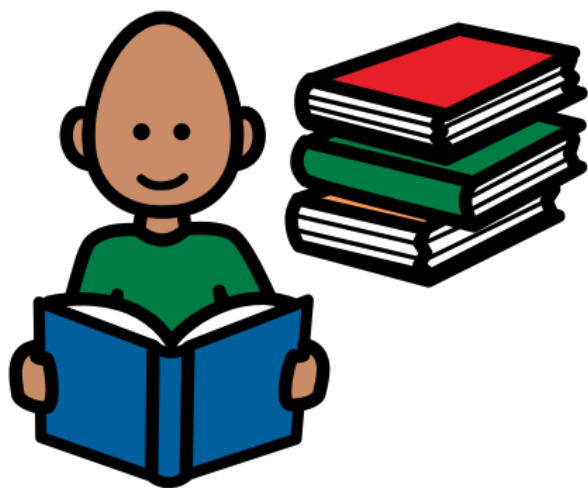


Reading at Bardwell School



Reading



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Intent:

Our mission at Bardwell is **“To empower our students to go further in learning and life, by recognising their strengths and providing a respectful environment, that builds confidence, raises aspirations and equips them to succeed.”**

At Bardwell we are driven by our values which are at the core of every decision we make. We emphasise the importance of joy and pleasure in leading a fulfilled life and promote a love of reading as a key avenue to achieve this. Reading at Bardwell aims to offer a broad and balanced curriculum.

Our curriculum is inclusive and personalised, acknowledging the diverse needs and abilities of our students. By focusing on reading as both an academic skill and a means of connection to the wider community, we strive to ensure our students have the opportunities to access, understand, and enjoy a range of texts that will enrich their lives and empower them to take part in society.

1. Fostering a Love of Reading

We aim to inspire a lifelong passion for reading through engaging and enjoyable experiences that allow students to explore a range of genres, authors, and formats. Our curriculum is designed to spark curiosity, encouraging students to see reading as both a pleasure and a means of self-expression. By celebrating stories and the power of imagination, we aim to instill a sense of pride in each student’s reading journey.

2. Promoting Fulfillment and Independence

Reading is a key tool in fostering personal growth and independence. We focus on developing each student’s ability to use reading to navigate and understand the world around them, building self-confidence and autonomy. Whether through accessing information, engaging in conversations, or making informed decisions, reading provides our students with the skills they need to thrive in daily life. Through reading, students gain the tools to pursue their interests, understand their needs, and make choices that enhance their quality of life.

3. Life Skills Development

We believe that reading is a vital life skill that underpins many aspects of daily living, from following instructions and understanding directions to interacting with others and engaging with technology. Our curriculum aims to equip students with the reading skills necessary to participate fully in society—whether it be reading for leisure, reading for work, or reading for social and community engagement. We prioritise functional literacy, teaching students to use reading to solve problems, make decisions, and communicate effectively with others.

4. Access to the Community

Reading opens the door to a wider world. Our curriculum ensures that students have access to texts that reflect and connect them to their communities, local culture, and global issues. Through stories, informational texts, and diverse perspectives, we enable students to see themselves as active members of the community. We use reading as a means to foster empathy, understanding, and a sense of belonging, helping students to develop connections with others and participate in meaningful social interactions.

5. Preparation for Employment

A key aspect of our Reading Curriculum is preparing students for future employment by equipping them with essential literacy skills. Being able to read and comprehend workplace documents, instructions, emails, and job applications is fundamental to securing and maintaining employment. Our curriculum is designed to ensure that students develop practical reading skills that support them in the workplace, whether through developing reading fluency, comprehension, or the ability to follow instructions with confidence.

6. Supporting Emotional Wellbeing

Reading plays a crucial role in emotional well-being by offering students the opportunity to explore emotions, relationships, and personal growth through literature. By engaging with texts that reflect a wide range of experiences, students are supported in developing emotional intelligence and resilience. Reading provides an outlet for self-reflection and a means of understanding the world, helping students to process their feelings, manage anxiety, and build coping strategies. Additionally, reading can foster positive self-esteem by encouraging students to see their own stories reflected in literature.

Conclusion

At Bardwell, we view reading as much more than an academic skill—it is a gateway to opportunity, self-expression, emotional well-being, and community engagement. Our Reading Curriculum is built on the belief that every student deserves the chance to become a confident, enthusiastic reader, empowered to take control of their learning and life journey. Through tailored instruction, diverse texts, and a focus on practical application, we are committed to helping each student thrive in school, in their communities, and beyond.

Implementation

Sequential Learning

Reading has a clear progression of skills to ensure that teachers are planning outcomes in a systematic way. [*Reading Progression of Skills*](#)

Reading is embedded across the curriculum, with key texts identified within our rolling programme. This ensures all students are exposed to a broad range of rich texts, including performance poetry and pantomime.

Early Reading Skills

We recognise that our learners have diverse needs, so we take a highly individualised and multi-sensory approach to teaching early reading, incorporating phonics, symbol-supported text, sensory stories, and real-life experiences. Our intent is to ensure that all pupils, regardless of their starting point, develop confidence and enjoyment in engaging with print, storytelling, and communication. Through a structured yet flexible approach, we aim to build essential skills in phonemic awareness, comprehension, and vocabulary development, supporting our pupils in becoming lifelong readers in a way that is meaningful and accessible to them.

Reading is promoted through circle time, continuous provision, 1-1 focused activities and free play. Staff will promote reading and writing through a range of different activities. During circle time we explore rhymes, stories and song to support early reading. We also deliver sensory stories, offering opportunities to explore all the senses and allowing all pupils to access the learning. During continuous provision staff will refer to the pupils learning outcomes to link in with reading and writing. Clear pictures and images are displayed around the classroom to promote picture talk. We have a lovely reading area, with reading tent so pupils have a quiet and calm space to read. We have a wide range of books available around the classroom,

linking in with a variety of topics, stories from around the world and number books. For those sensory seeking pupils, reading is promoted through sensory books. Within Willow class we follow foundation to phonics, this is through circle time sessions, outdoor learning and music.

Phonics Scheme of Work- Little Wandle Letters and Sounds

The Little Wandle Phonics Scheme is a structured and systematic approach to phonics learning, adapted to meet the learning and engagement needs of all of our pupils. This scheme adopts a comprehensive four-stage approach: focused attention, active engagement, error feedback, and practice and consolidation.

Initially, in the focused attention stage, learners develop their skills to concentrate on specific phonemes, fostering an awareness of sounds and applying this to their corresponding graphemes. Active engagement follows, where pupils participate in varied phonics activities that encourage interaction and application. This stage is essential for embedding knowledge through hands-on experiences.

Error feedback is an integral aspect of the learning process, providing pupils with the opportunity to identify and rectify their mistakes. This immediate feedback helps to reinforce learning and ensures that misunderstandings are addressed promptly. Finally, the practice and consolidation stage allows pupils to apply their acquired skills in diverse contexts, solidifying their understanding and transferring their knowledge to reading and writing tasks.

The Little Wandle scheme emphasises the development of three core decoding skills: segmentation, blending, and manipulation of sounds at both phonemic and syllabic levels. Pupils learn to segment words into individual sounds, blend these sounds to form words, and manipulate sounds to create new words or word forms. This multifaceted approach cultivates secure and robust phonics development and progression, allowing students to apply their learning to their everyday lives in order to decode and comprehend words and phrases.

Teaching Approaches

At Bardwell, we employ a variety of teaching approaches to enhance story sharing and engagement among our students.

We conduct daily dedicated story sharing sessions that support students to interact with narratives in a collaborative setting, promoting both social and communication skills. Explicit instructions are utilised to guide students through story comprehension, ensuring clarity and understanding.

Attention Bucket, following the principles of Attention Autism, is used to capture learners' attention and teach explicit Phonic skills, fostering an enthusiastic environment for storytelling.

Additionally, Sensory Stories are employed to provide immersive experiences, catering to diverse sensory needs. These stories engage students through tactile, visual, and auditory stimuli, enriching and ensuring accessible learning experiences.

Furthermore, we embed reading and story sharing across the curriculum, thus reinforcing early reading skills and fostering a lifelong love of reading. This holistic approach ensures that every student has the opportunity to engage meaningfully with stories.

Learning Environment

Our learning environments are designed to promote and support reading across both primary and secondary classes. Differentiated reading areas are established, catering to diverse learning needs, interests and preferences. These areas feature a variety of environmental print to enhance recognition and engagement. A wide selection of text types, including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, magazines and graphic novels, are readily available to stimulate interest and cater to different pupils. Additionally, supplementary reading resources such as digital magnifiers and reading pens are used individually, allowing students to access texts more efficiently. This comprehensive approach fosters a rich culture of reading throughout the school.

Timetable weightings

Individual Phonics sessions are conducted at least four times a week, ensuring that pupils have ample opportunity to consolidate their learning and develop essential phonics skills. These are supplemented with at least 3 individual reading sessions for students working at a blending level, in order to provide opportunities to apply their learning at an appropriate level for their understanding. Additionally, daily story-sharing sessions for all students take place, fostering a love for reading and enhancing comprehension skills.

Measuring Impact

Impact within the Phonics programme is rigorously monitored through a dual approach of summative and formative assessments. Summative assessments are conducted termly for all students working on phase 2 or above, ensuring that progress is thoroughly evaluated. Concurrently, ongoing formative assessments from daily phonics sessions are meticulously recorded to inform instructional decisions. Additionally, pupils' reading engagement and progress are comprehensively captured through reading records, alongside photographic and video documentation. Staff and student reflections, including book reviews, provide further insights into the learners' experiences, fostering a holistic understanding of their development within the reading and phonics framework.