



# Reading Curriculum Intent and Implementation

## Reading Curriculum Intent

At Our Lady's Catholic High School, we recognise that reading is a cornerstone of learning and a key to unlocking success across the curriculum. Our intent is to ensure that every pupil, regardless of starting point, develops into a confident, fluent, and motivated reader who is equipped to access the breadth and depth of the secondary curriculum and beyond. We believe that resilient readers are successful learners. Strong comprehension skills are essential not only for academic success but also for accessing the full richness of life.

Reading sits at the heart of our school's mission to provide a rich, inclusive, and ambitious education for all. Through reading, our students gain the language, knowledge, and cultural awareness that allow them to flourish academically, spiritually, and personally.

## Aims and Rationale

Drawing on the seven recommendations of the Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF) guidance report, *Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools (2019)*, our reading curriculum aims to:

- Close literacy gaps through targeted interventions that build the essential reading skills of accuracy, fluency, and comprehension, enabling students to engage, enjoy, and achieve across all subjects.
- Develop students as effective readers, supporting them to decode texts accurately, read with fluency, and apply comprehension strategies to interpret meaning, make inferences, and evaluate information critically.
- Embed oracy and writing development through structured opportunities for modelling and scaffolding, ensuring students can articulate and express understanding both orally and in writing.
- Foster metacognitive awareness, enabling students to become independent, reflective learners who can select and apply strategies to aid their understanding of challenging texts.
- Promote disciplinary literacy, helping students to read, write, and communicate as experts within each subject discipline. Teachers plan opportunities for pre-teaching and consolidation to strengthen understanding and confidence when tackling subject-specific texts.
- Equip all teachers as teachers of reading, recognising that every subject provides opportunities to strengthen students' literacy. Staff are supported with strategies to develop comprehension through clarifying, summarising, and questioning, as well as through explicit teaching of subject-specific vocabulary and language structures.
- Use data to inform practice, ensuring that reading assessments are visible to staff and embedded within planning, allowing teachers to identify, support, and track students who require additional reading intervention.



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## Reading for Pleasure and Cultural Enrichment

We believe that reading for pleasure is central to a lifelong love of learning and personal growth. Research by Sullivan and Brown (2013) highlights the strong association between reading for pleasure and improved outcomes in all areas. Beyond academic achievement, reading for pleasure enhances empathy, broadens worldviews, and shapes students into compassionate, responsible citizens.

Our curriculum is designed to illuminate students' understanding of the world and deepen their cultural and global awareness through exposure to a diverse range of challenging and enriching texts. We aim to foster curiosity and a sense of wonder through literature, encouraging students to read not just for school but for enjoyment and discovery.

This focus on enjoyment, cultural understanding, and empathy directly supports pupils' personal development and well-being, promoting engagement and a positive attitude to learning.

## Reading Curriculum Implementation

At Our Lady's Catholic High School, our reading curriculum is implemented through a coherent, whole-school approach that combines high-quality classroom practice with carefully targeted interventions. This approach is rooted in the principles of the National Curriculum and guided by the EEF's Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools (2019) report.

## Identification and Assessment

Pupils' reading abilities are assessed using the New Group Reading Test (NGRT), providing Standard Age Scores (SAS) that inform targeted intervention and classroom practice. This data is shared with all staff and integrated into class seating plans, allowing teachers to identify pupils requiring additional support and adapt teaching accordingly. Regular monitoring of NGRT data enables staff to evaluate progress, close literacy gaps, and ensure that pupils develop fluency and comprehension in line with curriculum expectations.

This approach supports inclusion and achievement, ensuring that every pupil receives the right level of challenge and intervention to make sustained progress.

## Thinking Reading Programme

The Thinking Reading programme is a highly structured, one-to-one intervention delivered by a specialist HLTA for pupils identified through NGRT data as requiring intensive support. Pupils attend three sessions per week, engaging in a systematic and evidence-based approach to improve decoding accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. The programme is designed to produce rapid progress, ensuring that pupils make measurable gains in reading age and confidence. Continuous assessment and review of pupil progress ensure that the intervention remains focused and targeted.

This programme exemplifies our commitment to inclusion and achievement, enabling disadvantaged and SEND learners to overcome barriers to reading success.



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## **Reading Leaders Programme**

The Reading Leaders Programme supports identified Year 7 pupils by pairing them with trained Year 10 mentors for weekly reading sessions over a ten-week period. This peer-led intervention encourages younger students to build fluency, confidence, and enjoyment in reading through shared experiences and discussion. Older pupils act as positive role models, developing their own leadership and communication skills while supporting the literacy growth of their peers.

The programme promotes personal development and well-being, strengthens inter-year relationships, and contributes to a positive school culture of respect, responsibility, and collaboration.

## **Targeted Intervention**

Targeted literacy intervention is provided for identified pupils across both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 to strengthen core skills in comprehension, spelling, and handwriting. These short-term, intensive sessions are delivered by trained English teachers in small groups, allowing for focused, responsive teaching that addresses individual learning needs. Through explicit instruction, modelling, and guided practice, pupils develop greater accuracy, fluency, and confidence in reading and writing.

Progress is carefully monitored throughout the intervention period, with outcomes reviewed to ensure that pupils make sustained improvements in their literacy skills. This ensures that curriculum and teaching remain responsive and inclusive.

## **Bedrock Learning**

All Year 7 pupils participate in Bedrock Learning, an online programme that explicitly teaches vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension. Pupils complete weekly lessons in school and as part of homework, building consistent habits of reading and language development. The platform's adaptive design enables personalised learning and allows teachers to monitor engagement and progress through detailed reporting tools.

This promotes achievement and independent learning, ensuring reading support continues beyond the classroom.

## **Learning Resource Centre Reading Lessons**

All Key Stage 3 pupils attend a reading lesson in the Learning Resource Centre once a fortnight. These sessions provide opportunities for independent reading, guided reading activities, and book discussion, helping pupils to develop a love of reading. The lessons promote engagement with a wide range of texts, encouraging pupils to read for pleasure as well as for learning.

This supports attendance and behaviour by fostering a calm, purposeful atmosphere for reading and independent study.



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## Reading Within the Curriculum

We believe that every teacher is a teacher of reading. Reading is embedded within every subject area, and all staff have received training in high-impact literacy strategies such as echo reading, choral responses, reciprocal reading, and explicit teaching of subject-specific vocabulary. Teachers develop students' comprehension through clarifying, summarising, and questioning, enabling pupils to tackle increasingly complex texts with confidence.

In-class interventions, including paired reading, coloured overlays, scaffolded questioning, and structured opportunities for oracy, ensure that reading support is inclusive and accessible to all.

This approach reflects high-quality curriculum and teaching and supports inclusion by ensuring that literacy development is every teacher's responsibility.

## Professional Development and Quality First Teaching

Ongoing professional development ensures that staff remain confident and skilled in supporting reading across the curriculum. Training focuses on developing comprehension strategies, disciplinary literacy, and the effective use of assessment data to inform teaching. Quality First Teaching underpins all classroom practice, with teachers adapting instruction and resources to meet the literacy needs of their learners, ensuring that all pupils experience success and progress in reading.

This reflects leadership and governance priorities, ensuring that staff well-being and professional growth are supported through collaboration and training.

## Reading Enrichment Activities

- Transition novel for all Year 6 pupils gifted during their taster day, with a personalised message and letter to parents.
- Author visits including Natasha Farrant, Paul Dowswell, Joseph Delaney, Chris Bradford, Emily Chappel, Elise Downing, and Tom Palmer.
- Celebrations for World Book Day/Week and National Poetry Day.
- Fiction Addiction, Spelling Bee, and Poetry Slam events.

These activities build community, promote a love of reading, and support pupils' personal development and well-being through enjoyment, creativity, and shared experience.