



Teaching Reading at Doubletrees School.

Context of school

Doubletrees school is a 2-19 provision. We have three learning pathways within school. The pre-formal learning pathway, known as Learning to Learn, where learners follow the Engagement Model. The Bridging to Learn cohort is a semi-formal learning pathway, where learners access the pre-requisites to learning and the early stages of the National Curriculum. The third pathway is our Ready to Learn pathway, where learners access the National curriculum through formal learning opportunities. We have an EYFS and Post 16 provision.

Our learners are complex and diverse and we take a personalised learning approach to our curriculum, making adaptations to ensure that learning is accessible to all.

Intent

We aim to provide a well-rounded and meaningful reading experience that supports students' academic and personal growth, whilst also fostering a love of reading. We aim to support our learners to become as independent readers and writers as they are able, with a lifelong commitment to learning. We recognise that reading is our key priority as it is the foundation to all learning and vital to accessing all other curriculum areas.

Achieve: The intent is to provide students with the skills and strategies necessary to become proficient readers. This includes developing their phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension skills. By achieving these goals, students will be able to read and comprehend various forms of text with ease, which will help them to be successful in all aspects of their academic and personal lives.

Belong: The intent is to create a sense of belonging for all students in the classroom. This includes promoting diversity and inclusivity in the texts that are read, providing opportunities for collaborative learning, and valuing and respecting students' unique perspectives and experiences.

Communicate: The intent is to develop students' communication skills through reading. This includes teaching them to express their thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in both written and oral forms. By doing so, students will be better equipped to participate in meaningful conversations and to engage with the world around them.

Develop: The intent is to foster students' personal and academic growth through reading. This includes providing opportunities for independent reading, encouraging students to explore a variety of genres and topics, and promoting critical thinking and analysis of texts

Enjoy: The intent is to create a love of reading in all students. This includes providing access to high-quality literature, creating a comfortable and inviting reading environment, and celebrating reading achievements. By enjoying reading, students will be more likely to continue reading throughout their lives and to experience the many benefits that reading can provide.

Overall, our aim is to use research based practises to provide a strong foundation for effective reading instruction which helps our learners to develop the skills they need to be successful readers.

Implementation

Initially we focus on developing a solid foundation in phonemic awareness: the ability to hear and manipulate sounds in spoken words. This is followed by systematic instruction in phonics, using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds scheme.

Our learners have daily reading books where they can apply the decoding skills taught through discrete systematic phonics. These individual reading books are also essential for the development of fluency, which is essential for successful reading, and learners are provided repeated, daily one to one practice to help them with their accuracy, expression and pace. Reading books are linked to the phase of phonics that the learners are within. The reading schemes used to support the development of fluency and decoding skills is the Oxford Reading Tree scheme. As learner progress through the school, the Project X reading scheme is used to provide more age appropriate reading material. For learners who, due to their specific learning needs require alternative approaches, these may include use of the POPs scheme for whole word recognition, the production of personalised resources and reading books with motivating subject matter included and the use of AAC/visual to support learners who are non-verbal or have sensory impairments. We work closely with our SaLT team to support this. This daily reading at home is supported by our daily phonics sessions. We encourage our parents to read at home to support this. Learners who are not making progress are targeted through class based intervention programmes.

Reading comprehension is also taught through specific instruction on text structures, purposes as well as a focus on developing comprehension strategies, for example questioning and predicting. Vocabulary development is also a crucial part of this and a variety of methods are used to promote vocabulary development and understanding, dependent upon the personalised pedagogies and individual learning needs. A broad variety of genres are studied and these are linked to purposeful writing so the skills learnt can be applied. As learners become more fluid in their reading ability, there are structured guided reading opportunities to support further development of comprehension strategies. The curriculum is designed to make reading as relevant to real life purpose, whilst ensuring that it is engaging and enriching as possible. The teaching of reading comprehension and vocabulary remain a high priority as the foundation of all learning and our curriculum is sequenced to ensure that these skills are built upon as learners move through our school.

For key stages 1-3, non-fiction texts are taught as these are essential for future functional literacy and ensuring our learners are prepared for life after school. This supports the learners to extract information from texts which enables them to follow instructions and make informed decisions. It is also an essential genre for accessing a range of other disciplines such as Science, History and Geography.

Fictional texts are taught to develop vocabulary, comprehension strategies and critical thinking skills. Exploration of fictional worlds and characters develops empathy and understanding of diverse perspectives, cultures and experiences. This includes, for example, the study of poetry to develop creativity and imagination, using word play which enhances their communication skills. The study of drama further supports communication and interpersonal skills by practising listening, verbal and non-verbal communication and collaboration with others.

As learners enter key stages 4 and 5, there is an increasing focus on the application of their knowledge of genres and texts to real life situations, including reading and understanding timetables, information that allows them to access community events, following instructions and recipes, communication with others to request or share information, in preparation for life beyond school.

Where learners are on the pre-formal pathway, following pre-subject specific learning through the Engagement Model, we still provide a rich reading environment, using sensory stories to engage and promote a love of stories, within communication rich environments.

All of our classrooms promote a love of reading, with a book corner that celebrates and values books. There are opportunities for our learners to have high quality reading modelled to them, through shared reading of a class book.

or story.

This approach is part of our commitment to providing a Literacy rich environment, including opportunities for shared reading, self-directed 'Love of reading' opportunities and participation in national initiatives, such as World Book Day and National Poetry Day.

Impact - Assessment of outcomes (So what difference did it make – Include evidence)

Last year, 2021-22, 98% of our learners made expected or above towards the communication targets of their EHCP outcomes. IN key stages 1 & 2, 100% of learners made expected progress, with 65% exceeding expected progress toward the SPTs benchmarks (This is 60% of learners making expected progress, with 25% exceeding expected progress).

In Key stage 3 88% of learners made expected progress with 21% exceeding expectations.

In Key stages 4 & 5, 93% of learners made expected progress with 69% exceeding these expectations.

This is currently measured through the B-Squared assessment framework, though the Special Partnership Trust has developed their own assessment framework, which better demonstrates sequential learning, especially to support non-subject specialist to deliver high quality English lessons. This is currently being trialled alongside the B-Squared assessment framework.

Participation in national initiatives, such as world book day are high, with good parental support. Reading continues to be highly valued by both staff and students alike.