

# How We Teach Reading at Blackpool Skills Academy

## Assessment and Placement

On admission, learners complete a standardised reading test to determine their reading age. Based on this, they are placed into one of three support waves to ensure targeted and appropriate intervention:

## Wave Overview

| <u>Wave</u>   | <u>Criteria</u>  | <u>Support Provided</u>                            |
|---------------|--|--|
| <b>Wave 3</b> | More than a three-year gap from chronological age      | Intensive 1:1 phonics-based interventions          |
| <b>Wave 2</b> | Eighteen months to three years below chronological age | Targeted in-class support and small group sessions |
| <b>Wave 1</b> | Less than eighteen months below chronological age      | Quality-first teaching embedded in the curriculum  |

Learner progress is reviewed regularly, and placement within waves is adjusted where appropriate to ensure sustained improvement in literacy.

## Wave 3 – Targeted 1:1 Support

Learners in Wave 3 access structured 1:1 phonics interventions, delivered by trained literacy staff using the **Fresh Start Programme**.

### Key Skills Developed:

- **Phonological Awareness:** Understanding the relationship between sounds and letters
- **Reading:** Decoding text and developing comprehension
- **Writing:** Structuring ideas with correct grammar and spelling
- **Listening:** Retaining and processing spoken information
- **Vocabulary:** Developing a wider, functional vocabulary
- **Spelling:** Applying rules accurately
- **Comprehension:** Interpreting meaning in spoken and written forms
- **Oracy:** Building confidence and clarity in spoken language

## Wave 2 – In-Class and Small Group Support

Wave 2 learners benefit from embedded literacy support during lessons and form time, including:

- Structured small group reading activities

- Phonics-trained staff delivering support in class
- Adaptive teaching strategies to meet individual needs
- Use of **IDL** to provide personalised literacy lessons

### **Wave 1 – Literacy Through the Curriculum**

For Wave 1 learners, literacy is promoted through high-quality teaching across all subjects:

- Vocabulary-rich classrooms with key words displayed and discussed
- Teachers modelling fluent reading
- Pupils reading aloud and to peers
- Comprehension tasks linked to subject content
- Phonics-trained staff providing embedded support
- Reading activities during form time
- Weekly library sessions at Key Stage 3 to encourage independent reading

### **Promoting a Love of Reading**

At **Blackpool Skills Academy**, we believe that reading is more than a skill—it's a gateway to confidence, creativity, and lifelong learning.

#### **Why Reading Matters:**

- **Builds Confidence:** Reading regularly supports learner self-esteem and achievement
- **Sparks Imagination:** Stories provide inspiration and encourage creative thinking
- **Expands Horizons:** Books help learners explore new ideas, cultures, and perspectives
- **Supports Learning:** Reading fluency underpins success across the curriculum
- **Grows Empathy:** Engaging with diverse narratives helps develop understanding and compassion

### **Our Reading Culture**

We promote reading in creative and inclusive ways, ensuring all learners have access to engaging and relevant literature:

- A diverse and inclusive library that reflects our learners and the wider world
- Reading surveys to understand learner interests and stock books they want to read
- Staff modelling reading behaviours—sharing their own reading journeys and favourite books

- Regular reading-themed events, including:
  - Book raffles
  - Outdoor reading sessions
  - “Caught reading” competitions
  - World Book Day celebrations
  - Book clubs
  - Reading recommendation displays
  - Literacy-themed bulletin boards
  - Opportunities for learners to request new titles

By embedding reading into everyday life at Blackpool Skills Academy, we empower learners to see themselves as readers and writers—now and in the future.