

St Alban's Catholic Primary School

Enjoying and Excelling in the Presence of God



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Reading in St Alban's School.

Dear Parents/Carers,

20th October 2021

Since returning to school in September, we have been working hard trying to close the gap in the children's education caused by Covid-19.

We are doing this across the whole curriculum in all subjects. I am writing to you today to tell you about some of the changes we are making in reading. We have recently assessed every child's reading ability using a standardised system. The result of this means that we can now accurately match the children's reading level with our updated school Oxford Reading Books.

The assessments carried out were not solely based on how your child reads the words on a page. We looked at:

1. **Fluency and intonation.**
2. **Reading speed.**
3. **The ability to decode difficult words.**
4. **Comprehension – Does the child understand what they have read and can they answer age appropriate questions based on their reading?**

We have noticed that lot of children do well in two or three of the above points. However, in order to progress through our reading scheme and therefore improve their overall reading ability, the children must achieve an age appropriate level at all four of the above.

As a result of this, you may notice that your child may come home with an easier reading book, a book that they have read in the past or a more difficult book to that which they normally bring home. This book is linked to the work the children are doing with their class teacher in school, focusing on the four areas.

Can I ask you to please continue to support your child's reading at home by getting them to **read every night** but also take the time to ask questions about what they have read? We have sent out a list of the type of questions you could ask.

I would also ask parents not to panic if they notice a significant difference in the level of their child's reading book. The new system in school means we can teach the children better and target their individual needs.



The NEW way reading works in school at present is as follows.

In Nursery

The children have access to high quality picture books. They use these independently, in small groups and as a whole class, and throughout the year, learning lots of stories and rhymes. Phonics (the teaching of sounds in order to read) is introduced in the Spring Term.

In Reception

The children progress through the Read, Write Inc. phonics scheme. They practise their sounds during whole class sessions and in small groups, during their guided reading sessions the children read to a teacher. Once children are in their phonics group, a book, that matches their reading ability, will be sent home.

In Years 1 & 2

The children continue to progress through the scheme. Most children complete the phonics programme by the end of Year 2. A book that is linked to the child's phonic ability is sent home. The children may also have a reading book that they have chosen themselves from their class library. This will be an age appropriate book, **but** may not be in line with the reading scheme book.

In Years 3 & 4

A small number of children will continue on the phonics programme. It is important these children complete the programme to support their reading in later years. All children get a reading book that is appropriate to their phonic/reading level. The class teacher uses this book to support the teaching of reading in school. The children may also have a reading book that they have chosen themselves from their class library. This will be an age appropriate book, **but** may not be in line with the reading scheme book.

In Years 5 & 6

An even smaller number of children will continue on the phonics programme. It is important these children complete the programme to support their reading in later years. All children get a reading book that is appropriate to their reading level. The class teacher uses this book to support the teaching of reading in school. The children may also have a reading book that they have chosen themselves from their class library. This will be an age appropriate book, **but** may not be in line with the reading scheme book.

As your child may not need the level of book they currently have, I ask that you **please return all Oxford guided reading books to school by the end of the week**. During half term, a book from the class library will be chosen by your child to read over the holidays instead.

Thank you for your continued support with your child's reading. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me through school office to make an appointment.

Mr M Smith

