



## Culverhill School

### Reading

#### Our Vision for Reading

Culverhill School is a Special School for children with a wide range of complex and co-existing learning difficulties aged 7 - 16. Every child has an EHCP and we promote an ethos and culture that provides every child with a learning experience to develop their independence, skills and knowledge.

Our aim is to enable our children to make a positive and valuable contribution to their own lives, the lives of their communities and society as a whole.

At Culverhill School we believe that reading is the gateway to our pupils' empowerment, lifelong learning, enjoyment and achievement. We therefore place a high value on reading as a priority for all children and our staff are dedicated to promoting reading for all pupils. We recognise that, prior to joining us, our pupil join Culverhill with a range of different reading experiences and we work hard to encourage, support and engage all pupils with a love of reading.

As well as the mechanics of reading (decoding, phonic awareness), it is important that children are exposed to a love of reading and this is instilled at an early age by the adults around them: their parents, families and school staff. If this is encouraged at an early age, children will develop their own ability to fulfil a life-long love of reading and therefore learning. Our reading vision at Culverhill fosters this love, and opportunities for children to be read to and to read to others are embedded in our curriculum.

We also recognise that our children learn to read in different ways at different stages of their development. For our pupils who are at the pre-phonics stage, we will employ a bespoke multi-sensory approach using input from the SALT team and other professionals, delivered by our highly skilled staff. Our professional experience at Culverhill School tells us that many of our children who have a range of complex needs, fit with this cognitive and developmental profile. Therefore we have identified that these children primarily need a combination of learning word recognition and individual letter phonics before they are exposed to more complex phonological components such as blending and segmenting, digraphs and trigraphs. We will also be adopting the 'See and Learn' structured programme to support the development of early reading with children who require this approach as their initial pathway into learning to read.

"The more you **read**  
the more **things** you know.  
The more that you **learn**  
the more **places** you'll go."  
-Dr. Seuss

## **Reading Curriculum Intent**

***For all pupils to develop the skills to decode, decipher and comprehend different texts independently so that they can make meaning of what they are reading for enjoyment and learning. For all pupils to be exposed to a wide range of fiction and nonfiction texts and written formats and to develop a life-long love of reading and stories.***

Our vision for Reading links with our overall Curriculum Intent Aims – the ability to read will have a positive impact on our pupils' development in all of these areas.

### Curriculum Intent Aims

Cognition and Learning - Increase my knowledge and understanding of the world and my ability to manage challenges.

Communication and Interaction - Communicate and understand my wants and needs and those of others.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health - Manage my feelings and behaviour to be happy, safe and resilient.

Self-care and Independence - Care for myself and Increase my independence to lead a better quality life.

Physical and Sensory - Understand how to manage my senses and look after my health.

## **Reading overview at Culverhill**

Whether pupils join us in Year 3 or Year 7, they would all have had prior teaching of phonics and reading. Therefore our key aim at Culverhill is to identify any gaps in their reading development with respect to phonics and continue to build on developing their confidence in reading and comprehension skills as they move through the school.

We have recently overhauled our phonics and early reading programme at Culverhill School.. We have introduced Bug Club Phonics which is one of the DfE's validated phonics teaching programmes. This enables us to access to over 180 fully decodable reading books to reinforce phonics skills from phase 1 - 5 which can be accessed as an e-book or as a print copy book.

Key Stage 2 and 3 pupils have a daily phonics session which involves a carousel of activities based on their individual phonic phase. We have also identified KS4 pupils' who require a continuation of this approach. We carry out phonics checks 3 times a

year to monitor progress. This forms the basis of each pupil's personalised reading progress journey. The pace of progression is led by pupils' needs and cognitive level with an emphasis on reviewing and overlearning to embed decoding, comprehension and higher order reading skills to develop each pupil's confidence and skills. For pupils in Year 7 upwards, Bug Club Phonics resources may be used to continue to reinforce and develop their phonic skills depending on the needs of each pupil.

We are aspirational for all our pupils and we recognise that pupils may need to continue to develop their reading using longer texts. We have introduced the Rapid Reading Scheme for pupils in KS3 which further develops their reading skills in a range of fiction and non-fiction texts that are more age appropriate. Pupils continue with this programme as they move through to Year 11. Rapid Reading has recently been purchased as an online resource so that pupils can access the books electronically in school and at home.

The English Curriculum from Year 3 through to Year 9 explores a different topic each term with a book at the heart of each topic, bringing it to life. Pupils have regular opportunities to read throughout the week and teachers and TA's will regularly read to pupils. Staff choose books that engage and interest our pupils.

We aim to employ a range of strategies for reading – we know our children well and know that different pedagogical approaches are needed for different children based on their needs, learning styles and interests. One strategy that has been extremely successful has been weekly visits from a 'Reading Dog'. This created an opportunity for our readers at all levels to read out loud without judgement.

We also recognise that reading is not just about decoding. It is about comprehension and the 'language of books' (including telling a story from pictures). To further support reading comprehension we use Reading VIPERS (Vocabulary, Infer, Predict, Explain, Retrieve, Sequence) a questioning tool to support with the understanding of texts.



Reading in all forms is encouraged – books, comics, instructions, recipes, screen text, magazines and so on. All classes have access to the digital edition of First News which is a weekly children's newspaper to help our pupils understand and make connections to the world around them. We strongly believe that reading of every kind fosters enjoyment and further learning and provides opportunities for practice, developing higher order reading skills.



Our children have free access to our fiction and non-fiction library and can choose books to share, to read with others at school or enjoy reading on their own. We are continuing to replenish our library with new and exciting books. We are currently exploring new options for our library area.

We do not underestimate the power and joy of reading – As author and playwright Victor Hugo said "To learn to read is to light a fire". At Culverhill School we are passionate about lighting that fire in each and every child in our care.

TO LEARN TO READ  
IS TO LIGHT A FIRE;  
EVERY SYLLABLE THAT  
IS SPELLED OUT IS A SPARK

~ VICTOR HUGO ~



[www.BlueHarvestCreative.com](http://www.BlueHarvestCreative.com)  
f BlueHarvestCreative t @justaddblue