**Accelerated Reader**

**What is it?** Accelerated Reading is a web-based service that enables children to quiz and answer questions on books that they have read, in order to test their understanding (comprehension).

**How does it help us?** As adults, we often read with children and ask them questions to test their understanding. Accelerated Reading aims to do something similar, when children are reading independently (without an adult), whilst providing us with some useful data (information) about a child's unsupported success as a reader.

**Who takes part in Accelerated Reading?** We begin introducing Accelerated Reading in year two, once children have completed the phonics programme. Then, in years three to six, most children will have access to Accelerated Reading, as long as it is appropriate to the needs of the child.

**Where and when should children be reading and quizzing?** Children should be reading for pleasure at home four times per week. Whilst we teach reading daily at school, the reality is that there is not sufficient time in the school timetable for our children to read wider and independently to enable them to be truly successful readers. This is especially true, when children have progressed to thick chapter-books, which take significant time to read. All children who take part in AR, have the ability to bring a book home, to make sure that they are regularly reading and progressing through their book.

**What is a ZPD?** The ZPD (or Zone of Zone of Proximal Development) or ATOS level, tells us what ability-level each child should be reading at. The ZPD is generated when a child completes a STAR test at school, consisting of a series of reading-based multiple-choice questions, which are completed within a time limit. If a child finds that their ZPD is too easy or too hard, they can speak to their teacher about completing a new STAR test, in order to review their ZPD. However, we also try to complete a STAR test at least once a term, to ensure the accuracy of the ZPD and to reflect children's progress.

**How often should my child quiz?** This is very much up to the discretion of the class teacher and is adjusted to the needs of each child, although I can give you a general idea:

* For children reading thinner, more easily accessible books, the idea would be to quiz at least once or twice a week.
* As children move on to slightly little thicker, early chapter books (i.e. reading at a higher level), we generally expect children to quiz once every 1-2 weeks.
* By the time that children have reached thick, more advanced, sophisticated chapter books, we would expect children to quiz every 1-3 weeks, depending upon the size of the text. *However, there is a danger that if children take too long to read a book, or choose one that is too advanced (i.e. outside of their ZPD), that they will struggle to quiz on the book and become disheartened.*

**What if I have further questions?** Your first point of contact should always be your child's class teacher, as they will know your child best and deal with their day-to-day learning.

Thank you for all of your help in supporting and encouraging our children. By helping them to become better readers, not only will their knowledge, skills, confidence and resilience all grow, but it will make so many other facets of their daily lives far easier!