

The Reading Journey

Children learn to read by reading which is why we ask you to read with your child at least 5 times per week.

Please write in your child's reading record each time your child reads to you as this helps their class teacher to see how well they're doing at home as well as at school.

How do children learn to read?

The brain does many, many clever things as the child learns to read – from learning to distinguish specific sounds to paying attention to the first letter of a word, from taking clues from a picture to learning to check that a sentence makes sense and correcting their own errors.

Supporting your child on their learning journey can feel tough at times but when your child begins to read independently, fluently and with expression, the feeling is magical for both you and them!



‘Children learn to read by reading.’

(Marie M. Clay)



When human beings, especially children, feel tense, stressed or scared, they cannot learn well.

So be positive with your child when reading together at home and allow them to correct their own errors when they can.



What kind of books will my child bring home?

In Nursery, children bring home a school library book for you to read to them each week. Children are not expected to read these books to you.

In Reception and Year 1, children bring home a decodable reading book. Children should be able to read all of the words in these books as they will have learned all of the graphemes with their teacher in school by the time they bring the book home.

In Year 2, children bring home a 'Read With Me' book from our KS1 reading scheme and in Years 3-6, children bring home Accelerated Reader books. Children might need help with the words in these books and it's a good idea to check their understanding, even as they get older.

How do we teach children to read in school?

When children are learning to read, they have a phonics lesson every day. These lessons teach children letters (sounds and names), phonemes (sounds), graphemes (how that sound is written), digraphs and trigraphs (e.g. oo, ee, igh), blends and other rules such as the split digraph (which some people think of as the 'magic 'e)'). In phonics lessons, children learn that we read from left to right. They practise reading sentences as well as words. Children also practise letter formation in their phonics lessons. At Sacred Heart, we use the ELS Synthetic Phonics Scheme to teach our children to read.

Children also have a daily Guided Reading lesson. In these lessons, they learn how to read fluently and with expression as well as developing their comprehension skills.



THE MILLION WORD GAP

New research shows the different numbers of words kids will have heard by age 5 based on how often parents read to them:

Never read to: 4,662 words

1-2 times per week: 63,570 words

3-5 times per week: 169,520 words

Daily: 296,660 words

Five books a day: 1,483,300 words



Accelerated Reader

In Years 3-6, children enter the Accelerated Reader scheme. Children choose a book matched closely to their ability and complete a quiz in school when they have read the whole book. Once children have passed three quizzes, they choose a book that is a little more challenging, moving up by 0.2 points each time. Children win weekly class trophies and termly individual certificates and medals for the most quizzes passed, most words read and most points earned.

How long should my child spend reading at home?

10 minutes per day is enough for young children in Reception and Year 1, rising to 15 minutes for children in Year 2 and 20 minutes for children in years 3-6.

Children who want to read more are, of course, welcome to do so!