



Reading Policy

‘Reading is power and the key to unlocking our curriculum and preparing students for life-long success and happiness’

At Ark Alexandra, we prioritise reading in every classroom and beyond. By promoting reading across the full curriculum spectrum, we equip students to read fluently and comprehend texts in every subject discipline. Nurturing fluent readers who can independently comprehend a wide range of texts is crucial for students to appreciate the central role of reading to acquiring knowledge and setting them up for excellence in future learning. Reading, comprehending and interpreting texts develops students’ skills in self-reflection, discussion and navigating divergent opinions and interpretations. In this way reading enhances and expands students’ empathy and self-awareness, encouraging them to be kinder and develop faith in their own opinions and abilities.

Principles

The following principles underpin our beliefs about reading and influence our approach to reading at Ark Alexandra and across all areas of our work.

1. Reading is prioritised to allow all students to access the full curriculum offer.
2. Reading is celebrated, enjoyed and discussed by all staff and students.
3. All children read at their chronological age level by the end of year 9.
4. Children are taught to be metacognitive readers so that they can unlock challenging texts and independently read for meaning.
5. Reading is embedded across the curriculum.
6. A rigorous and sequential approach to the intervention reading curriculum develops student fluency, confidence and enjoyment in reading (for the lowest 20% of readers)
7. All teachers are teachers of reading, regardless of the subject they teach.
8. High quality training is in place for staff to ensure teachers are experts in the teaching of reading.
9. The “Five Pillars” are the components for the effective teaching of reading.

A Reading school culture

The library

- The heart of the school on both campuses is the library, which helps to mitigate against ‘book poverty’ by providing access to hundreds of books for children to read for pleasure.
- The library provides a quiet place for students to read independently at break times.
- Reading Champions are recruited and trained by the librarian to support students in their choices and help to organise the library.





- The librarian encourages and celebrates children's reading through engaging them in the choice of books, competitions and events.
- Teachers use the library as resource and place to develop students' knowledge and engage them in their learning.

Staff culture

- All staff are readers.
- Staff read and discuss what they are reading with their students. They ask students about their own reading.
- Staff get caught reading competition each academic year over the summer break.
- Staff share their reading recommendations with each other.

KS 3 Reading for Pleasure

Tutor time Whole Class Novel.

- A rich and vibrant selection of modern texts have been carefully selected to provide tutor groups with enjoyable stories to read and discuss together. Tutors are trained at the beginning of each academic year in the purpose, rationale behind the canon, and delivery of Reading for Pleasure sessions.
- Texts chosen for the Tutor Whole Class Novel at the Lower School, are available on the Accelerated Reader (AR) quizzes.
- Tutor groups 'Read for Pleasure' twice a week.

Accelerated Reader.

- All students at the Lower School engage with Accelerated Reader, building upon the success of AR in feeder primary schools.
- The library actively promotes AR with termly competitions and support to students in completing quizzes using the library's IT facilities.
- Tutors promote Accelerated Reader and celebrate students' 'Reading Journey' with the school community.

The assessment of Reading

All students in year 7- 10 are tested at the beginning of the academic year using the NGRT tests, in line with schools across the Trust.

The lowest 20% of readers in year 7 are identified on entry using primary SATS and star testing. The students in this group are confirmed by the NGRT test in the first week in September, and tested each half term using the NGRT test, to monitor the impact of the intervention curriculum.

All teachers use the NGRT data to inform their planning and seating plans.





KS 3 Reading Intervention curriculum (Lowest 20% of readers)

Lowest 20% of readers are in the same English class in year 7 and year 8 and follow the bespoke Mastery English Curriculum, allowing them to access rich texts from our literary heritage with the level of scaffold and support to ensure progress.

Expert teachers are allocated to teach the Literacy groups. Teachers of the Literacy groups have been trained in the principles of reading, including phonics. Teachers have been trained in Fresh Start and using the ARK TENS Reading training programme.

Students follow a bespoke Literacy curriculum that is delivered with TENS strategies. Accelerated Reader and PM Benchmark are used termly to monitor progress and implement smaller interventions for withdrawal groups.

Students in Literacy groups have a bespoke High Interest, low RA library within their classrooms to take books home on a weekly basis.

Students who need phonics intervention are given 1 to 1 support by the SEND Literacy tutor and follow an intensive Fresh Start intervention on a timetabled basis (at least 3x a week for 30mins)

Reading across the curriculum

- Reading is explicit in the school and departmental intent, implementation and impact statements.
- Purposeful inclusion of reading texts in every subject. Texts have been planned carefully in terms of accessibility and challenge. Co-planning is used to identify and plan texts.
- TENS strategies are implemented to unlock the meaning of subject specific texts.
- Coaches and Heads of Departments coach and support staff in the effective implementation of TENS strategies.
- Teachers are aware across the curriculum of knowledge/ content crossovers and use this to build students' schema effectively.

TENS Strategies to develop metacognitive readers

- Paired Reading. Reading for Fluency – how students engage with texts.
- Teacher Modelling - metacognitive reads (think-aloud comprehension).
- Inside, Outside and beyond.
- Guided Annotation
- Explicit Vocabulary instruction - 6 Step.





Timeline and strategy for whole school implementation of TENS strategies and curriculum development

Timeline	Whole school strategy	Rationale	Training	Curriculum
Academic Year 2021/2022				
Autumn Term	Paired Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Builds on practice from primary schools. Develops oracy. Change classroom culture. Students and teachers actively supporting each other with reading. Building student their confidence Low stakes – both for students and staff Monitoring and assessing impact for classroom teacher is in the moment. Approach can be scripted for trainee development. 	<p>September – inset days</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Whole school demonstration and practise Planning and practise in Depts. A paired reading activity for the next week 	Purposeful inclusion of texts for Autumn and Spring term Year 7 and 9 MTP
Spring /Summer Term	Inside, Outside and Beyond Guided Annotation with HODS / targeted teachers and depts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signature strategy to equip students with the ability to unlock texts by modelling how to unearth the meaning of a word using structural clues, contextual clues (pronouns, punctuation etc...) and beyond (both contextual background knowledge and external reference guides 'look up') <p>•INSIDE: Structural clues within the word e.g. key</p>	<p>January inset days</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Whole school demonstration and practise <p>Videos of ILA/JHO implementing I,O,B recorded during Autumn term</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and practise in Depts using subject specific source texts. 	



		<p>morphemes; roots and affixes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •OUTSIDE: Contextual clues outside (around) the word, including punctuation clues, e.g. commas used as parenthesis, colons and semi colons •BEYOND: Reference guides e.g. Macmillan Dictionary or Learners' Dictionaries, glossaries, + multimodal texts - images/graphs etc (+ background knowledge) 		
Academic Year 2022 /2023				
Term	Focus	Rationale	Training	Curriculum
Autumn Term	Guided Annotation	<p>We annotate to discuss; to share our thinking, challenge others' thinking, have our own thinking challenged, and potentially to revise our thinking.</p> <p>The ultimate aim of annotation is to unlock the meaning of the text. Our data clearly shows that reading comprehension is our biggest area for student improvement.</p>	September Inset	<p>Purposeful inclusion of texts for Autumn and Spring term Year 8 MTP</p> <p>Identification of key vocabulary for the Year 8 Spring term MTP</p>





		<p>Annotation makes students' thinking visible. It puts their 'gaps' in understanding under a spotlight.</p> <p>It illuminates their cognitive journey – staff can formatively assess comprehension through monitoring students' annotation</p> <p>When we annotate, we have a conversation with the text. We are also preparing for our conversations with others, thus developing student oracy.</p> <p>The process needs to be consistent across subjects and year groups, but allow for subject specific adaptations where appropriate.</p>		
Spring Term	Vocabulary instruction	<p>6 step Vocabulary instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 step develops student understanding of vocabulary in the current learning context, but also wider contextualisation, collocations and • Children need to be taught not just to read and write, but to talk. 6 Step will put the cognitive load onto students and develop our classroom talk as students actively engage verbally with contextualising new vocabulary into their schema. 	<p>January – inset days</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Whole staff session incl. Rationale, videos, staff as students to experience the process. 2. Staff to be given '6 step quick planning sheet', given an extract to which they choose a word to six-step. Feedback and delivery practice in groups together. 3. Staff to work within depts to identify a word to six step within an upcoming lesson 	<p>HOD Identification of key vocabulary to be explicitly instructed using 6-step.</p>





		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In terms of supporting trainees and staff, the planning is more considerable than Paired Reading, so launching in Spring will allow teachers to embed academy routines etc...		
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