



Reading policy

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Version	Date	Notes on Revisions
1.0	September 2024	
2.0	September 2025	Section 2 – Aims: changes incorporate support for students who are functionally illiterate with reading ages of 9.6 or below. Section 3 – Principles: removal of the word 'passports' when referring to strategies shared with staff Section 4 – Reading in Practice: changes incorporate support for students who are functionally illiterate with reading ages of 9.6 or below; and to incorporate references to Lead Practitioner responsible for reading. Section 5.4 – Reading across the Curriculum Lead: changes to incorporate references to Lead Practitioner responsible for reading.
3.0	September 2026	Updated for the September 2026 Ofsted inspection toolkit: foundational reading, inclusion, diagnostic assessment, targeted intervention, curriculum access and impact evaluation.

1. Background information

This policy sets out the school's approach to reading. Reading is a foundational skill and an essential prerequisite for students to access the full curriculum, achieve well and prepare successfully for their next stage of education, employment or training. At Mount St Joseph Catholic School, we are committed to ensuring that all students become accurate, fluent and confident readers who can understand increasingly complex texts across different subject disciplines. Leaders recognise that some students, including disadvantaged students, students with SEND and students facing other barriers to learning, may require additional support to secure the reading knowledge and skills necessary to access the curriculum independently. The school therefore identifies reading needs accurately, provides timely and appropriately targeted support and evaluates whether gaps in students' reading are closing.

2. Aims

The primary aims are:

- To ensure every student is able to read fluently, comprehend texts effectively and develop a love of reading.
- To identify and support students whose reading is below age-related expectations, including those in the lowest 20% of readers and those who have not yet secured the foundational reading knowledge and skills required to access the secondary curriculum independently.

These will be achieved through the following measures:

- To ensure teachers are equipped with the tools to support students to read in every subject discipline in order to unlock the academic potential of students.
- To meet the increasing demands of reading in the curriculum through the acquisition of background knowledge and skills to address the unique challenges of reading subject-specific texts.
- To enable consistency in the teaching of reading across the curriculum.
- To ensure reading needs are identified accurately through screening and, where appropriate, diagnostic assessment, so that intervention is matched to the specific barrier to reading.
- To ensure disadvantaged students, students with SEND and other students facing barriers to learning receive timely and effective support so that reading gaps close and they can access the same broad and ambitious curriculum as their peers.
- To promote student engagement with reading and support students to develop a love of reading.

3. Principles

- Reading is the key to unlocking the curriculum for students.
- The Simple View of Reading highlights the importance of both word recognition and language comprehension. Reading comprehension depends upon students' ability to read words accurately and fluently alongside their vocabulary, language comprehension and relevant background knowledge. Teachers therefore explicitly develop the knowledge, vocabulary and reading strategies students require to understand increasingly complex texts within each subject discipline.

- Students need to read regularly to improve fluency and comprehension. Providing students with structured opportunities to read in the classroom allows teachers to support students with fluency and comprehension.
- Disciplinary literacy is vital to ensure students read as an expert in each subject.
- Prior knowledge is vital to success. The reading students undertake in school is typically more complex than other forms and requires substantial background knowledge. Through shared reading strategies, teachers can equip students with background knowledge to aid reading and comprehension.
- Able readers read more. Given that students' reading ability affects how much they read, and how much they enjoy reading, improving the teaching of reading will increase students' reading ability and subsequently how much they read independently.

4. Reading in practice

There are three main strands to reading at Mount St Joseph School: reading across the curriculum; reading intervention; and reading for enrichment.

Reading across the Curriculum	Reading Intervention	Reading for Enrichment
All teachers teach disciplinary literacy and vocabulary, with training prioritising subject specificity. The curriculum is sequenced so that students develop the background knowledge needed to understand what they read. Departments identify and explicitly teach the tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary and disciplinary reading approaches students need to access increasingly complex subject-specific texts. Subject reading guides outline how students learn to read as an expert in each discipline. Implementation and impact are quality assured through the school's teaching and learning processes.	All students in Years 7–11 complete the NGRT (New Group Reading Test) at the start of the academic year, with students in Years 7–10 retaking the test at the end of the academic year. This information is triangulated, where available, with KS2 reading information, transition information and teachers' knowledge of students. Screening identifies students who may require further diagnostic assessment. Reading age and standardised scores are used as indicators of need rather than as the sole basis for intervention. Where concerns are identified, further assessment is used to establish the specific barrier to reading and to inform appropriate support. Students receiving intervention are reassessed so that leaders can evaluate progress and determine next steps.	The library contains some books for students to read for pleasure. Books are chosen by students and those recommended by staff to provide access to rich texts relating to the curriculum. The library includes displays for themed months, such as recommendations of texts by black authors during Black History Month. Library ambassadors are recruited and trained by the Head of Teaching and Learning to support students with choosing books and to help to organise the library.
Teachers ensure students read a wide range of high-	Students identified through screening as requiring	The library not only stocks books to support the

quality reading material across the curriculum, including during PDT time. Reading material is carefully chosen to ensure students encounter progressively more challenging material in each subject.	additional support, including those within the lowest 20% of readers, undertake further diagnostic assessment as appropriate. This identifies the specific barriers to successful reading, which may include phonological awareness, decoding and word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, language comprehension or a combination of these. Intervention is then matched to identified need. Particular attention is given to disadvantaged students, students with SEND and students facing other barriers to learning.	curriculum but also provides a supportive environment for students to read independently at social time. This is ran by the Head of Teaching and Learning and in conjunction with the English department. Particular groups of students are targeted to attend to ensure that students who need support with reading are given the required support.
All students in Years 7-11 follow the English curriculum which allows students to read a wide selection of carefully chosen, sequentially challenging material, with teaching adapted to meet the needs of students to ensure all students make progress. Teachers teach reading skills as part of teaching texts in English lessons, including skills of retrieval and inference.	Following diagnostic assessment, students in Years 7–10 receive targeted intervention matched to their identified area of need. This may include structured support for decoding and word reading, fluency, vocabulary or comprehension, including the six-week Reading Development programme by School Improvement Liverpool and Lexonik Leap where appropriate. Progress is reviewed during and after each intervention cycle. Where students do not make sufficient progress, provision is adapted, intensified or further specialist advice is sought as appropriate.	A number of reading initiatives are run by the Head of Teaching and Learning and the Lead Practitioner responsible for reading. These include the Reading Challenge, where students are rewarded once they have read a range of books, reading competitions, student book choices, World Cup Reading Challenge. Students provide feedback on these initiatives as part of student voice and the impact is monitored through NGRT tests that are completed twice a year.
Students in Year 7-9 have one timetabled lesson per week for guided reading as part of the English curriculum. In Year 10 and 11 all of the literature lesson are reading focused lessons that based around key texts.	Students with the most significant reading needs receive additional targeted support during PDT time and, where appropriate, further guided reading or structured intervention overseen by trained staff. Support is designed to help students secure the foundational	During tutorial time in Years 7-10, three PDT sessions a week are dedicated to DEAR time. Students read texts centred around a theme with texts carefully selected to provide enjoyable stories to read together and to arouse students'

	reading knowledge and skills they need to participate successfully in the full curriculum.	curiosity. Staff receive support to deliver the sessions through whole-school CPD. Students provide feedback through student voice and the Head of Teaching and Learning carefully selects the texts.
The reading lessons are planned as above but also utilise the content of the English curriculum to ensure that students who require additional support with reading receives the same broad and ambitious curriculum as their peers.	Lexonik Leap is used, where diagnostic information indicates it is appropriate, to support students with identified word-level reading needs. Intervention is matched to need and its impact is reviewed through reassessment and wider evidence of students' ability to access reading across the curriculum.	Wider reading is compulsory to and students read around their subjects, particularly through homework set to read with a visible outcome, for example a series of questions about the reading to be completed.
Within each department there is a literacy lead, and they meet each half term to discuss how reading could be better supported within each department. This is an opportunity to share best practice and also embed effective reading strategies into all subject curriculums across school.	Paired reading also takes place, where the HAP group read with younger students who are identified as lowest 20%.	The Head of Teaching and Learning promotes reading at home through regular updates in the parent bulletin including sharing recommended reads with parents.

5. Monitoring and evaluation of impact

The Assistant Headteacher, Head of Teaching and Learning and Lead Practitioner for Reading will monitor both the implementation and impact of this policy. Evaluation will consider: NGRT and relevant diagnostic assessment information; progress during and following intervention; the proportion of students successfully exiting intervention or requiring further support; outcomes for disadvantaged students and students with SEND; evidence from teaching and learning quality assurance that students can access increasingly complex subject texts; the implementation of disciplinary literacy and vocabulary across subjects; and student voice and engagement with reading. Findings will be used to adapt provision, inform staff development and report to SLT and governors. The central measure of success is whether students' reading knowledge and skills improve sufficiently for them to access the curriculum with increasing fluency, confidence and independence.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 Oversight

This policy will be overseen by the Assistant Headteacher, who will ensure that reading remains a whole-school priority and that leaders evaluate the impact of provision on curriculum access and achievement, particularly for disadvantaged students and students with SEND.

6.2 Heads of Department

- Heads of Department will ensure that their curriculum provides regular opportunities for students to read high-quality, increasingly complex texts and that barriers to reading are anticipated and addressed without reducing curriculum ambition.
- Heads of Department will ensure that the disciplinary vocabulary, background knowledge and reading approaches required to read successfully in their subject are explicitly identified, taught and revisited.

6.3 Teachers

- All teachers are responsible for implementing the principles for reading outlined in this policy, explicitly teaching the vocabulary and disciplinary reading approaches required in their subject and using available reading information to support access without lowering curriculum ambition.

6.4 Reading across the Curriculum Lead

- The Head of Teaching and Learning, in conjunction with the Lead Practitioner for Reading, takes responsibility for reading across the curriculum and ensures that staff receive appropriate training in evidence-informed approaches to reading, disciplinary literacy and vocabulary. They coordinate quality assurance and evaluate the impact of whole-school and targeted reading provision.
- The Head of Teaching and Learning and the Lead Practitioner for Reading will ensure that reading for pleasure is promoted and that student voice helps to inform and evaluate enrichment provision.

6.5 LSAs

- LSAs support students to access reading in lessons in accordance with identified needs and agreed strategies, while promoting independence and maintaining curriculum ambition.
- Appropriately trained LSAs and other staff deliver targeted reading intervention in line with diagnostic information, programme expectations and agreed monitoring arrangements.

6.6 Governors

- Governors will receive appropriate information about the implementation and impact of the school's reading strategy, including the progress of students receiving targeted support and the effectiveness of provision for disadvantaged students and students with SEND.

6.7 Students

- Students complete all class and homework, including those which involve reading, to the best of their ability.
- Students attend any intervention sessions that they are invited to, and complete the work in these sessions to the best of their ability.

6.8 Parents/guardians

- Parents are encouraged to support their child and the school to ensure their child develops their reading ability and their love for reading.