



Beacon Hill School

Reading Policy

This Policy forms part of the English Policy and should be read in conjunction with that and the other specialist English policies, and the Alternative Communication Policy.

"Pupils learn about reading and writing while listening and pupils learn about writing from reading and speaking." (Goodman 1986)

PRINCIPLES

- The Programmes of Study for English (2000) state that "Teaching should ensure that work in speaking and listening, reading and writing is integrated." This is an important principle for pupils at Beacon Hill School, for whom developing skills in isolation is sometimes a difficulty. In the curriculum guidance for the Foundation stage the Early Learning Goal is referred to as "Communication, Language and Literacy."
- Reading is a quest for meaning and one which requires the reader to be an active participant (DES 1989A) Pupils with severe learning difficulties may master the developmental skill of decoding print without learning to then understand the meaning behind the print. It is important that teachers always draw attention to the meaning as well as the sound of the word. (Refer to the 'Simple View of Reading' - Primary Framework 2007 - Appendix A)
- Children need to learn in an environment where there are many opportunities to nurture the acquisition of all aspects of the English language (i.e. a literate environment) Such an environment is rich in expressive and imaginative language in books and other modes of writing - e.g. display boards, notices etc.
- The written word is "talk written down". It is important that teachers write down their talk and that of the pupils and that the pupils observe, understand and interact with this process, as well as using more formal, structured reading materials.
- The development of pupil's independence is important to the education for all pupils of Beacon Hill School. The ability to read at, whatever level, including symbols is important to the development of independence for the following reasons:

- ◇ It is an additional source of language, which supplements that which is spoken and/or signed.
 - ◇ It is a useful and established social skill and accomplishment leads to greater acceptance and self-esteem.
 - ◇ It can facilitate mobility in the community. The ability to read and understand words in the outside world increases safe and independent social mobility.
 - ◇ It facilitates achievement across the curriculum and opens up access to community facilities.
 - ◇ It facilitates and enhances inclusion into mainstream provision.
 - ◇ It provides a means of pursuing leisure activities - reading for pleasure and retrieval of information about available facilities.
 - ◇ ICT can provide access to reading through the use of audio books, CDROMs etc.
- There is no single approach to the teaching of reading. Teachers need to find the right combination of approaches for the individual pupil. The Primary Framework acknowledges this. Barbara Jordan stated that there are 6 key words for the teaching of reading at Key Stage 1 - Repetition, Variety (through multi-media), Enjoyment, Reinforcement, Patience and Progression.

AIMS OF READING

- To provide for all pupils a literate environment which through reading, symbols and writing produces collaborative talk and extends language.
- To enable pupils to formulate, clarify and express ideas through reading and symbols/PECs.
- To encourage in pupils a love of stories, poetry, drama, role-play and rhyme - a wide variety of literature and non-fiction.
- To enable pupils to retrieve written factual information.
- To enable pupils to have increased access to the community and its facilities.
- To enhance pupils self esteem.
- To enable pupils to develop a functional sight vocabulary.
- To enable pupils to develop enhanced self-advocacy skills through their increased understanding of written materials.

LINKS TO SCHOOL AIMS

Beacon Hill School and Specialist College for Business and Enterprise is a community:

- *That has high expectations for continuous improvement in order to raise standards for pupils.*

The skill of reading is an important one, and every child needs to develop this ability, where possible. The continual raising of standards, which this aim refers to, must also include standards in the teaching of reading. Raised standards in reading,

through SMART target setting, and individualised teaching, will improve pupil access to many areas, and so it is important to the whole quality of education at Beacon Hill School.

- *In which all partners include, involve and inform each other.*
Beacon Hill School works closely with both parents and external agencies, including speech and language therapists and teachers for the visually/hearing impaired, for the benefit of the pupil. External agencies are involved, where appropriate in target setting and reviewing to ensure consistency between approaches.
- *That actively develops parental partnerships for the benefit of the pupils.*
As with all work in school, parents can assist in the teaching of reading in many ways. Parental support will develop the child's skills considerably. Reading is a valued skill in our community and parents are very keen to help their children acquire this skill. Pupils take home library books, and parents are encouraged to read these with their child.
- *That positively promotes and encourages independence, confidence and self advocacy.*
The skill of reading is highly valued in the community, and our older pupils are therefore keen to develop this. Any achievement of this raises their self esteem, and also their ability to express their own thoughts and choices. The ability to read also leads to pupils gaining more independence within school and in the community.
- *That values communication and provides the time and opportunity to make it effective.*
Reading is recognised as an important method of communication within Beacon Hill School. Time is spent with pupils on an individual basis, as well as in group settings, to develop the skills involved in reading.
- *That extends inclusion within and beyond the school.*
Reading is a skill valued both in school, and in mainstream settings. The ability to read enhances pupils' ability to mix in the community and inclusion placements, and facilitates access to outside opportunities.
- *That gives pupils the skills and opportunities to make informed choices.*
Reading, through the use of text, symbols or photos is a vital skill for all pupils to develop, particularly older pupils, in order that they are able to make choices, developing their own independence and self confidence.
- *That celebrates achievement for all.*
The achievement of success in reading is valued in school and in the community, especially for those who find it a difficult skill to acquire. Success is celebrated in class, and in department assemblies. Reading, both in symbols and in text format is a fundamental method by which achievement is recorded, recognised and celebrated.

- *That works in a creative and enterprising way to fulfil these aims.*
Beacon Hill School recognises that children learn in different ways, and will respond to some methods of teaching better than others. Staff use a range of strategies including multisensory methods, in order to teach the skills involved in reading.

GUIDELINES

- Pupils' access to reading will not be restricted solely on the basis of gender, race or ability.
- Through planning and teaching strategies, including the use of ICT, PECS, symbols, visual and physical structure, provision will be made to ensure that children with ASD are given equal learning opportunities in this area.
- For pupils with ASD, reading is a fundamental skill, to enable pupils to use PECs effectively to communicate their needs, preferences and comment. Group reading sessions (shared reading) will also help to develop pupil's skills in the area of social interaction. Being able to read also helps pupils to understand changes in their routines (through the use of symbols) and environment more clearly, in a visual way, therefore assisting in pupils' flexibility of thought.
- The Primary Framework provides a detailed basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the Programmes of Study for Reading and Writing.
- Experiences in the Foundation Stage in 'Communication, Language and Literacy will link to Key Stage 1 teaching of reading.
 - Teachers will provide age appropriate materials whatever the pupil's actual reading ability.
 - Every pupil will have a communication target on their IEP. This may be specifically in the area of reading.
 - Reading will be encouraged in every curriculum area. The Primary Framework encourages schools to teach reading, and provide opportunities for reading, in all subject areas.
 - Termly topics will be used as a vehicle to encourage and extend pupil's vocabulary.
 - Pupils will have opportunities to read their own written work, and read to a variety of audiences.
 - Reading will be linked to drama and role play where appropriate. This is a key area of development in the Primary Framework.

- Students in Post 16 provision will have Literacy sessions, in addition to carrying out ASDAN accreditation units.
- Displays in school will contain words and symbols to ensure that pupils have opportunities to read for information. This includes labels, captions, notices, instructions, plans and maps which will be set out in the Narrative form of 'who', 'where' and 'what happened'.
- Narrative will be used throughout school as a means of helping to develop the following areas:-
 - Reading comprehension
 - Sentence structure
 - Beginning to write a story
 - Developing awareness of the 4 key areas, in practical real life situations

Each key area has a corresponding colour:

Who	-	Orange
Where	-	Green
When	-	Red
What happened	-	Yellow

- All classrooms will have a reading area, with age appropriate books. Displays in classrooms will also contain labels, captions and information using text and symbols. This will ensure that there is a literate environment for children to develop their skills in reading, within each classroom.
- Reading may enhance a pupil's spiritual development (e.g. stories or poetry which express feelings)
- Reading will be closely linked to writing as in the Primary Framework. At Beacon Hill School, reading may begin through symbol recognition. Opportunities to 'read' symbols should be included in reading programmes for some pupils, particularly for pupils using PECs.
- The extension of pupils' language vocabulary and the development of their interest in words and meanings are parts of the programme of study. Learning of words with similar meanings and learning opposites are specifically mentioned. Pupils will be encouraged to play and experiment with language.
- I.C.T. will be used to extend reading activities, for example in the use of audio books, interactive stories and CD ROMs.
- Secondary age pupils and those at post 16 will use words/symbols to make choices, contribute to Annual Reviews and Careers sessions. Writing is, therefore a key/life skill.

- Parental involvement is welcomed but needs careful monitoring to ensure that the child does not receive conflicting advice from school and home.
- The advice of a teacher of the visually impaired and/or the speech therapist may be useful in developing appropriate strategies for reading with individual pupils.
- Early reading and phonics must be taught to all primary aged pupils. At Beacon Hill School phonics will be taught to all pupils up to and including Key Stage 3.
- Pupils with Downs Syndrome will not be taught using a straightforward phonics methods as national research has shown that very young children with Downs Syndrome benefit from a mixture of approaches but especially whole word work when starting to read.
- Phonics will be taught at the level of the individual pupil, and in a systematic way using the following programs:
 - ◊ Early Years/Key Stage 1 : Jolly Phonics
 - ◊ Key Stage 2 : Letters and Sounds
- Pupil's development in early reading is recorded on a regular basis, using the current annual PIVATs assessment. Phonological Development is recorded as a separate entity to 'Reading', on the PIVATs recording sheet.
- All pupils have a weekly library session, where they are able to read and explore the books independently, read for enjoyment, listen to stories, and borrow a book to read at home.

ASSESSMENT/ACCREDITATION

- Reading activities will be assessed and recorded regularly. They may form an important part of an individual's IEP.
- The percentage of time spent on reading will differ across Key Stages but will reflect the importance of this area for all pupils at Beacon Hill School.
- Rates of learning will be variable, but will be valued individually.
- Recording of learning will be ongoing
- Students in Key Stage 4 and Post 16 will receive accreditation, through ASDAN and AQA units, in the areas of Literacy and Communication.
- Levels of attainment will be recorded for individual pupils, using PIVATs through to NC Level 4, where appropriate. This will be carried out annually.

RESOURCES

- A range of age appropriate materials will form a structure for the teaching of reading. A range of fiction, poetry and non-fiction will be available to all pupils. The Oxford Reading Tree scheme and Lighthouse series continue to be a valuable, well structured resource.
- The Jolly Phonics scheme, and Letters and Sounds pack will be available for the teaching of early reading and phonics.
- Beacon Hill School has access to the Children's and Young Persons Library (CYP), based at Wallsend library. This enables staff to borrow a wide range of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, videos, posters and story sacks.
- The departmental library system encourages pupils to develop their skills with a wide range of books, both fiction and non-fiction. Pupil's will borrow a book on a weekly basis.
- Each class will have access to books within the classroom environment, either through bookracks or a book corner. This encourages reading for pleasure and as a chosen leisure activity.
- Pupils need access to age appropriate non-fiction material such as magazines, newspapers, recipes, timetables etc.
- Pupils who are unable to access the decoding of print will use tactile books, sensory stories, story sacks, Tac Pac, audio books, interactive stories, and other ICT equipment during Literacy sessions.
- Resources in school will assist continuity and individual progress. Texts for use in Literacy sessions are divided into departments to ensure progression through the school.
- Resources for the teaching of reading are stored centrally in the library, and include: Big books, topic books, Oxford Reading Tree books with accompanying manuals, Lighthouse Series books, photocopiable activities, resources and equipment used to assist reading development.

Literacy Coordinator - October 2011