



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 the teaching of phonics which adheres to the strictest fidelity. This is enacted the moment a child steps foot in our school. The moment 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 FS2 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.

"Reading gives me joy" – Ronnie Y3

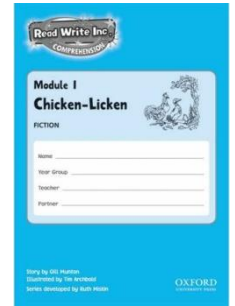
See our separate Phonics policy for more detail at <https://tinyurl.com/mrx54fks>

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.

RWInc. Comprehension:

If a child masters phonics whilst they are in KS1, they begin understanding comprehension through RWInc. Comprehension. This is an ideal transition for the children as they already know the routines and management signals from RWInc. Phonics. Each module consists of a fiction and non-fiction text – the first is the ideal length for children’s reading stamina at this stage, the second shares the same theme but is shorter and perfect for developing children’s writing.



Pathways to Read:

Once a child enters KS2, they begin on Pathways to Read. Each unit provides a progressive development of reading skills that follows a mastery approach. Pathways guarantees complete coverage of the content domains, incorporating high-quality discussions that revolve around the essence of rich language. There are six units per year and they mostly centre around one book:

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Y3						
Y4						
Y5						
Y6						

Pathways to Read follows a mastery approach to learning with three categories of skills developed each half term:

- Ongoing skills - linked to text choices and achieved through selection of teaching activities
- Core skills - prediction, vocabulary development and retrieval
- Mastery skills - 2-3 objectives are focused on for pupils to master over the course of the half-term

Every unit consists of six whole class reading sessions following the four-part structure:

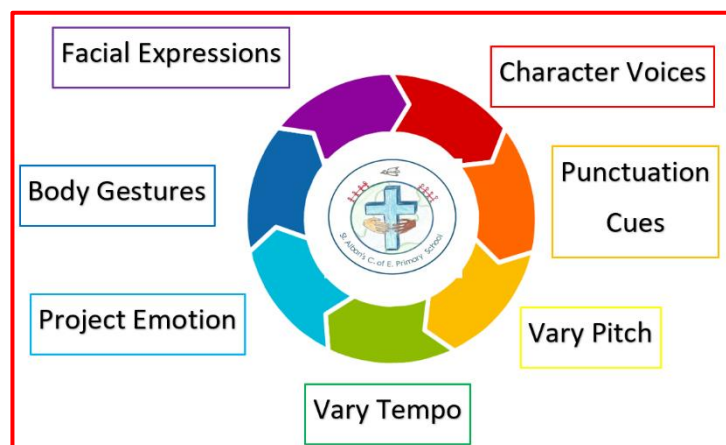
- Predict
- Clarify vocabulary
- Read and retrieve
- Read and explain

The core elements of each session are prediction, developing pupils' vocabulary and retrieval. The 'Read and explain' part of the lesson is the mastery focus for the majority of sessions.

Reading Aloud:

Studies have also shown that reading aloud makes it easier to remember words than if you read them silently. This is key for young readers who are building their vocabulary. Oral reading also helps students build their reading speed, allowing them to read larger texts with ease.

At St. Alban's, we decided to break down what it is to read with expression into small steps that the children can learn and remember:



Using Pathways to Read, we use the following techniques to teach the children how to read with expression and/or improve their fluency.

- **Echo Reading:** Echo reading involves the teacher reading aloud a text line by line or sentence by sentence modeling appropriate fluency. After reading each line, the students echo back the reading of the line with the same rate and prosody.
- **Paired Reading:** Paired reading is a research-based fluency strategy used with readers who lack fluency. In this strategy, students read aloud to each other. When using partners, more fluent readers can be paired with less fluent readers, or children who read at the same level can be paired to reread a story they have already read.
- **Silent Reading:** Children read the text in silence.
- **Timed Reading:** The teacher reads a section of text and times it. The children then read the exact same text and try to finish it as close to the teacher's time as possible.

Cracking Comprehension:

We supplement Pathways to Read with a scheme called Cracking Comprehension. It has high-quality extracts from such authors as Dick-King Smith, Michael Morpurgo and William Shakespeare. It gives the opportunity for children to answer questions on a cold text that they are not familiar and the questions are from various content domains.

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. 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.

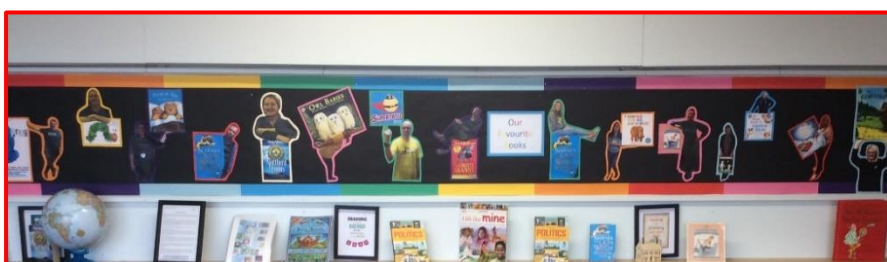
"Reading is fabulous, we do it every day!" – Lexi Y1

A Love of Reading

Pathways, RWInc. and Cracking Comprehension 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 see us as readers and we 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: <https://wsap.academy/ks2-home-reading-activity-summer-1/>

- **Celebrate children's reading successes:**

- Racing Reading charts are filled in weekly and (bronze, silver, gold and governor) awards are handed out.
- Children are awarded a St. Alban's Bookmark if they achieve the Governor's Reading Award (see photo)



- **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. <https://wsap.academy/carmel-reading-assembly/>

- **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.

"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 Y5

St. Alban's Variety of Books

St. Alban's Virtual Library: <https://wsap.academy/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Master.pdf>



Book Banded Books:

We have a selection of banded books that KS1 children have access once they are off RWInc. Phonics. These are kept in classrooms.



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.



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.



KS2 Library Books:

These are the main reading books for children in KS2. They are group into Y3/4 and Y5/6 according to their Lexile Level. They are also grouped into genres.



Role Model Books:

These books are designed for children to see a range of role models from a range of backgrounds and cultures.



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.



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.

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 1						
F S 2						
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.

Fisher Family Trust:

At St. Alban's we use the Fisher Family Trust Aspire Reading Assessment Programme to regularly assess our children in four areas:



- Decoding
- Reading Accuracy
- Speed
- Expression
- Comprehension

A section of the FFT Assessment Report

Reading Fluency	
WCPM	89
Reading accuracy	100 %
Expression, pace, fluency	Band 3
Passage length	160
Words read	89
Number of words read correctly	89
Number of words read incorrectly	0
Time	60 seconds
Words read incorrectly	

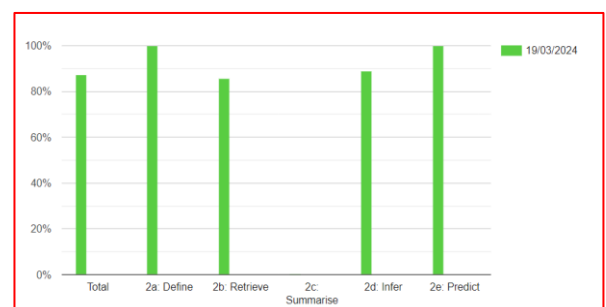
The assessment then produces a report which shows the Words per Minute, Reading Accuracy and Reading Age. We use this to inform the types of books each child should be taking home.

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. We use the results from the NTS assessments to determine the following terms whole class focus or interventions.



A section of the NTS Assessment Report

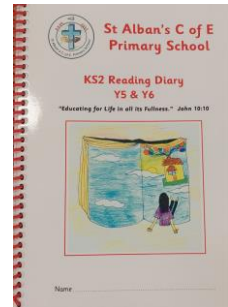
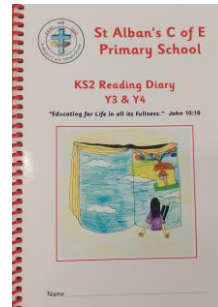
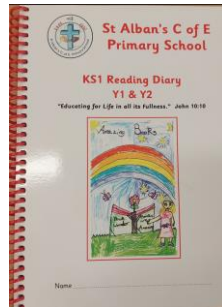
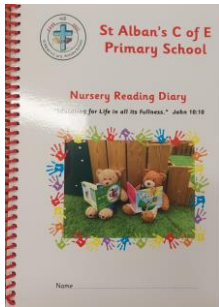


Home Reading

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.

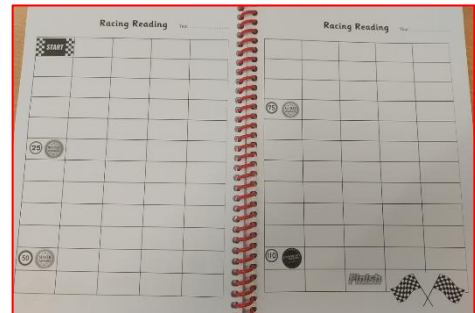
Reading Diaries:

At St Alban's we had our own reading diaries designed and tailored to our needs:

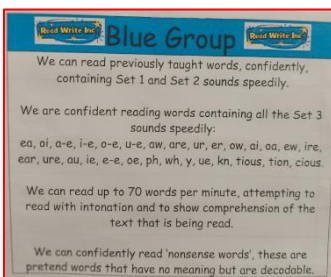


The expectation is our children read at least three times a week at home and parents record it in their diaries. As children progress through the school, more ownership is placed on the children to record this independently.

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. The four awards available are Bronze (25 reads), Silver (50 reads), Gold (75 reads) and Governors Award (110 reads). There is a special assembly in the Summer when children are presented with their Governor's Award and leather bookmark.



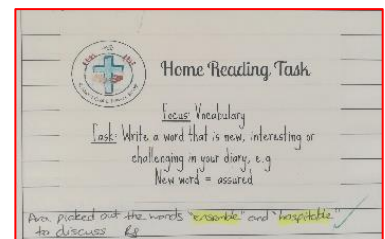
<https://wsap.academy/governors-reading-award-2023/>



In KS1, RWInc. Information is regularly shared with children in their Reading Diaries. It lists the sounds the child is working on as well as the speed they need to be reading at.

In KS2, 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.

<https://wsap.academy/ks2-home-reading-activity-summer-1/>



"Reading is like reality. Anything can happen, anyone can happen. At any time or place – Alfie Y6

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.

Libraries

School Library:



Children in KS2 will no longer belong to a colour book band. Once a child has successfully completed RWI phonics, they are fluent readers and have the skills to read a much broader range of books than scheme book band books.

All books from KS2, other than Classroom Library Books, have been collected in the school library. They have all been labelled either as Y3 & Y4 or Y5 & Y6 using a system called Lexile Levels which determines the language complexity of a book.

These books have then been categorised, like a real library, to allow children to choose books based on their preferences. Once they have chosen a category, they can easily check whether it is a 3/4 book or 5/6 book to determine whether it will be accessible for them

Folklore	Authors	Horrible Histories	Famous Modern Authors
Adventure	Contemporary	Science-Fiction	Fantasy
Funny	Graphic Novels	Historical	Plays & Poetry
Crime & Mystery	Animals	Sport	Tales from Other Cultures
Shakespeare	Spooky & Scary	War	Classics

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!

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 Y6

Vocabulary

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	fidgit	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	

Decoding unfamiliar words.

Children 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.