

Chesham House School

Reading Strategy: 2025 – 2026

INTENT

Chesham House School's intention for reading is to create a holistic approach to reading across the curriculum, to create an environment which students develop their curiosity of the world around them whilst fostering a love of reading which will stay with them throughout their lives. We will support early readers to improve their phonics understanding and encourage students to read for pleasure, to foster more confidence in their reading ability and fluency and improve literacy in all subject areas. We recognise that literacy skills are both general and subject specific so have implemented a strategy which will encourage wider reading around all of the subjects we teach and boost literacy across the curriculum.

We intend to create a whole school approach to reading that enables all learners to read books that are appropriate for their age and ensure that early years readers are supported to close any gaps in phonics knowledge to enable access to a curriculum that supports their age, expected ability and beyond.

IMPLEMENTATION

At Chesham House School all learners will be initially assessed on entrance to gauge an understanding of a young person's reading age, this will be ascertained through the GL Assessments and will be used as a standard baselining tool.

If a learner scores below 85 Standard Age Scores (SAS) then a further Phonics assessment will be completed. From this all low-level readers will be supported through 'Phonics' interventions on a 1:1 basis and through small group support. The main reading programme that will be followed at Chesham House School is **Read Write Inc. Fresh Start by Ruth Miskin** and progress will be monitored throughout this programme supporting early readers to become more confident and fluent readers. All learners will have access to texts to support reading for pleasure both within school and at home, but teachers will ensure books are mapped to the learners current reading ability and interests.

Learners with a SAS of 85 and over will be supported to reengage in a love of reading in both reading for pleasure and through subject specific reading.

The National Literacy Trust states that "If we want to be skilful in helping other people, especially children, become willing, avid, and – most important of all – thoughtful readers, we need to know how to create a reading environment that enables them." Many learners arrive at school with low reading levels and as a school we will ensure we understand individual gaps and support learners to embark on their journey in bringing reading alive.

The Department for Education in The Reading Framework states that “The Simple View of Reading has been described as the product of decoding and comprehension, a model first proposed by Gough and Tunmer in 1986, who called it the Simple View of Reading. It has been fundamental in changing the debate about the teaching of reading over at least the last 20 years. It is frequently shown as a diagram (Figure 1), consisting of two axes and four quadrants: a horizontal axis for word reading (decoding) processes and a vertical axis for language comprehension processes.”

The national curriculum programmes of study for reading reflect the model, presented as two dimensions: ‘word reading’ and ‘comprehension’. At Chesham House low level reading support will be through the use of the **Read Write Inc. Fresh Start programme by Ruth Miskin** and guided reading will be supported through the careful mapping of all reading books including national curriculum text to enable whole school access for all learners regardless of learner ability and level.

Figure 1 -



We have drawn heavily from the recommendations of the Education Endowment Foundation recommendations in their “Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools” document, first published 6th July 2018 ([Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools | EEF](https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) [educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk](https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk))

1. Prioritise “disciplinary literacy” across the curriculum

We have membership of the National Literacy Trust which gives us access to wide range of CPD opportunities, teaching resources and subject specific guidance so that we can prioritise literacy across the curriculum.

Key words specific to each subject are displayed in every classroom to ensure maximum exposure to the vocabulary conventions of each subject.

Reading and literacy sessions are timetabled for all learners every day for 15 minutes. The structure of timetabled reading incorporates 15 minutes individual reading time. This also feeds into the learner reading incentive.

Books for group reading are selected based on current affairs or personal growth and development, books are also differentiated to support all reading levels and abilities. Teachers will support learners to access books at their level.

Current affairs books support learners to widen their knowledge and interest in events of political or social interest and importance happening in the world at the present time.

Personal growth and development books support learners in the development of new skills, attitudes, actions, or reactions that can have a positive impact on their life and increase overall well-being. Through books within this genre it may also support learners to process previous trauma in a positive way or creates a safe space where they can open up and reflect on their own experiences in the context of the characters of the book rather than themselves.

All books are vetted through school.

Reader of the week is also encouraged to support individual reading, reading for pleasure and reading at home.

2. Provide targeted vocabulary instruction in every subject

All lessons focus on key words for the lesson taught. Staff encourage students to think about unfamiliar words and what they look like so that they might be able to decode the meaning of them. Subject specific knowledge organisers are also used in a range of subjects to support the learning of unfamiliar vocabulary.

Staff look for opportunities wherever possible within the lesson and teaching to highlight word etymology and morphology to help students remember the meanings of new words and to make connections with the words they already know e.g. in science, the prefix photo- means light therefore photosynthesis is concerned with light.

3. Develop students' ability to read complex academic texts

Across the curriculum, students are given the opportunity to read complex texts relevant to the subject they are studying, either as a reading comprehension or analysis. For example, in maths, we use extended written questions where students need to read and pick out key pieces of information in order to answer the question.

4. Break down complex writing tasks

Where students are expected to create extended pieces of writing, teachers use a combination of planning, monitoring, evaluation and modelling to support students to structure their text appropriately and to a high academic standard. We also provide

targeted support for those who need it through the use of scaffolded structures, sentence starters and keyword mats as appropriate.

5. Combine writing instruction with reading in every subject

Task cards are produced according to learner need for lessons to provide written instruction that all students can follow, and also supports students who may struggle with verbal instructions in the classroom, acting as a prompt. We encourage students to recognise key features, aims and conventions of good writing within each subject through the use of model answers and structural analysis. SPaG is marked in every subject across the school, with opportunities for students to correct and improve during directed independent reflection time.

6. Provide opportunities for structured talk

Students at our school can be reluctant writers so our verbal discussions form an integral part of our learning journeys which we then use as a platform to stimulate written work. Staff encourage high quality talk through excellent questioning techniques, by modelling examples of high-quality talk and by encouraging students to use key words from lessons in their responses in order to ensure that discussions are including high level vocabulary.

7. Provide high-quality literacy interventions for struggling students

All students receive targeted literacy intervention appropriate to their level and their needs. This is in addition to the SPaG marking across all subjects, dedicated reading time and emphasis on academic reading texts across all subject areas. Our literacy interventions are based upon the Reading Framework published by DfE July 2021 ([The reading framework - teaching the foundations of literacy \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/95421/reading-framework-teaching-the-foundations-of-literacy.pdf))

IMPACT

Through the implementation of our Reading Strategy, we aim to foster a love of reading in all of our students. Reading confidence will allow students to access a range of texts across a broad variety of genres, able to tackle written material in college, to build transferable employability skills and enable them to have literacy skills for life.

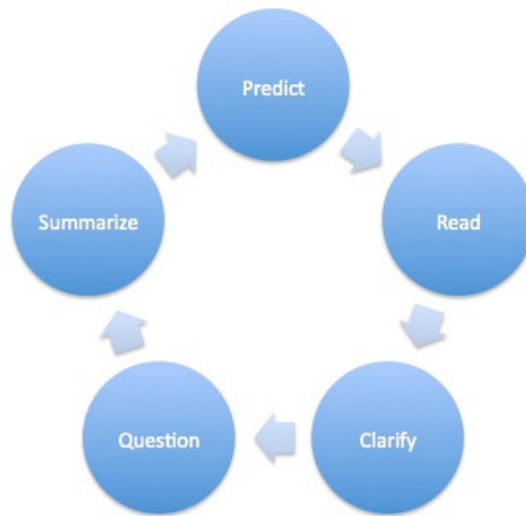
QUESTIONS FOR EACH SUBJECT LEAD TO CONSIDER

1. What is unique about your subject discipline in terms of reading, writing, speaking and listening? What is common with other subject disciplines?
2. How do members of the subject discipline use language on a daily basis?
3. Are there any literacy misconceptions held by students, for example, how to write an effective science report?
4. Are there words and phrases used typically, or uniquely, in the subject discipline?
5. How can we ensure that vocabulary instruction is effectively integrated into classroom teaching?
6. How can we move beyond static word lists to support students to develop a deeper understanding of the meaning and applications of words?
7. How can we ensure that subject specific vocabulary becomes memorable and that students can use new words in writing and talk?
8. How can we best teach students to read academic texts?
9. Which reading strategies improve the accessibility of subject specific texts and genres?
10. How can we support students to become effective independent learners?
11. How do we break down complex reading tasks?
12. How can we support students to become independent writers?
13. How can we motivate students to persist with challenging writing tasks?
14. Where should writing tasks sit within lessons and lesson sequences?
15. How can we integrate reading and writing tasks in different subject areas?
16. How can we support students to improve their spelling, punctuation and grammar?
17. Is it right to view talk as a luxury?
18. How can we structure speaking and listening activities to support learning?
19. Where should discussion activities sit within lessons and lesson sequences?
20. What types of interventions are most likely to have an impact?
21. Who should provide targeted support?
22. How will the impact of the intervention be monitored?

ACTIONS

- Evaluate the quality and complexity of existing reading materials in the school
- Ensure that the development of disciplinary literacy is coherently aligned with curriculum development
- Identify tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary across your subject
- Identify 15 – 20 words of academic vocabulary needed for each topic and SoW, teach these explicitly.
- Find tasks in which you can use the Reciprocal Reading Approach to aid students with reading academic texts:

The Reciprocal Teaching Cycle



- For extended writing opportunities, break down writing tasks by providing word level, sentence level and whole text level instruction; ensure students understand the Tier 2 vocabulary used in writing questions; explicitly teach students planning strategies; help students monitor and review their writing.
- Look in your SoW to find opportunities for structured talk and make explicit either on task cards or in SoW.
- Use WRAT to track literacy improvements.
- Word of the Week
- Use of board games such as Trugs, Upwords, Scrabble, Bananagrams.
- Write comprehensive intervention programme for all students