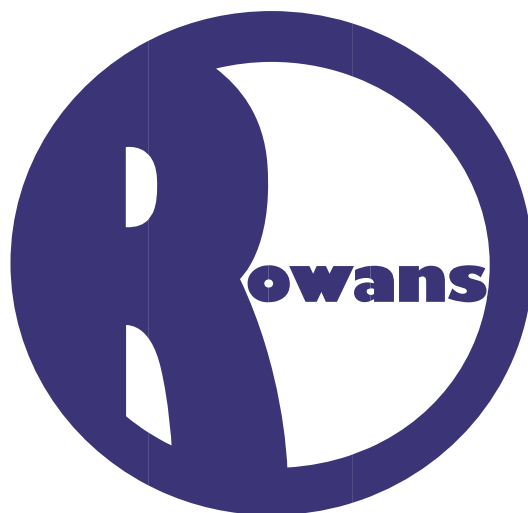




Literacy Policy

Policy Written/Reviewed by	Fiona May
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Rationale

“Acquiring literacy is an empowering process, enabling millions to enjoy access to knowledge and information which broadens horizons, increases opportunities and creates alternatives for building a better life.”

Kofi Annan (seventh General of The United Nations)

At The Rowans, we accept the fundamental principle that Literacy is the key to improving learning and raising standards; it enables pupils to gain access to the subjects studied in school, to read for information for pleasure and to communicate effectively. Poor levels of literacy impact negatively on what pupils can do and how they see themselves. Crucially, we believe that literate pupils will ultimately emerge as confident and articulate communicators, fully prepared to enter the adult world, whether to continue their academic studies or to enter the world of work.

We believe that we should equip our pupils with the necessary transferable skills to be fully literate in the 21st century and, as such, literacy is prominent in the school’s improvement plan, its core values and ethos.

All teachers are teachers of literacy. As such, the staff of The Rowans share responsibility for the teaching of literacy across the curriculum. Language is the prime medium through which pupils learn and express themselves across the curriculum and all teachers have a stake in effective literacy because:

- reading helps us to learn from sources beyond our immediate experience;
- writing helps us to sustain and order thought;
- language helps us to reflect, revise and evaluate the things we do, and on the things others have said, written or done;
- responding to higher order questions encourages the development of thinking skills and enquiry;
- improving literacy and learning can have a positive impact on pupils’ self-esteem, on motivation and behaviour. It allows them to learn independently. It is empowering and facilitates enjoyable learning.

Policy Aims

1. To adopt a whole-school approach to literacy across the curriculum to promote progress
2. To enable all pupils to reach their potential in the key literacy skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening.
3. Additional provision will be made for pupils with EAL by the interventions team as necessary.
4. To support the development of literacy skills throughout the curriculum and those who are under performing by targeted intervention.
5. To develop staff knowledge and confidence in supporting literacy across the curriculum through evidence-informed approaches, including the EEF recommendations for improving literacy in secondary schools. This will be supported through ongoing CPD, professional discussion, the sharing of effective classroom practice and the

development of an inclusive, reading-rich learning environment that meets the diverse needs of all pupils, including those with SEND and literacy difficulties.

6. Vocabulary is taught explicitly in lessons, pupils are encouraged to read aloud in lessons and brief comprehension questions are given to ensure pupils' understanding.
7. To promote oracy by expecting answers in full sentences, scaffolding pupils' answers and encouraging pupils to think about their use of language.
8. To encourage staff to take responsibility for the development of literacy in their subject areas through inclusion on appropriate medium-term plans and daily lesson planning.
9. To embed the Rowans Reading Levels across teaching and intervention practice, providing staff with a consistent framework for understanding pupils' individual reading needs, selecting appropriately challenging reading materials and determining suitable support. The Rowans Reading Levels will inform classroom adaptations, Guided Intervention, targeted 1:1 intervention and ad hoc literacy support, while recognising that assessment data must be considered alongside pupils' wider needs, engagement and staff professional judgement.
10. To support the development of literacy through the deployment of a range of resources in the school e.g. Library.
11. To identify specific roles and responsibilities within the school with regard to the development of literacy work.
12. To establish procedures for monitoring literacy across the curriculum which celebrate success and identify areas for improvement.
13. To develop and sustain a positive culture of reading across the school by making reading visible, valued and celebrated throughout the school environment. This will include a peer reading system, accessible reading materials and displays, subject-specific word walls, opportunities to earn reading points through daily sheets, and regular recognition of pupils' reading engagement and progress through Reader of the Week rewards, Reading Recognition certificates and other whole-school incentives.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Leadership Team:

- Lead on literacy across the curriculum, ensuring it has a high profile
- provide opportunities for literacy training
- monitor subjects' implementation of the Literacy Policy
- ensure that 'subject specific literacy' is clearly identified in medium term plans and that there is obvious progression through the key stages
- monitor the work of subjects with regard to the inclusion of specific literacy strategies in lesson planning
- encourage models of good practice e.g. modelling and close collaboration between colleagues in order to promote literacy developments
- use available assessment data to identify pupils that need additional support

The role of the English department includes:

In addition to the whole-school aspects of this policy, the English department at The Rowans has a leading role in providing pupils with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write, speak and listen effectively. The department is well placed to provide expertise, guidance and leadership in literacy across the school, supporting pupils to develop their reading, writing, oracy and communication skills, alongside handwriting, spelling,

punctuation and grammar. Through high-quality, inclusive teaching, the English department plays a key role in establishing strong literacy foundations, supporting individual pupil needs and contributing to a consistent whole-school approach to literacy. The English department will:

- Identify literacy priorities, targets and objectives for the department and wider school, and identify the particular contributions English can make to whole-school literacy development.
- Establish appropriate literacy baselines for pupils, using available assessment information and classroom evidence to identify individual strengths, gaps and areas for development.
- Use assessment and wider pupil data to identify literacy targets, ensuring that teaching and intervention are responsive to pupils' starting points and identified needs.
- Set clear and achievable literacy targets, alongside aspirational targets, so that pupils are supported to make meaningful progress while being encouraged to develop their confidence, independence and potential as readers and communicators.
- Ensure pupils develop a secure foundational understanding of literacy
- Provide appropriate adaptations, scaffolding and targeted support to ensure that pupils with SEND, lower prior attainment or identified literacy needs can access the curriculum while maintaining appropriate challenge.
- Support the development and consistent use of the school's Reading Tiers, working alongside staff to identify appropriate strategies and interventions to meet pupils' individual reading needs.
- Work collaboratively with the wider school to raise the profile of reading, promote reading for pleasure and contribute to a positive and inclusive culture where pupils see themselves as successful and developing readers.

The role of the interventions team includes:

- Offering literacy specific interventions to boost reading age, to support with SPAG, and handwriting.
- Supporting the acquisition of phonics and phonetical learning, where needed.
- Encouraging pupils to support and learn from one another through the school's peer mentoring and peer reading scheme, which runs alongside both primary and secondary provision and promotes reading confidence, communication and positive relationships.
- Build pupils' confidence and positive attitudes towards literacy through a supportive, relational and trauma-informed approach, creating a safe environment where pupils can experience success, develop resilience and feel increasingly confident in their reading and literacy skills.

Teachers across the curriculum will:

- Adopt a consistent approach to teaching literacy skills in lessons.
- Be familiar with and implement a range of strategies aimed at equipping students with the necessary literacy skills to succeed.
- Adopt a standardised approach to the teaching and learning of Literacy skills, including phonics.
- Indicate in medium term plans where skills will be explicitly taught.

- Use the Rowans Reading Levels to identify and respond to pupils' individual reading needs, applying appropriate strategies, adaptations and support to develop reading confidence, independence and progress.

Parents/carers will: encourage their children to use the range of strategies they have learnt to improve their levels of literacy.

Pupils will: take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs and making improvements, with support where needed.

Rowans Reading Levels

The Rowans Reading Levels provide a consistent whole-school framework for identifying pupils' reading needs, selecting appropriate reading materials and determining the most suitable approach to reading support and intervention.

All pupils complete reading baseline assessments on entry to The Rowans. Assessment information, including Hodder standardised scores, is considered alongside the pupil's wider literacy profile, reading behaviours, engagement, confidence, identified SEND needs and the professional judgement of staff. Hodder standardised scores provide a guide to an appropriate Reading Level; however, they should not be used in isolation when determining a pupil's reading needs or the support they require.

The Rowans Reading Levels consist of a Pre-Stage and Stages 1–6, providing a progressive framework from bespoke foundational reading and phonics support through to fluent, independent reading for pleasure, meaning and functional understanding.

The framework supports staff to identify appropriate next steps in areas including:

- phonics and decoding;
- word reading and fluency;
- vocabulary development;
- comprehension and retrieval;
- prediction and inference;
- summarising and analysing texts;
- understanding language, structure and presentation;
- evaluating themes, viewpoints and authorial choices; and
- reading for pleasure, meaning and functional understanding.

The Reading Levels will be used across the school to support consistency in Guided Intervention (GI), targeted 1:1 reading intervention, classroom reading and ad hoc literacy support. Staff will use the framework when selecting texts and resources so that reading materials provide appropriate accessibility and challenge while reflecting pupils' age, interests, needs and individual starting points.

The framework provides a clear rationale for decisions regarding reading provision and intervention. It recognises that pupils with similar assessment scores may require different approaches according to their individual literacy profiles. For example, some pupils may

require systematic phonics teaching, while for others an age-appropriate functional literacy approach may better meet their identified needs.

Pupils working at the Pre-Stage will receive bespoke phonics and/or reading support appropriate to their age, interests, knowledge and identified needs. This may include Sounds-Write, the Dockside Reading Scheme and functional reading skills.

Progress through the Reading Levels will be informed by ongoing assessment, intervention outcomes, classroom evidence and professional judgement. The purpose of the framework is not simply to assign pupils a level, but to ensure that assessment information is translated into appropriate teaching, reading materials and intervention.

Responsibilities for implementing the Rowans Reading Levels

The English Department will:

Use baseline assessment information and the Rowans Reading Levels to identify pupils' reading strengths, areas for development and appropriate next steps; support staff in the consistent application of the framework; and work collaboratively with the Interventions Team to ensure classroom teaching and targeted intervention are informed by pupils' individual reading profiles.

The Interventions Team will:

Use the Rowans Reading Levels alongside baseline assessments and wider pupil information to plan and deliver targeted reading intervention. Intervention may include phonics, functional literacy, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, SPaG and other individualised literacy support according to identified need.

The team will monitor pupils' progress and use assessment information, intervention evidence and professional judgement to review the appropriateness of each pupil's Reading Level and intervention approach.

Teachers and support staff will:

Be familiar with pupils' Rowans Reading Levels and use the framework to inform the selection of reading materials, appropriate classroom adaptations and support. Staff will maintain high expectations while ensuring texts are accessible and appropriately challenging.

The Reading Levels should support, rather than restrict, pupils' access to reading. Pupils should continue to have opportunities to engage with age-appropriate, ambitious and interesting texts, with appropriate scaffolding and support where required.

Strategies for Reading, Writing and Oracy

Reading:

At The Rowans, we believe that reading is at the heart of every lesson and is fundamental to pupils' academic achievement, independence, communication, wellbeing and future opportunities. We recognise that many of our pupils may have experienced barriers to reading and learning, and therefore take a high-quality, inclusive and consistent approach to developing reading skills across the curriculum.

Our aim is not only to improve reading ability, but also to develop confidence, fluency, comprehension and a genuine love of reading. We want pupils to see themselves as readers and to experience reading as something purposeful, enjoyable and relevant to their lives. Reading is the responsibility of all staff and all curriculum areas. Teachers and support staff model positive reading behaviours and provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to read, listen to, discuss and respond to a wide range of texts. Reading is explicitly supported through high-quality teaching, appropriate scaffolding, vocabulary development, questioning, oracy and opportunities to develop comprehension and critical thinking. Across the whole curriculum teachers will provide activities for pupils to:

- read and follow written instructions;
- read to explore and to develop understanding;
- learn how to skim, select and take notes from the text;
- learn how to access their textbook, including format and index;
- learn how to select from written material, reformulate, question and challenge what they read in textbooks, encyclopedias and newspapers or from ICT sources

Teachers will provide reading material of high quality, which is up to date, relevant and balanced in its presentation of ethnicity, culture and gender and appropriate for age and ability of the pupils.

Our whole-school reading approach includes:

- Reading opportunities embedded across the curriculum, with reading at the heart of every lesson.
- A consistent Rowans Reading Levels approach, supporting staff to understand and meet pupils' individual reading needs.
- Targeted reading support and interventions, including phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, SPaG and fluency.
- Reading Champions who support the development of a strong reading culture across the school.
- A range of engaging and accessible reading materials matched to pupils' interests, needs and reading levels.
- Opportunities for pupils to read for pleasure, including dedicated reading opportunities, book recommendations and access to books within school and at home.
- Whole-school reading incentives and recognition, including Reading Recognition certificates and VIP Reader of the Term, celebrating effort, progress, engagement and positive reading habits.
- Opportunities for pupils to discuss books, develop their vocabulary and share their reading experiences with others.
- Reading opportunities which promote independence, confidence, communication and wider personal development.

We recognise that pupils may demonstrate different reading strengths and areas for development. Staff therefore use appropriate adaptations and scaffolds to ensure that reading is accessible without unnecessarily reducing challenge. These may include

modelling, pre-teaching vocabulary, chunking text, paired or supported reading, audio support, visual prompts, questioning and explicit teaching of reading strategies.

Reading development is monitored through the school's wider quality of education processes, including learning walks, observations, pupil voice, work scrutiny, planning reviews and professional development. Staff are supported to develop their own practice through ongoing CPD, collaboration and the school's professional development pathways.

Ultimately, our reading provision aims to ensure that every pupil makes progress from their starting point, develops greater confidence and independence, and has the opportunity to discover the enjoyment and wider benefits that reading can bring.

Writing:

It is important that we are consistent across subjects, to recognise and reinforce pupils' language skills, through:

- making connections between pupils' reading and writing, so that pupils have clear models for their writing;
- using the modelling process to make explicit to pupils how to write;
- being clear about audience and purpose;
- providing opportunities for a range of writing including sustained writing.

Teachers will set writing tasks that have clear and immediate purposes are objective driven and which are appropriate for the age and ability of the pupils concerned.

Teachers will teach pupils how to structure their writing using a variety of sentence structures, paragraphs and a wide range of punctuation, including higher order punctuation e.g. semi-colons, colons and brackets.

Where pupils are asked to write in a particular genre, e.g. a newspaper report, teachers will ensure that pupils are familiar with the appropriate style and conventions.

Teachers will correct errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling in line with the school's marking policy.

We will aim to:

- provide good models for a variety of writing;
- provide frameworks where appropriate;
- provide dictionaries and teach pupils how to use them;
- display Key Words in the classroom;
- teach subject specific vocabulary and spelling;
- encourage high standards of presentation;
- ensure progression through support and intervention.

Oracy:

We will teach pupils to use language precisely and coherently. Pupils should be able to listen to others and to respond and build on their ideas and views constructively.

We will develop strategies to teach pupils how to participate orally in groups and in the whole class, including: using talk to develop and clarify ideas; identifying the main points to arise from a discussion; listening for a specific purpose; discussion and evaluation.

Across the whole curriculum teachers will provide activities (both formally and informally) for pupils to:

- listen and carry out instructions;
- explore and develop ideas with others, through their talk;
- ask questions as well as answer them;
- work collaboratively with others;
- develop problem solving skills.

Phonics

Where the teaching of phonics is needed, this will be delivered by the interventions team and reinforced by all staff. The teaching of phonics objectives are:

- To learn to read and write all 44 graphemes in the English language.
- To teach children high frequency words that do not conform to regular phonic patterns.
- To teach children specific strategies to help them remember tricky words.
- To ensure that the teaching of phonics is lively, multi-sensory, interactive and investigative.
- To encourage children to apply their phonic skills in all curriculum areas.
- To ensure that children have opportunities to read texts and words that are within their phonic capabilities as early as possible, even though all words may not be entirely decodable by the children unaided.
- To help the children to apply the skill of blending phonemes in order to read words.
- To help the children to segment words into their constituent phonemes in order to spell words.
- To learn that blending and segmenting words are reversible processes.

Implementation: The Rowans AP Academy uses the 'Sounds-Write' programme which provides a consistent and systematic approach to the teaching of phonics. Sounds-Write is a multisensory, fun and engaging program that is taught daily for identified pupils. All staff receive basic phonics training as part of a whole school CPD offer to ensure high quality teaching is flexible and meet changes in cohort needs.

Monitoring and Evaluation

We will make use of available data to assess the standards of pupils' literacy. Possible approaches are:

- work scrutiny – both pupils' work and medium-term plans across the curriculum
- observation – learning walks and literacy teaching
- meetings, mentoring and coaching
- pupil interviews and pupil voice questionnaires
- encouraging subjects to share good practice

Intervention

There is a comprehensive package of baseline assessments for all pupils on entry to The Rowans. Reading baseline information will be considered alongside the Rowans Reading Levels to identify the most appropriate approach to support and intervention. This ensures that decisions are based on the pupil's overall reading profile rather than reading age or standardised score alone and provides a recorded rationale for the intervention and reading materials selected. Progress is then tracked across the curriculum and regularly reviewed. Every child in Key Stag 3 is offered reading intervention and additionally, targeted intervention will be offered to specific Key Stage 4 pupils. Intervention is used to help pupils to close the attainment gaps as quickly and effectively as possible in order to maximise access to the curriculum and optimise learning opportunities. Teachers across the curriculum will be kept informed about which pupils are accessing intervention through regular pupil progress meetings.

Group Intervention

Alongside the whole-school approach to reading, The Rowans provides targeted, flexible reading interventions for Key Stage 3 form groups. The overall aim is to help pupils develop the skills, confidence and independence needed to access the wider curriculum and experience greater enjoyment and success as readers.

Group Interventions are designed to complement high-quality classroom teaching and are structured around key areas which support pupils to become more confident and independent readers:

- **Vocabulary Development** – developing understanding and use of new and subject-specific vocabulary.
- **Phonics and Decoding** – strengthening pupils' ability to recognise, blend and decode unfamiliar words where appropriate.
- **Comprehension** – developing the ability to retrieve information, make inferences, explain ideas and demonstrate understanding.
- **Spelling Punctuation and Grammar** – strengthening spelling, punctuation and grammar skills to support both reading and writing.
- **Oracy and Communication** – providing opportunities for pupils to discuss, explain and articulate their ideas using increasingly appropriate vocabulary.
- **Critical Thinking** – developing pupils' ability to question, make connections, evaluate information and think beyond the literal meaning of a text.

Group Interventions are delivered flexibly and may include small-group or individual support, games, practical activities, guided reading, adapted texts and structured resources. Activities are selected according to pupils' identified needs and are designed to be engaging, purposeful and accessible, while maintaining appropriate challenge.

The intervention programme also supports staff development by sharing practical strategies and resources that can be transferred into classroom practice. This ensures that the impact of targeted intervention is reinforced through pupils' everyday learning and contributes to a consistent whole-school approach.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Pupil

This policy takes into consideration the following Articles:

Article 3 - The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

Article 28 – All pupils and young people have a right to primary education, which should be free. Discipline in schools should respect pupils' human dignity. Young people should be encouraged to reach the highest level of education they are capable of;

Article 29 – Education should develop each pupil's personality to the full. It should encourage pupils to respect their parents, and their own and other cultures.



Rowans Reading Programme



Pre – stage level

Bespoke phonics/reading work based on the pupils age, interests and knowledge, using Soundwrite, Dockside Reading scheme and functional reading skills.



Stage 1

(Hodder standardised score of below 70)



Word Reading

- Apply phonic knowledge to read words.
- Blend sounds in unfamiliar words.
- Read simple compound words.



Comprehension

- Talk about new words and what they mean.
- Explain personal views about a story.
- Check that reading makes sense.
- Make simple predictions.
- Retell familiar stories.
- Join in with predictable phrases.

Stage 2

(Hodder standardised score of 71 – 80)



Working Towards the Expected Standard

- Read aloud many words quickly and accurately without overt sounding and blending.
- Sound out many unfamiliar words accurately.
- Answer questions and make simple inferences.



Working at the Expected Standard

- Read accurately most words of two or more syllables.
- Read fluently (90+ wpm).
- Sound out unfamiliar words accurately.
- Check text makes sense.
- Make simple inferences.



Working at Greater Depth

- Make inferences independently.
- Predict what might happen.
- Make links between different texts.

Stage 3

(Hodder standardised score of 81 – 89)



Working Towards the Expected Standard

- Decode quickly using phonic knowledge.
- Read aloud with some intonation.
- Identify text features.
- Retrieve non-fiction information.



Working at the Expected Standard

- Read fluently.
- Make predictions using implied detail.
- Infer with evidence.
- Use retrieval conventions confidently.



Working at Greater Depth

- Read fluently and decode unfamiliar words quickly.
- Analyse vocabulary choices.
- Summarise across paragraphs.
- Justify predictions and inferences.

Stage 4

(Hodder standardised score of 90 – 95)



Working Towards the Expected Standard

- Read most words fluently; decode unfamiliar ones using context.
- Summarise across paragraphs.
- Infer feelings, thoughts, motives.
- Justify predictions.
- Retrieve and evaluate authorial language.



Working at the Expected Standard

- Analyse language, structure and presentation.
- Infer with full justification.
- Identify fact vs opinion.
- Retrieve and present information.



Working at Greater Depth

- Read challenging texts above age level.
- Perform texts with expressive techniques.
- Recognise deeper themes.
- Analyse figurative language.
- Summarise key ideas.
- Challenge views respectfully in discussion.

Stage 5

(Hodder standardised score of 96 – 105)



Working Towards the Expected Standard

- Decode unfamiliar words using context.
- Summarise across paragraphs.
- Infer characters' motives and feelings.
- Justify predictions.
- Evaluate language.



Working at the Expected Standard

- Compare themes across books.
- Analyse language, structure and presentation.
- Infer with full justification.
- Distinguish fact from opinion.
- Retrieve, record and present information.



Working at Greater Depth

- Read high-level challenging texts fluently.
- Perform confidently.
- Analyse figurative language deeply.
- Evaluate themes and viewpoints.
- Infer character development using indirect clues.
- Summarise and justify opinions effectively.

Stage 6

(Hodder standardised score of 105 and above)



Reading for pleasure, meaning and functional understanding.

