



# Reading Policy

<b>Formally adopted by the:</b>	<b>The Clare School</b>
<b>On:</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> April 2023</b>
<b>Headteacher:</b>	<b>Rebecca Wicks</b>
<b>Approval level:</b>	<b>Headteacher</b>
<b>Committee:</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>To be Reviewed:</b>	<b>Spring Term 2025</b>

## **Rationale**

- We recognise the importance of phonic teaching in conjunction with sight word recognition. For those who are able to access phonics we use the systematic synthetic programme Read Write Inc.
- We recognise that developing a love for reading is essential.
- We support Early Language Development by tailoring our approach to individual needs.
- At The Clare School we recognise that reading and communication are key to our pupils' development. It is a lifelong skill. We understand that reading is closely related to other literacy skills such as communication and writing.
- At The Clare School we recognise and celebrate each of our pupils as individuals and recognise that each pupil learns differently and will need approaches to teaching reading tailored to their needs. Reading achievements deserve to be celebrated.
- We ensure that students experience reading in a variety of ways. As a school we recognise that reading encompasses both decoding skills as well as comprehension skills
- We recognise that reading can include the mechanics of reading, the love of reading and the experience of being read to. Additionally, we aim that reading opportunities develop anticipatory responses through repetition.
- At the Clare School we are committed to encouraging a love of reading in a variety of ways in which suit the ever-changing needs of our pupils.

## **Aim**

Our overall aim is to ensure that students are able to develop a love of reading and also use reading in a real life context if required, for example using their communication aid, recognising symbols, recognising signs in the environment. Purposeful and Functional reading is key for our pupils both during their time at The Clare School and into their future development.

## **Entitlement**

At The Clare School, we strongly believe that approaches to teaching reading should be tailored to the needs of the pupil rather than the other way round. All pupils are entitled to quality teaching of reading to ensure they not only develop reading skills but also to develop reading for pleasure as well as information. All of our pupils have unique learning needs and therefore a variety of strategies and interventions are used across the school to ensure accessibility and opportunities to succeed. Some students for whom it is applicable can access quality phonics teaching, using the Read Write Inc. scheme (RWI). This is at the early stages as we started embarking on our journey in RWI from September 2022. Phonics teaching continues into Secondary if required. Phonics interventions and small group/ 1:1 teaching has also been in place from September 2022.

## **Phonics Approach**

We have chosen RWI because it is SEND appropriate due to its multi-sensory approach. We have investigated age and stage appropriate books for those students who are older and embarking on their phonic journey. We have fidelity using this programme. Key staff have been trained in this programme and have access to ongoing training via the RWI portal. Ongoing training and CPD in place. Many classes have started their journey into phonics. We are ensuring that teachers and staff are aware of the correct pronunciation. We are beginning our journey with RWI (from Sept 2022) and this will ensure that consistency in phonics teaching is addressed. Phonics is taught to students who are able to access it. This is not applicable to all students due to their complex needs. However, we are keen that we do not limit the opportunities our students receive, therefore phonics may be taught individually or in small groups. Our phonics sessions are guided by the individual and their needs.

RWI resources are simple and limit distraction. RWI works for us as a school because the resources can be adapted for pupils who:

- have fine motor difficulties that affect their ability to hold a pencil
- are non-verbal, using pictures to select responses and augmentative communication strategies
- have both of the above, using alternative communication systems, such as iPads and eye gaze technology
- have limited hearing, using sign language, if appropriate
- have limited vision, using enlarged texts, if needed.
- With advice from a specialist advisor, we have made the decision to not teach nonsense words to our students as they are developing functional reading and do not access the phonics statutory check.

Pupils learn the routines and behaviours necessary for each activity, and practise these until they use them automatically. This allows them to focus on learning to read and write. We are also able to access The Fresh Start texts for those who need this approach which is tailored more towards the older students. We are starting Phonics interventions in some of the Secondary classes. Again, this will be tailored to individual needs.

Unfortunately for secondary age pupils reading books RWI currently do not offer high interest low threat books that suit our pupils. In the RWI scheme there are books which are appropriate for the phonic level but not the age. However, currently we are going through the Project X reading scheme and matching books to the RWI reading scheme in order to support pupil interest and age-appropriate texts. We are using Project X as a supplementary scheme due to keeping the fidelity of one additional scheme and the needs of learners. Pupils will be supported whilst accessing these books as the two schemes may not marry up in their entirety. We are fully aware that students should access books where they have good knowledge of the letters and sounds within them.



- Pink
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- Grey

The second scheme is Project X. The texts in this scheme will be used for learners in the Secondary department. The texts will not be in their 'typical' scheme of progression as we are in the process of adapting the order to suit the delivery of our RWI phonics programme.

If appropriate, pupils will have a reading book. Many have the opportunity to take these books home and have a reading record book. Opportunities are given for pupils to have time to read their books in school and to read to an adult. This is more common in some of our formal class groups. We also ensure that students have opportunity to access a variety of books and stories. Some students are also able to access Chapter books for their engagement and enjoyment.

### **Strategies and Interventions across the school:**

#### Pre-Reading

Students also access rhymes, playing with sounds, listening to sounds. The DfE 'Playing with Sounds' document (Step 1) may be used for ideas to ensure that students are given opportunities individual to their needs. This will be prior to the students being ready for our adopted Phonics Scheme (RWI)

#### Sensory Stories

Sensory stories including sensory boxes and bags are used in The Clare School. A sensory story is often a short recognisable tale whereby each line or every few lines will be accompanied by sensory stimuli. By using sensory stories, children who may have language difficulties can experience stories in the same way as others by using items such as a drum to build tension. When these sensory stories are combined with the right type of instrument or other stimuli, the sensory effect will almost recount the story without needing the words. This can be a brilliant, exciting and immersive experience for children. Sensory stories are accessible to all, regardless of ability or physical difficulties. These are a great way to encourage pupils to engage in stories and develop a love for reading. At The Clare School there is also a Lunchtime Library Club which often has Sensory stories too.

#### Book Corners

Some of our classes will have a book corner that is available to learners at all times and is used to promote a love of reading. These book corners will have a range of texts that could be of interest to the learners. Some of the books in the book corner will also include favourite books.

#### Additional Communication Sessions

Across all ages, identified learners will have regular sessions with a Communication Support Assistant Specialist which is an intervention where they work intensively on communication

needs. This may involve reading signs, reading emotions, reading PECS, using their Communication Aids or Communication books.

### Look to Read

Look to Read is another engaging way for our students to have the opportunity to explore and experience books for pleasure. It also develops their use of cause and effect through using eye gaze or a physical push/press. The Look to Read stories are to be enjoyed and to develop a love of reading. We will not be using these as a teaching method or part of our phonics offering.

### Topic Approach

Reading and Communication is featured widely in our curriculum. The long-term topic plans across the different pathways will have at least one linked text in order to bring to life that topic through using the text in a variety of ways. This may include sensory elements, work related art and other activities. It also may be seen as a cross curricular approach.

### Reading for Pleasure, Love of Reading and Whole School Events

We wholeheartedly aim to ensure that students are able to develop their love of reading in an appropriate way. We aim to engage students in 'reading' for pleasure. Again, this may look 'different'. Ways of 'reading' for pleasure resources may include:

- Sensory stories
- Signed stories
- Audio books
- E-books accessible on iPads
- Story Bags
- Hi-Low Reading books
- Indestructible books
- Various phonics resources (games)
- Fiction / Non-fiction books
- Switches
- Texts with different sized fonts
- Eye gaze technology
- Symbols

Students participate in reading activities such as World Poetry Day, celebrating World Book Day and Roald Dahl Day. We have visitors and authors from various places such as Bookbugs and Dragontales, The Puppet Theatre and Grandad Wheels.

### Parental Engagement

Due to the nature of our school, students usually use specialist transport to make their journey to and from school so we do not always see Parents/Carers on a daily basis. Therefore, we have thought carefully about how to engage Parents/Carers. We add observations of 'reading' onto

Earwig that Parents/Carers can see. We also receive Parental feedback on these observations. We are also giving Parents and Carers access to the RWI portal with ideas on how to help their child at home. Additionally, students have the opportunity to visit the Library to choose a book to share at home. We are developing a reading area on our website so Parents/Carers can access opportunities and ideas to support their child's reading development. We also share photos of reading events via our Facebook and Instagram pages.

**Assessment**

At The Clare School we assess reading using P Levels. Evidence is on Earwig Assessment Framework (From Sept 2022) and previously on the B Squared Sheets. We celebrate any achievement in reading no matter how small it may seem as this will be enormous amounts of progress for our students. Assessment looks different in our school; We have a small steps tracker to monitor individual progress.

Progress for our students is ipsative (personal progress) and will undoubtedly look different to those in a Mainstream school, however the progress for our students is meaningful to them. Progress may happen over time or may happen in a day. Progress is not always consistent and fixed due to the impact of the complex needs.

**Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the DfE or Ofsted is updated, or as a minimum every two years by the Literacy Leader. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Headteacher.

**Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Curriculum Policy
- Phonics Policy
- Data and Assessment Policy

**Table of changes**

Date of change	Summary of update
28/4/23	New policy written