



Reading for pleasure policy 2022-23

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Reading for Pleasure Policy

The new Ofsted framework has a clear emphasis on the encouragement and development of reading, not only as a key skill but also for pleasure and intellectual growth.

Researchers studying the effects reading for pleasure has on cognitive development discovered that “children who read for pleasure made more progress in mathematics, vocabulary and spelling between the ages of 10 and 16 than those who rarely read.”

(Sullivan and Brown, 2013)

Studies (conducted by Egmont, 2019) also suggest “reading for pleasure has a positive impact on children’s wellbeing. The benefits include greater resilience, happiness, empathy, improved communication skills and relaxation.”

At the Holgate Academy we aim to:

Develop a positive reading culture so our students are encouraged to appreciate and enjoy books regardless of attainment or background. Reading is a high value activity that can provide an escape from day-to-day events, letting imagination and creation take over.

We agree to:

- Ensure that all Year 7 and Year 8 students have a dedicated library lesson as part of their regular timetable.
- Maintain a wide range of clearly labelled accessible material for all to enjoy in the Academy library.
- Actively involve students in the development of the library stock so it reflects their interests.
- Regularly up-date the library stock with engaging fiction texts, dyslexia friendly books, graphic novels, and information texts to meet the needs and capabilities of our students.
- Promote reading for enjoyment through displays, competitions, and recommendations to encourage wider reading, both in and out of school.
- Raise self-esteem and develop confidence in reading by ensuring students are encouraged to read aloud in lessons.
- Establish routines and encourage reading at home by supplying reading logs for all students in Yr. 7 and 8, so all personal reading can be recorded.
- Commit to review the Reading for Pleasure Policy to ensure it matches any new initiatives or schemes.

The Profile of Reading for Pleasure at Holgate

Timetabled Library Lessons

Every student in Year 7 and 8 has a timetabled Library lesson where they can read at their own pace in a relaxed setting. They can bring in their own book or choose one from the library shelves.

In addition, and to support the whole school focus on reading, library lessons now include a session in which the class teacher reads aloud to the students. Reading aloud enables the students to hear and absorb the various patterns of language, as well as providing opportunities to facilitate responses as a whole class. Listening and engaging with language from a wide repertoire of books will expand and clarify unknown vocabulary, enabling and developing the confidence required to share responses and preferences.

Students are encouraged to discuss their favourite books and authors. They may also ask for recommendations from knowledgeable staff who can use their experiences of children's literature, along with valuable information generated from the Star Reader assessment to direct students to suitable books.

The reading sessions are the perfect way to discover how enjoyable books and reading can be. The ESARD research states, 'Reading for pleasure is an activity that has real social and emotional consequences.' (ESARD, 2013)

Star Reader

Star Reader is an online assessment used to determine reading growth and achievement levels. This programme uses computer-adaptive technology to record answers from a range of multiple-choice questions, supplying a comprehensive range of analytical data that can be used across the curriculum.

Data from Star Reading assessments is used to ensure the library stock reflects a range of reading abilities. The reading age (an estimate of reading ability) and the ZPD level (a numerical readability range to assess text complexity) is an invaluable source of information used to help with stock purchases. To support reading for pleasure, maintain interest and enjoyment, recommendations and requests from students and staff are also considered.

Additionally, this information is provided to assist students, so they can decode and comprehend the books they have chosen to read. The ZPD range suggests a readability level a student should be selecting to challenge and promote optimal growth and increase motivation.

Although fiction books in the school library are organised in alphabetical order by author surname, colour coded stickers relating to ZPD levels are visible on the spines so books appropriate to all abilities and interests can be chosen independently.

Students are aware of their ZPD levels and are encouraged to check their own progress throughout the academic year. These levels are updated after each Star assessment has taken place. Not only does this help with the management and support of reading for pleasure it enables teachers to set targets for development and assess student progress.

Reading Homework Logs

To support the whole school reading focus and to improve intellectual growth, it is an expectation that students read (where possible) for at least 20 minutes every day. The school provides homework logs so students can record all periods of reading completed outside of school. These form part of the library lessons to support home/school links and are invaluable when initiating discussions about books and reading. Staff add updated ZPD levels to reading homework logs after each reading assessment has taken place. This enables students to choose appropriate books and monitor their own progress.

Media Subscriptions

As an additional resource to extend and support the whole school reading focus, the library has subscribed to two thought-provoking media publications.

The Week Junior – This weekly magazine explains the news clearly and safely, encouraging students to develop their own opinions. It explores an array of topics ranging from science and nature, sport, technology and more - written in a way that makes learning interesting and enjoyable.

Science and Nature – This monthly magazine brings STEM subjects to life. As well as incredible pictures, astonishing facts, and inspiring stories, it helps young people to expand their knowledge on subjects taught in school in an interesting and engaging way.

Reading Cloud

Reading Cloud is a fully automated system used by the Academy to manage all aspects of the library. Students all have a (user-friendly) library account which can be accessed via the school website. Once logged in, they can read about their favourite authors and genres, view current reading trends, as well as reading and producing reviews about their favourite books. During the autumn term, students are shown how its key features can help them with their reading choices, as well as sharing ideas from others. They are also encouraged to regularly check their accounts so they know when their books should be returned to the library.

World Book Day

This international event is one of the most important dates in the Academy's diary. At Holgate this is celebrated throughout the whole school, accessible to every student and raises awareness of books and reading. Competitions, WBD starter activities, sponsored reads and tutor time book quizzes help to make this a great celebration that can appeal to all.

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