English Reading Policy

English at Al-Islamia is delivered through two complementary strands: Reading and Writing. Reading develops fluency and comprehension through structured progression from phonics to immersive text study. Writing develops transcription, grammar and composition through explicit teaching and sustained opportunities for independent writing, including free writing.

Intent

'Read in the name of your Lord who created…' (The Holy Qur'an, Surah al-Alaq, Verse 1).

'the[re is evidence of the] impact of being able to read fluently, and choosing to read, on pupils' future academic success and life-long well-being' (Ofsted English Report, March 2024)

At Al-Islamia, reading is central to all learning. We believe that fluent, confident readers are able to access the full curriculum and engage meaningfully with the world around them.

Our reading curriculum is designed to ensure that all children:

- Develop automaticity in decoding and fluency
- Build deep comprehension through structured, discussion-led approaches
- Are exposed to a rich, diverse diet of high-quality literature
- Develop a lifelong love of reading

Reading is taught as a progressive journey:

- Early reading focuses on decoding and fluency
- Later reading focuses on comprehension, interpretation and critical engagement

Curriculum Overview

Early Reading (EYFS – Year 1)

- Delivered through Little Wandle Phonics
- Daily sessions focus on:
    - Grapheme-phoneme correspondence
    - Blending and segmenting
    - Decodable books matched to phonics stage
- Daily reading practice develops fluency and confidence
- Weekly discussion-led comprehension focusing on:
    - Listening and responding to ambitious texts
    - Discussing ideas, characters and themes
    - Developing vocabulary in context
    - Exploring illustrations and author choices
    - Justifying opinions orally
    - Preparing pupils for discussion-led comprehension in Year 2 and beyond

Transition Phase (Year 2)

- **Autumn Term:** Continued focus on decoding and fluency
- **From late Autumn:** Transition to immersive comprehension
- Introduction of:
    - Structured whole-class reading
    - Discussion-led responses
    - Vocabulary development

Whole Class Reading (Year 2 – Year 6)

Reading is taught through a structured comprehension curriculum, for 4x30-minute sessions from Year 2 to Year 6. Texts are selected so pupils explore a balanced selection of fiction, non-fiction, picture books and poetry. This ensures broad genre exposure, balanced text diet and progressive complexity.

Additional Reading Opportunities

Children engage with reading through:

- Class Book (teacher-led reading)
- Individual reading

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- Home reading (fluency + pleasure)
- Book Talk sessions
- Reading challenges and initiatives

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Implementation

Fluency Development (Early readers in KS1)

- 5 Daily Supported Reading (early readers) sessions:
    - Session 1 – reading to teacher and Book Talk
    - Session 2 – Decoding and word reading
    - Session 3 – Reading fluency and prosody
    - Session 4 – Comprehension
    - Session 5 – Prosody practice
- Echo reading and modelling
- Re-reading for accuracy and prosody

Comprehension sessions – Year 1

he Year 1 Comprehension session bridges the gap between daily supported reading and the Whole Class Reading curriculum from Year 2 onwards. Daily reading continues to develop decoding, fluency, prosody and basic comprehension. The weekly comprehension lesson develops vocabulary, oral language, inference, discussion and deeper understanding through rich, high-quality texts.

See Appendix 2 for explicit delivery guidance.

Frequency

- 1 × 40-minute lesson per week
- Whole-class teaching
- Primarily oral discussion
- No requirement for written comprehension activities

Progression

Across Year 1, pupils will gradually develop the ability to:

- Listen attentively to longer texts
- Discuss characters, events and ideas
- Make simple inferences
- Explain their thinking
- Explore how illustrations contribute to meaning
- Respond thoughtfully to different viewpoints
- Engage confidently in text-centred discussion

These foundations prepare pupils for the discussion-led Whole Class Reading model introduced in Year 2 and developed throughout KS2.

Comprehension Teaching (Year 2 to Year 6)

Comprehension is developed not through isolated tasks, but through active, structured engagement with text. See Appendix 2 for delivery expectations.

Teachers:

- Read and re-read sections of text to pupils
- Model expert reading behaviours (fluency, prosody, phrasing)
- Direct pupils' attention to specific words, phrases and sentences
- Lead discussion that requires pupils to return to the text
- Design tasks that involve:
    - Oral response
    - Short, focused retrieval
    - Annotation or highlighting
    - Re-reading for meaning

Pupils are expected to:

- Engage directly with the text (not rely on memory or inference alone)
- Justify responses using textual evidence
- Develop understanding through guided interaction, not task completion

This approach ensures that:

- Comprehension is built through secure knowledge of the text
- Vocabulary and meaning are explored in context
- Cognitive load is managed effectively
- All pupils can access high-quality literature with support

Text Selection

Texts are:

- High quality and ambitious
- Matched to curriculum themes
- Inclusive and diverse
- Vocabulary-rich

The reading curriculum map ensures progression across year groups.

Inclusion

We ensure all pupils access reading through:

- Structured phonics intervention
- Fluency interventions (lowest 20%)
- Vocabulary pre-teaching
- Scaffolded questioning
- EAL/SEND adaptations

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Impact

Children leave Al-Islamia as readers who:

- Read fluently and accurately
- Understand and interpret texts deeply
- Engage critically with literature
- Read independently for purpose and pleasure

Assessment for Learning:

Reading is assessed through:

- Daily AfL (questioning, reading aloud)
- Half-termly comprehension assessments (see below)
- Teacher judgement against progression

Assessment informs:

- Intervention
- Text selection
- Teaching focus

Half-Termly Reading Comprehension:

Standardised reading comprehension texts by Headstart and Pearson are completed by children at the end of each half term. The Headstart assessments can be tracked against the assessment domains to analyse gaps or needs at individual and whole-class level. These assessments will be completed by children in Year 1 from Autumn 2.

To ensure that we have a comprehensive analysis of reading comprehension, the assessments will be delivered as follows:

Half Term	**Assessment**
Autumn 1	Pearson
Autumn 2	Headstart Test A
Spring 1	Pearson
Spring 2	Headstart Test B
Summer 1	Pearson
Summer 2	Headstart Test C

The Assessment, Reporting and Recording Policy states how pupil attainment should be recorded in class markbooks and on Insight.

Review

Review Date: September

Al-Islamia
Institute for Education

Appendix 1:

Year Group Expectation	Age	Lexile Band	Year Group Expectation	ORT Equivalent	Colour Code (applied by Al-Islamia)	Phonics Phase
F1	3-4	BR400L - BR301L	F1	Phase 2	Pink	Phase 2
Reception Autumn	4-5	BR300L - BR264L	Reception Autumn	Phase 2	Red	Phase 2
Reception Spring		BR265L - BR229L	Reception Spring	Phase 3 Set 1	Yellow	Phase 3 Set 1
Reception Summer		BR230L - BR194L	Reception Summer	Phase 3 Set 2/Phase 4	Light Blue	Phase 3 Set 2/Phase 4
Year 1 Autumn	5-6	BR195L - BR159L	Year 1 Autumn	Phase 5	Blue	Phase 5
Year 1 Spring		BR160L - BR84L	Year 1 Spring	Phase 5	Green	Phase 5
Year 1 Summer		BR85 - 89L	Year 1 Summer	Phase 5	Orange	Phase 5
Year 2 Autumn	6-7	90L - 164L	Year 2 Autumn	Stage 6	white	
Year 2 Spring		165L - 251L	Year 2 Spring	Stage 7	cream	
Year 2 Summer		252L - 337L	Year 2 Summer	Stage 8	brown	
Year 3 Autumn	7-8	338L - 424L	Year 3 Autumn	Stage 9	gold	
Year 3 Spring		425L - 497L	Year 3 Spring	Stage 10	Glitter lilac	
Year 3 Summer		498L - 571L	Year 3 Summer	Stage 11	neon orange	
Year 4 Autumn	8-9	572L - 644L	Year 4 Autumn	Stage 12	aqua	
Year 4 Spring		645L - 712L	Year 4 Spring	Stage 13	grey	
Year 4 Summer		713L - 781L	Year 4 Summer	Stage 14	Forest green	
Year 5 Autumn	9-10	782L - 849L	Year 5 Autumn	Stage 15	Dark blue	
Year 5 Spring		850L - 882L	Year 5 Spring	Stage 16	Light pink	
Year 5 Summer		883L - 915L	Year 5 Summer	Stage 17	beech	
Year 6 Autumn	10-11	916L - 949L	Year 6 Autumn	Stage 18	Neon yellow	
Year 6 Spring		950L - 998L	Year 6 Spring	Stage 19	maroon	
Year 6 Summer		999L – 1047+L	Year 6 Summer	Stage 20	black	

*Codes preceded by BR indicate 'beginner readers' and suggest that books should be co-read with adult support.

Appendix 2

Year 1 – Delivering Discussion-Led Comprehension

1. Introduction and Vocabulary (5 minutes)

The teacher:

- Introduces the text and provides any essential context
- Pre-teaches 2-3 important words
- Briefly discusses the cover, title or illustrations where appropriate
- Encourages prediction using picture and title clues

Questions might include:

- What do you think this book might be about?
- What do you notice?
- What makes you think that?

2. Interactive Read Aloud (15 minutes)

The teacher reads the text aloud with expression and appropriate pacing.

During reading, the teacher:

- Pauses at planned points
- Checks understanding
- Explores vocabulary naturally within the text
- Encourages prediction and discussion
- Maintains the flow of the story

Discussion should remain brief and purposeful so that the experience of the text is not interrupted excessively.

Questions might include:

- What do you think might happen next?
- How do you think the character feels?
- What helped you work that out?

What do you notice in the picture?

3. Discussion-Led Comprehension (15 minutes)

This forms the core of the lesson.

Pupils revisit key pages, illustrations, sentences or sections through structured discussion.

Teachers should prioritise open questions that encourage reasoning and justification rather than retrieval alone.

Examples include:

What do you think is the most important part of this page?
Which picture tells us the most? Why?
What surprised you?
Was the character right or wrong? Why?
Which part made you think the hardest?
How do the pictures help tell the story?
What does this remind you of?

Discussion routines should include:

Thinking time
Partner talk
Small-group discussion
Whole-class sharing

Teachers should accept and explore multiple reasonable interpretations when supported by the text.

4. Reflection and Response (5 minutes)

The lesson concludes with a brief oral or practical response.

Examples include:

Vote and justify
Turn-and-talk
Retell a key event
Select and discuss a favourite page

Draw and explain a response
Compare with another known text

The focus remains on speaking, listening and understanding rather than written recording.

Teacher Expectations

Teachers should:

Read aloud with expression and enthusiasm
Model thinking aloud when appropriate
Encourage every pupil to participate
Return pupils to the text and illustrations when discussing ideas
Explicitly develop vocabulary
Encourage pupils to justify opinions using evidence from the book
Prioritise discussion over task completion

Appendix 3

Year 2-Year 6: Delivering Whole Class Reading

This appendix outlines how Whole Class Reading is delivered through three distinct lesson types:

- Fluency Read
- Extended Read
- Close Read

Lessons will be 30 minutes long.

Each lesson type serves a specific purpose and should be planned deliberately and proportionately across the sequence of texts.

Class	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4
Y2	Fluency Read	Extended Read	Fluency Read and Close Read	Extended Read
Y3	Fluency Read and Close Read	Extended Read	Fluency Read and Close Read	Extended Read
Y4	Fluency Read	Extended Read	Fluency Read and Close Read	Extended Read
Y5	Fluency Read	Extended Read	Close Read	Extended Read
Y6	Fluency Read	Extended Read	Close Read	Extended Read

Fluency Read

To develop:

- Accurate and automatic decoding
- Prosody (expression, phrasing, intonation)
- Reading confidence

Steps

Steps 1-3 should not encompass more than 10 minutes in total.

1. Introduce and read a short text

- Select a text for children to practice
  - Should not take more than 2 minutes for children to read (approx. 50 words for Y2; approx. 200 words for Y6)
- Introduce text content, make links to previous reading if applicable
  - Extract can be part of a *Close Read* or an *Extended Read* text
- Model reading aloud – pronounce/enunciate clearly and precisely

2. Vocabulary exploration

- Identify no more than 5 tricky/unfamiliar words
- Reread them, segment into syllables and phonemes, and pronounce (I do/You do)
- Define, providing images if appropriate/necessary

3. Read again/Echo Read

- Hand out extracts – 1 between 2, NOT one each
  - Children should be in mixed ability pairs (MA/MA; LA/HA)
- CT rereads extract as before
  - If appropriate, e.g., in Year 2 or Year 3, have children echo
  - If opting for echo reading, consider where to pause/how much to chunk for sense-making, prosody and fluency
- Pupils track with a ruler

4. Mixed-attainment reading

- Paired reading time
- Each child reads 3-4 times each, partner tracking with ruler
- CT:
  - Floats and 'listens in' OR
  - Does echo reading with particular groups
- Pause frequently to break up the monotony and maintain motivation
  - Give feedback

- Review a specific word
- Pause to praise

- Younger readers could alternate sentences and read the extract together

Steps 5 and 6 should take no more than 10 minutes altogether

5. Text Performance

- Call on volunteers or non-volunteers to perform their reading

6. Discuss and check/deepen comprehension

- Plan discussion questions
- Make the link between fluency and comprehension
  - The repeated reading should have allowed children to internalise information more effectively
- Ask questions that require whole-class engagement:
  - Thinking time
  - Pair share
  - Whiteboard work/response

NB: For classes that have been instructed to do a Fluency Read + Close Read in one 30-minute session, complete steps 1-4 within 15 minutes, and then move onto the Close Read structure/strategies (see below for Close Read guidance).

Extended Read

To develop:

- Reading stamina
- Sustained engagement with longer texts
- Global understanding (themes, structure, ideas)

The text for an Extended Read should be ambitious, pitched slightly higher than age-related.

There are 2 versions of the Extended Read

Weaker Readers (Y2, Y3 and Y4)

1. Read while pupils follow

- Unlike the Fluency Read, this should be with expression and prosody. Live the storyline
- Aim for approximately 2000 words per session

2. Pause for explanation and discussion questions

- Every child engages
- Questions should be interspersed during the reading
- Momentum should be maintained
- Pause no more than 4 times during one session to ask questions/discuss
- New/tricky vocabulary. Either:
    - Pause to explain
    - Read and redefine without breaking momentum
    - Let children understand through context clues/repeated exposure
- *Sometimes*:
    - Reread a paragraph/section to model checking for meaning. Make this obvious.
    - Pause to summarise a chapter/section, particularly if it is pivotal/complex

Stronger Readers (Y5 and Y6)

Steps 1 and 2 should encompass 20 minutes

1. Read while pupils follow

- Unlike the Fluency Read, this should be with expression and prosody. Live the storyline
- Aim for approximately 2000 words per session

2. Pause for explanation and discussion questions

- Every child engages
- Questions should be interspersed during the reading
- Momentum should be maintained
- Pause no more than 4 times during one session to ask questions/discuss
- New/tricky vocabulary. Either:
    - Pause to explain
    - Read and redefine without breaking momentum
    - Let children understand through context clues/repeated exposure
- *Sometimes*:
    - Reread a paragraph/section to model checking for meaning. Make this obvious.
- Pause to summarise a chapter/section, particularly if it is pivotal/complex

Steps 3-5 should encompass 10 minutes

3. Children read independently

- Have a section of text ready for each child to read independently. Length of text will depend on time of year:
    - Y5: initially for 1-2 minutes > 3-4 minutes by the end of the year
    - Y6: initially for 3-4 minutes > 7 minutes by the end of the year

4. Have a question for them to respond to

- Quick finishers summarise/respond to open ended questions
- CT reads with/to weaker readers and poses the open ended questions to them

5. End with discussion

- Review how children felt about what they read independently
- Discuss predictions if appropriate

Close Read

To develop:

- Analyse language and structural choices
- Develop personal, justified responses
- Make meaningful connections between texts
- Understand how and why writers craft meaning

This is the core comprehension lesson type.

Steps

1. Read a selected extract

- Texts that best work for this sort of lesson are:
  - Narrative
  - Poetry
  - Speeches
  - *Horrible Histories* and the like
- The text can be an extract from Class Book, the Extended Read, Book Talk, Fluency Read, etc. but must be suitable for Close Read.
  - The text can be a reread or new
- CT reads aloud and pauses where/when appropriate to pose questions/think aloud
- Identify and review words/phrases
- Paired reading or silent reading

2. Questions for response/discussion

Subjective questions that:

- Provoke thinking about language choices
  - *Find and share words/phrases that suggest…*
  - *Which word is doing the most work here? Why?*
  - *What does this word/phrase make you picture?*
  - *How would the meaning change if the author had used…?*
- Develop personal responses
  - *What did you like about this part?*

    - *Which word/line stayed with you? Why?*
    - *What puzzled you here?*
    - *Do you agree with what is happening here?*
- Enable children to make links to other texts
    - *Where have we seen something like this [repetition, word use, structure, theme, etc.] before?*
    - *Does this remind you of another story?*
- Engage EVERY child
    - *Begin with open questions*
    - *Use paired/group talk before whole-class discussion*
    - *When justified, accept multiple valid interpretations*
- Identify themes and patterns e.g.,:
    - *Reread paragraph/section/sentence X…*
    - *Find and share words/phrases that suggest…*
    - *What do you notice about how this section is written?*
    - *What does this part suggest about [courage, power, belonging, etc.]*
    - *Hoe does this section link to the bigger idea of this text/book/poem?*
- Discuss authorial intent, e.g.:
    - *Let's look at the words used to describe …; what image do they create?*
    - *Why might the author have used these instead of ...?*
    - *What image is created here? How?*
    - *What do we feel when we read this section? Why?*
    - *What effect does this sentence structure have on us? How might it be different if the sentence was structured differently?*
- Inform children as writers:
    - *What could we borrow from this in our writing?*
    - *How could we adapt this sentence for a different purpose?*
    - *What makes this effective as writing?*