

**Reading Policy**

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| **Author** | **Written/ Reviewed** | **Next Review** |
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**Aims:**

Our aim is to ensure that all pupils with SEMH needs are able to read fluently and with comprehension. We believe that all pupils can learn to read, regardless of their background or abilities. We believe that reading has a fundamental place in education and underpins all other subjects across the curriculum. Staff use a specific part of the planning framework to detail how they will promote reading in their lessons and this is also monitored during Learning Walks undertaken by Senior/HoD staff throughout the year. Through reading at Shenstone, we aim to:

Develop Literacy Skills: The primary aim of reading in school is to develop and enhance students' literacy skills. Reading plays a crucial role in improving vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and critical thinking abilities.

Promote Well-being: Reading fosters emotional well-being and provides an avenue for students to explore different worlds, experiences, and perspectives. It can offer comfort, empathy, and a means of escape, contributing to students' overall mental health.

Enhance Communication: Reading enables students to communicate effectively, express their thoughts, and articulate ideas with clarity and confidence. It aids in developing strong verbal and written communication skills, which are vital for academic success and future opportunities.

Encourage Independent Learning: Reading encourages independent learning by empowering students to acquire knowledge beyond the classroom. It cultivates curiosity, self-motivation, and a lifelong love for learning, enabling students to become independent thinkers and problem solvers.

**Phonics at Shenstone Lodge School:**

For many of our students, they have missed out on the early years, fundamental teaching of phonics and have come to us with gaps. Our aim, for those students who have missed the basics of phonics, is to deliver high quality teaching of phonics for accelerated progression in reading and spelling, and help to close the gap between students and their age related expectations. Students are assessed every half term and placed into ability-appropriate groups.

Phonics at Shenstone is taught through the **Read Write Inc** programme. This systematic phonics approach helps students develop essential phonetic knowledge and decoding skills. It involves teaching letter sounds, blending, segmenting, and building words to improve reading fluency and accuracy.

The Read Write Inc Phonics programme is based on the following principles:

* Explicit teaching: Children are taught the sounds of the English language explicitly, in a systematic order.
* Consolidation: Children are given plenty of opportunities to practice the sounds they have learned, both in isolation and in words.
* Phonics-based reading: Children are taught to read by blending together the sounds they have learned.
* Comprehension: Children are taught to read for meaning, by using their knowledge of phonics, vocabulary, and grammar.

The programme is structured into sets, with each set introducing a specific group of letter sounds. Students progress through the sets in a systematic manner, building upon their knowledge and skills as they go. The sets also include 'red words,' which are common words that cannot be easily decoded using phonics rules.

The Read Write Inc Programme provides a structured and engaging framework for teaching phonics, reading, and writing. It equips children with the essential skills needed to decode words, read with fluency, and develop a lifelong love for reading.

This approach continues to be used through into the secondary site and groups are set in accordance with reading ages and staffing allocated in a 1:1 or much smaller groups where necessary.

**Guided Reading:**

Each day students attend their reading groups for a 30-minute guided reading session (25 mins on the secondary site), which are streamed according to reading age. At the primary site, Class staff will expose the students to a range of different texts, which are changed regularly to maintain interest and develop students’ reading ability. During each text, students will complete a range of activities developing all areas of their reading, such as retrieval, comprehension, and inference. These skills will be lead to an end outcome, displaying the skills that the students have been developing, and could include a book review, a retelling of the story, etc. At the secondary site, the groups are arranged in terms of reading age and more focus is placed on the use of 1:1 support for those with the lowest reading ages. The interests of students for free reading (for the higher ability readers) is the basis of the books we buy in for the school library.

All texts chosen within the guided reading groups are within the ability of the students and not only help to develop their literacy but also foster their love of reading. Staff will aim to expose students to a wide range of texts so that they have the opportunity to explore beyond the populist authors of the current day and broaden their literary horizons. Students will have access to physical copies of books from our new school library and from our online portals: Bug Club and Serial Mash.

Students are separated into three groups within the reading groups: those that require phonics, those that can read but may struggle, and ‘free readers.’ Free readers are placed into groups and focus on guided reading sessions designed to push their abilities. Students that are behind age related expectations are placed onto the Rapid Reading Scheme (see below), and students that require phonics are placed into a phonics group (see above). All students in every group will be heard read aloud, by an adult, at least once a week. At the secondary site, even those free readers will be read to at least once a week by the staff.

**Rapid Reading:**

Within the students’ reading groups, we employ our Rapid Reading scheme as an intervention to help students progress quickly towards their age related expectations. The Rapid Reading programme is a structured reading scheme designed to improve students' reading fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. It offers a wide range of levelled books that gradually increase in difficulty, allowing students to progress at their own pace.

Students will start at the level based on the reading scores and then work through each book with a member of staff, completing an assessment at the end of each book. If a student is unable to progress once they have completed a level, there is a set A and set B of each colour to enable more opportunities to develop their reading skill. Once students have completed the scheme, they are classed as a free reader and will complete guided reading activities within their group.

**Home Reading:**

The school values the involvement of parents in their children's reading. We believe that parents can play a vital role in supporting their children to learn to read.

Students in our phonics groups will be send home with a decodable book on a Monday, which will include the same sounds and words they have been learning in class that week. They will be sent with a pack including their book and sounds and words they have been learning, so they are able to read at home, with the idea that they will read the same text to build fluency, being able to read said text confidently by the end of the week. Packs will be returned on a Thursday and changed over the next week.

Students in our guided reading groups will have the opportunity to select a text from the library or access the range of books on our online portals. They will be sent home with a form of reading journal so that parents/carers are able to listen to them read and record progress. Students will be encouraged to pick books within their range but will also have the opportunity to take home any book, of any level, that they may enjoy reading with their parents/carers. Students will also have the logins to their reading schemes sent home and home reading is always promoted.

**Assessment:**

Students are assessed six times a year for their spelling and reading ages, using the Blackwell Spelling Test and Schonell Reading Test. This data is collated by the English Lead and informs the groupings for the students’ reading groups.

Formative and summative assessment of students’ progress is continually used by the class teacher, and the reading group teacher, to monitor progress and identify gaps. Data is monitored and appropriate interventions put in place for any students that require them.

**Reading for Pleasure:**

At Shenstone, our aim for reading is not only to develop students’ functional literacy but promote and foster a love for reading. We hope that a love of reading develops alongside reading in guided reading groups and during reading at home, however, we continually aim to develop this in school also. Each classroom has an individualised reading area, which class staff encourage students to use. Staff also employ the use of ERIC (Enjoyable Reading In Class) time. This is a 10 minute slot, at a point in the day best suited to the class, where students complete a non-assessed reading activity, purely for the enjoyment of reading. This can be independent reading, listening to staff read, audiobooks, or anything else the students find enjoyable.

At the Brades site, we use the free reading groups to foster their love of reading and continue to accelerate their reading age through the use of age appropriate books. The students chose these books themselves and we store these in the school library for use across the school. A school reading ‘reward ladder’ is promoted in school for students to also earn a book of their choice to take home.

**Conclusion:**

The school is committed to providing all pupils with SEMH needs with the opportunity to learn to read. We believe that all pupils can learn to read, and we will provide the support that is needed to make this happen. We aim to equip all students with the skill to read functional when they leave school; be it to attend college or university, read road signs or manuals in the home, or continue their love of reading alone.