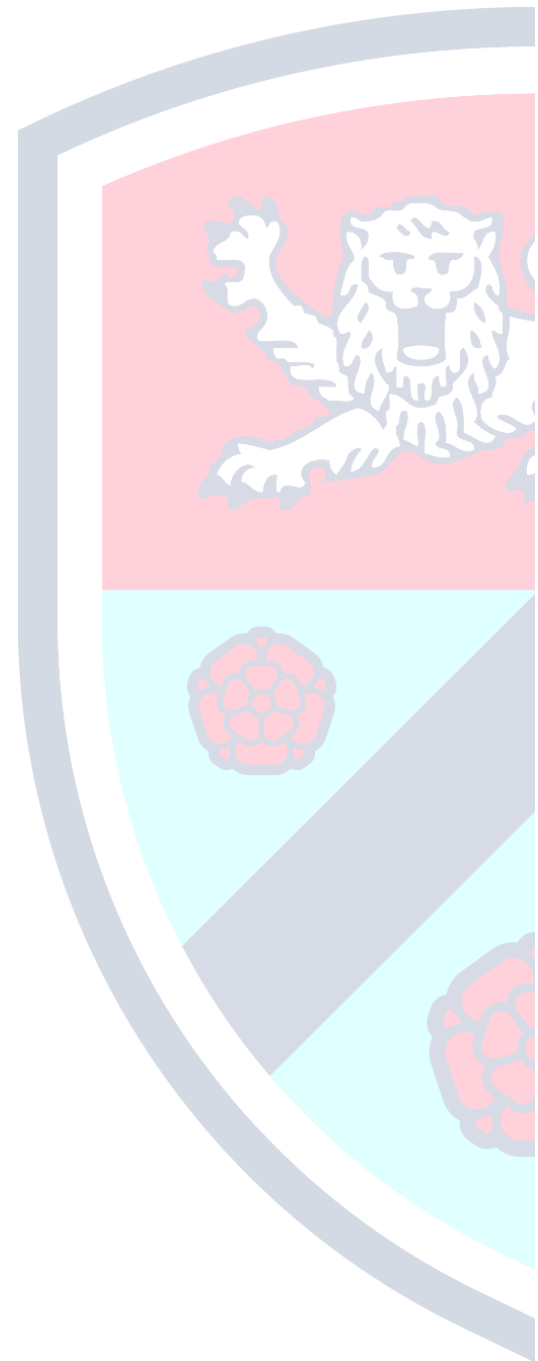


Carnforth
High School

Whole School Reading Strategy 2025.26



Confidence Purpose Respect

Carnforth High School: Reading Strategy

At Carnforth High School, we place significant value on the importance of reading. Our strategy aims to cultivate a vibrant reading culture that supports all learners, embracing a love of literature, empowering pupils to become confident, fluent readers.

Purpose

The overarching aim of this reading strategy is to enable our pupils to successfully access their academic curriculum, whilst fostering a lifelong source of joy and enrichment and to foster and embed a sustained culture of reading across the school. This culture will support all pupils—regardless of their starting points—to make measurable progress and to thrive as readers. Particular emphasis is placed on ensuring that both confident and reluctant readers are provided with the necessary support to develop their skills and engagement.

Rationale

Reading is recognised not only as a source of personal enrichment and enjoyment, but also as a fundamental component of academic success and lifelong learning. The school acknowledges the following principles as central to its reading strategy:

- **Equity in Achievement:** Proficient reading is a key determinant in reducing disparities in educational outcomes, particularly those arising from socio-economic disadvantage.
- **Broadening Horizons:** Reading enables pupils to access knowledge and perspectives beyond their immediate environment, thereby enhancing their understanding of the wider world.
- **Personal Development:** Improvements in literacy are closely linked to increased self-esteem, motivation, and positive behaviour among pupils.
- **Independent Learning:** High levels of literacy empower pupils to engage with learning autonomously and with confidence.

Implementation and Review

This strategy will be implemented through a whole-school approach, involving curriculum planning, targeted interventions, staff development, and the promotion of reading for pleasure. Progress will be monitored regularly, and the strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness.

“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.”

EEF: Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools

Aims

- **To foster a lifelong love of reading** by embedding reading for pleasure into the daily experiences of all pupils
- **To develop a whole-school reading culture** that values literature as a tool for academic success, personal growth, and wellbeing
- **To ensure all pupils can confidently access the curriculum** through targeted support that improves reading fluency, comprehension, and confidence
- **To monitor and evaluate reading progress rigorously**, ensuring interventions are timely, impactful and responsive to pupil needs to enable them to flourish
- **To provide staff with the training and resources needed** to effectively teach and promote disciplinary reading across all subject areas
- **To engage all stakeholders** - pupils, staff, and families, promoting shared responsibility and celebration of reading within and beyond the curriculum.

Implementation of the strategy

Reading Assessments

At Carnforth High School, we are committed to identifying and addressing reading needs early and effectively. To do this, we implement a robust assessment framework:

Diagnostic assessments

- **Baseline Assessments:** All students complete a range of assessments including CATs, SATs, and NGRT to establish a comprehensive reading baseline
- **Informing Classroom Practice:** Baseline assessment data is shared with class teachers to inform planning and enabling adaptations to be made to allow all pupils to successfully access the same ambitious curriculum
- **Diagnostic Testing for targeted support:** Pupils whose reading age falls below their chronological age undergo further diagnostic assessments, including WRAT5 (single word reading and sentence comprehension sub tests), and Fresh Start Phonics screening, to pinpoint specific areas of need
- **Tiered Intervention Placement:** Based on assessment outcomes, pupils are placed into one of five tiers of intervention, ensuring that support is tailored, targeted, and impactful.

Intervention

To enable every pupil to become a confident and capable reader, we adopt a strategic, tiered approach to supporting our weakest readers

- **Fresh Start Phonics:** A structured synthetic phonics programme designed for older readers who struggle with decoding. It supports accurate word reading and comprehension
- **Language builders:** To support language comprehension
- **Lexia:** A comprehensive digital programme that targets six key areas of reading development: phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and structural analysis
- **Reading Partners:** A peer mentoring scheme where confident readers in Key Stage 4 are paired with younger pupils for weekly reading sessions. This not only supports struggling readers but also provides leadership opportunities for older pupils.

Tiers of intervention and support:

Tier	Profile of Pupil	Description	Assessing Progress and Impact
Tier 1: Fresh Start Phonics	NGRT/WRAT5 SAS below 80 and do not pass the Fresh Start phonics screening.	Fresh Start is a proven phonics intervention programme that rescues reading in secondary schools, unlocking the whole curriculum. Small group sessions 5 times a week for 20 minutes at the same time each day. There is a 1-hour opportunity daily for 1:1 catch up if needed.	Each half term, pupils undergo a phonics screening to assess progress from baseline/ last assessment. Some pupils also sit the NGRT at the end of Term 1, 2 and 3 to assess whether they can apply what they have learnt into a test environment.
Tier 2: Language Builders	NGRT/WRAT5 SAS below 80, pass the Fresh Start phonics screening but do not pass the WRAT5 Comprehension. (Or completed the Fresh Start programme before the end of term).	A Bedrock Learning centred intervention that supports pupils to access subject specific, Tier 2, terminology that has been identified by departments in our KS3 curriculum. Small group sessions 2 times a week for 1 hour.	Pupils are tested using the Bedrock reading test at the end of Term 1, 2 and 3 to assess whether they can apply what they have learnt into a test environment.
Tier 3: Lexia PowerUp	NGRT/WRAT5 SAS 80-89. (Or pass the WRAT 5 Comprehension).	Lexia is a highly personalised, blended learning model. Lexia has been designed to target secondary-aged pupils who lack the basic reading, academic vocabulary, and comprehension skills necessary to fully access the curriculum. Small group sessions 2 times a week for 1 hour.	Pupils repeat the NGRT at the end of Term 1, 2 and 3 to assess whether they can apply what they have learnt into a test environment.
Tier 4: Lexia PowerUp	NGRT/WRAT5 SAS 90-95.	Small group sessions 1 time a week for 1 hour. Reading Partners	Pupils repeat the NGRT at the end of Term 1, 2 and 3 to assess whether they can apply what they have learnt into a test environment.
Tier 5: Lexia PowerUp	NGRT/WRAT5 SAS 96-99 without a 'balanced profile' description.	Pupils access for 60 minutes across a week at home or in homework club. Reading Partners	Pupils repeat the NGRT at the end of Term 1, 2 and 3 to assess whether they can apply what they have learnt into a test environment.

Monitoring progress

To ensure that reading interventions are effective and that all pupils make progress, we implement a rigorous assessment schedule:

- Whole Cohort Assessment for all pupils in Years 7–11 takes place at the start of each academic year through the completion of the NGRT reading assessment
- Monitoring of pupil progress within Fresh Start and Lexia platforms provides granular progress data
- Pupils accessing a reading intervention receive additional NGRT reading assessments at the end of each term
- Stakeholder voice - pupil, staff and parental/ carer voice is used to assess the level of confidence of all readers on an intervention.

Reading for pleasure

In order to encourage **all** readers to flourish, reading is core to all that we do. We actively promote reading within and beyond the curriculum.

- Book Buzz. Pupils in Year 7 and Year 8 are gifted with a book to support reading for pleasure at home through the BookTrust
- Reading Ambassadors where pupil leaders from KS4 promote reading through peer recommendations, book talks, and library events in addition to supporting reading partners
- School library is the reading hub of the school allowing pupils quiet space throughout the school day to immerse themselves in literature

Whole School Reading Culture

- RISE Promote reading for pleasure during registration with reviewed choice of texts using suggestions from staff and student voice.
- SPARX reader used by all KS3 classes for English homework and for 20 minutes in each KS3 library lesson.
- Author events within school and across the Trust
- Half termly book recommendations and reading celebrations in the Parent Newsletter and on Progress Evenings. Fiction and non-fiction books recommended by the National Literacy Trust are advertised to parents.
- **Reading Displays:** Corridor and classroom displays with student reviews and reads, staff picks, and themed reading challenges.
- **Extra curricular activities:** Student-run book clubs to allow for students to share their interests and passions with others.

Improving Fluency Through Poetry

- **Poetry by Heart:** A structured programme where Year 7 students learn and recite poems.
 - Focus on rhythm, expression, and memory to build fluency and confidence.
 - Termly poetry recitals and competitions to celebrate progress.

Leadership Opportunities for Older Readers

- i. **Structured Peer Reading:**
 - a) Year 10/11 students trained as reading mentors.
 - b) Weekly sessions with KS3 students focusing on fluency, comprehension, and discussion.
 - c) Mentors receive leadership certificates and can log hours for enrichment or Duke of Edinburgh awards.
- ii. Reading Leaders
 - a. Year 11 students lead lunchtime reading groups and activities
 - b. Opportunities to co-host library events and support Year 6/7 transition reading activities.
 - c. Involvement in planning World Book Day and other reading celebration events,

The Bay Learning Trust Literary Canon

All pupils in Year 7-11 will read carefully chosen texts throughout the academic year in dedicated form time activities. Form tutors, as the expert readers, read the set texts aloud to the pupils who are expected to follow the text and where applicable, engage in discussion and debate.

Through the Bay Learning Trust Literary Canon, delivered through our RISE programme, we aim to:

- Highlight the significant value and importance of reading to our pupils, parents and staff
- Develop pupils' reading abilities and strategies to further support reading for pleasure and being able to access the curriculum effectively
- Provide challenging texts both in content, vocabulary and themes that will further develop pupils' reading skills, future reading habits and them holistically as individuals who can engage with the wider world and empathise with others
- Develop pupils' cultural capital by offering texts which are outside of their 'known' world, allowing pupils to explore other cultures, situations and experiences
- Promote a joy and love for reading to both our pupils and staff.
- Address year-wide reading issues diagnosed from the NGRT tests and QLA of GCSE and internal exam results.

Reading within the curriculum

The English department teach a wide and diverse range of challenging, full texts, covering several genres throughout Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.

Curriculum maps have explicit reference to reading and vocabulary skills and knowledge required for each subject.

In addition, led by Heads of Department, class teachers review their curriculum areas, exploring:

- How reading is taught and embedded within each subject
- Ensuring appropriate and engaging reading resources are available for all readers
- Adapting curriculum delivery to support pupils with lower reading proficiency
- Emphasising disciplinary literacy - teaching pupils how to read, interpret, and engage with texts specific to each subject area.
- Ensure explicit links to tangible links to real life situations where the reading skill being taught is used.

Staff CPD

To ensure staff are equipped with the knowledge and tools to support reading development across the curriculum, we have embedded reading - focused professional development into our CPD programme:

- Whole staff CPD explaining baseline data and implications for curriculum delivery
- Diagnostic information shared with subject teachers to support progress of struggling readers.
- Whole staff CPD focusing on adapting curriculum delivery for weaker reader
- Delivery of training on effective strategies for teaching reading within lessons
- Training focus on reading aloud with confidence and clarity.

Parental Engagement

A number of strategies are used to better engage parents and carers:

- A dedicated reading stall at open evening showcases the Trust Literary Canon and Sparx Reader programme, offering parents the opportunity to ask questions and learn more
- A summer reading challenge for Year 6 parents and students to take part in together
- A dedicated reading stall at open evening showcases the Trust Literary Canon and reading support, offering parents the opportunity to ask questions and learn more
- Follow up reading stalls and presentations at important parent events during the school year
- Regular communication to keep parents informed about reading initiatives, updates and celebration.