



## Reading at St Catherine's

### Our vision

We support our students to develop a lifelong love of reading and believe that 'reading is reading'; whether literature, a recipe, comic or high interest magazine. We understand the relationship between a strong school reading culture and children's attainment in literacy and support our students through our integrated approach to harness the many life skills reading supports. Our students are encouraged to have a positive attitude to reading and a confidence to break down any barriers. The advantages of reading go beyond academic attainment.

At St Catherine's, we:

- Place reading and books at the centre of our curriculum in order to expand our student's learning experiences and build their cultural capital
- Support all students to learn to read and believe that all can with the right teaching, resources and support
- Understand that not all children will have had the opportunity to develop a love of reading at home, so therefore it will be taught and encouraged at school
- Build in opportunities during school and residential time for students to read for pleasure, be heard reading or listen to someone reading to them
- Use finances effectively to ensure we have the resources to teach, encourage and support reading
- Ensure that every teacher is an advocate of reading and a teacher of literacy

### Strategic areas

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|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Supporting staff                   | Equipping staff with the skills and knowledge they need to teach children to be confident and keen readers  |
| 2. Teaching the reading curriculum    | Making use of every opportunity the curriculum offers to teach children to become life-long readers. Students will read for purpose, pleasure and productivity              |
| 3. Engaging parents and carers        | Encouraging and welcoming the enthusiasm of parents and carers to ensure the reading culture developed by our school extends into the home                                  |
| 4. Developing the reading environment | Understanding and supporting the role of our physical environment including our library, book areas and displays can play in teaching and supporting children to be readers |
| 5. Targeting resources                | Using a wide range of materials, support strategies and tools to teach children to become confident readers   |
| 6. Celebrating reading                | Involving our school community in special events to raise the profile of reading and engage children  |

## **1. Supporting staff**

Teachers, supported by speech therapists will support students to develop their word reading and comprehension skills through high quality teaching and intervention. Students will be supported to apply these skills across the curriculum. Staff will teach students about authors and books and the language of books. Reading stamina and confidence will be supported as well as choosing books—for both skills development and enjoyment. Teachers will use effective assessment to grasp where every student is as a reader and support intervention where necessary. The teaching team will be given effective professional development in order to have an impact on the individual development of reading for all students.

## **2. Teaching the reading curriculum**

Lessons across the curriculum will encourage and motivate books and texts. This may be a specific book, play, poem or genre. Learning opportunities will be embedded for word reading as children encounter unfamiliar words; grammar and punctuation; comprehension through listening to and discussing texts; spoken language through discussion about books and writing (transcription and composition). Classroom dialogue will be meaningful to support the development of spoken language and attitudes to reading. Questioning will be open, effective and linked with blank level ability so that students are supported to develop their understanding, critical thinking skills and ability to express their opinions. Phonics assessments will be undertaken and linked to intervention in order to support fluent and acute decoding. Direct teaching, supported by SALT will support the teaching of word-reading knowledge and skills. Opportunities will be sought for reading with others; reading aloud and both independent and guided reading.

## **3. Engaging parents and carers**

We will encourage children to read at home through choice and make effective links with parents and carers to support them to extend our culture of reading into the home. Resources will be made available and curriculum content and learning experiences will be shared regularly.

## **4. Developing our reading environment**

Our library and classrooms will be welcoming, working spaces where our students can visit, read, choose and talk about books. Our library will be accessible at all times for unstructured visits and all classes will have timetabled library time each week. Importantly our library areas will have a variety of accessible material to support the wide range of interests and abilities our students have. Our reading spaces will be inviting, organised and current. Resources will be available linked to the overarching curriculum plan in all areas.

Students will have input into the resources and reading materials on offer to them.

## **5. Targeting resources**

Our resources will be introduced to students through excellent teaching and learning and will be matched both to the curriculum and the needs of our students. A wide range of engaging fiction and non fiction books will be available, as well as picture books and non book/high interest materials such as magazines, newspapers, comics and graphic novels. ICT will be incorporated such as chromebooks, tablets, ebooks and audiobooks. Guided reading and whole class lesson texts will be selected so that they are both motivating and challenging. We have quality reading schemes to help build the fluency, stamina, confidence of reading skills.

## **6. Celebrating reading**

Books and reading will be celebrated regularly and a wide range always promoted. We will develop links with resources and services external to our setting to maximise opportunities within our local community. Our SMSC calendar will always reflect assemblies and special events such as World Book Day, National Poetry Day and key writer's birthdays to provide opportunities to promote and celebrate reading and offer our students as many experiences to immerse themselves as possible.



St Catherine's  
School & College

Specialists in Speech, Language and  
Communication Needs

## Reading at St Catherine's

### Education

In our lower and middle school reading is taught through Phonics, Reading Fluency and Comprehension lessons.

Phonics screening takes place in September and areas for development are identified.

Students are taught a new phonics sound each week (differentiated according to need) and this is embedded over three sessions as well as in English lessons.

Reading fluency takes place on a weekly basis and is based on the text that the children are studying.

Discrete comprehension skills are taught once a week as well as in English lessons and across the curriculum.

Reading books are allocated to children to match their phonics levels and each child is heard read on a 1:1 basis by an adult at least once a week. This is recorded in the class reading record. In addition, children read within lessons across the curriculum.

Reading books are sent home for children to read independently or with parents and this is recorded in individual Reading Records. Reading for pleasure plays an important role in the school. Children are encouraged to have a book to read for pleasure and the class teacher reads a text to the children for pleasure.

In our sixth form students read independently and we have a variety of high interest reading materials available in both the library and common room. This includes magazines, newspapers and audio books. Students are also heard reading across the week and a discrete approach is taken to support phonics and wider reading skills

### Residential

Reading is supported during the week and noted in homework diaries to communicate with education staff. Students have trips to the local library to become members and borrow books of their choice. For students who want them, bedtime stories are shared with them as part of their evening routine.

Students are supported when reading online via their computers, phones and tablets and discussions are supported.

Our residential provision provides a deep support of functional reading both within the houses and when out in the community. Within the houses there are many signs and displays including visual timetables, forms, job lists and schedules. Students will read recipes and shopping lists and this extends to the community where they may read signs, menu's, lists and timetables.



### Speech and Language Therapy

Phonological awareness screens are undertaken for every student in school and Sixth form on an annual basis and targeted intervention groups are run by therapists.

We offer targeted interventions such as Toe by Toe, Units of Sound and Nesy and use a wide range of strategies such as Colourful Semantics and the Shape Coding System to support reading comprehension.

We are a Nationally accredited communication friendly school and therefore use a range of Elklan strategies to support reading, language acquisition, understanding and expression. We maintain our online widget system and ensure this supports reading across the entire school and college environment.

Therapists undertake an annual assessment of Blank Levels which is communicated to staff through reading folders and supported further through identifying targeted reading comprehension questions.

Speech sound assessments are undertaken and subsequent intervention is offered to support students with articulation of sounds.

Regular staff training and support enables the use and understanding of Sign-Supported English to both non-verbal and verbal students.

Therapy intervention target reading for meaning and inference and we support the creation of personalised and symbolised stories for individual students to engage in reading and signpost staff towards accessible reading options.

We have staff who are qualified in administering assessment for exam access arrangements (WIAT III and GORT).

We have a variety of tools available to support our students including reading pens, audio books, Chromebooks with text to speech software and Dyslexia gold reading intervention. We also use Widgit across education, therapy and care.

Reading is encouraged social interaction sessions and the resources we produce are aimed at making reading accessible.

### Occupational Therapy

We ensure that there are a variety of recipes available during our cooking groups in order to meet the reading needs of the students, including non-adapted text recipes, adapted text based recipe and full widget'd adapted recipes.

More able students in the sixth form are encouraged to write their own recipes to be read and understood when they use them again independently.

We also support visual perceptual skills which are a vital precursor to being able to access visually presented learning materials.