



Highams Park  
Academy Trust



# Highams Park Academy Trust

## Whole School Policy for Literacy

This policy applies to all teaching and support staff.

Date of review	SLMT lead	Trustee approval
18 <sup>th</sup> October 2018	Katherine Taylor / Tom Capewell	18 <sup>th</sup> October 2018
12 <sup>th</sup> October 2020	Katherine Taylor / Cally Halkes	12 <sup>th</sup> October 2020
8 <sup>th</sup> December 2022	Katherine Taylor/ Enuma Afulukwe	8 <sup>th</sup> December 2022
25 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	Katherine Taylor / Carl Robinson	25 <sup>th</sup> January 2024

Date of next review: January 2026 or earlier if required



## **Rationale**

'A teacher must: ... demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject.' Teachers' Standards

Literacy underpins the school curriculum by developing students' abilities to speak, listen, read and write for a wide range of purposes, using language to learn and communicate, to think, explore and organise. Helping students to express themselves clearly, orally and in writing, enhances and enriches teaching and learning in all subjects. All departments and all teachers have a crucial role to play in supporting all students' literacy development.

## **Our Aims: Reading Focus**

Our key literacy focus for the Year September 2023 – July 2024 is to improve our teaching of reading to all students across the curriculum and to raise the reading ages of our lower ability readers through targeted intervention in class and outside the classroom.

NGRT data shows that our students in Year 7-11 have a reading age that is above the national average. Reading ages are above the national average at the higher end but, at the lower end, our lowest ability readers are scoring reading ages below the national average.

## **Methodology**

We are using NGRT to test, twice yearly, the reading age of students in Years 7-11.

We have subscribed all KS3 students and targeted KS4 students to **Bedrock Learning**, a vocabulary, comprehension and grammar programme. It is compulsory for all subscribed students to complete Bedrock Learning to earn at least 20 points per week. Students who score a reading age of more than three years below their chronological age attend supervised Bedrock sessions.

Selected students are enlisted onto the phonics programme, **Word Wasp**, in which they work with an LSA 3 x 20 minutes per week.

Reading age scores, intervention lists and Bedrock progress data are made available to all staff so that knowledge of students' needs enables effective pastoral and classroom strategies to be put into place. The results of NGRT are being sent to parents and carers.

Whole school CPD focuses on teaching and learning strategies to support and scaffold students' reading skills in the classroom for all to make excellent progress.



## **READING**

### **Tutor Groups**

It is expected that all students have a book that they are reading at home. Each tutor group will have 1-2 Reading Monitors who will assist the Form Tutor in recording books being read by students and enable rewards to be made for regular reading and target achievement.

All tutors in Years 7-11 must be aware of students' progress in Bedrock Learning. KS3 tutors can log in directly to Bedrock to see reports for their class. Praise and reward should be given for excellent progress. If a student has not gained 20 points in the previous week, a BP must be given by the tutor. KS4 tutors can find the data for students in their tutor group in Staff Documents and, likewise, should praise excellent progress, issue a BP if 20 points are not earned and follow up with communication with parent/carer and/or Katherine Taylor, Literacy Coordinator.

At the end of each half term a £10 Amazon voucher is given to the two students in each year group who have gained the most points and have the highest progress score.

### **Tutor Groups**

One registration per week is allocated to reading activity. Tutors should monitor that students have a reading book and are reading for pleasure. This may be done by the tutor or by designated Reading Monitors who should make a class record of the book that each student is reading for pleasure. Reading for pleasure should be made a focus for display which the Reading Monitors may be employed to undertake.

Students who are listed for intervention in any registration should go to their allocated room at 8.30am where they will be registered. Late arrival to intervention impacts the effectiveness of the intervention so it is very important that students arrive on time.

Bedrock Learning leaderboards are to be displayed in every KS3 assembly, making opportunity for praise and encouragement.

### **Sixth Form**

Sixth Form tutors should allocate one registration per week to students' reading for pleasure.

### **Word of the Week**

Katherine Taylor produces a root word of the week in a series of powerpoint slides every half term. This is shared with staff in Staff Docs via the weekly bulletin. Word of the Week must be shared in one registration per week with consideration of words that include the root word and use of the word in a sentence. Staff may use Word of the Week as a lesson starter also, enabling overlearning of the word across the curriculum.



### **Disciplinary Reading and Tiers 1-3 Vocabulary**

All teachers must be familiar with the reading ages of their students in order to enable excellent progress in learning and achievement.

All teachers are responsible for teaching students, through a range of strategies, the Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary that will enable them to be confident speakers, readers and writers in their subject and readying them for the world ahead. Lower ability readers and EAL learners must be given opportunity to 'overlearn' vocabulary, understanding word definition and how it works syntactically and contextually.

Vocabulary must be taught explicitly in the classroom considering:

- How do we pronounce the word?
- What does it mean?
- How is it used in a sentence?
- What can I do to remember the meaning and the spelling?
- Recap, recap, recap

In each department, a Literacy Champion will coordinate to ensure that:

- a key word list is produced and published for each scheme of work.
- An updated reading list is produced and published for each year group
- Literacy support is displayed in the classroom

It is vital for us to model the reading process, considering the audience, genre and purpose of the text we're reading; the formality of the text; interesting vocabulary; patterns of words; key words and words that break a 'rule' of spelling or context.

Teachers should carefully consider when to read the text themselves and when to select student readers. As a guide, a text read aloud confidently, fluently and clearly by the teacher or an able reader will be understood and engaged with more confidently by a less able reader than when text is read aloud with a lack of fluency because meaning then becomes lost for other students. If students are asked to read aloud, target the student to the length of text (such as a paragraph or bullet point per student) and enable willing lower ability readers to develop confidence by reading very short passages aloud.

Handouts should be given to lower ability students to reduce the cognitive load of reading and, perhaps, copying from the board.

Hard copies of key word lists must be made available to stick into books and/or as word mats. Ensure text on handouts and PowerPoint slides is laid out simply and clearly for lower ability readers with visual cues, avoiding an overload of text in different boxes to be navigated.



### Other useful reading activities

**Give the answers:** Students have to predict the questions asked.

**Summary:** Students are asked to summarise a text. This could be a textual summary or one presented through the use of images, diagrams, drama etc.

**Student-generated questions:** Students compile a list of questions they would like answered before reading a text or questions to test other students' understanding post reading.

**Text transformation:** Students are asked to change the way the text is presented. This could include a change of layout, first to third person, genre etc.

**Text marking:** Students locate and underline parts of a text representing a certain meaning or piece of information, key words for the topic, information they think is important etc.

### The Library

The Library is open and managed by HLTA, Ms Sahana Shan, at break time and lunchtime. The Library is open for book borrowing and returns, quiet reading and study. Books are not to be taken from the Library at any other time and without being signed out by Ms Shan or a Student Librarian. New books are regularly added to the Library at the recommendation of students, staff and other media reviews.

Reading Challenges and activities are regularly promoted by Ms Shan.

The Library is available to be booked for lesson use.

### World Book Day

World Book Day is an opportunity to celebrate and promote the joys and benefits of reading.

Every department is expected to participate in making reading for pleasure a lesson focus. This may be a starter activity, a whole lesson, a lunchtime or after school activity.

Every assembly in that week and registration on the day of World Book Day should have a relevant focus on reading for pleasure.

### **SPEAKING AND LISTENING**

Talk is the foundation for literacy and students must be given opportunity for different types of talk in the classroom: asking a question, giving an answer or response, discussing in pairs, small groups and feeding back, talking in role.

Talk is structured when:

- High expectations are made
- Roles are allocated
- Sentence starters are given
- Vocabulary for inclusion is made explicit
- Time is set

Talk should be modelled and corrected by the teacher as appropriate for learning.

### **WRITING**

Students are expected to present their work neatly in their exercise book, whether it be note taking, brainstorming or writing in full sentences and paragraphs. The date and the title should be underlined with a ruler.



Writing should be supported for all students with a range of the following put into place: modelling, exemplar responses, listing of key words, sentence starters, frameworks for the structure of an answer.

Where relevant, planning should be considered an essential part of writing, from generating ideas to selecting sorting and drafting those ideas cohesively and clearly.

Students must be taught grammatical structures for writing clearly and accurately, such as use of verb tense, plural and singular, and writing passively for formal explanation and description. (For example, the passive is, 'the solution was placed over the flame' rather than 'I placed the solution over the flame.')

Some students are recommended to use a laptop in lessons due to their handwriting not being sufficiently legible. Laptops are borrowed from the Learning Centre.

### **Spelling**

Spelling of key words must be taught explicitly with opportunities made for overlearning. This includes the sounding out of words, the understanding of phonic sounds and morphemes within the word, patterns, regular and irregular spellings and strategies for learning the spelling of words, such as 'look, cover, write check', mnemonics and the visual shaping of words

### **Punctuation**

Lower ability learners typically write sequences of paragraphs that are one sentence long. Putting all ideas into one sentence tends to trap the ideas, leaving a student unable to develop a point any further because they think they've written all that they can. Students must be shown how to develop a point through use of varied sentence forms. A topic sentence introduces the point of the paragraph and then the following sentences develop that point with reason, example, etc.

Students must be taught correct use of punctuation, the basics being full stops, capital letters, commas and question marks. When punctuation is incorrect, intervention must be applied, such as through verbal feedback, written feedback, homework and targeted questions to teach and enable practice of correct use of punctuation.

### **Marking**

The following codes must be used in the margin of exercise books to note errors made by students. Not all errors need to be identified: focus on some key words and high frequency words (such as there, their and they're)

P – punctuation error

SP – spelling error

G – grammatical error

? - does this make sense?

// new paragraph



### **Literacy Intervention**

The following interventions are in place for students in Years 7-11. Enlisted students can be found in Staff Docs. If you have concerns about a student's reading, spelling, communication or handwriting abilities, please refer with evidence to Katherine Taylor so that we can consider the best placed intervention.

- Bedrock Learning – all KS3, targeted KS4, vocabulary, comprehension and grammar
- Word Wasp – phonics for selected students in KS3-4
- WordShark - (beginning in Spring 2024), software to improve spelling ability
- Sixth Form Literacy Mentoring – selected KS3 students: reading, SPaG and handwriting
- TypingClub – touch-typing for students who have been referred as having poor handwriting
- Flash Academy – software for EAL students
- Oxford Graded Readers (beginning in Spring 2024) for EAL and low ability readers

2024-2025: The aim for next year is to improve students' oracy skills



## VOCABULARY IN ACTION

Classroom strategies for vocabulary and language



Robust strategies for teaching vocabulary and modelling language use in the classroom (adapted from Beck & McKeown). Use these techniques as part of teacher modelling, explanation, and pupil practice to support your vocabulary teaching.



### Bespoke Definitions

Introduce words through explanations in everyday connected language, rather than dictionary definitions.



### Purposeful Variation

Provide several contexts in which the word can be used purposefully or for alternative meanings.



### Immediate Interaction

Build opportunities for pupils to interact with word meanings *right away* e.g. pair two target words, to support interaction with words in novel contexts: 'can splendour ever be unpleasant to look at?'



### Deep Processing

Develop activities that require students to process the meanings of words in deep and thoughtful ways e.g. getting pupils to think hard about meanings, by identifying and explaining appropriate word usage.



### Active Interest

Provide examples, situations and questions that are interesting and create discussion.



### Repetition, Repetition, Repetition

Provide many encounters with target words, including through various contexts and retrieval activities.

Adapted from Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G. and Kucan, L. (2013) *Bringing Words to Life: Robust Vocabulary Instruction*, New York: Guilford.

Beck, I et al. (2018) Deepening knowledge through vocabulary learning. *Impact Journal: Developing Effective Learners*, (Issue 3, Summer 2018).

Visit the EEF site to read our Literacy Guidance Reports

[eef.org.uk/guidance](https://www.eef.org.uk/guidance)







For further reading:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65830c10ed3c34000d3bfcad/The\\_reading\\_framework.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65830c10ed3c34000d3bfcad/The_reading_framework.pdf)

[https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/eef-guidance-reports/literacy-ks3-ks4/Vocab\\_in\\_Action\\_Poster\\_v1.0.pdf?v=1704293495](https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/eef-guidance-reports/literacy-ks3-ks4/Vocab_in_Action_Poster_v1.0.pdf?v=1704293495)

[https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/eef-guidance-reports/literacy-ks3-ks4/Simple\\_View\\_of\\_Reading\\_2021-11-15-083742\\_dwzx.pdf?v=1704293495](https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/production/eef-guidance-reports/literacy-ks3-ks4/Simple_View_of_Reading_2021-11-15-083742_dwzx.pdf?v=1704293495)

<https://learningfrommymistakesenglish.blogspot.com/2023/09/a-student-doesnt-read-text-in-isolation.html>

[https://education.gov.scot/media/vaapuk03/lit13\\_teachingreadingcomprehensionfinaldraft.pdf](https://education.gov.scot/media/vaapuk03/lit13_teachingreadingcomprehensionfinaldraft.pdf)

<https://www.adlit.org/topics/comprehension/teach-seven-strategies-highly-effective-readers#:~:text=To%20improve%20students'%20reading%20comprehension,summarizing%2C%20and%20visualizing%2Dorganizing.>

Instructional Aid 1.1: Seven Strategies of Highly Effective Readers	
Strategy	Definition
Activating	"Priming the cognitive pump" in order to recall relevant prior knowledge and experiences from long-term memory in order to extract and construct meaning from text
Inferring	Bringing together what is spoken (written) in the text, what is unspoken (unwritten) in the text, and what is already known by the reader in order to extract and construct meaning from the text
Monitoring-Clarifying	Thinking about how and what one is reading, both during and after the act of reading, for purposes of determining if one is comprehending the text combined with the ability to clarify and fix up any mix-ups
Questioning	Engaging in learning dialogues with text (authors), peers, and teachers through self-questioning, question generation, and question answering
Searching-Selecting	Searching a variety of sources in order to select appropriate information to answer questions, define words and terms, clarify misunderstandings, solve problems, or gather information.
Summarizing	Restating the meaning of text in one's own words--different words from those used in the original text
Visualizing-Organizing	Constructing a mental image or graphic organizer for the purpose of extracting and constructing meaning from the text





## READING FLUENCY

What might fluency practice look like in the classroom?



Actively teaching reading fluency to struggling pupils can be beneficial. This tool offers practical classroom examples to support developing pupils' reading fluency.



To view our Literacy Guidance reports, visit the EEF website:

[eef.li/guidance](https://eef.li/guidance)



### What the evidence tells us:

### Possible approaches--

**Whole class fluency practice**



**Small group & 1:1 fluency intervention**



### Key Stage 3 Examples

While most pupils begin secondary school with the general skills and knowledge needed to read accurately, fluently and with comprehension, some do not.

Given the complexity of academic reading, pupils need to be able to deploy an array of reading strategies, which can be modelled and practised in the classroom to develop students as strategic readers.

- When reading from a class text, model appropriate strategies to tackle the meaning of unfamiliar words. Encourage repeated reading of the word to build accuracy and automaticity.
- For example, in a science lesson might involve pupils revisiting prior learning on reaction energy and catalysts. To support the decoding and automaticity of newly learned tier 3 words 'exothermic' and 'endothermic', the whole class might choral read a short paragraph in unison to ensure all pupils are given the opportunity to practise reading these words aloud in context
- Provide motivational opportunities for pupils to re-read familiar texts. For example, using a poem from 'The Crossover' by Kwame Alexander, pupils might practise reading a stanza each repeatedly, coming together to perform the poem.
- Use echo and choral reading when working closely with small groups or 1:1 to support oral reading development.

### Terminology

**Echo reading** is a rereading strategy where the teacher reads a segment of text aloud and the pupils echo it back.

**Choral reading** is when a small group or whole class read aloud together.

**Morphology** is the study of words and their parts e.g. prefixes and suffixes.

**Etymology** is the study of the origin of words.



## Reading Strategies

You can understand more about a text by:

<b>Predicting</b>	<p>You can make informed guesses about a text by predicting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ What is the text going to be about? What will happen next?</li><li>✓ What are the clues that lead to this idea?</li><li>✓ Guess what word/phrase comes next.</li></ul>
<b>Skimming</b>	<p>You can read quickly through a text in order to get a gist of what the text is about. You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Skim a text using first lines of paragraphs. Paragraphs are organised internally and the first sentence of each paragraph is often a summary of, or an introduction to, the paragraph.</li><li>✓ Skim a text using first and last paragraphs. In most academic writing, the text is organised clearly with an introduction and a conclusion. The introduction gives you an idea of what the text is going to be about and the conclusion shows that this is what it has been about.</li><li>✓ Skim a text, using section headings. In some academic writing, the text is organised through the use of headings and sub-headings. You can therefore get a good idea of the overall content of a text by reading the headings and sub-headings first.</li></ul>
<b>Scanning</b>	<p>You can search for key words or ideas. Scanning the page try to focus on the information you need and ignore everything else.</p>



<b>Close reading</b>	When you pay close attention to the words, phrases and sentences you can build up your understanding of the meaning of the text. Rereading parts or the whole of the text will help to develop your understanding
<b>Questioning</b>	You can ask questions about a text to clarify your ideas. You can ask questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Before reading – What do I want to find out?</li><li>✓ After reading – What have I learnt and what do I still need to know?</li></ul>
<b>Empathising</b>	By putting yourself in someone else's shoes you can begin to empathise and feel what they feel.
<b>Visualising</b>	Building a picture in your mind can help you to gain a better understanding of the text. (You can use these images to design a new text (restructuring) to show your understanding)
<b>Inferring</b>	By reading 'between the lines' you can find meanings that are not initially obvious. You have to search for clues and match information so that another point can be made.
<b>Text Marking</b>	Text marking includes underlining, annotating or numbering the text to find information.