



How we Teach Reading at Holy Trinity Academy

Phonics

Systematic Synthetic Phonics is taught from Reception year. This is where children learn the sounds made by letters (and by groups of letters, like 'th') and build these sounds to make words. A daily phonics lesson continues for all pupils until the end of year 2. Beyond this, phonics teaching continues only for those children who continue to need it. Phonics is a useful stepping stone to reading, but is not be taught in isolation. We teach children three sources of information- visual, structural and meaning. Where children are not attending to all sources, carefully chosen prompts are used to ensure that the children are using a range of strategies to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary. Mature readers read for meaning and more than half the words in the English language cannot be read using phonics, including many very basic words such as 'the'. Children take the national phonics check test in year 1. Results at our school have consistently been significantly above national averages.

Reading Books

In Reading we use national book bands to assess each child's reading ability. Books should offer some degree of challenge and extension. Book banding is used throughout Early Years and Key Stage One. There is a small selection of reading scheme books covering Key Stage 2. We encourage children to move on to shorter chapter books when they have grown in confidence and ability.

We use four complimentary reading schemes to scaffold the teaching of reading at Holy Trinity. Nelson PMs are used as a fiction scheme and AlphaWorld books are used to develop the children's understanding and exposure to non-fiction text types. Kingscourt books provide a balance between the two schemes. We still use some Oxford Reading Tree books within each book band.

All children have reading books and reading record books. These are taken home and brought back to school each day so that the child can read and be heard read at home and at school. Involvement with reading is one of the most important contributions that parents can make to their child's learning. Our school has been recognised as a Reading for Pleasure School.

In the Early Years and Key Stage One children's books are colour banded to identify their level of difficulty. Children will move on through the colour bands before they have read all the books in that band. Teachers will monitor children's book choices to ensure a varied diet of text types. The class teacher will move children on through the book bands as they feel appropriate. As a general guide, children should be reading around 95% of words in a book fluently before they move on. This means that they are meeting sufficient new words to challenge them while still gaining the overall meaning of the text and reading with appropriate pace and expression. After the initial stages (red and pink) all reading scheme books are housed in our library.

There is also a large selection of picture books in the library. Younger children will often bring one of these home as well as their reading book. Although called picture books, these books often contain quite sophisticated text and ideas and continue to be enjoyed by all children. There is a shelf of picture books appropriate for older readers.

Once children move on from the reading scheme they progress to shorter fiction and non-fiction texts. A section of the library is labelled 'shorter chapter books'. Non-fiction books appropriate to the children's age are housed in each classroom and are linked to the current class topics.

After these children progress onto the main fiction shelves of the library, which has a very wide selection of excellent books, arranged alphabetically by author's surname. There is a separate shelf of books for year 6 only, which explore themes that may be unsuitable for younger readers or provide particular challenge. Children are also encouraged to sometimes choose books from other smaller sections in the library: –Poetry, Books in French, Children's Classics, Anthologies and Shakespeare Plays. The prayer room, which opens off the library, contains a comprehensive selection of books to help children deal with difficult emotions and times in their lives. These may be taken home by special arrangement.

Teaching Reading – Older Children

In older classes children read in groups with the teacher, being guided through more complex texts and sharing discussion of the themes. This increasingly replaces individual reading with the teacher, although this still has a place. Children have a reading time each day, when groups who are not with the teacher will read silently, review books, undertake comprehension exercises or do other reading related tasks. Reading at home, with an adult and independently, continues to be very important at this age. Children will also benefit from continuing to have an adult read to them, to demonstrate reading aloud. Class teachers have a class story which they read aloud to the children.

Each year group has a key author that the class teacher will focus upon. At Holy Trinity we believe that there are a group of authors and significant books/stories that the children should experience before they move on to secondary school. We have also produced a recommended list of books which is available to download on this website.

Summer Reading Challenge

Every summer the town library runs a reading challenge over the holidays. Our school regularly has the largest number of participants of any of the schools in the town.