



Reading Policy

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Introduction:

At Esteem South Academy our starting point for all our students is the future, gaining the skills they need to prepare them for life after school in the adult world. We take seriously the importance of developing functional life skills for all students, with reading, despite being a complex skill with many components, being a core life skill that all students should aim to develop. We believe that successful approaches to the teaching of reading should encourage students to use a variety of strategies to develop their literacy skills of decoding, comprehension and communication, increasing their levels of independence as their confidence grows. When planning the development of reading skills all students' individual needs are considered and reflected in the approach. At Esteem South Academy we focus on the importance of laying firm foundations in this crucial area of the curriculum and apply a consistent, whole school approach to the teaching of reading.

Aims:

The school aims:

- To develop happy, healthy and curious learners who in time will read confidently and independently to their full potential
- To begin to develop lifelong enjoyment and pleasure in reading
- To enable students to access all areas of the curriculum at an appropriate level for them as individual learners
- To enable students to access, understand and begin to manage information, increasing in skill and confidence as they move through the school so that they reach a functional level as young adults
- To develop an understanding of the meaning of what is read to them and what they read
- To begin to respond to what they read; to say whether they like or don't like it and why
- To begin to understand and respond to the feelings that words can arouse in us like happiness, sadness, anger supporting their socioemotional literacy development, in turn enabling them to express themselves and their needs clearly in a range of contexts and with a range of people.
- To enable students to access work experience opportunities both within the school environment and in the wider workplace.
- To enable students to access a range of academic qualifications such as Entry Level, GCSE and vocational qualifications.

Range

Pupils are given the opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and understanding through the following ranges:

Literature:

- Stories and poems with familiar settings and those based on imaginary or fantasy worlds. Stories, plays and poems by significant authors
- Retelling of traditional folk and fairy stories
- Stories and poems from a range of cultures
- Stories, plays and poems with patterned and predictable language
- Stories, plays and poems which are challenging in terms of length and vocabulary
- Texts where the use of language benefits from being read aloud and reread

Non-fiction and non-literary texts:

- Print & ICT-based information texts
- Dictionaries, encyclopaedias & other reference materials

Text:

- Star Reader – Reading and comprehension assessment system
- Interactive white board resources; software and websites
- Big books
- Reading books grouped into fiction and non-fiction, core phonics scheme Dockside
- Class library books and reading resources

Pupils working towards Qualifications:

KS4 - AQA/WJEC Pathways include a range of fiction and non-fiction materials to support coursework, cross-curricular instructional texts

Whole School Approach / Implementation

Literacy skills, including reading, are supported and developed through a framework based on the core skills of decoding, comprehending and communicating.

What is decoding?

The ability to recognise, read and write 26 letters and 40+ sounds (phonemes).

To segment and blend sounds to read and write words.

To develop fluency to combine sounds to read and write words, sentences and full texts with increasing ease.

At Esteem South Academy we use the Ruth Miskin's 'Read, Write Inc' scheme for teaching phonics across the whole school. Read Write Inc. Phonics teaches students to read accurately and fluently with good comprehension.

Students learn the English alphabetic code: first they learn one way to read the 40+ sounds and blend these sounds into words, then learn to read the same sounds with alternative graphemes. Students are initially taught the sounds in overt phonics sessions, with staff then discretely reinforcing and embedding this learning cross curricular in all lessons by using decoding charts and dots and dashes to scaffold students decoding of words and texts. In practice this happens when encountering or introducing new words such as topic words, for example; on daily PowerPoints, on worksheets, labelling in and around the classroom, on displays, labels for class based practical activities, when doing group mind mapping activities and on an individual basis when students need help to decode when accessing text to support their learning.

Students are encouraged to take a 'steps to success' approach to decoding: using a decoding chart, asking for a word to be 'dotted and dashed', asking a friend, using a dictionary to increase their independence at decoding for reading and spelling. Makaton and Cued Articulation are used to reinforce words and sounds where needed.

What is comprehension?

Comprehension is the understanding and interpretation of what is read.

To be able to accurately understand written material, students need to be able to:

- decode what they read
- make connections between what they read and what they already know
- think deeply and critically about what they have read.

Whole School Approach / Implementation Continued...

One key part of comprehension is having a sufficient vocabulary or knowing the meanings of enough words. Readers who have strong comprehension are able to draw conclusions about what they read – what is important, what is a fact, what caused an event to happen, which characters are funny. Thus, comprehension involves combining reading with thinking and reasoning.

For developing readers, who can monitor their own reading and have the ability to check on themselves or search for possibilities and alternatives if they encounter a problem when reading, then guided reading sessions offer a powerful way to support the development of reading strategies. When students are assessed to be at this stage in their reading development then English lessons will offer regular 1:1 or small group reading sessions.

What is Guided reading? Guided reading is an instructional approach that involves a teacher/teaching assistant working with a small group of students who demonstrate similar reading behaviours and can all read similar levels of texts. The text is easy enough for students to read with the skilful support of a member of staff. The text offers challenges and opportunities for problem solving but is easy enough for students to read with some fluency. Guided reading gives students the chance to apply the strategies they already know to new text. Staff provide support, but the ultimate goal is independent reading with fluency, phrasing and a high level of comprehension.

Accelerated reader is a computer-based program that we use in school to help monitor reading practice and progress, promoting students' independence in reading and assess pupils reading age.

What is communication?

Communication is the act of conveying meanings from one entity or group to another through the use of mutually understood signs, symbols and semiotic rules.

A total communication approach is taken at Esteem South Academy. Total communication is a holistic view of communication that can be used with children, adolescents, and adults. It involves not only oral language to build on communication skills, but includes gestures, sign language and other visual communication systems. All methods of communication should be supported equally, respected and encouraged. Non-verbal communication can be just as effective as speech, communication is a two-way relationship and is only successful if the communicator and the people who they are communicating with are utilising the same language, i.e. there must be a shared communication system.

What is communication? Continued...

Total communication is an approach that incorporates all the ways in which we communicate, including: speech, body language, facial expression, sign and gesture, vocalisations, symbols, written words, hearing, touch, taste, objects, art, music, contextual cues and behaviour.

For further information, please see the English policy.

Contexts for reading:

Print in the Environment

Students should be encouraged to note print around them. Classroom notices should be discussed and produced with the students' level and needs in mind. These should generally take the form of the most appropriate approach for the class group considering their reading ability for example pictures, symbols, phrases, sentences and individual words. Main notices should have key words 'dotted and dashed' to support decoding.

All classrooms should have a designated English working wall with tools for decoding easily accessible to students. Classes should also have a dyslexia friendly alphabet arch, days of the week and months of the year on display and 'dotted and dashed' topic words were appropriate.

All classes within KS2/3/4 have a timetabled reading for pleasure slot.

Assessment and Roles

Were it being appropriate students' phonic knowledge will be assessed according to their phonic phases using RWI assessment tools. These assessments will take place when classroom staff identify students have achieved all elements of one phase and are ready to move on to the next phase. Phonic assessments will be kept in the student's individual reading record. Accelerated reader offers an ongoing accurate reading assessment for individual students, at the start of using the program and at the end of each completed level. Higher up the school, course work and academic examinations offer the students opportunities to take and achieve recognised qualifications at entry level and GCSE.

Role of Coordinator:

- The English Co-ordinator is responsible for co-ordinating reading throughout the school. Please refer to English Policy.

Assessment and Roles Continued.....

Role of the Class teacher:

- To aim to develop reading skills with pupils using the whole school approaches outlined above: RWI, Word Aware, guided reading sessions, cross curricular reading opportunities, reading for pleasure sessions.
- To provide and regularly update a classroom environment that facilitates the development of student's reading skills in decoding, comprehension and communication.
- To develop and update own skills, knowledge and understanding of reading.
- To identify inset needs in reading and take advantage of training opportunities.
- To keep appropriate on-going records for reading in all three domains: decoding, comprehension and communication.
- To plan effectively for reading, liaising with co-ordinator when necessary.
- To inform parents of students' progress, achievements and attainment
- To analyse progress data in conjunction with assessment co-ordinator and suggest further interventions where appropriate.

Equal Opportunities:

We incorporate reading into a wide range of cross curricular subjects and seek to take advantage of multicultural aspects of reading. All children have equal access to the curriculum regardless of their learning need, gender or ethnicity. This is monitored by analysing pupil performance throughout the school to ensure that there is no disparity between groups.