

2021-2022

Reading policy

Reading at Highfield School

Reading is a fundamental part of life for many people. At Highfield, we want to ensure our learners develop a love of reading through being as proficient as they can be in reading and understanding text. We promote a love of reading and actively encourage this across school on a daily basis. Reading is shared or independent depending on the ages and need of the pupil.

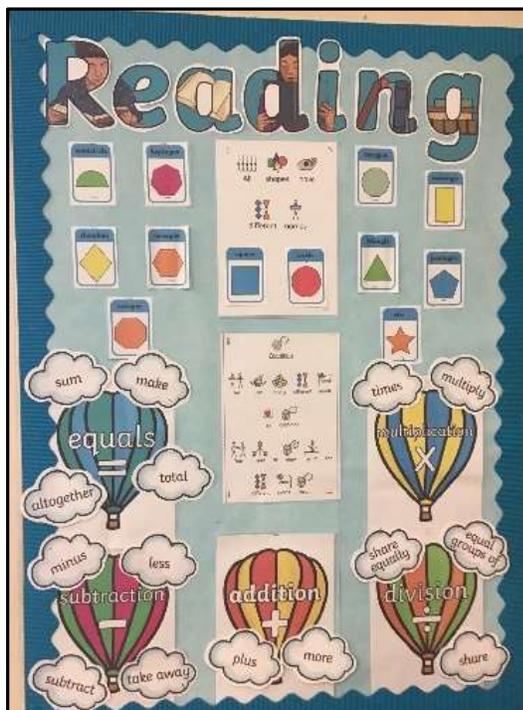
Year 7 assessments and baselining

On entry to the school, pupils on the formal pathway are assessed for phonics, reading and spelling of high frequency words and for their receptive vocabulary. Where it is considered appropriate, they are also assessed for expressive vocabulary, dyslexia and Irlen Syndrome. Students on the semi-formal pathway are also assessed for reading where appropriate.

Reading

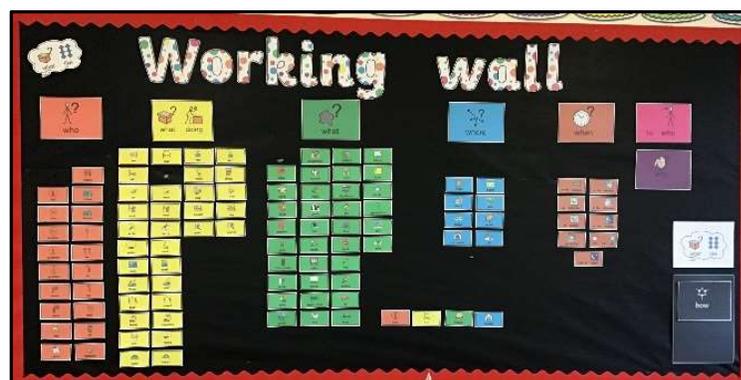
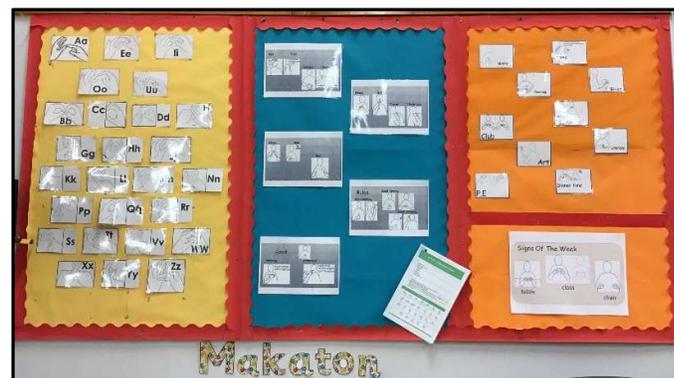
Reading is prioritised throughout school across all subject areas. Every teaching room has a reading display appropriate to the age and stage of the pupils and the nature of the room.





Total Communication

We are a Total Communication School and use to a range of strategies including Matkaton signs and symbols; Communicate in Print and Colourful Semantics to support the written word.



Phonics and word reading

At Highfield phonics is used in Years 7 and 8, where appropriate, and occasionally, further up the school if it is proving to be a successful strategy in developing a student's reading and spelling skills. Our aim is for students to become functional and social readers. We use Phonics Play and Read Write Inc for the delivery of phonics, although other schemes may be used at the discretion of individual teachers if they feel it is more suited to their group / an individual student.

For some of our students who have found accessing phonics is not the gateway to reading and we need to consider alternative approaches and work with sight vocabulary.

Staff employ a range of multi-sensory strategies when teaching word reading and spelling. Our aim, is always to find an approach that motivates and engages students.



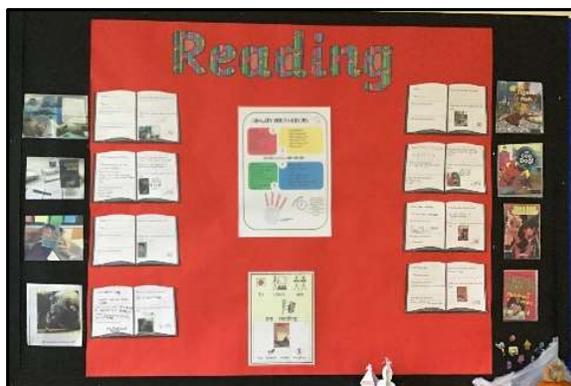
Pre-Reading Skills

It is vital to develop the pre-reading skills of our learners and those pupils with complex learning needs. The emphasis within our semi-formal pathway classes with our more complex learners is in developing communication, language attention & understanding through a range of activities, including; intensive interaction, shared attention and shared interaction. Pupils regularly take part in sensory stories, book exploration, songs, playing and therapies.

Social and functional reading

For those pupils who find accessing reading a challenge for a variety of reasons, we support them to read social cues which are also functional and will support them in their everyday lives and to be as independent as possible. This can include recognising bus stop signs, their names in different formats, places of interest and places such as the doctors, shop signs, supermarkets and food labels.





Reading for pleasure and learning

Throughout school, students are exposed to texts that may be above their reading level by means of shared reading and teacher led sessions. This way, they can be exposed to a greater range of texts such as; non-fiction, poetry and a range of fiction, including Shakespeare.

The Library

The school is fortunate to have a recently refurbished library. Teachers are encouraged to use these teaching spaces and a booking scheme is in operation, although classes can “drop-in” whenever the room is available. The library is divided into two zones – a “work zone” where reading scheme books are kept and where a table gives the opportunity for group work and a “reading zone” with comfy seating and cushions to encourage students to read.

Additional reading books (fiction and non-fiction) have been purchased with money from a sponsored read and a grant from the Foyle Foundation. This money was divided up to provide higher level non-fiction books, large print books, books on diversity and real-life issues, graphic novels and super heroes (very popular with many of our students) and books to support vocational teaching.



Every class has access to the library on a regular basis. These sessions may be used for group reading activities, 1-1 reading with an adult, individual reading or shared story time depending on the group and their needs. In addition to their reading scheme book, students borrow library books to read in their classrooms.



Assessment

In order to meet the needs of a range of pupils with complex needs, there are a number of assessment systems in place to monitor and analyse pupil progress from their individual starting points.

These are our Highfield reading trackers, reading records, IEP targets and PLGs (personal learning goals) which are on our assessment system, Evidence for Learning: and accreditation/qualification course tracking. All students on both the formal and semi-formal pathways have at least one Communication target. For some, this is based on reading, but even where their IEP target is not reading based, staff are always endeavouring to enhance reading skills and develop a love of reading and books.

Assessment data is used to inform future planning and to indicate necessary interventions for those pupils who may not have made expected progress.

Parental Involvement

Support from parents is vital in ensuring consistency of learning within literacy. Parents are informed of their child's progress in reading through Parent's Evenings, as well as being given updates to targets through the PLGs being sent home and through the annual EHCP review process. Students are also encouraged to take reading books home to share with parents.

Amanda Whitwood
English and Drama Lead
November 2021

