouns:** Does it have a capital letter – is it a proper noun?
- **Context:** Read the sentence / paragraph and figure out the context.
- **Root Word:** Does it have a root word, prefix, suffix that they are familiar with?
- **Replace:** Can the children replace the word with another word and it still make sense.
- **Word Class:** Can the children identify what the purpose of the word in the sentence is and therefore what word class it is.