Featherstone High School

Reading Policy

Contents

1.0 Aims and rationale

The reading strategy at Featherstone High School aims to:

- Foster a vibrant, aspirational reading culture within and beyond the school gates;
- Remove barriers to learning;
- Enhance the progress, engagement and development of all pupils.

At Featherstone High School every subject area has a responsibility to develop and promote reading to help pupils build essential background knowledge. There is a great focus on training teachers to understand how pupils learn to read; supporting teachers to explore evidence-based reading to learn pedagogy, and encouraging teachers to engage with the research about the importance of reading for pleasure. To remove the barriers to reading, teachers in all curriculum subjects model and scaffold pupils' disciplinary reading skills, helping them to become strategic and knowledgeable readers. There is an emphasis on developing pupils' metacognitive skills so that pupils understand how they can apply reading comprehension strategies to become expert readers in all subjects.

Teachers will be trained on how to interpret the reading data made available to them, including pupils' reading ages and more nuanced diagnoses from specific one-to-one assessments. This will help teachers make informed choices about which texts to share with pupils (both within and beyond lessons), and how to teach these texts (to maximise pupils' comprehension) so that students are supported in accessing a wide range of appropriate but challenging texts.

Each pupil is identified using the key below:

- **Wave 1** – most pupils for whom classroom strategies are used to scaffold and develop reading;
- **Wave 2** – pupils who require small-group interventions;
- **Wave 3** – bottom 20% of pupils who require individual, intense intervention – often diagnosed with SEND/ EHCP.

The following initiatives are implemented in each wave:

Wave 1 – whole-class teaching approaches to support disciplinary reading
- Direct vocabulary instruction
- Reading aloud and reading fluency
- Active reading approaches – DARTS (Directed Activities Related to Texts)
- Reading comprehension strategies, including reciprocal reading

Wave 2 – small-group interventions
- Reading Buddies (RB)
- Bedrock Learning (BED)
- National Tutoring Programme (NTP)
- International Dyslexia Learning Solutions Limited (IDL)
- IXL Learning (IXL)
- EAL support

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Wave 3 – individual, intense interventions
- Daisy Education – oral fluency (FLU)
- Literacy intervention (LIT)
- Reading for Meaning (RFM)
- EEF Switch On (EEF)
- One-to-one phonics (PHO)
- Fresh Start (FS)
- Speech and Learning Therapy one-to-one inference (SLT)
- EAL one-to-one reading support (EAL)

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It is the responsibility of every teacher to ensure that all pupils are provided with the opportunity to develop effective reading skills so that they can:

- Read fluently, accurately and with understanding;
- Employ a range of strategies in order to access a wide range of disciplinary texts;
- Vary their reading styles to suit different purposes;
- Read independently;
- Be critical readers and make informed and appropriate choices.

The Oracy Coordinator will be conducting an Action Research Project with the English Speaking Union (ESU) to support the development of reading through oracy across the school.

2.0 Reading for Learning

Academic reading is taught through a subject-specific lens across the board. The emphasis placed on disciplinary literacy ensures that pupils are taught and supported in the use of subject-specific strategies alongside general reading strategies. Teachers must ensure that pupils are equipped with the skills to read as subject experts. Within lessons, it is an expectation that teachers include:

- Carefully targeted vocabulary teaching of tier 2 and tier 3 words;
- Questions and talk to draw out what pupils know and understand of what they read;
- Activities that get pupils to write about what they read, to elaborate and reflect on their thinking and to update their predictions;
- Models of reflective thinking, for example: asking precise questions or discussing layers of meaning in a text in classroom dialogue.

Quality first teaching is a priority and is driven by evidence-based research from the EEF to support the pedagogical practices implemented in the classroom. Teachers are expected to implement wave 1 strategies as part of their whole class teaching strategy.

3.0 Reading for Pleasure and Empowerment

Research by the 'Great School Libraries' campaign states that schools with a higher proportion of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are more than twice as likely to not have access to a designated library space. Furthermore, research from the National Literacy

Trust (Children and young people's book ownership and access to books at home, 2022) shows that pupils who receive FSMs are far more likely not to own a single book. Therefore, the gulf widens as the 'reading rich' (those reading at the expected level with access to books) are likely to get richer and the 'reading poor' get poorer. At Featherstone High School, it is a fundamental aim to close this gap, thus the library sits at the heart of the school.

Large-scale international research indicates that reading for pleasure is 'the most important indicator of the future success of a child' (OECD, 2002). The significance of reading is promoted throughout the main school and sixth form. The library nourishes the enrichment of pupils through clubs such as 'The Reading Club', 'Manga' and 'How to choose a book'. Key events and special dates throughout the year are celebrated through displays, books, activities and competitions, as well as author visits.

Evidence shows that there is a strong relationship between reading for pleasure and social and emotional wellbeing and cognitive development. Research also highlights that the two most important criteria to get pupils engaged are choice and access to text. Once a fortnight, Years 7 and 8 pupils have a timetabled library reading lesson to browse, read and informally talk about books. Book Chat is a new initiative to develop pupils' oracy skills, encouraging informal discussions about fiction and non-fiction books students are reading. To help pupils with their choice of books, each year group has a reading list. The library contains books from a range of authors, provides a plethora of genres and caters for different ability levels. To acknowledge the changing nature of reading and how it can be done through different forums in the twenty-first century, the library provides pupils with the opportunity to read e-books and listen to audiobooks.

The library promotes the school's key value of inclusion and ensures diversity of authors and content. The importance of representation and inclusion is encompassed through the librarians collaborating with the leader of the Gay/Straight Alliance Club so that pupils access diverse literature. The school also promotes writers from different cultures, for example within English, as part of the school's ongoing commitment to decolonise the curriculum.

The school also subscribes to First News, with each pupil at Key Stage Three having their own log-in details. This is to encourage pupils to remain up to date with current affairs, whilst also developing their cultural capital.

4.0 Parental Involvement

Parents are reminded of the importance of reading and how it is that they can support their child to develop his/ her reading skills. This communication takes place through letters and leaflets sharing useful links and strategies to guide parents with helping their child to enhance his/ her reading skills. Parents are also kept up to date with initiatives such as Bedrock Learning and First News and are provided with students' log-in details so that they can support students with reading at home.