

21 September 2022

Dear parents/carers

At Ark Victoria, we believe that reading is the greatest gift for our pupils.

We strive to provide children with the tools they need to become confident, fluent readers whose passion for reading encourages them to read widely for enjoyment and to further their learning.

Being a strong reader is vital in order for pupils to be successful within and beyond school. Children who love to read tend to perform well across the entire curriculum, achieve highly and develop holistically. Excellence in reading creates a wealth of opportunities for pupils throughout their lives.

Our Reading Programme - Primary

The 5 pillars of reading underpin our curriculum: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.

Pupils begin to develop phonemic awareness in Early Years before progressing to phonics instruction using the Read Write Inc. programme. This teaches pupils to recognize letter-sound correspondences which they are able to apply to decode (read) and encode (spell).

Fluency instruction supports pupils to read text aloud with accuracy, speed and appropriate expression. Fluency is important for pupils to bridge the gap between decoding and comprehension. Explicit vocabulary instruction supports pupils by teaching them the meaning of new words as well as strategies for understanding the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary in context. Pupils are taught comprehension strategies such as question-asking, monitoring understanding and summarising so that they can independently apply them to complex texts. The texts that our pupils study are balanced, diverse and representative. Texts align with the rest of the curriculum so that pupils are able to use existing background knowledge and vocabulary to support understanding.

Our Reading Programme – Secondary

In Key Stage 3, every pupil has a library lesson in which they have time dedicated to developing as a reader. Those identified by the NGRT as requiring additional support will also receive intervention to address their reading needs for part of the library lesson.

Pupils who require additional support may be asked to use their school-issued laptop or device to complete homework using Reading Progress on Microsoft Teams. Reading Progress is a tool that allows a teacher to set a reading homework and then listen to an audio recording of pupils completing the reading. This vital tool gives pupils more practice with reading and also provides vital information to the teacher about how best to improve their reading fluency.

All pupils in Years 3-9 are also enrolled in the Accelerated Reader programme. This well-established website quizzes pupils on their reading for pleasure and records their word count over the year. It is a fantastic tool to motivate learning readers and reward their progress.

Where pupils need urgent support with reading due to being significantly behind their peers, we have staff trained in delivering catch-up phonics via the Fresh Start Phonics programme to ensure they make the fastest possible recovery.

Reading Age Assessments

Pupil from years 2 – 10 take the NGRT reading assessment at the beginning and end of each academic year to measure their reading age. This is valuable data because it allows us to identify pupils who are reading at or above their chronological age, and pupils who are reading below their chronological age who require further support to catch up. Depending on their need, pupils reading below will receive at least one form of reading intervention: phonics, fluency or Lexia (an adaptive computer-based programme to accelerate the development of literacy skills).

Parent Workshops

As parents, you can have a huge, positive impact on your child's success and support their enjoyment of reading by promoting a reading culture at home. Reading together with your child at home each day is one of the most valuable things you can do to support them. Over the Autumn term, we will be hosting parent workshops to provide further guidance about how you can best support your child at home with their reading. Further details about this will be communicated in due course.

Many thanks for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



Mr. J. Ledingham
Assistant Headteacher (Literacy)