

Wellington School



Honesty

Community

Excellence

Fairness

Endeavour

Literacy Policy

Updated: July 2024

Review Date: July 2025



Wellington School



Policy Title	Literacy Policy
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Summary of Contents

The policy outlines the School's approach to ensuring all pupils receive a curriculum which views literacy as of great importance. It details the roles of staff, teaching strategies and also the required intervention processes to ensure pupils can demonstrate excellent literacy skills and fluency.

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Member of SLT Responsible	Z. Hitchens

Literacy at Wellington

Aims

Literacy is at the heart of learning at Wellington School; we value the importance of pupils' ability to read, write and talk well and meaningfully. We understand that it is the duty of every teacher to ensure pupils can thrive by accessing and demonstrating the required literacy skills to succeed within the curriculum and as part of the wider School community.

Ultimately, our Curriculum is designed to ensure that pupils have access to great literacy teaching appropriate for each disciplinary subject area, with access to authentic texts, Tier 3 subject vocabulary, as well as opportunities to hear and participate in expert reading. The role of Oracy is viewed as essential in pupils' communication of their ideas and with others, as well as cementing the thinking and language required for successful writing.

At Wellington, we view literacy as one of the most valuable ways we can provide equality and equity of opportunity for our pupils as well as understanding the importance of good literacy in our pupils' future opportunities and to ensure their well being as confident and fluent communicators.

This policy reflects the requirements and expectations set out in:

- The [National Curriculum programmes of study for English](#)
- The [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice 2014](#)
- The [Equality Act 2010](#)

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Teaching and Learning, SEND, EAL and Reading for Pleasure policies in: [Q:\011 Policies and Proformas](#)

Roles and Responsibilities

Students will:

- Bring reading material to school; all Ks3 pupils must have a fiction book with them to support the tutor programme and their bi-weekly LRC lessons;
- Engage in the reading time they are given – for pleasure and purpose;
- Embrace opportunities to read, talk meaningfully, write effectively and acquire new vocabulary;
- Use the LRC to support their learning;
- Take pride in acting upon marking and feedback to improve upon their literacy.

Teachers will:

- Recognise that all literacy teaching contributes to pupils' development and that it requires explicit teaching so pupils understand how to approach, complete, and achieve excellent standards for literacy;
- Utilise the School's literacy toolkits to inform their planning;
- Use authentic texts where feasible in their teaching;
- Contribute to pupils' reading fluency through modelling expert reading and planning for opportunities to read and comprehend their reading;
- Ensure pupils are taught the relevant Tier 3 disciplinary vocabulary for each unit and promote Tier 2 vocabulary usage;
- Ensure spellings are taught in context to support usage;
- Use the whole-school marking symbols for literacy; ensuring pupils have time for corrections and feedback;
- Be reading role models ('Reader Leaders') and promote and model expert reading and reading for pleasure;
- Display 'Reading for Pleasure' posters;
- Book and utilise the LRC regularly and also support pupils' wider reading with the *AccessIt* platform;
- Utilise reading age, spelling age and SEND/EAL data and reports to inform their planning and the TA support available to them;
- Explicitly praise and recognise pupils' excellence and endeavour in literacy practices;
- Identify and communicate concerns via Class Charts to the SEND department;
- Maintain familiarity with educational research pertaining to literacy
- Ensure that pupils who miss any learning due to intervention are welcomed and supported to quickly catch-up so intervention is not viewed as inconvenience.
- Refer concerns about pupils' literacy to the SENDCo

Heads of Department will:

- Monitor schemes of work to ensure there are explicit opportunities for developing literacy skills and authentic reading;
- Ensure that 'subject specific literacy' is clearly identified in schemes of work, and that there is obvious progression through the key stages;
- Regularly evaluate the impact of the teaching of literacy skills on student progress in their subject area through observations and work scrutinies;

- Audit department strengths and areas for development;
- Ensure the school's marking for literacy policy is embedded in the department;
- Ensure that all texts used within the department are accessible to all students;
- Ensure that the department's instruction of reading, writing, speaking and listening is in line with whole school's recommended pedagogy;
- Ensure that all department members are aware of the literacy demands of their subject;
- The English department will take the lead for ensuring that grammatical and literacy skills are explicitly taught;
- The English HOD will ensure that all KS3 pupils will receive dedicated LRC time for reading and literacy.

Senior Leaders

- The Senior Leader responsible for Teaching and Learning and Reading will take responsibility for the development of staff in whole-school literacy strategies; they will ensure dedicated intervention staff are trained and led to support pupils;
- With the Interventions Co-Ordinator, the SLT lead will analyse all data to ensure the appropriate pupils receive additional literacy interventions and that these are monitored and evaluated regularly; they will ensure that pupils receive the sufficient intervention time;
- The SLT lead will ensure staff are trained to deliver the whole-school reading policy;
- The SLT Lead, alongside the LRC Manager will continue to promote the school-wide reading-rich culture with training, visuals, and information in all reading for pleasure focuses;
- The SLT responsible for DOKS will work to ensure that reading is heavily-featured with the tutor and enrichment programmes;
- The SLT lead will seek to support the wider parent/carer community with reading outside of School.

Teaching and Learning

All staff have access to the relevant literacy toolkits and research that underpin the structured teaching of literacy at Wellington. These toolkits stipulate core strategies that will benefit and support the development of all pupils in Reading, Writing, Oracy and Vocabulary Acquisition. It is recognised that all teachers and relevant support staff are responsible for the nurturing of pupils' reading fluency.

All of these toolkits are designed based upon:

- The prominence of literacy in lessons;
- The checking and development of pupils' literacy understanding and skills;
- Modelling and scaffolding literacy activities;
- Recognising barriers to literacy learning;
- Celebrating achievements and progress and championing the importance of literacy

[Q:\003 Teaching and Learning\005 Wellington Literacy Toolkits](#)

Staff should plan to support pupils in the following areas:

Oracy Skills

Speaking encourages students to organise and structure ideas, while active listening is key to picking out important information. These skills could be further enhanced by tasks which integrate speaking and listening skills with reading and writing tasks as this can help to reinforce both skill sets. The promotion of oral participation in class discussions supports the need to use talk to develop and clarify issues resulting in improved active listening skills. Students need to use debate to support key evaluation skills and be taught how to use language precisely and coherently to construct ideas and form clear foundations for moving onto writing in a formal manner.

Reading skills

This should include being able to interpret a range of different text types as well as understanding how style and format can affect how different meanings are communicated. To develop confidence and competence, students need to be taught how to decode texts and interpret both explicit and implicit meanings. Disciplinary reading for meaning strategies, need to be incorporated into all lessons to ensure students learn how to independently access challenging texts. All students, regardless of their starting point, need to be able to read with greater understanding, locate and use information, follow a process or argument, summarise, synthesise and adapt what they learn from reading.

Appendix One: *The Wellington Way: Whole School Reading* is displayed in all classrooms

Writing skills

In conjunction with grammar, punctuation and spelling, students should also learn about the craft and different styles of writing for different purposes. The idea of 'text type' is central to this, whereby a 'text' is a piece of writing and the 'type' of text relates to its purpose or the reason why it is being

written. These skills should be reinforced both within specific subject areas as well as across the curriculum. Students need to be able to demonstrate their ability to interpret, evaluate, explain, analyse and explore through written expression. When completing extended writing tasks, teachers should provide students with the necessary support to enable them to progress and organise writing.

Separately, guidance for all SEND and EAL pupil is accessible via Pupil Plans and also the EAL Toolkit and assessment log. Any concerns should be identified and recorded on Class Charts through the SEND and/or EAL 'Cause for Concern' button.

Written Annotation and Feedback

There is a consistent series of symbols that should be adopted by all staff for providing feedback on Literacy. **During marking for acknowledgement, each teacher will make literacy a focus using the following codes:**

- Sp** Spelling error
- G** Grammatical mistake
- ^** Word or letter is missing
- C** Capital letter is missing
- P** Punctuation error
- ?** Something doesn't make sense
- //** New paragraph

Where a spelling mistake is identified, teachers should write the correct spelling. Students must then write out the correct spelling in green pen ('Go Green'). Staff should be mindful of students with weak literacy and focus on common misspelt words or topic specific vocabulary rather than correct every spelling mistake. Time should be dedicated to this and allow pupils to make corrections and act upon any further feedback or activity the teacher has deemed necessary

Quality Assurance

Literacy is one aspect of the Wellington Framework for Teaching and the teaching of literacy features in the School's Observation prompts. Likewise, the School's work scrutiny proformas support the review of literacy.

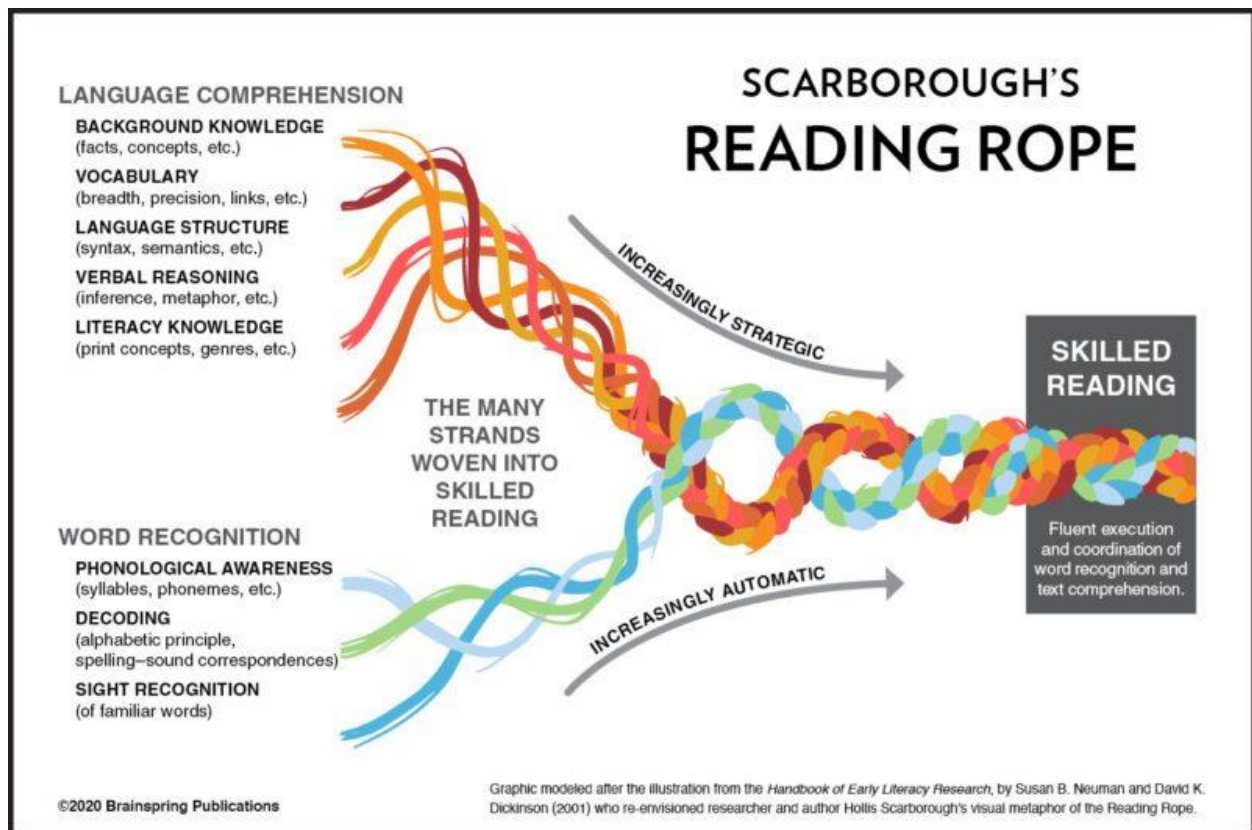
Research

All teaching and learning practices at Wellington are research-informed; we expect staff to retain familiarity with such research. **Links can be found here:** <Q:\003 Teaching and Learning\005 Wellington Literacy Toolkits> as well as in recent SIP focuses on Reading and Oracy

There is lots of research to support pupils' literacy; the EEF's report into Literacy offers a concise focused guide to what is most effective. In turn this informs in-school staff development.

<Q:\003 Teaching and Learning\005 Wellington Literacy Toolkits\Research and Resources\EEF Literacy Guidance.pdf>

Likewise, the series of '*Closing the Reading/Vocabulary/Writing Gap*' by Alex Quigley provides exceptional summaries of how and why there is an academic and moral need to improve pupils' literacy. These again are research informed studies, inspired by research such as the Scarborough's Reading Rope of Skilled Reading (2001):



Reading Fluency Strategies

All teachers and relevant support staff can contribute to pupils reading fluency by understanding that Fluency is the **bridge** between **word recognition** and **comprehension**. This is because, Fluency connects to **accuracy and automaticity** in **decoding**. Furthermore, it connects to **comprehension** through **prosody** or **expressive interpretation**. Fluent reading **supports comprehension** because pupils' cognitive resources are **freed** from focusing on word recognition and can be **redirected towards** comprehending the text.

It is achieved by:

Accuracy (words read accurately and with correct pronunciation, usually with a high success rate):

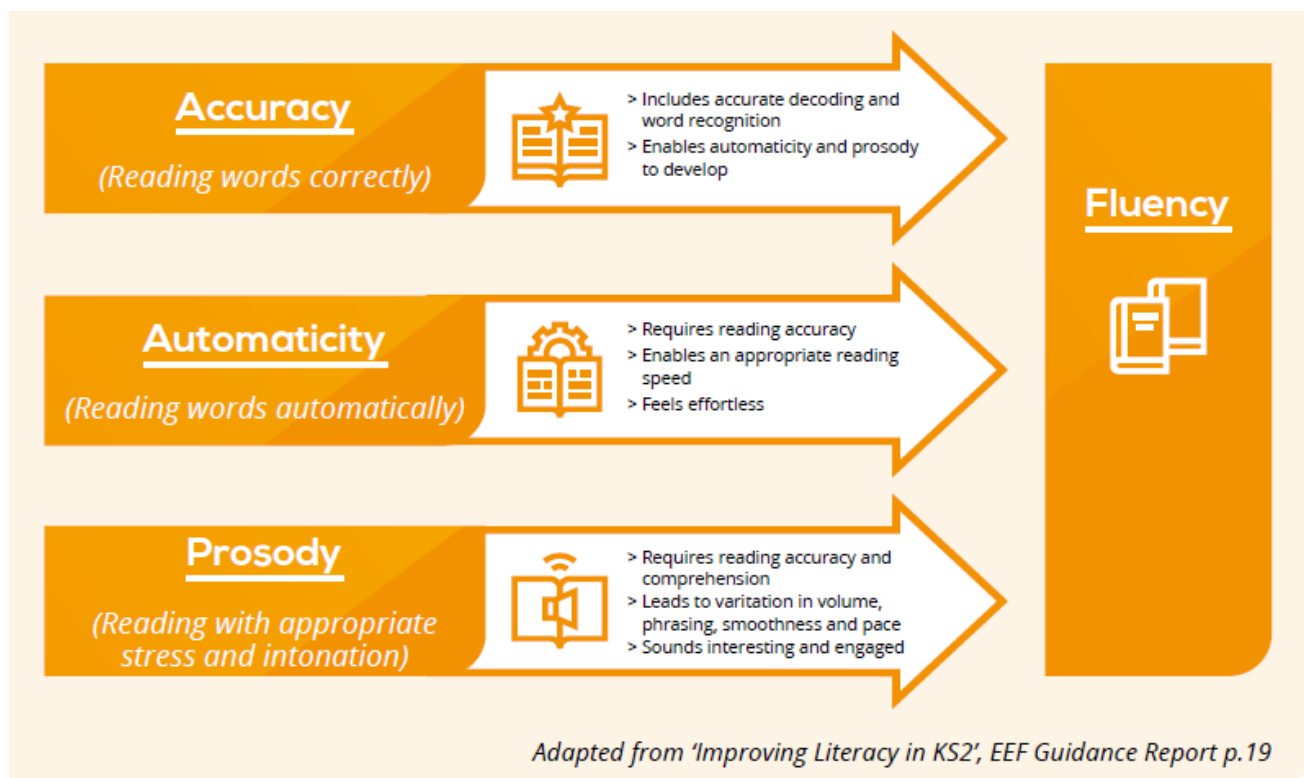
- > Pupils use context to support them in accurately
 - reading homographs ('there is no time like the
 - present to present a friend with a present').

Automaticity (rapid word recognition without conscious decoding):

- > Pupils are able to recognise words quickly, accurately and without effort: whole word recognition.
- > Pupils' cognitive resources can attend almost entirely to reading comprehension.

Prosody (appropriate use of phrasing and expression):

- > Pupils demonstrate appropriate intonation, rhythm and emphasis of words and sentences when reading out loud.
- > A pupil's prosody can demonstrate their understanding and the extent they have read for meaning. Prosody is a signal that the text has been comprehended.



Supporting Reading Fluency

Whether disciplinary Reading for Purpose or Reading for Pleasure, staff can support pupils reading fluency by realising:

- > Fluent readers **read whole words**. Research tells us that this is how **most adults** read;
- > Words have three forms: their **sounds** (phonemes), their **orthography** (spelling) and their **meaning**;
- > When we have seen and read a word many times, it is stored **in long term memory as a unique letter string** that can be read instantly. This process is referred to as '**orthographic mapping**' (Ehri, 2015);
- > **Orthographic mapping** is the **process** that successful readers use to become fluent. Readers use the oral language processing part of their brain to connect the sounds/phonemes of words they already know to the letters/graphemes in a word. Then, they **permanently store** the connected sounds and letters of words - along with their meaning - as instantly recognisable words;
- > After approximately **one to four exposures to a written word**, the word becomes **unitised** or instantly familiar (Kilpatrick, 2015).

Misconceptions about Reading Fluency:

- > '**Fluent reading is fast reading**': speed is a consequence of automaticity, not the cause. Pupils need to increase their reading miles to increase automaticity. Getting pupils to read fast does not improve their fluency: it makes them quick readers, but doesn't mean that they are reading for meaning. We should avoid stopwatch reading.

> **‘Exposure to many texts develops fluency’**: reading a text once – or ‘wide reading’ - is rarely enough to support fluency. Repeated readings, or ‘deep reading’, allows pupils to rehearse and hone their reading. Ultimately, this increases fluency and boosts comprehension. These benefits improve the reading of new texts pupils meet in future.

Reading Strategies that support Reading Fluency

What does effective fluency instruction look like? How do we do it really well?

Fluency must be **explicitly taught and deliberately practised**. This can be done through the following strategies:

Fluency Strategies	
Teacher-led, modelled fluent reading	Pupils hear how a text sounds when read fluently and can identify what aspects of fluency were used. Prosody (like language) is usually acquired naturally as children grow and listen to prosody modelled around them. Much infant-directed language is rich in prosody. Hearing an adult read aloud with expression or appropriate prosody demonstrates to pupils how to give meaning to what is read through varied pitch (frequency), intensity (specific emphasis on a syllable), and duration (length of the word and pauses between words).
Choral reading	This involves simultaneous reading of a passage and can be done individually, in groups or as a whole class. In choral reading sessions, it is important to monitor pupils’ reading to ensure that all are participating. One way of doing this is to invite different groups of pupils, mid-flow, to read aloud; for example, girls, boys, people with blue eyes, people on a specific table etc.
Repeated choral reading	The teacher might lower their voice with each repeated reading, thus phasing themselves out and gradually releasing responsibility to the students.
Echo reading	The teacher reads a short section of the text aloud while pupils silently follow in their own copies of the text. This section could be a sentence, paragraph or a short passage. Pupils echo the section back. Sections need to be long enough so that students are required to rely on reading their text and not just remembering what the teacher said. The teacher then releases responsibility to pairs of pupils, who engage in partner reading. Partner A (the stronger reader in the pair) reads the same piece of text; Partner B tracks the text and monitors their partner. The pairs then swap: Partner B reads and Partner A tracks and monitors.
Deep reading	This occurs when a pupil is asked individually to read a single text repeatedly until a level of fluency is achieved. This may be silently or out loud. Several reviews of research on fluency have shown that word recognition accuracy, automaticity, comprehension, and attitude toward reading have been shown to improve with repeated readings.
Performance reading	Texts that feature monologues, dialogues, speeches, songs, are suited to performance reading. Pupils can discuss the text and make decisions about how to use their voices, facial expressions or gestures. Text marking can be used to show how different aspects of the reading sounds e.g., underlining a phrase/word/part of the word that will be stressed when read out loud. This is a crucial strategy because it is a way to make repeated reading purposeful and engaging.

<https://researchschool.org.uk/shottonhall/news/five-minutes-on-fluency>

Handwriting Guidance

There is much evidence to suggest that handwriting standards have declined since the pandemic; this could be attributable to some children missing-out on direct instruction, increased use of technology, or indeed independently developing bad handwriting habits. This guidance sheet is designed to support you in addressing handwriting concerns.

Inconsistent Standards of Handwriting

If some of the work in a pupil's book is below their typical standard then this is most likely attributable to sloppiness or a lower effort than typically demonstrated or expected.

Action:

- Make a comparison to work of their typical standard
- Expect the work or part of the work to be rewritten at the pupil's typical standard

Consistently Legible but 'Messy' Handwriting

Where this is the case, a pupil would benefit from the following:

- Ensure that left-handed and right-handed pupils are sat accordingly so they have space to write and don't clash elbows
- Sometimes pupils don't hold their paper/book down when they write – this can easily be addressed with Blu-Tack
- Blu-Tack can also make an effective pen grip
- Would the pupil benefit from a handwriting pen? ZHS and SEND department can provide these
- Consider the handouts you provide – is there clearly demarcated space for writing? Are there lines to support this?
- Is enough time being allowed for task completion? Is there a possibility the pupil's cognitive load is too heavy?
- Is there time to 'rest' in more extended tasks? Sometimes handwriting is attributable to issues with grip or indeed writing stamina
- It's always worth speaking to a couple of the pupil's other teachers – is this writing typical across their subjects?

Significant Concerns: Legibility and Speed

Where a pupil's handwriting is illegible or indeed their writing speed is incredibly slow, then complete a SEND referral so the pupil can be assessed. This may mean a more significant intervention is put in place: this might range from a sloping board to improve transference, adapted exercise books with darker lines, or potentially (depending on typing speed) the provision of a laptop. Likewise, such assessment might determine suitable access arrangements for assessments and examinations, such as additional time where writing speed is slow. Where there is significant concern, then refer.

Data and Monitoring; Literacy Interventions

All Y7 pupils are assessed for Reading Ages and Spelling Ages at the beginning of Y7, providing data to inform interventions for those below secondary-reading age ('functionally illiterate') of 11. Likewise, this provides staff with reports on all Y7s for both reading and spelling and each report includes guidance on the best ways to support these pupils should staff require additional information.

Likewise, KS2 and SEND/EAL information allows the Interventions Co-Ordinator and SLT Lead to determine the most meaningful interventions. Where interventions are grouped reading age and phonological data and texts is used to inform these groupings.

Termly analysis then continues to take place for as long as pupils require support. This might be through 1-1 interventions, guided reading, phonics intervention, or resources and led by the Interventions Co-Ordinators, LRC Manager and teaching assistants.

All Y7s are reassessed on the NGRT at the end of Y7 to support the measuring of reading age progress.

Pupils remaining on reading and literacy interventions in Year 8 upwards are reassessed using the NGRT termly until they have a reading age suitable for access the curriculum. The relevant team of staff regularly review the intervention groupings and determine additional interventions. Pupil Premium pupils are also assessed at the beginning of Year 8 and 9 to determine any changes in learning gaps and progress

Parental Communications

Reading lists and useful websites are detailed on the School website to support pupil literacy. Parents are also regularly invited to feed back on their child's reading through an online survey.

Parents also receive communication via letter where pupils are involved in literacy interventions with the rationale and purpose clearly stipulated; updates are then provided annually or when pupils complete interventions.

Resources and the LRC

All departments are well-stocked with relevant reading materials. There is also school-wide access to iPads, computers and laptops. Dictionaries and thesauruses are available to all departments with additional in English department and the LRC. The school has a subscription to *The Day* for non-fiction articles as well as many subject-specific periodicals such as *National Geographic*.

The LRC is at the Hub of the school is where interventions, additional support and a wide variety of reading materials are available to all pupils at all Key Stages. The *AccessIt* platform compliments this material and makes it easy for pupils to access, recommend and utilise the reading materials the LRC can offer.

Dedicated Reading Page on School Website: <https://www.wellington-school.co.uk/curriculum/reading-at-wellington/>

Appendix One: The Wellington Way: Whole-School Reading

The Wellington Way: Whole-School Reading

At Wellington, all staff have a duty to teach and develop pupils' capacity and enjoyment of reading; we understand that pupils need to be able to read well and effectively to enjoy and value reading itself.

To read fluently, pupils must be able to demonstrate...

Accuracy	Automaticity	Prosody
Reading words correctly with accurate decoding and word recognition	Reading words automatically and with accuracy at an appropriate speed	Requires pupils to have reading accuracy and comprehension so they can vary volume, phrasing, smoothness, tone and pace

To do all of this, pupils require an appropriate secondary-ready reading age of 12:00+. Pupils at Wellington may require support in any of these areas: pupils with KS2 scores below 90 and reading ages below 10 are likely to have accuracy and decoding needs and require significant phonics support; pupils with reading ages between 10 and 12 or KS2 scores between 90 and 100 are likely to require comprehension and vocabulary support.

All teachers at Wellington will...

Reading Knowledge and Profile

- Ensure time is regularly dedicated to reading in all subject areas and pastoral time/enrichment
- Ensure reading is modelled: through being seen to read, emphasising the importance of reading to our own expertise, and by sharing valuable reading experiences
- Reference 'Reading for Purpose' in the Wellington Learning Language
- Be knowledgeable of the relevant reading, SEND and EAL data for their pupils and read their NGRT reports or pupil plans where relevant
- Display a Reading Recommendations poster

Teaching and Learning

- Identify challenging vocabulary and explicitly teach it with the understanding that pupils need to be able to understand 95% of a text to be able to read it
- Pre-teach or foreground relevant contextual knowledge to support pupils' understanding
- Read aloud to model vocabulary and its usage; model reading fluency through intonation, pace and emphasis
- Utilise probing questions to check pupils' understanding
- Give explicit praise for excellent reading and comprehension
- Make sure that if a pupil misses some of their lesson for intervention, they are welcomed back to the lesson and supported quickly to reinforce the value of such interventions

Curriculum and Wider Reading

- Select texts that are challenging; where additional support is required, chunking and other scaffolding will be utilised to support all learners
- Model the disciplinary reading skills required in their subject; assumptions about 'How to read a text' won't be made and the process will be modelled in lessons
- Recommend reading for both purpose and pleasure to pupils: *Access It*, *The Day*, and the School Website will support this. Departments will determine and request texts and content from the LRC Manager to support their curriculums and where possible the LRC can be utilised as a learning space