Reading Policy

Manchester Vocational and Learning Academy



*This policy should be read in conjunction with the school’s Reading Strategy.*

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| **Approved by:** | Linda Guest |  |
| **Last reviewed on:** | 1st September 2025 |
| **Next review due by:** | September 2027 |

**Aims:**

At Manchester Vocational and Learning Academy, we understand that reading is of vital importance to all students. We believe that it is our duty to ensure that all of the young people at our school are competent in reading and are supported to understand what they have read and link it to their own lives and experiences.

Many of our students have missed significant time out of education, or have faced barriers preventing them accessing learning effectively. As a result, the majority of our students are behind with their reading skills when they join us. For some students, negative experiences in the past means that it can be challenging to engage them with reading, but as a school, we have a responsibility to find strategies that work for each individual.

Not all students will be behind with their reading when they join us, but every individual will be supported to build on their current reading fluency, whatever their starting point. The approaches set out below are relevant for all students, regardless of their ability.

**Expectations:**

It is essential that all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject. At Manchester Vocational and Learning Academy some of our students only have short term placements, but it is an expectation that they will still make measureable progress with their reading.

Progress with reading will be reported back to referring schools alongside assessment grades for subject areas.

**Our Approach**

Many of our students have not got a solid grasp of some of the basic skills required for fluent reading. Where this is the case we support them through teaching both word recognition and comprehension skills alongside each other. Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through students’ experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non- fiction.

All pupils are encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. All pupils are encouraged to read at home and from October 2020 the school, parents and students will all sign a ‘reading pledge’ during their pre-admission meeting committing to this. Reading within class will be seen across all subject areas and include a wide variety of materials.

Reading widely and often increases pupils’ vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. These words are ‘rescued’ within the class and children are given the opportunities to explore word meanings and encouraged to use these words within their own speaking and writing where possible.

Reading feeds pupils’ imagination and is therefore a significant focus throughout the year at Manchester Vocational and Learning Academy. Our English Literature sessions are based on high-quality texts and English Language skills are taught using these books as a vehicle.

**Measuring Progress:**

Upon entry to the school we build a knowledge of the starting point of each student through baseline testing (NGRT) and teacher assessments. Progress is then measured through further reading tests, teacher assessments and formal assessments in each subject once per half term.

**Online Learning**

During the coronavirus pandemic, several of our students are likely to miss time in school due to the need to isolate. We will ensure that these students do not miss opportunities for developing their reading, by providing resources and lessons in line with our Blended Learning Policy. Where students are unable to access online provision, hard copies of texts will be posted to them or dropped off at their homes.

**Student Leadership**

To ensure that our approaches to reading are in line with the needs of our students, we feel that it is important for students to support in the leadership of the strategy. We will identify a lead students who will be designated a small budget to develop and expand the range of texts available within school. This student will seek the views and input from other students and have an input into the school’s Reading Strategy.

**Library Development**

To support students to develop a love of learning we have provided a school library. The library contains a growing range of fiction and non-fiction texts. The library is designed to be a comfortable place to sit and to contain material that will stimulate students’ thinking. Some books in the library should be forward-facing to support the children to choose appropriate books. We will also develop the library to include children’s own reviews of books or pictures of their favourite books.

Our lead student for reading development will be allocated a termly budget to develop the quantity and range of texts available within our library.

**Reading for Pleasure**

Reading for pleasure is an important part of the reading curriculum at Manchester Vocational and Learning Academy and the students are given the time to read and most importantly discuss the books they like. The teachers and other staff members will model this process and encourage the children to reflect on their own reading and share their opinions as much as possible.

**Guided and Whole-class Reading**

The children’s taught reading sessions will be a mixture of individual and guided sessions. The guided group sessions enable the teacher to focus on key skills they know a specific group of students need whilst the individual sessions allow all students (regardless of their personal word recognition and phonics skills) to access, experience and discuss high-quality texts therefore preventing them for being held back by the mechanical skills of reading.

**Subject Vocabulary**

Each subject on the curriculum, will have its own subject specific vocabulary. Teachers will identify any key words during the session and write them on the whiteboard/display screen to reinforce these. Teachers will discuss with students where they might find these words in everyday lives and where they might be used in other subject areas.

**Speed Reading**

Where relevant students will be supported to increase their reading speed as this has been shown to have an impact on GCSE grades. The PiXL speed reading materials will be used to support this process.

**Responsibility for developing reading**

The operational responsibility for developing the reading strategy across the school lies with the teacher in charge of English. However, it is important to note that reading is a cross curricular skill, not one that should start and finish within English lessons. The teacher in charge of English will therefore have a responsibility to ensure that reading is developed across all subject areas and embedded into all aspects of school life.

The teacher in charge of English will have responsibility for developing the skills of support staff to provide interventions for individual students.

The lead student for reading development, will seek the views of other students about the development of reading and the school library and will feed these views back to staff. The lead student will have responsibility for allocating a small termly budget for reading materials.

The Headteacher/Proprietor will ensure that funding is allocated to meet any specific training needs and that there are appropriate levels of resources to support students of all abilities.

The Management Committee will oversee the delivery of the school’s Reading Strategy and will monitor the range of appropriateness of texts within school, ensuring that these do not undermine British Values.

**Policy Implementation**

This policy will be reviewed every two years but can be updated more frequently if required.