

Accelerated Reader:

At Goldsmith Primary Academy, our use of Accelerated Reader is rooted in the principles of the WAT Aspire Curriculum — developing pupils' aspirations so they strive to be the best they can be. In line with our Aspire approach, we explicitly develop Aspire learner skills and character virtues, such as curiosity, independence, and perseverance, helping pupils to become confident, reflective readers.

This document sets out the key principles for how we deliver the Accelerated Reader programme to ensure that all children can access reading, experience success, and feel a strong sense of belonging in our reading culture.



Intent

At Goldsmith Primary Academy, we are passionate about equipping our children with the essential tools to become life-long readers. Our aim is for every pupil to move on to secondary education having discovered “the book” that changed their perception of reading and ignited the reader within them.

For over 25 years, Accelerated Reader (AR) has been a highly successful and popular programme, providing a powerful tool for monitoring and managing independent reading practice. Through its use, our pupils develop not only their reading fluency and comprehension, but also a genuine love of reading that lasts a lifetime.

Accelerated Reader offers children access to a limitless library of books, each one carefully matched to their individual reading level. It ensures that every pupil, regardless of ability, can engage with a wide range of accessible and diverse texts spanning both fiction and non-fiction, fostering curiosity, confidence, and a deep enjoyment of books.

Knowledge, Skills and Subject Knowledge

What is Accelerated Reader and how is it used?

Accelerated Reader (AR) promotes differentiated reading practice to develop confident, capable readers who have a natural passion for reading. At the start of the year, and at key milestones throughout, children complete a STAR Reader assessment, which measures comprehension and generates their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). This personalised reading range guides pupils toward books that are challenging enough to promote progress yet accessible enough to maintain enjoyment.

Children begin reading at the lower end of their ZPD and move gradually upward as their confidence and fluency grow, ensuring steady, measurable improvement. AR also enables teachers to monitor vocabulary growth, comprehension, and wider literacy development over time.

Many children struggle to develop a love of reading simply because they have not yet discovered “the book” that sparks their interest. The AR BookFinder tool helps pupils easily locate books suited to both their reading ability and personal interests. After completing a book, pupils take an AR quiz to assess comprehension. With over 150,000 quizzes available across fiction and non-fiction titles, pupils have access to a wide and varied literary landscape that nurtures engagement and curiosity.

For teachers, AR is an invaluable assessment tool, providing instant feedback on each child's progress. This data enables staff to closely track comprehension, identify gaps, and plan targeted support or intervention where necessary.

When is it timetabled?

Timetabled AR sessions allow pupils to complete quizzes and select new books independently. During these sessions, staff listen to children read on a 1:1 basis, with a particular focus on the lowest 20% of readers who receive additional support. All pupils are heard reading by a teacher once every three weeks and by a teaching assistant at least once per week. The lowest 20% are heard reading three times per week, ensuring they receive the focused practice and encouragement needed to accelerate progress.

Impact

How is impact measured?

To ensure reading progress is closely monitored, four STAR assessments are completed each academic year:

Baseline: September

End of Autumn 2: Growth point

End of Spring 2: Growth point

End of Summer 2: Final data point

These assessments provide reliable, standardised data that allows teachers to track pupils' progress and identify those requiring additional support or challenge.

How do we know children have made progress?

Progress is evidenced through an increase in standardised scores, reading age, and ZPD range, all generated from the STAR Reader tests.

Benchmark data from STAR assessments identifies children who need intervention, categorised as either urgent intervention or on watch intervention to ensure timely support.

AR Growth data is used to measure progress across individual terms, multiple terms, or the full academic year, giving a clear picture of each pupil's reading journey.

How do we challenge and support lack of progress?

Data from all reading assessments (Read Write Inc., NTS, and Accelerated Reader) is cross-referenced to ensure a complete understanding of pupil performance. Following analysis, the lowest 20% of readers are recalculated, and their timetabled reading sessions are updated by the Phonics, Reading, and AR Lead. This ensures targeted support is precisely allocated, allowing staff to deliver focused interventions that directly address barriers to progress and accelerate reading development.

How are we inclusive?

AR starts for children who have a reading age of 6 or above - this means that Year 2 children who are currently reading at a reading age of 6+ now have access to AR.

Reading intervention in place for children in LKS2 who are not currently reading at a reading age of 6+ - the intent is for these children to have intensive sessions where they will move towards AR.

Supporting our lowest 20% - We use the data from the STAR tests and NTS combined to identify the lowest 20% after each set of assessments. These children then have a daily timetable for reading and extra reading sessions with a member of staff. Pupils will be heard read by a teacher once per 3 weeks and a TA (at least) once per week. The lowest 20% will be heard reading 3 times per week.

