



## **Reading policy**

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Document History		
Version	Date	Notes on Revisions
1.0	September 2024	
	September 2025	<p>Section 2 – Aims: changes incorporate support for students who are functionally illiterate with reading ages of 9.6 or below.</p> <p>Section 3 – Principles: removal of the word 'passports' when referring to strategies shared with staff</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Section 5.4 – Reading across the Curriculum Lead: changes to incorporate references to Lead Practitioner responsible for reading.</p>

## **1. Background information**

This policy sets out the school's approach to reading. Reading is vital to allow students to access the curriculum and to be successful. Research (EEF) has shown that students' learning in reading has been adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, with students identified as disadvantaged being affected more than other students. At Mount St Joseph Catholic School, reading is seen as the key to students' learning and therefore reading is prioritised as part of our commitment to sustained recovery following the pandemic and to ensure that all students are able to read with fluency to access the entirety of the school's curriculum.

## **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 support students with reading ages below chronological ages, particularly those students with the lowest 20% of reading ages or those students classed as functional illiterate (reading age of below 9.6 years), to improve their reading.

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 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 (EEF) highlights successful reading as word reading and language comprehension. Comprehension is specific to the text being read; it is not transferable to another text and therefore is not a skill that can be taught. Word reading is the ability to recognise, decode and understand the meaning of individual words. Language comprehension is the process used to access the underlying meaning of language and includes knowledge of word meaning and syntax and making inferences. Students who need support with word reading and/or language comprehension will receive tailored interventions and useful strategies for staff to follow will be shared with staff.
- 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 to ensure background knowledge can activate students' understanding of what they are reading and the end points for each subject are carefully considered to map out the tier 2 (high-frequency words that are more present in written than spoken language) and tier 3 (subject-specific) vocabulary, which are explicitly taught and regularly revisited to check knowledge and understanding. This is evidenced by subject reading guides which outline how to read like an expert in each subject, and how these strategies are taught. These are quality assured as part of teaching and learning quality assurance.	All students in Year 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 data is cross-referenced with KS2 scaled scores for reading and with information provided by colleagues from the feeder primary schools during the transition period. Students who are reading below age 9.6 (functional illiterate) and students who are reading 2+ years below chronological age will be targeted for intervention during PDT time at selected points in the year. Students who are part of intervention complete the NGRT after each intervention cycle. Reading ages are used by all subject teachers to ensure texts are accessible in class.	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-quality reading material across the curriculum, including during PDT time. Reading material is carefully	Students with the lowest 20% of reading ages in Years 7-9 undertake additional diagnostic assessments by Lexonic LEAP to identify the specific area of reading	The library not only stocks books to support the curriculum but also provides a supportive environment for students to read independently at social

chosen to ensure students encounter progressively more challenging material in each subject.	requiring support, for example whether the need is related to phonological awareness or decoding, or with comprehension or fluency.	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 the diagnostic assessments, students in Years 7-10 receive intervention based on their area of need, including: group-based comprehension intervention; fluency reading groups; this is an intensive 6-week programme – The Reading Development programme by Schools improvement Liverpool. After this, students will then receive ongoing internal support.	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.	All pupils with a low reading age (below 9.6) receive support during PDT time with a further guided reading session overseen by trained experts across the school.	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' 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.	The intervention program <b>Lexonic LEAP</b> is used to support students with challenges such as dyslexia and is offered for use at home to further strengthen word level, grammar and comprehension skills.	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.
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## **5. Roles and responsibilities**

### **5.1 Oversight**

This policy will be overseen by the Assistant Headteacher.

### **5.2 Heads of Department**

- Heads of Department will ensure that there are regular opportunities for students to read high-quality texts in their curriculum.
- Heads of Department will teach the specific disciplinary vocabulary that allows students to read as experts in their subject.

### **5.3 Teachers**

- All teachers are responsible for ensuring the principles for reading outlined in this policy are followed.

### **5.4 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 will ensure teaching staff are trained in best practice in teaching reading, through staff briefing and INSET time.
- The Head of Teaching and Learning and the Lead Practitioner for Reading will also ensure that reading for pleasure is promoted.

### **5.5 LSAs**

- LSAs support students in their lessons with reading.
- LSAs run intervention sessions focused on improving the reading skills of students who require additional support.

### **5.6 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.

### **5.7 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.