



Reading & Literacy Policy

St Christopher's Church of England High School

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St Christopher's CE High School Mission Statement

St Christopher's is a Church of England Academy where pupils and staff work together, in the knowledge and love of God. We try to act out our faith in daily life, with Christ as our example.

Within our strong Christian, Anglican context, we seek to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development of our pupils, growing together as a caring and supportive community whilst preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of their adult lives.

We aim to achieve our mission by providing an environment which

- recognises that each member of the school community is an individual with specific needs and strengths
- fosters mutual respect and concern for others
- values the contribution made by each member of the school community
- encourages and celebrates positive achievement
- actively supports those in need.

What is Literacy and Why Does Reading Matter?	4
Purpose	4
Provision.....	4
- Vocabulary	
- Reading	
- Literacy	
- Oracy	
- Assessment	
- Intervention	
Provision: Key Staff	7
Performance: Quality Assurance	8

What is Literacy and Why Does Reading Matter?

Literacy is functional reading, writing, speaking and listening. This includes pupils' ability to communicate in a range of contexts, across the curriculum. High level literacy skills are essential in ensuring pupils' achievement in school and their ability to access further education and employment once they leave.

'Young people who leave school without good literacy skills are held back at every stage of life. Their outcomes are poorer on almost every measure, from health and wellbeing, to employment and finance.'

2020, Education Endowment Foundation

It is important to note that literacy skills, whilst clearly a primary focus of English, are used across the school. These skills must be developed and reinforced across the curriculum. Therefore, all teachers must demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English whatever [their] specialist subject.

Literacy can be broken down into four key areas:

- The accuracy of spoken or written language
- The understanding and application of core skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening
- The understanding and correct use of subject specific and wider vocabulary
- The promotion and development of reading

The reading and writing of Standard English, alongside proficient language development, is the key to unlocking the rest of the academic curriculum. Pupils who struggle to read struggle in all subjects and the wonders of a knowledge-rich curriculum passes them by unread. Fluency of reading is also a key indicator for future success in further education, higher education and employment.

Ofsted 2021, The Reading Framework

Purpose

As a school we aim to:

- To raise the literacy attainment at every level in all subject areas to ensure that we give every pupil the opportunity to maximise their potential
- To recognise that all teachers are facilitators of reading and literacy and have a responsibility to promote high expectations both, across all subject specialisms
- To sustain and develop high standards of disciplinary literacy, where the subject's way of reading, speaking and writing are integrated and mapped into curriculum intent
- To foster a love of reading, through a reading rich curriculum
- To enable all pupils to have the opportunity to become effective readers, speakers, and writers, and provide targeted intervention to support pupils' skills.
- To encourage spoken language skills in discussion amongst pupils, as well as classroom instruction, promoting high quality talk across the curriculum and outside the classroom.

Provision

Vocabulary

During 2019-2022, whole school CPD focused on vocabulary gap by developing pupils to become 'word rich', with a specific emphasis on academic and disciplinary vocabulary.

This entailed:

- Ensuring that each subject has a 'word rich' curriculum in the SoL review
- Making sure that staff are aware of and understand the different tiers of vocabulary and how they influence other areas of literacy and their subject specific outcomes

- Promote word exploration through etymology, morphology, root words, synonyms, and antonyms to enable pupils to expand their knowledge and ability to decode new complex words
- Ensure that staff explicitly teach, model and scaffold pupil vocabulary (part of SIP for T/L 2022-23) continuing throughout 2023-24.

This work is ongoing to embed the strategies as part of CPD through the Teaching and Learning emphasis for 2022-24, whilst forthcoming work on assessment practices will also consider the impact of vocabulary on assessment practices.

Further scrutiny of vocabulary, particularly around spelling, is being explored in 2024-25 with access to GL assessment spelling test software alongside the NGRT package being put in place for monitoring reading age and progress.

Reading

In 2022-2023 whole school development of reading forms a significant part of our SIP following the 2022 Ofsted report. Our overriding aim was to develop fluent readers through three core strands: (1) support for struggling readers, (2) reading independently and for pleasure, (3) reading in all subjects. This continues to form a key strand of our approach in 2024-25 through the following reading strategy:

1. Supporting struggling readers:

- To support our weakest readers who struggle with phonics, so that they can catch up quickly and access the full curriculum, identified through GL Assessment (NGRT) for 2024-25.

2. Reading independently and for pleasure:

- To foster a culture, and love of, reading within and beyond the classroom.
- To continue to develop form tutor time activities to raise the standards of reading and to promote independent reading and reading for pleasure.
- To develop our communication with staff, pupils, and parents about reading progress and strategies to support reading at home.
- Support book gifting initiatives such as Book Buzz and World Book Day to gift across KS3. In turn this is supported by whole class reading in form of the gifted books. Focus is on pupil choice to promote reading for pleasure.

3. Reading in all subjects:

- To ensure that each subject has a 'reading rich' curriculum through their SoL review.
- To support whole school CPD with the promotion of the development of reading across all curriculum areas and support staff in ensuring reading fluency.
- To ensure that staff understand how pupils learn and develop their ability to read.
- To ensure that staff can teach, model and scaffold effective reading in the classroom.
- To promote up-to-date and relevant research relating to reading across school through relevant documents such as the Reading Bulletin.
- To provide opportunity for group reading activities in form time through whole class reading (and oracy) such as 'War Horse' with Yr7 and core subject reading comprehension exercises in Yr10.

Literacy

A key aim of our school improvement plan for 2023-24 was to embed effective strategies to improve literacy across all subjects. It is imperative that connections are made between subjects as we acknowledge that Literacy is the responsibility of all staff in our ongoing commitment to this school improvement priority in 2024-25.

A departmental audit of existing practices and preparation for curriculum mapping around literacy took place in June 2023, leading to CPD in the same month, illustrating both 'the writing gap' and a range of strategies which can be deployed across KS3-5. This formed the first stage of our CPD program for 2023-24 where staff from across school led on literacy within their department, working on specific strategies to embed subject specific good practice. SLT then used whole school CPD, T&L morning briefings, the Reading and Literacy (half-termly) Bulletin to increase both the profile – and access to – high quality CPD around literacy and the latest pedagogy. In conjunction with our T&L SLT lead, learning walks and lesson observations are now used to support T&L, monitoring the impact of literacy provision in class, whilst our CPD resource booklet has given further opportunity for staff to share good practice beyond our February INSET session.

Oracy

In 2024-25 we aim to build on our previous CPD around literacy to promote high quality teacher and pupil talk in our classrooms, providing pupils with regular opportunities to practice. This will involve structured CPD modelled on our previous department focused strategy approach, culminating in whole staff CPD alongside teaching and learning briefings to raise the profile of Oracy as a key objective in our strategy for the academic year. Progress will be measured and evaluated through learning walks, observations and pupil panel evidence taken strategically throughout the year.

Assessment

Reading age assessments are conducted termly for all KS3 pupils using the STAR program. The results of these tests are analysed and evaluated to locate key trends before KPI's are distributed to SLT/HoD's. The long-term aim is to allow all staff access to the latest reading data. This allows teachers to ensure that their teaching and learning matches the reading requirements of pupils. These tests, in conjunction with summative assessments and teacher referral, are used to identify pupils who require 1-to-1 or small group reading interventions, particularly through the two intervention models, English literacy (small) group work and Reading mentors. Targeted Year 10 pupils have one reading age assessment during term 1, this is to validate their outgoing Year 9 data and to identify individual pupils who may still require reading support progress during KS4. However, prior to this teacher referral can be made for pupils of concern, alongside historic data from KS2, CAT scores and previous STAR testing.

Intervention

A diverse range of staged intervention practices will be used to support pupils. Their progress will be tracked using a range of data including GL Assessment NGRT/NGST testing, teacher referral and transitional data from KS2. To support our weakest readers a range of interventions are in place. Urgent interventions are tailored to the specific and individual needs of the pupils. Pupils, once identified, will have further support through different avenues of intervention, triaged at the point of need:

- Direct support with school librarian in small groups of Yr7-9 through NGRT/NGST data consultation with SIP priority lead (JWR) using Bedrock Learning (a new platform for our literacy intervention for 2024-25, launching January 2025).
- Reading Mentor Scheme – buddy system in library during form time, identified through data reviews of NGRT data by SIP priority lead (JWR) and relevant HOY team
- SEND department to continue their work supporting target groups of weaker readers through Lexonik / Lexonik Advanced in small groups across Yr7-9.
- IDL spelling intervention groups to continue in 2024-25 supporting the deployment of key vocabulary and spellings.

Explicit teaching of reading strategies as a whole school approach has been introduced this year in a staggered approach of four strategy foci per term. It is designed to allow all pupils to develop their reading and literacy skills across all subject disciplines and for pupils to be able to identify and apply specific reading skills required to access *'the wonders of a knowledge rich curriculum'*. CPD (e.g. February twilight) to showcase strategies, supported by school policy on QA throughout the academic year.

In 2024-25 the SLT lead will investigate liaison with key feeder primaries schools, in the spring and summer term, alongside specialist training (such as LPDS) to support, influence, and inform staff CPD and raise awareness of reading across the next academic year. The aim of this will be to continue the development of a whole school approach to ensure that all teachers can support the reading needs of all pupils in the classroom, and for a consistent approach to the teaching of reading to become embedded as standard practice, supporting and enhancing transitions from KS2 to KS3 and KS3 to KS4. The continued review of SoL by each department, treating their SoL as a working document, should reflect the broader whole school 2024-25 T&L priority.

All teachers are teachers of reading and literacy. Therefore, regarding its implementation in school, they aim to:

- Explicitly use reading strategies within teaching activities e.g. close reading, making connection, skimming and scanning
- Model effective reading using core skills e.g. emphasis, pause, tone = prosody
- Explore pupils' prior knowledge, misconceptions and expand pupils' vocabulary
- Use reading ages (which are available via STAR reading data from JWR) to inform lesson planning and match activities sensitively to pupils' needs
- Use a wide range of texts and sources including print, media and ICT to engage learners and foster a love of reading

Provision: Key Staff

Although every teacher takes responsibility for the success of whole school literacy (as outlined above), there are key staff with specific roles:

Staff	Role
Literacy Lead SLT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This is a member of the leadership team.• The Literacy Lead has overall strategic responsibility for whole school literacy and helps to maintain the high profile of this important aspect of school life.• Monitor and review effectiveness of strategies.• Responsible for the introduction and success of whole school reading and literacy strategies. This includes reviewing and maintaining existing policies, such as form time activities, reading mentor schemes, overseeing intervention, as well as introducing the next steps for whole school reading and literacy through CPD.• Reports to SLT on Reading & Literacy strategy as well as annual progress data.• Raises the profile of reading (continuing as a SIP priority) with staff by introducing a new literacy focus, particularly through CPD/HoD's/Reading Bulletin.• Develop contacts with outside agencies and relevant professional qualifications e.g. NPQLL and the Lancashire Literacy Network.
Curriculum Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a reading rich curriculum through SoL review• Ensure that staff in their department are marking accurately and effectively using agreed departmental marking policies• Ensure that staff in their curriculum areas have high expectations of literacy for pupils• Ensure that staff in their department adhere to and actively use the strategies mentioned above to promote and literacy• Use learning walks to identify and share good practice E.G. reading strategies, writing frames and word rich activities• Conduct work scrutiny with specific literacy focus to QA provision in everyday teaching• Integrate SIP termly strategies on reading/vocab/literacy/oracy as directed by Literacy Lead into SoL and support QA of this process in classroom teaching
Librarian	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote pupils' love of reading• Organise, manage and co-ordinate biannual Reading testing program (STAR 2021-24, GL Assessment 2024-25)• Lead Bedrock Learning intervention groups (launching January 2025)• Provide recommended reads to pupils to match their interests and abilities• Raise the profile of reading in school, through displays, social media, parental and pupil contact, and reading lists for forms/school website• Support the SLT Literacy Lead with book clubs, pupil mentoring and reading competitions

Performance: Quality Assurance

Staff	Role
HoY Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the importance of high-quality literacy with the year group for whom they are responsible by reinforcing expectations of weekly silent reading form time activity. Through assemblies and other year group activities, ensure that literacy is promoted as an important life skill Through their form tutors have an important role to play, by generating enthusiasm for whole school strategies such year group book gifting, class reads and supporting attendance at the weekly <i>Reading Mentor Program</i>.
Form Tutors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use one form time a week for form-time reading, supporting strategies such as reading aloud and whole class reading books. Encourage pupils to enter internal and external competitions (as displayed in the library, via synergy or through external providers). Encourage pupils to extend their reading, read for pleasure and promote reading materials from the school's library through book boxes and verbal challenge on reading appropriately.
SEND Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify, through data and teacher recommendation, pupils for Lexonik and IDL intervention. Create appropriate intervention plan which complements intervention strategies to suit pupils' individual needs e.g. tiered vocabulary support or scaffolding reading tasks. Run Lexonik and IDL or a one-to-one session with targeted pupils, often within lessons where multiple pupils identified with significant reading challenges. Provide support strategies to parents, or liaise with SLT Literacy Lead, for those pupils they support.

SLT Briefing:	Weekly
Learning Walks (general):	SLT discretion
Learning Walks (T&L focus):	Termly (HoD/AHT T&L)
Work scrutiny (general):	Book Inspection/Dept review
Reading Assessments:	KS3 Termly, Year 10 Nov-Dec half term
HoD SoL Review:	Regular review use of literacy within learning plans, work scrutiny, learning walks, pupil voice.



**That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither-
whatever they do prospers.**

Psalm 1:3



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