# Our commitment to developing reading

Our commitment to providing extended reading opportunities for students across the curriculum is driven by a clear understanding of our social context and the ambition to ensure education at Hall Cross is about social mobility for all our learners. The year 7 entry for the 2023/24 academic year saw a third of all students with a reading ability below age expectation. There has been a plethora of research in recent years outlining how engagement in reading, and enjoyment of reading, is in decline across secondary age students. However, research is also irrefutable that those students who read regularly for both academic enrichment and pleasure attain higher grades at GCSE and have a greater earning potential in life after education. It is this desire for our students to prosper that underpins our commitment to reading across all subject areas.

**How do we ensure a rich reading culture across the academy?**

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| Effective programme of testing. | Survey level assessment using the Literacy Online programme is conducted across the whole cohort of year 7 in the first few weeks of September. Students are then identified for greater diagnostic assessment and students who will benefit from specific targeted interventions are identified. This process is repeated throughout the journey through the academy. |
| Reading hour | The whole of year 7, have an additional timetabled reading hour in their week. This is designed to engage in reading for pleasure early in secondary school, and maximise the opportunities to embed positive reading behaviours and attitudes to reading. It is our commitment to raising the profile of reading and promoting the positive impacts that reading has on effective written communication. |
| Reading across the curriculum | All departments have a target for embedding reading across the curriculum within their development plans. Teachers have a target within performance management for developing reading opportunities within the classroom. There has been significant training and CPD to raise the profile of reading in the curriculum with focus upon developing comprehension and disciplinary literacy. |
| Reading Plus | Current trial across year 8 to be rolled out across KS3. The programme is heavily focused upon building fluency in order to secure higher levels of comprehension. Students undertake three reading sessions each week - one in their English lessons and two at home. Students have ownership of text choices within the programme and difficulty increases gradually based upon performance in the tests in each module. |
| Bedrock vocabulary | Bedrock vocabulary is an intervention utilised across KS3 to develop vocabulary in response to our recognition of relatively low levels of access to books at home for a significant number of our students. There is a weekly session on Bedrock vocabulary as part of English lessons for targeted students, and an expectation for remaining sessions to be completed at home. |
| Thinking reading | A targeted reading intervention for students who struggle with decoding. Identified students receive three timetabled 40 minute sessions per week with a trained member of staff, in a dedicated space, to secure rapid progress in closing the gap between reading age and chronological age. |
| Encouragement of reading for academic enrichment | Departments across the academy have developed ‘academic libraries’ for their subjects. These direct students to articles and whole texts, related to key content studied across the key stages. Many are available through QR code links and we encourage students to read widely around the subject content to support the learning taking place in the classroom. |
| Celebrating reading | A number of initiatives are planned to ensure students' reading achievements are celebrated. These include book bundles, achievement points and celebration events to raise the profile of reading at the academy. |
| ePlatform | Students across KS3 have access to an online eLibrary with over 2,500 titles. Students are able to borrow ebooks and audiobooks. Students are also able to personalise backgrounds, fonts and language to aid their reading. |
| Sixth Form paired reading | This scheme runs from October half term until Easter. Students within Y8 are identified through their reading age data and have a 30 minute scheduled session with a Sixth Form student one per week. |