

The importance of **Reading and Literacy** at King Ecgbert School



We aim for all our students to be confident readers. This letter sets out our aims to achieve this and how parents can support their children as readers.

Why we want all our students to be confident readers

Reading for pleasure can result in increased empathy, improved relationships with others, reductions in the symptoms of depression and improved wellbeing.



Also, confident reading is an essential tool for learning in every subject. Everyone knows that reading is an important part of English, but it is just as important for other subjects. Students need to read confidently in all their lessons. It is just as important in maths and sciences as it is in arts subjects.

How does the school promote reading?

When students are in school, they get regular reading practice. Their teachers model strategies for successful reading summarised as 'PRISE' which stands for Predict, Read, Interrogate, Summarise and Enquire. This is a strategy to help students tackle any text. Teachers also build student vocabulary every lesson to help students tackle more challenging text. (Text = any piece of writing.)



Students in Y7 and 8 have 'Accelerated Reader' in the library which gives students individual guidance to choose a book to improve their reading skills and embed the reading habit. During some of these lessons, trained 6th formers will join the class to hear individual students read so they can practice reading aloud to gain confidence in reading fluency. For about half of each term, students experience 'Guided Reading' in this lesson, where the whole class reads a book together with their teacher.

Students from Y7 to Y9 will be set independent reading each week at home using Sparx Reader. Through this programme, students have access to a range of e-books which are broken down with quick questions to check students' understanding.

Also, form tutors Y7 to Y10 read a novel to their forms in two form time sessions a week in an initiative designed to promote reading for pleasure called 'DEAL - Drop Everything and Listen.' As well as being a calming start to the day, this exposes students to new vocabulary, to books in different genres and by different authors, and gives the class the satisfaction of starting and completing a whole book together.

How does the school promote literacy?

As well as promoting reading, we promote all the skills which contribute to someone's literacy, including speaking and writing skills. This is a regular feature of our teacher

training, and we make sure we use up to date research to maximise lesson time to improve our students' literacy. In addition to our reading strategy, we encourage better literacy through:

- Encouraging good quality discussions and structured debates
- Asking students to talk in full sentences when answering questions
- Teaching academic vocabulary
- Modelling effective writing in different subjects
- Supporting students to write effectively in different subjects, by giving examples and writing frames
- Helping students to improve their spelling and grammar accuracy

What can parents do?

Encouraging reading outside of school and in the holidays makes a really big difference. For reading suggestions, please see the Reading part of our school website which has links to several reading lists appropriate for different age groups from diverse authors. Books or articles don't have to be in English: reading in a home language, or as a way of practising a new language, are just as rewarding.

We know it isn't always easy to motivate students to read, or parents may feel that at secondary level they don't know how to get involved. Here are some ideas:

Reading tips for parents with secondary age students

- ✓ Show your teenager that it is as much fun to read a book as it is to watch TV or play on the computer
- ✓ Create a quiet, well-lit space in your home to encourage reading.
- ✓ Make sure that your home contains books that will interest your teenager.
- ✓ Encourage your teenager to read magazines, newspapers or the sports guide. Leave them around your home. It doesn't really matter what your child reads as long as they read!
- ✓ Subscribe to a magazine that your teenager has an interest in.
- ✓ Share articles you've read from the newspaper or a magazine, especially if it's something your teenager is interested in. Sunday supplements are particularly good.
- ✓ Play audio books in the car. This will encourage reading for enjoyment.
- ✓ Recommend adult-themed books that would be appropriate.
- ✓ Link books and reading to films at the cinema or video games they know.
- ✓ Introduce books which are part of a series and biographies.
- ✓ Ask teenagers to recommend books for younger readers in the family.
- ✓ Make use of e-books and e-book readers such as Kindles.

We look forward to helping your child on the next stage of their reading journey at King Ecgbert School.