

St Peter's Middle School Reading Statement

Intent

The ability to read is an essential life skill. Good quality, diligent teaching of this subject must be seen as a priority throughout the school. The ability to read is necessary to ensure success and to make connections in all other curriculum areas, and is a vital tool in our quest to know about and investigate the world around us. The school builds upon previous school experience of books and reading and on the students' prior knowledge of the function of the written word. It is vital that parents and teachers work together to support, inspire and encourage students in their reading development.

We want students to be confident readers. They should be able to critically analyse writers' language and then apply linguistic techniques they have explored to their own writing. While reading varied and challenging text types from across centuries and cultures, they should be able to delve into the historical and cultural contexts of these texts to facilitate their understanding of characters and settings. Students learn about the origins of the English language and use this knowledge to self-manage when approaching new vocabulary: they have the tools to decipher definitions independently.

We choose novels, short stories, extracts and poetry, rich in language to challenge, engage and inspire students, and which provides cultural capital to extend their knowledge and imagination, and thus be creative thinkers.

Our English reading curriculum aims:

To enable the students to read for meaning and understanding.

To equip students with higher level reading skills (inference, deduction, prediction etc).

To introduce students to a wide variety of good authors.

To encourage all students to make a personal response to a text.

To provide a balanced school reading programme which includes a variety of reading experiences.

To foster a positive attitude to reading, encouraging students to read for pleasure and enjoyment.

Implementation

We have an extensive range of texts by many different authors and publishers, available for all levels of reading ability. This caters for a wide level of interests and ensures that the students have choice and variety in their reading materials. When studying texts, students are supported in their learning of these texts through scaffolded resources and individual or group guided learning with their teachers or teaching assistants.

All students take termly Accelerated Reader Star Tests which track their reading progress. As a result of the Star Test, students are given their reading age and a ZPD (zone of proximal development) range which they use to choose books from the library. This test looks at comprehension and vocabulary. The questions get harder as the students get more questions correct and then brings the test to a close when the child starts to make errors.

Regular library visits are incorporated into students' English and literacy timetabled hours but they are also encouraged to go to the library in their break and lunch times to read and borrow books. Students are encouraged to read a range of genres and they have a great choice to select from in the library. Class teachers from across the curriculum also talk about fiction and non-fiction books related to their subjects to foster an interest in students to read outside of their normal genres.

Impact

The reading curriculum is monitored by the English Subject Leader through learning walks, book looks, monitoring of Accelerated Reader reports, student conferencing and through the analysis of progress and attainment data.

Students who are working below age-related expectations are supported in their lessons through careful scaffolding and targeted support to ensure that they make sustained progress. They are also given a diagnostic test to identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge. The diagnostic process is currently being implemented and the programme will begin before December 2022. We are using Abigail Steel's Key Stage 3 Phonics programme (author of Rocket Phonics which is validated by the DfE).

Teaching assistants run carefully structured interventions for students with SEND to support them with their reading.

Improving attainment in reading is a priority for all students who are not at age related expectations.