

Every child will want to read every day, at home and at school.

The St Peter's vision for reading

Dear parents,

One of our focus development areas this year is reading and we want every child in the school to fulfil their potential for this vital lifelong skill. We have invested time and money in a variety of different initiatives aimed at helping us achieve this goal. We are very excited to be able to tell you about one of these, the Accelerated Reader scheme, which will be introduced from Year Two to Year Six.

This scheme is recognised worldwide as being successful in motivating pupils, increasing their fluency and comprehension of books. At St Peter's, we are using it as a facet of our approach to improving the reading skills of our pupils.

Reading ability appropriate books

After taking an initial test, the Accelerated Reading scheme assigns each pupil with a ZPD range (Zone of Proximal Development). This will help them choose books which are not only ability appropriate, but also which will challenge them and develop vocabulary. By consistently reading books towards the upper end of their ZPD range, the increasing ability of pupils is reflected in an increasing ZPD level.

Accessing the Accelerated Reading scheme

Pupils are able to access to the Accelerated Reading website through a personalised login and password. The attached letter provides families with these details. The website allows pupils to track their progress and plan their next steps in their reading. Below is the welcome screen that is displayed once children have logged on.

The screenshot shows the Accelerated Reader website interface. At the top left is the logo for Accelerated Reader. On the right side of the top navigation bar are three icons: a magnifying glass labeled 'Reading', a star labeled 'Progress', and a bookshelf labeled 'Bookshelf'. Below the navigation bar is a search bar with the text 'Find a Book' and a placeholder 'Title, Author or Quiz Number', followed by a blue 'Search' button. Below the search bar is a section titled 'Top Book Ideas For You' which displays a row of book covers including 'The Gruffalo', 'Roald Dahl Magic', 'Puppy Love', 'Roald Dahl', 'The Tiger Who Came to Tea', and 'Harry Potter'. Three callout boxes are present: one pointing to the search bar with the text 'Search for a new book, or quiz to take on a book already read.', one pointing to the 'Progress' icon with the text 'Chart progress towards targets.', and one pointing to the 'Bookshelf' icon with the text 'Have a look at the bookshelf of books already read.'

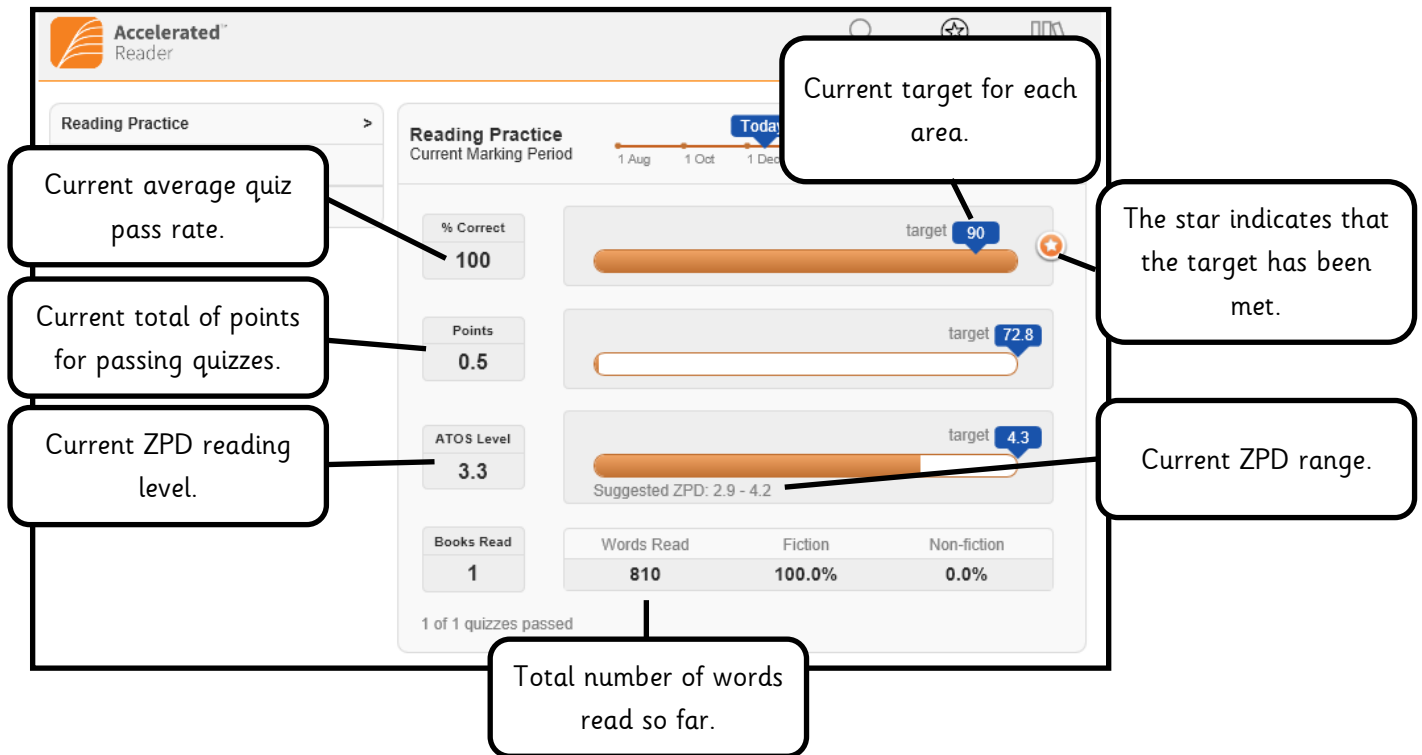
Quizzing

Once children have read a book, they are able to take a 'quiz' upon it. These quizzes focus upon comprehension, or vocabulary understanding. If children answer enough questions correctly, they are able to take credit for reading the book, and it is added to their Accelerated Reading progress. If a quiz is not passed, there will be other opportunities to retake this, but not before the pupil discusses the outcome with their class teacher - perhaps the book was too challenging, read too quickly, or the vocabulary needs to be unpicked.

Children will be given opportunities to quiz themselves on a book during the school day. It is recommended that children try to take a quiz within forty eight hours after finishing a book, though this may not be possible after periods such as school holidays.

The website interface

The picture below shows the Progress screen, which is the main information screen that children will refer to.



Through taking and passing successive quizzes, children will improve their scores and begin to achieve their targets. These targets are set and adjusted by the class teacher. There will be regular retesting to ensure that ZPD ranges are accurate and reflect the progress made by children.

Motivational

The Accelerated Reading scheme is very motivational for children, and our trials in school indicate this. However, we have planned additional ways in which to celebrate the success of the children at St Peter's. From January, once all appropriate year groups have begun, we will begin two incentives for the children.

'Caught Reading'

We would like more of our children choosing to independently read. This can be at appropriate times in the school day, or at playtimes. If a pupil is 'caught' reading at such times, they will be given a 'caught reading' slip. This will then be put in a draw, which will occur every two weeks. The winner of the draw will be have a book purchased for them of their own choice.

Word Millionaires

The Accelerated Reading scheme keeps a count of the amount of words read by each child. When a child passes the one million word count, their names will be put in an end of the year draw to win a tablet computer. We are providing such a prestigious prize as we want as many pupils motivated as possible.

How you can help

We are aiming for our children to read for at least thirty minutes a day. It would be wonderful if families could be involved in encouraging their children to read every day at home. As well as hearing your child read, it would be very beneficial if you were to ask questions about what has happened, the vocabulary used or their opinions on the book.

Alongside explicit teaching of reading everyday and time spent reading at home, we are hoping that the Accelerated Reader scheme will help motivate children to engage and challenge themselves in reading, and lead to increased progress. If you have any questions regarding the scheme, or our focus upon reading, please do not hesitate to ask your child's classteacher, or Mr English or Mr Tolerton, the English coordinators. Thank you for your help and support.