



## Rationale for reading at Curnow School.

### School Context

Curnow school is a 2-19 specialist provision for students with special educational needs. We have two learning pathways within school. Our curriculum is divided into the Learning to Learn and Ready to Learn strands, the EYFS curriculum and the Post 16 curriculum. Our Learning to Learn pupils are assessed using annual EHCP outcomes broken down into termly targets. The engagement model looks at how the children learn. Our ready to learn pupils follow a curriculum based on the national curriculum, split into the core subjects (including English), the creative curriculum and understanding the world. At Curnow we are proud of the levels of engagement in the classroom which is supported by teacher's knowledge of how to plan a highly individualised timetable which takes into account pupil's interests and learning styles.

### Intent

***I emphasise a 'literacy for all' focus, with a wider definition of reading as gaining meaning from some form of stimulus. This means we look at how our learners are reading interactions, people, situations, objects, events, images and for many, texts.***

***This does not imply that we are trying to make cognitive leaps or treat everyone as being able to move along the continuum in a set way, but that all learners are part of this journey.***

***Dr Sarah Moseley, Teaching Reading To All Learners Including Those With Complex Needs, 2023***

We aim to support our learners to become as independent and skilled readers as they are able. Our English curriculum recognises reading as a vital component of communication, as a tool for greater learning, as a source of pleasure and to support wellbeing. Our curriculum equips our students with the skills and the knowledge needed to enable them to use their reading skills functionally and recreationally in life beyond school. Our reading curriculum is open to all. By widening the definition of reading, by holding consistently high expectations which are not limited by assumptions and by constantly reviewing our practice both in our own classroom and by learning from the research of others we are able to provide a rich and varied curriculum and develop evidence based practice. As our young people progress through the school we prepare them to access the written word in the wider world to foster their independence skills.

### Implementation

All learners at Curnow School are assessed using either the engagement steps or the SPT reading Framework and receive instruction based on their learning style, level and pace. Learning to Learn learners receive a literacy rich experience, delivered by skilled and knowledgeable staff. Their literacy diet will reflect their current level of understanding and any barriers to learning. As such these pupils will experience stories and texts (not exclusively) through sensory stories, stories shared with adults, rhyme and massage. The communication offer for these learners will also build upon their reading skills, developing their understanding of shared interactions, sign and on body signing, symbols and objects of reference. Teachers will assess which method a learner most responds to, therefore building understanding through strength based methods. Some learners within the school with specific

needs will receive instruction using specialist materials, for example 3D symbols developed by Project Core ([www.project-core.com](http://www.project-core.com)) or by using texts developed by Living Books, specifically developed for blind and VI learners. This forms part of the school offer.

Using the evidence based practice outlined in **Comprehensive Literacy for All**, Teaching Students with Significant Disabilities to Read and Write, (Karen A Ericson and David A Koppenhaver), students within the Ready to Learn strand are assessed as either emergent or conventional literacy learners. The following diagrams outline the assessment of this along with the school offer for each strand:

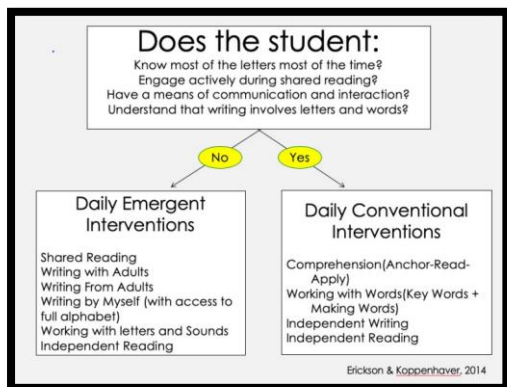


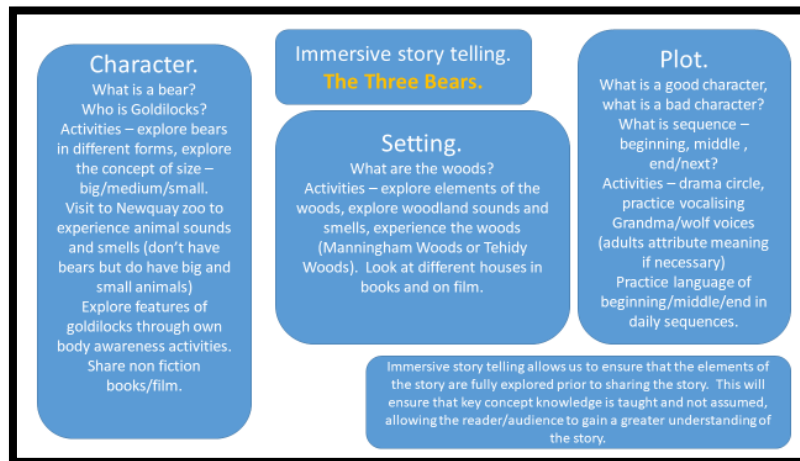
Table 1 – literacy strands



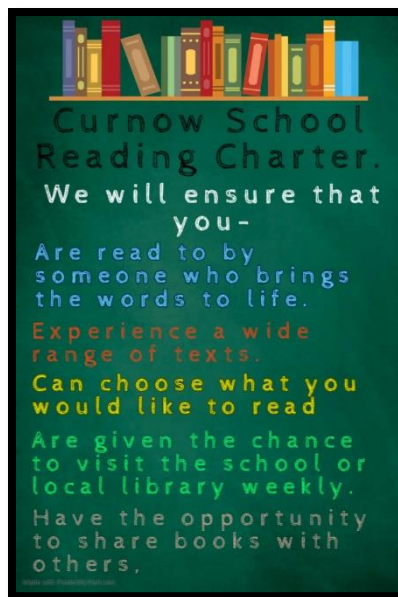
Table 2 – school offer for emergent and conventional learners

Phonics and reading teaching is linked closely to our communication and writing offer. During daily phonics teaching students learn to form letters and link these to their sound, moving from reading individual sounds to forming words. Emergent readers will learn single letter sounds through the sound of the day, allowing rapid exposure to letter sounds, preparing them to switch to conventional literacy instruction. Phonics for conventional learners is delivered using the Phonics for Pupils with Special Educational Needs (PPSEN) scheme, developed for pupils with additional needs by Ann Sullivan. This scheme works on phonics in many forms, ensuring that our learners can hear the sounds, identify the grapheme in a variety of fonts and in addition it supports word knowledge, a mastery approach to the learning. We believe that this scheme is appropriate to our learners in its pace and breadth. All learners placed on the conventional pathway will read a book linked to the phoneme, digraph etc that they are currently learning. This emergent and conventional phonics instruction is delivered right through to key stage 4. Any learner who is falling behind in terms of their understanding or who is disengaged with the methods used will be discussed by the teacher with the English Lead and additional methods will be explored. At Post 16 some learners may continue with formal phonics instruction at the discretion of the teacher, lead and student, most emergent learners will cease daily phonics instruction and the focus will be on their communication skills. Any learners that show, through shared reading and other observation, a talent for whole word learning may also be supported through use of the See and Learn scheme. Some pupils may also show a talent for reading but experience difficulties with reading comprehension. For these learners the Blanks Level materials will be used alongside appropriate questioning and text based exercises to support the development of comprehension skills.

Reading for pleasure is a strong component of our offer. At Lower School topics are planned to include an author study in each yearly cycle. In addition all topics will have suggested texts which are often at the core of learning. Stories are explored through our Immersive Story Telling format, developing background knowledge before stories are shared. Please see below for an example of this.



At Upper School texts are also delivered linked to the topic areas, these will be guided by the schools scheme of work literacy units. The Anchor, Read, Apply method will replace immersive story telling for the majority of classes, however, the development of understanding the whole text and background knowledge continues. Shared reading is a feature of the school day, and while this will look different in different class groups, all classes are guided by the schools 'reading charter'.



Regular staff training and lesson visits/learning walks and planning checks support us to ensure consistent high quality teaching and to address any inconsistencies early by providing extra support and guidance. Staff CPD is planned in accordance with literacy developments and work/progress scrutiny to ensure that teaching teams are well informed in how to deliver and assess high quality provision.

### Impact - Assessment of outcomes

Evidence for learning is used to track progress in reading against the bespoke reading framework written by the Special Partnership Trust. Evidence for Learning and workbook scrutiny provide the basis of quality assurance/moderation in house and trust wide to ensure that standards are measured consistently and planning and assessment show a clear sequence of learning in this subject. Teachers meet with the English lead to discuss

any students who are not reaching the expected standards in any area of the curriculum and this forms the basis of an action plan to address any requirements for intervention/support.

Emergent phonics is tracked via half termly assessment based on individual letter sound knowledge. The outcome of this assessment will be used as part of the assessment that determines whether students move to the conventional strand. Conventional phonics is tracked using the PPSEN trackers, these are monitored half termly by teachers and information on progress is shared with the English lead. Individual learning plans with targets drawn from the SPT frameworks are used to assess learning outside of phonics. These are checked on a termly basis by SLT and any student who falls below the expected standard will be raised for discussion with the English lead and where necessary a plan for further support will be put in place.