

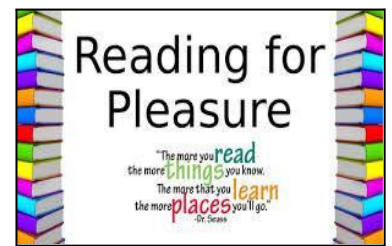
**includEd Learning**

**Independent Specialist Education Provider**



## READING POLICY

## Reading for Pleasure - Aims and Objectives



IncludEd Learning actively encourage reading for pleasure and recognise it as an essential part of every student's education

We make reading a key part of our curriculum and expose pupils to a wide range of culturally rich and challenging texts.

Our aims are that our students develop a love of reading and become lifelong readers. The value of reading extends beyond its educational value and supports well-being and personal development.

Students are encouraged to read in all subjects.

We provide a wide range of texts/books including fiction and non-fiction books, graphic novels, poetry, newspapers and a range of internet-based text. Students write book reviews and are regularly exposed to new materials.

All teachers encourage reading for pleasure. This is done through a wide range of activities:

- Teachers regularly read aloud to pupils in all subject areas to model good reading and promote comprehension
- Students have a dedicated reading time for 15 minutes each day
- Students are encouraged to read aloud to encourage fluency and develop confidence
- Students read quietly to themselves. Class novels are chosen to reflect student interest and cultural relevance
- Students read and study appropriate and challenging texts in English and other subject areas.
- Teachers encourage a love of reading and promote the reading of a wide range of book and sharing their own reading habits.

Activities used to promote reading:

- Books and book vouchers are given as rewards
- All students have access to reading areas and/or libraries
- Students are encouraged to take books home to read
- Partnership and competitions with Portico Library
- Students are gifted books e.g. World Book Day. Students are able to select books of their choice
- Displays promoting reading are visible in each learning centre
- Reading challenges are set; 10 book challenge; Book review competitions
- Calendared events, e.g. World Book Day; National Poetry Day; Shakespeare Week;
- High Interest books for reluctant readers are provided.
- Interventions for weaker reader are timetabled and progress monitored
- All students are encouraged to participate in projects with local libraries, Manchester Read initiatives; Book Clubs in School; Author visits are live and online.
- Quiet reading areas are provided during lunch and unstructured times
- Books around curriculum subjects have been identified, e.g. Science, history, sport, geography and art.

### **IncludEd Learning Commitment**

An annual budget is allocated for books and meets the interests, demands and needs for each academic year. Book tokens are included in the reward system. The budget considers the need to replenish and update books as students are encouraged to take reading materials home to read. Professional development and support, coaching, training and guidance is made available for staff to support their understanding and develop their skills in promoting reading for pleasure through:

- Staff meetings and INSET led by Literacy Lead
- Membership to National Literacy Trust
- Student voice
- Discussions with Governors, SLT, Literacy and English Curriculum Lead
- Discussions and good practice within teams
- Wider reading/research on 'Reading for Pleasure'
- Partnerships with Libraries
- Poet and Author visits

## Reading for Empathy - Aims and Objectives

IncludEd Learning actively encourages reading for empathy and recognises it as an essential part of every student's education.

This will support the development of key empathy skills through:

- perspective taking (e.g. through different characters' points of view);
- emotion recognition/vocabulary;
- active listening;
- ability to put empathy into action.

Including tackling key empathy issues of the day: e.g. refugees, homelessness, loneliness.

### **What is reading for empathy?**

It's a mental and emotional experience that ignites our imagination, triggers our emotions, and connects us to the thoughts and experiences of others, even if they lived in a different time or place.

### **How reading can impact empathy social skills?**

Reading books can help children develop empathy by exposing them to different perspectives, cultures, and experiences. By reading about characters who are different from themselves, children can learn to understand and relate to others who are different from them.

### **What is the link between reading and empathy?**

Research shows that lifetime exposure to reading increases a person's cognitive empathy, which is understanding the world from another person's point of view. *A short-term experience of reading will impact affective empathy, which is the capacity to share another's feelings* (Stansfield & Bunce, 2014).

Research shows that reading for empathy is:

- a pivotal social/emotional competence: [influential frameworks](#) include empathy as a key factor
- an essential ingredient in education: it builds the relationships pupils need to learn/feel safe (Settling Children to Learn, Bomber & Hughes, 2013)
- a key factor in moral behaviour: [Empathy, Justice, and Moral Behavior, Decety & Cowell, 2015](#)

Research also suggests that empathy is made up of 3 key elements:

- Feeling: where we resonate with other people's feelings
- Thinking: where we use reason and imagination to work out how someone else feels
- Acting: where we are inspired to help others, having experienced what they are feeling

### **What's the connection between reading and empathy?**

According to research by [BookTrust](#), children who read are more likely to develop empathy and creativity. Stories can offer children a realistic and authentic 'mirror' of their own lives and experiences, as well as a 'window' to view the experiences of others.

When children are emotionally involved in what they're reading, they feel connected to, and see their lives as part of, the wider human experience. Plus, children who read texts that offer opportunities to empathise with the characters show increased levels of empathy, especially towards stigmatised groups.

All teachers encourage reading for empathy. This is done through a wide range of activities including:

### **Choosing books that are good for empathy work should:**

- Have expertly crafted characters who readers care about and which explore characters' feelings and motivations.
- Challenge tribal thinking through building understanding about different individuals and communities.
- Support the development of key empathy skills: perspective taking (e.g. through different characters' points of view); emotion recognition/vocabulary; active listening; the ability to put empathy into action.
- Tackle key empathy issues of the day, such as the ongoing war around the world, the cost of living crisis, loneliness, etc.
- Provide insight into other challenging life circumstances like bereavement or bullying.

### **Focus on characters**

Focus in on the characters of a book and their feelings instead of focusing on the plot or technical aspects of the book. Leave plenty of space for discussion and reflection, and keep within the safety of the book – children will process their own feelings and understand others through the characters and their experiences.

### **Build a language for emotions**

In order to share their emotions and understand other people's, children first need to be able to recognise and name their own. As you talk about books, pick up on new words for feelings used by the author and share what they mean – have fun making the face or modelling the body language that accompanies the feeling.

### **Model empathic communication**

Listening is a key aspect of empathy, so talk to your students about how important and powerful it is to listen to each other. Challenge pupils to practise the four key aspects of being a good listener: concentration, being still and quiet, checking your understanding and asking questions.