The Importance of Reading Policy

July 2024

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1. Our Intent

At Falconer, we know and understand the importance of developing reading and other literacy skills for our young people now and in the future. Falconer is an all-boys school where the majority of children have autism and associated challenging behaviors. A legacy group who were reading at age appropriate levels will be leaving us in 2025 and subsequent year groups have needed sharper focus on basic skills including emotional regulation, social interaction and reading. As a result, the school has reviewed its practice and an audit of needs in the areas of reading, phonics, social communication and speech and language has been completed. Changes to the curriculum and to interventions have been recently implemented as a result.

Reading has remained central to these developments and underpins our whole curriculum. Young people who develop their skills in reading can grow not only as readers, but also as people who understand and can act on what they read. This is incumbent upon us as educators and care colleagues to ensure that our pupils know how important reading is and that they are given time, strategies and support to improve. We set to work on improving the literacy skills of our pupils from the point they arrive with us at Falconer School.

2. Assessment

Currently, the assessment of reading and Speech and Language is led by the SEND team in relation to phonics and the English team in relation to ongoing reading across the curriculum. This has been a very deliberate choice, in order to further embed our strong belief at Falconer School, that reading is a critical issue for every child in every subject, not limited to English and literacy specialist subjects only. The SEND department carries out baseline assessments of single word reading and comprehension of new pupils on entry to the school and as soon as possible. They are also completed at assessment points in October and March for all pupils. Speech and Language Assessments are actioned on an ongoing and rolling programme and are analysed and monitored by our commissioned Speech and Language Therapist.

Since January 2024 we have assessed all pupils using NGTR for single word reading and comprehension to ensure our process and judgements are as robust and consistent as possible.

Testing is led by the SEND team are reported to include the childrens' reading ages as well as their standardised scores. Ongoing teacher assessment of literacy is conducted by the English department and results are reported using B Squared. Should a pupil's progress be of concern in ongoing teacher assessment, they are referred to the SEND team for additional support.

3. Use of Phonics

The school has practitioners trained in the delivery of Smart Kids Phonics and a specialist teacher of Phonics and Dyslexia one day a week to support the development of this area of practice. The use of Phonics at Falconer School is delivered under three separate strands:

1. **Initial teaching:** this is through explicit phonics lessons resourced for all teachers in our SEND reading room and throughout the school.
2. **Intervention:** this is through targeted sessions delivered by the SEN department.
3. **Support:** this is the responsibility of all education staff when teaching or supporting in class by assisting pupils with reading using the strategies that have been taught to the pupils during their time in Key stage 2.

4. **Adjustments:** Adjustments are made for the needs of the boys including engagement material based on interests, dyslexia friendly reading material and guidance and safe adults deployed. A catch students when they are ready to read approach is being implemented to engage harder to reach readers.

4. Delivery of Reading Interventions

Reading is delivered as a whole school approach through the timetabled sessions every morning. These sessions are recorded in pupil's individual reading record booklets. The English curriculum has been reviewed with an English Specialist from HFL support to focus on reading development across all year groups and especially at KS3. Texts have been chosen in collaboration with students and are highly age appropriate and engaging. Teachers across other subjects have had some training on use of AI to adjust texts and language to support early readers having access to subject knowledge. B squared is used to assess progress and identify gaps to be used for further support and teaching.

5. Other Opportunities for Reading

Beyond this, there are numerous opportunities to read across the curriculum which can be found as an appendix to this policy. This includes the active use of the schools Marking and Feedback Policy which is based on Strength, Improvement and Response (SIR) where pupils are encouraged to read the feedback given them in each lesson and respond to the learning that has taken place.

We use SMART Kids Phonics as our phonics scheme for interventions. Our SEND team deliver reading interventions aimed at increasing both comprehension and single word reading scores, this is measured through the bi-annual testing undertaken by the SEND team.

It is the responsibility of all staff at Falconer School to encourage and engender a love of reading in our pupils.

6. The Impact of Reading and Literacy Interventions

Reading interventions are having early impact as seen in those students becoming more confident within early phonics phases. This is evidence in our reading logs in the reading base. Proportions of students engaging in reading are increasing weekly and a culture of the importance of reading is being established. The new English curriculum, with its reading focus, is being launched and will be rolled out in September 2024. Students who do not need phonics interventions are beginning to show an interest in reading.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

- All teachers at Falconer are teachers of reading.
- The English Lead and Assistant SENCO are responsible for leading the development of reading across the English curriculum and into other subjects.
- The SENCO leads on the phonics interventions and support, delegating the developments needed to the team as appropriate. They will also train and develop Support staff to enable reading methods to be reviewd and further developed and embedded in all activities every day.

8. Monitoring and Review

The reading policy will be monitored on a bi-annual basis in school through assessments in house. Governors will review the policy on a yearly basis.

Appendix 1: Opportunities for Reading

Subject	Opportunities for Reading
English KS4	Pupils are encouraged to read from the interactive white boards. Guided reading takes place with explanations to clarify what is read. PowerPoint presentations further embed the reading process. Supported reading is linked to the topic being studied, from set texts such as Sunlight on the Grass and Shakespeare's Romeo & Juliet. We visit past examination papers with them to support with their read and prepare them for formal examinations. From Literacy lessons - pupils access read through a wide range of own choice reading materials (young literature - David Walliams / autobiographies/ First News newspapers etc) in the final 15 minutes of their literacy time. GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature will both be studied from September 2022 (previously only English Language has been sat at GCSE level)
English KS3	All English KS3 classes read at the start of each lesson. Each pupil is on the reading scheme and can progress through them at their own pace. Pupils read independently but will have to read to the teacher and the Teaching Assistant in their lessons throughout the week. They read a selection of factual and non-factual books. The schemes are easy to read but stretch pupils as well, and they should complete a book every two weeks if not sooner. The aim is to expose them to lots of different texts and vocabulary and to provide them with the confidence to succeed at reading. Each year group reads a class text each term and studies it, normally one book per term. • Year 7 Harry Potter, Harry's Mad and Stories from other Cultures and Poetry. • Year 8 The Daydreamer, Great Uncle Stilton, Newspapers, Holes and Poetry. • Year 9 Oliver Twist, Macbeth /The Tempest, Dracula. We promote "World Book Day" each year. Dressing up and sharing texts that adults and pupils love as well as running reading activities and live zooms with authors. There are opportunities for reading in comprehension texts and short plays.
Music	PowerPoint presentation encourage pupils to read in lessons which includes the classes learning objectives for each lesson. In addition, there are lots of opportunities to read simplified rhythmic notation, graphic notation and a few conventional notations as well as song lyrics.

Primary	Reading is embedded across all subjects in our primary curriculum. The children read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts, as well as recipes, instructions, magazines, and signs/notices around the learning environment. Adults also model reading for pleasure through daily story time (which the children all engage amazingly well with).
Art	The opportunities for reading for pupils are during lessons where we research artists work and compile PowerPoints for their sketchbooks to complement the practical work. Pupils are asked to read information about the work and compile their own written responses. There is also a large archive of art books for pupils to read for their extension work as well as books to inform their learning in class. Pupils also read from the board when presenting resources.
Science	Pupils access reading in this lesson via PowerPoints and Learning objectives. They also read out answers to questions set (their own written work), mark each other's work and read to access the materials provided for their learning.
Food	Opportunities to read are presented at the beginning of a new sub theme both through PowerPoint presentations and on worksheets produced for the corresponding activity.
Motor Vehicle Mechanics	During theory lessons, reading take place via: • Board presentations (pupils will be asked to read sections if they are comfortable in doing so) • Using google to research information/ feedback to the group • Creating posters • Worksheets for each unit • Handouts for each unit • Theory work/ Write-ups (sentence structures when answering). • Searching the word wall for the item they mean • End of unit tests • Health & Safety Test • Self-assessment traffic light sheet • SIR marking/ Live marking • Word Banks During practical lessons, reading takes place through: Reading the list of which tools should be in the tool trolley/toolbox/cabinet (each lesson to ensure no losses) The lessons briefing (done verbally but usually on the white board throughout the lesson) • When using Google to search for information (e.g. recommended Tyre Pressures or Torque settings) • Using Google and books to research information often feeding back to the group • Information on Tyres (Direction of rotation, Maximum Pressure, Date of production, etc)

	• Information on Parts • Installation instructions • Tool Names on the pictures along the workshop wall • Reading the labels (e.g., identification and information on contents of Engine Oil)
Maths	Pupils are encouraged to read from the interactive white boards. PowerPoint presentations further embed the reading process. We visit past examination papers with pupils to support with their reading and prepare them for formal examinations. Reading is encouraged across both key stages through the use of online resources such as MyMaths and through the use of bespoke worksheets and topic examination booklets.
DT	In years 7, 8 and 9, there is reading from the interactive white board re tasks, instructions and projects. In years 10 and 11, there is a considerable amount of exam preparation which requires a significant amount of reading in order to gain knowledge of the questions associated with the 2-hour exam. As the year groups progress towards GCSE, there becomes an increasing emphasis on research and the ability to investigate how things are designed and made.
ICT	Pupils have a considerable range of opportunities to engage in accessing and reading in IT classes. The reading medium can be provided in a variety of methods from online to hard copy sources. Text is used to develop language acquisition and specialised key language in relevant different modules. For each module, the young people will be required to read, select and interpret information in order to complete tasks. It is a cross curricular subject that facilitates incorporating both core and additional subjects in KS3 & KS4 which is evidenced in their class folders.
DofE	During enrichment lessons, there are reading opportunities such as following instructions on how to do something, how to access the activity or identifying items such as Trees or flora and fauna, animals, or pieces of equipment.
PE	Those pupils who are on the GCSE course read related and appropriate textbooks in the classroom. Reading materials are also available for all pupils to refer to in the sports hall building. There are large posters mounted on the wall which all provide appropriate reading material relating to all aspects of the subject. Many pupils often refer to these for points of reference.
SEND	Within 1:1 sessions, there is always a targeted reading time. This varies from pupil-to-pupil dependent on need. Some will use graded reading schemes and read aloud. Other pupils will have longer 'real' books, extracts of text from different genres, sometimes digital to read and respond to. These may be exam style questions to develop strategies to understand what is being asked and to plan what needs to be done to answer the question. These may be read aloud or silently depending on the

	young person. Verbal and written follow up questions and tasks are completed to develop strategies which can be transferred to wider reading in class and life. If support is for maths, then young people read vocabulary and discuss meanings with examples, and if appropriate to the young person's maths ability, worded questions which require reading, comprehending subject-specific vocabulary and breaking it all down into a process. Further to this, we use card and board games which require reading of single words to develop sight and pattern recognition of spelling rules/ letter strings. Bespoke reading resources have been devised by our phonics and reading specialist. Sessions are recorded in our lesson notes which are on the server and indicate the type of reading, pupil response, difficulties or success and the next steps. As a department, we take the approach that there are reading opportunities in all subjects and environments which help young people to develop the relevant skills and strategies to read in different contexts, whether it be reading signs, timetables or menus etc when out and about, reading for academic success or reading for pleasure in audio books, books or digital print.
Humanities	Reading in Humanities includes, PowerPoints, textbook activities, case studies, worksheets and comprehension activities.