



Reading Policy

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**At ARTS Education reading is like
breathing in, and writing is like
breathing out.**

GOAL: To ignite a lifelong love of reading, equipping every student with the fluency, comprehension and critical thinking skills to thrive in an information-rich world.

1. Introduction

At ARTS Education we endeavour to re-engage students who have lost their love of learning, through a bespoke approach to their education. This is mirrored in our vision for reading.

Students at ARTS Education will likely have had poor experiences in other learning settings and as such they require a reading environment that is unthreatening, tailored to their needs and consistent.

2. Scope and Purpose

This policy sets out to combine the unique nature of our setting with the guidance from *Now the whole school is reading: supporting struggling readers in secondary school*, Ofsted – October 2022 and *The Reading Framework*, Department for Education - July 2023 and to demonstrate the determination of ARTS Education to ensure that all students leave with the highest levels of reading abilities and skills that they can possibly obtain.

These abilities and skills will provide equality of opportunity for each of our students to achieve external qualifications and to compete with their peers for FE places, in the workplace and throughout their future.

All staff are familiar with Scarborough's Reading Rope and are working collectively to support each strand of this to develop all students into skilled readers.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Governing Body:** Provide appropriate challenge and ensure leaders are promoting the reading policy across the whole school community.
- **Headteacher:** Provide leadership and vision for the reading policy.
- **SENDCo/Reading Lead:** Oversee the implementation of the policy and monitor its effectiveness.
- **Teachers:** Deliver reading instruction in accordance with the policy and curriculum guidelines.

This policy along with the reading action plan will be led by JBS, supported by SLT and SGN.

Parents/Carers

In line with ARTS Education's reading policy, parents and carers play a crucial role in fostering a love of reading at home. Here are some ways you can contribute:

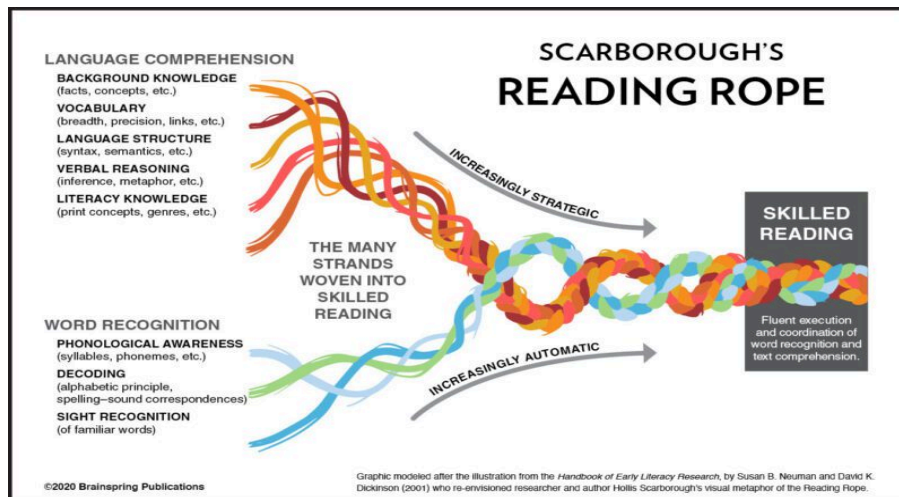
- **Create a reading-rich environment:** Fill your home with books, magazines, and newspapers. Set aside dedicated reading time and encourage children to choose their own books.
- **Lead by example:** Let your children see you reading for pleasure and discuss what you're reading with them. Share your own childhood favourites and explore new genres together.
- **Engage in conversation:** When reading to, or with, your child, ask questions, discuss the characters and plot and make predictions. Encourage them to do the same when they read independently.
- **Visit the library regularly:** Make library visits a fun and regular outing. Let your child explore different sections and help them choose books that pique their interest. Make use of the extensive ARTS online library too.
- **Celebrate reading achievements:** Acknowledge and praise your child's efforts in reading, regardless of their level. Celebrate their progress and encourage them to keep exploring the world of literature.

By working together, school and home can nurture a generation of passionate readers equipped with the skills and confidence to thrive in a literacy-rich world.

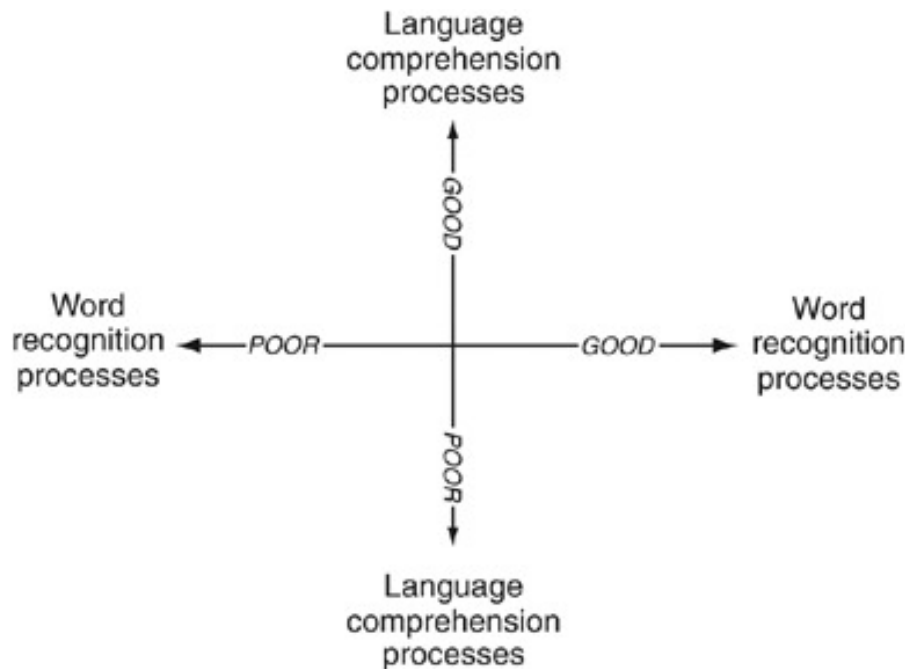
4. Implementation

The following pages set out the reading strategy that can be seen across ARTS Education.

All staff are familiar with Scarborough's Reading Rope and are working collectively to support each strand of this to develop all learners into skilled readers.



Staff are also familiar with the Simple View of Reading and are focused on developing all students to ensure they sit in the top right quadrant of the graph.



5. Three Strands of Reading

In order to meet the reading needs of all students, ARTS Education focuses on three strands:

1. Fostering a love of reading.
2. Additionality, supporting learners who have areas of reading to develop.
3. Disciplinary literacy, visible across the curriculum.

6. Additionality Through Interventions

On entry, students are tested for reading age (RA) and spelling age (SA), using the IDL package.

This data allows students to be Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rated and those who are identified as 'Red' are provided with immediate intervention. This intervention currently is Abigail Steel Synthetic Phonics, which is provided at least three times per week to individuals or groups and is also supported by phonetically decodable books which are read within these sessions, once an initial knowledge base is secured.

The starting level for this intervention is identified through the embedded assessment process. Assessment takes place at least every 6 weeks to measure progress and to review interventions moving forward.

One justification for the use of Abigail Steel is the lower expectation on students to interact with staff or others (than required in some other programmes), hopefully reducing the social threat that some of our students may feel in attending an intervention.

Students identified as 'Red' Readers need the most support and will benefit from a structured approach that prioritises foundational reading skills. This means explicit instruction in phonics, sight word recognition, and fluency practice. Small group sessions designed to address specific decoding and fluency weaknesses can be highly effective. Celebrating small wins and progress is crucial to keep students motivated throughout the intervention process. In some cases, individualised instruction through one-on-one tutoring or differentiated learning plans may be necessary.

'Amber' readers are offered intervention through the International Dyslexia Learning (IDL) Literacy programme. Many of our students struggle to build relationships, communicate effectively or work in groups. As such, the independence provided within the IDL Literacy programme means that 'Amber' students can access reading support in a very unthreatening environment which is key to the vision of this policy.

'Green' students, who are already demonstrating strong reading skills, can benefit from ongoing challenges and enrichment activities. Introducing new vocabulary, exploring synonyms and antonyms, and teaching specific comprehension strategies like summarising and making inferences will further develop their reading abilities. Encouraging independent reading with a choice of books that pique their interest and setting aside dedicated reading time are also important.

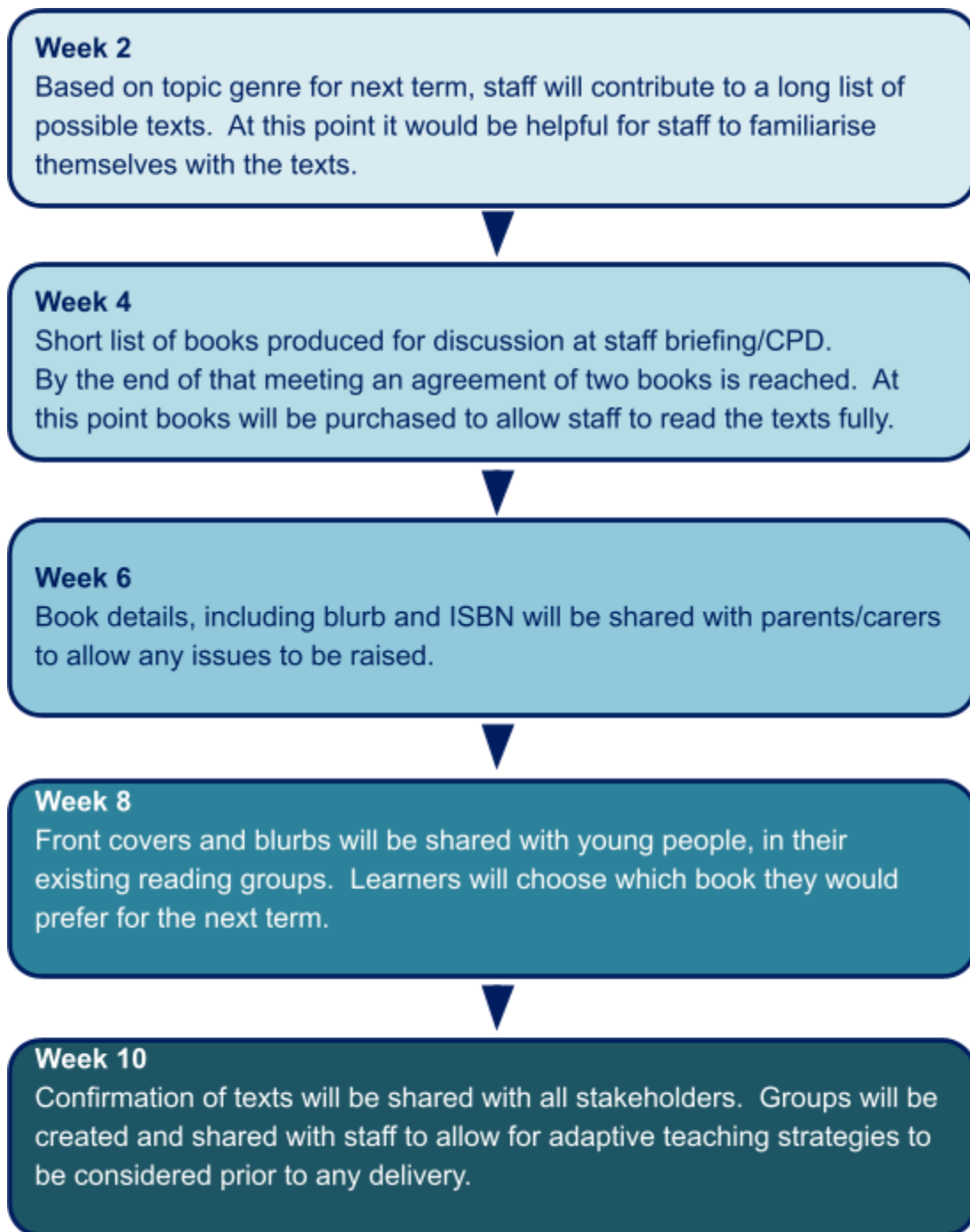
Overtime, and as students become more confident, the school is open to bringing online further synthetic phonics programmes such as Read Write Inc. (RWInc), Lexonik LEAP/Advance but at this stage in development it has been agreed that staff must take into account social anxieties etc, without removing reading support and so the less intrusive programmes of IDL Literacy and Abigail Steel are being utilised initially.

7. Fostering a Love of Reading/Drop Everything And Read (DEAR)

To continue to support reading development, and following a schoolwide review of reading sessions, a stringent process is in place to ensure that all stakeholders have a say in the texts that are read during these times.

This following process will run during the term **prior** to when the texts will be read.

This process is based on a 12-week term.



In order to remove any fear from this activity, all reading is initially adult led, this is again to reduce any threat that students may associate with reading. Students are asked to follow reading and be given individual strategies eg. ruler reading, to support individual

needs. Comprehension of texts are monitored through reciprocal reading strategies, which are recorded for each student on a daily basis. Staff have received reciprocal reading training to support this new approach.

Our commitment to literacy extends beyond the classroom. To encourage continued reading during school holidays, we've implemented initiatives like reading bingo, which incentivizes students to explore diverse genres and activities. We've also curated the school's online library based on student requests, ensuring they have access to engaging materials at home. Additionally, we actively promote World Book Day to generate excitement for literature. Furthermore, we will utilise visitors such as a recent author visit which allowed students to interact with professional writers, gain insight into the creative process, and explore career paths within the literary field.

8. Disciplinary Literacy

Staff will receive a suite of training linked to the EEF guidance for disciplinary literacy. This is vitally important to ensure the consistent approach to reading that will form the diet for all students at ARTS Education.



IMPROVING LITERACY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Summary of recommendations

<p>1</p> <p>Prioritise 'disciplinary literacy' across the curriculum</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy is key to learning across all subjects in secondary school and a strong predictor of outcomes in later life. • Disciplinary literacy is an approach to improving literacy across the curriculum that emphasises the importance of subject-specific support... • All teachers should be supported to understand how to teach students to read, write and communicate effectively in their subjects. • School leaders can help teachers by ensuring training related to literacy prioritises subject specificity over general approaches. 	<p>2</p> <p>Provide targeted vocabulary instruction in every subject</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers in every subject should provide explicit vocabulary instruction to help students access and use academic language. • Effective approaches, including those related to etymology and morphology, will help students remember new words and make connections between words. • Teachers should prioritise teaching Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary, which students are unlikely to encounter in everyday speech. • Teachers and subject leaders should consider which words and phrases to teach as part of curriculum planning. 	<p>3</p> <p>Develop students' ability to read complex academic texts</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training focused on teaching reading is likely to help secondary school teachers teach their subject more effectively. • To comprehend complex texts, students need to actively engage with what they are reading and use their existing subject knowledge. • Flooding strategies, such as activating prior knowledge, prediction and questioning, can improve students' comprehension. • Strategies can be introduced through modelling and group work, before support is gradually removed to promote independence. 	<p>4</p> <p>Break down complex writing tasks</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing is challenging and students in every subject will benefit from explicit instruction in how to improve. • Teachers can break writing down into planning, monitoring and evaluation, and can support students by modelling each step. • Targeted support should be provided to students who struggle to write fluently, as this may affect writing quality. • Teachers can use a variety of approaches, including collaborative and paired writing, to motivate students to write. 	<p>5</p> <p>Combine writing instruction with reading in every subject</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combining reading activities and writing instruction is likely to improve students' skills in both, compared to a less balanced approach. • Flooding helps students gain knowledge, which leads to better writing, while writing can deepen students' understanding of ideas. • Students should be taught to recognise features, aims and conventions of good writing within each subject. • Teaching spelling, grammar and punctuation explicitly can improve students' writing, particularly when focused on meaning. 	<p>6</p> <p>Provide opportunities for structured talk</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk matters: both in its own right and because of its impact on other aspects of learning. • High quality talk is typically well-structured and guided by teachers. • 'Accountable talk' is a useful framework to ensure talk is high quality, and emphasises how talk can be subject-specific. • Teachers can support students by modelling high quality talk, for example including key vocabulary and metacognitive reflection. 	<p>7</p> <p>Provide high quality literacy interventions for struggling students</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools should expect and proactively plan to support students with the weakest levels of literacy, particularly in Year 7. • Developing a model of tiered support, which increases in intensity in line with need is a promising approach. • Assessment should be used to match students to appropriate types of intervention, and to monitor the impact of interventions. • Creating a co-ordinated system of support is a significant challenge requiring both specialist input and whole school leadership.
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The initial focus for all lessons will be expected elements of reading including, subtitles on clips, pre-teaching of tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary, element of reading in all lessons. As the training schedule develops, further expectations will be added to ensure disciplinary literacy is used effectively across the curriculum and at subject specific level.

All staff have access to reading ages (RA) and spelling ages (SA) data and information regarding any additionality that learners are accessing through interventions, to ensure they can support disciplinary literacy at an appropriate level.

9. Free reading through our libraries - online and physical

Our library operates under a student-led model, established through a rigorous selection process. Students who participate in this program undergo an independent application process, demonstrating their dedication and willingness to contribute their free time to enhance the library experience for the entire school community. The library itself is well-equipped with resources and is constantly expanding based on student recommendations. Dedicated time slots are available for different year groups, with Tuesdays designated for Year 7 students and Wednesdays for Year 8 students, and so on.

Students have the privilege of borrowing books from the library to enjoy during their designated free periods within the school day, such as lunch and breaks. The library environment is specifically designed to foster a calm and conducive atmosphere that promotes focused reading.

In addition to our physical library, the school also operates a comprehensive online library that is accessible both in school and at home. This digital platform provides students with access to a wealth of recommended reading materials, carefully curated for each school year. To ensure all students benefit from this valuable resource, parents are contacted regularly and offered access to the online library. This allows students to explore a wider selection of books beyond the physical library's collection, fostering a love of reading and supporting their academic development at home. Both ARTS Education's physical and online library is maintained and managed by our elected student librarians.

10. Evaluation and Monitoring of Additionality

Outcomes of interventions are evaluated in line with each programme and reported to SLT within two weeks of the end of a programme, at which point recommendations and next steps are identified. Attendance and Attitude to Learning are monitored session by session, using a shared tracker, which helps to provide a narrative to support outcomes.

Interventions are also part of the QA programme and are included in learning walks, tracker reviews and support meetings. Impact of interventions are monitored through class reports, student, teacher and parent/carer voice.

Fostering a Love of Reading (curriculum sessions now known as DEAR) is monitored as part of the QA programme and will include learning walks and book scrutiny of reading logs on at least a half-termly basis. Staff, parent/carer and learner voice also form part of the quality assurance processes for fostering the love of reading.

Disciplinary literacy is monitored as part of the QA programme and will include learning walks, observations and book scrutiny.

All elements of this policy are part of the reading action plan for 2023-24 and this policy is supported by this document.

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

We review the effectiveness of our policy and practices yearly through student feedback, parent feedback and staff reflection.

12. Conclusion

This reading policy is not merely a set of guidelines, but a shared journey towards instilling a lifelong love of reading in every student. While the school provides a structured learning environment and a treasure trove of resources, the journey of reading should continue at home.

By implementing these strategies, fostering collaboration and embracing a culture of literacy, we empower students to navigate the rich and varied texts of information with confidence, critical thinking, and a love for exploration. Let us remember, the journey begins with a single page turned, and together, we can unlock the transformative power of words for every student.

13. Additional info

['Now the whole school is reading': supporting struggling readers in secondary school. Abigail Steel phonics](#)

14. Links to Other Policies

- Teaching and Learning Curriculum Policy
- Data and Assessment Policy