



School Reading Policy

Version	Document Title	Status	Author	Approved by	Date	Reviewed On	Next Review Date
0.1	School Reading Policy	Final	Literacy Leads	Vice Principal/ Principal	Dec 2022	August 2025	August 2026
Regional Director		Principal			Vice Principal		
Head of Foundation Stage		Head of Primary			Head of Secondary		

A. Aim and objectives

Our overarching aim for English and Arabic at Newlands School, is to promote high standards of literacy across the curriculum by equipping students with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. We recognise the responsibility to send every student to secondary school (Phase 3) having mastered at least the basic elements of reading and with the ability to participate confidently in society.

The recent PISA and TIMSS results highlight the importance of reading literacy on student performance in international assessments, including science and mathematics, in which there is a clear link to the National Agenda. Newlands School, therefore, provides opportunities to ensure our students have high levels of reading literacy to be able to successfully read across the curriculum.

Newlands School's reading policy aims to support the the UAE National Agenda in its vision to produce a reading generation and establish the UAE as the capital of cultural and knowledge content. It aims to support and meet the UAE National Agenda target to ensure that the students in the UAE rank amongst the best in the world in reading, as per PISA and TIMSS results, and ensure our students have strong knowledge of the Arabic language. Newlands will ensure that all students have equal access to the curriculum, regardless of gender, religion, race or ability. Students with specific reading, speech, and language or hearing difficulties will be identified and supported through support programs in school and external help will be sought where necessary.

To promote high standards of literacy, we aim to ensure that all students:

- Will read every day, in English, Arabic lessons and in subjects across the curriculum
- Read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information through regular Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) time
- Acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- Appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences modelled in their reading
- Use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas, supported with evidence from the text
- Are competent in the skills of speaking and listening, asking and responding to questions and participating in discussions, demonstrating understanding of what they have read.

B. Planning

Reading is carefully planned into the curriculum at Newlands, with cross-curricular opportunities for reading embedded across a range of subjects. In KS1, Daily reading lessons using RWI are planned to offer support to groups of students, with lessons streamed across the year group. Dedicated reading lessons are carefully planned in KS2 to support the development of students' ability to read and comprehend a range of texts. Teachers plan

high-level discussion within reading lessons, discussing authors use of language, making links between texts students have read and applying their knowledge of the world to what they are reading. Opportunities for cross-curricular learning are carefully planned and through frequent reflection of the curriculum, adaptations are made to ensure that all groups of students are able to access reading lessons, reaching their full potential. The English Subject Leader and Primary Leadership team monitor the planning and delivery of the reading curriculum, ensuring that the UK National Curriculum is planned and delivered in a way that covers year group objectives, building upon prior knowledge and developing their skills in line with age related expectations.

Core-text reading books are carefully selected to offer rich cross-curricular opportunities whilst exposing students to a range of genres, authors and texture types. Each term, our curriculum is centered around a 'core text', chosen from a dedicated reading spine. This means that thought is given to the texts that are chosen for our students and ensures they are exposed to a wide range of text genres and challenging, age-appropriate texts.

C. The Teaching of Reading

Reading, at Newlands School, supports a 'reading across the curriculum' view, where children are encouraged to apply the skills they have been taught in focused reading lessons (such as Read, Write Inc. in Year 1 and 2, and Guided Reading lessons from Years 3-6) to a range of cross-curricular settings and purposes.

Teaching in Guided Reading sessions, across the school, focuses on developing pupils' competence in both word reading and comprehension skills, supporting them as readers by encouraging them to make links to what they are reading to their understanding of the world. Skilled word reading involves both the speedy decoding of unfamiliar printed words and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why, in the primary, there is an emphasis on phonics in the early teaching of reading to secure independent decoding and we use the Read, Write Inc program to achieve this. (see appendix Read, Write Inc)

Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of engaging stories, poems, and non-fiction. The Oxford Reading Tree program is used when teachers read with their guided reading groups. Children work in groups using the reading roles independently with differing texts.

Each classroom has stimulating and inviting book corners, where children are expected to explore and organize their books. Students visit the school library regularly, taking books from the school library weekly. The Library at Newlands School also provides quality texts for each class, with Lexile levels displayed on all books to guide students and books chosen to match the program of inquiry, as well as ORT leveled readers.

D. Key Stage 1

In KS1, reading is an important feature inside and outside the classroom. We have a range of ways in which we promote reading in the early years:

- Book corners that are stimulating and accessible, owned and loved by children, indoors and outdoors.
- Using unit-related literature and books to plan for children's interests and unit topics
- Children have the opportunity to read to an adult using ORT leveled reading books once a week
- Children are assigned Oxford Reading Tree leveled readers based on their reading age, using half-termly PM Benchmark assessments and NGRT assessments as competent assessment and progress tracking tools.
- Reading passports communicate reading progress between home and school, and include teachers' and parents' feedback.
- Having enthusiastic and empowered teachers who share their excitement of books with children through celebrating World Book Day, Author's day, reading aloud, guest readers etc.
- Having a range of quality books available in classrooms and the school library
- Having opportunities for independent writing in all areas of the classroom
- Using story props, story sacks, role play areas and displays to enhance unit books
- Having well planned, shared reading sessions that all practitioners are confident to take part in
- Opportunities for children to learn from clearly modelled 'reading behaviours', for example, the recognition that print conveys meaning, the left to right directionality of English text, the purpose of punctuation
- Involving parents in understanding the importance of early literacy through parents' workshops, Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) Parent Reading sessions, home shared reading, reading communication diaries etc.
- Listening to and joining in a variety of genres, for example, non-fiction, poems, taped stories, rhymes etc.
- Opportunities to retell and to act out stories using props and story maps.

Students in KS1 have reading at the heart of their English lessons to develop happy, healthy and curious learners who read confidently and independently. In Year 1, students take part in daily Phonics lessons (Read Write Inc) to help improve word reading skills and strategies to engage with texts.

We follow the Read Write Inc approach and use phonetic reading scheme books and rhymes so that students practice and develop the ability to segment and blend phoneme/grapheme sounds independently.

The children in Year 2 also have two Read Write Inc sessions per week that last for 45 minutes each, along with intervention with those identified as needing further support. Students build upon their phonetics skills in order to progress with their reading. A carousel of activities is undertaken centering on phonics development. The activities are linked to the core texts the children are reading and promote the independent application of skills previously taught.

E. Year's 3-6

In Years 3 to 6, two lessons per week are allocated to teach reading. These are skills-based sessions focusing on reading objectives in line with curriculum expectations and ensuring the acquisition and application of higher-order reading skills. Guided Reading sessions are purposeful and allow children to work independently as well as with an adult. A different focus group is taught by the teacher during each session, whereby the children will be taught new skills in order to progress with their Reading. Activities are then carried out to follow up with the text focus and promote the application of skills previously taught. Teachers carry out regular formal and informal assessment of students' reading abilities during this lesson. Whole-class reading sessions ensure students are exposed to wide range of age-appropriate texts of varying genres and styles, carefully selected to ensure excitement, engagement and challenge, growing students understanding of language, culture and history of the world.

These skills are based on teachers' PM benchmark assessments and the children's next steps. Further to the focus group, the other students take on a range of "Reading roles" within their group, giving a clear purpose to their reading and discussions and enabling them to work independently on fluency, comprehension, reasoning and inferencing activities. The activities are linked to the texts the children are reading and promote the independent application of skills previously taught.

We aim to expand the skills gained earlier in the school by keeping a teaching focus on reading, drawing attention to the structure of a variety of texts, helping pupils to adapt their style of reading to suit the purpose (skim, scan, read critically) The higher order reading skills must be taught and should not be confined to the Literacy lesson alone. The opportunity to read texts from different media, to research, investigate, to sift, select and take notes from text, to question, challenge and look for bias in texts, to scan and skim for project information and use this purposefully can be found in many different areas across the curriculum. As soon as children can read, we aim to support them in their need to become independent, helping them to develop fluency, expressiveness and critical awareness. It is important that older children still share books and sets for books during guided reading sessions. A range of high-quality texts are used to deliver this having full texts in addition to the use of extracts.

Within English lessons, class teachers use a range of strategies to teach reading skills and develop children's enthusiasm for reading across a variety of genres.

These include:

- Shared Reading, including use of the interactive whiteboard;
- Whole Class Guided Reading of the same text;
- Focused Reading sessions in smaller groups where high-quality discussion is facilitated by a teacher or Learning Assistant;
- Reading of texts and comprehension activities linked to the English genre, topic and core text;
- Reading for pleasure opportunities in inspiring environments (corridors and classrooms). In FS there are themed reading areas linked to topics, whereas in Key Stage 1 and 2 these areas are linked to a chosen core text or author.

F. Secondary

Secondary School Strategies for Developing Whole School Development of Literacy.

Reading is a key component not only for the English department but also across the curriculum, taught through a Balanced Reading approach to teach decoding, fluency and comprehension – literal, inferential and evaluative, across a wide range of text types and genres. Main Features include:

- Whole class reading that develops listening skills, a love of story and reading for pleasure.
- Reading of texts and comprehension activities linked to the English genre, topic and core text;
- Shared reading that immerses children in the pattern of story and features of text type.
- Guided reading and library lessons that target our students' reading skills.
- Independent Reading in school and at home.
- Intervention lessons during CCA.
- Celebrating Reading Achievements in assemblies, book fairs and author's visits.

All Secondary departments take part in Reading Across the Curriculum training. Disciplinary Literacy is prioritised so each department has a strong grasp of the best way for students to master the language of each subject and make connections between subjects. Departments focus on explicitly teaching key vocabulary through etymological approaches and sentence stems which enables students to make links between key vocabulary. Robust vocabulary instruction is prioritised and classrooms are crafted as language rich environments especially for subject-specific Tier 3 vocabulary. We expect all the subjects to:

1. Prioritise 'disciplinary literacy' across the curriculum

Literacy is key to learning across all subjects in secondary school and a strong predictor of outcomes in later life. Disciplinary literacy is an approach to improving literacy across the curriculum that emphasises the importance of subject specific support. All teachers are supported to understand how to teach students to read, write and communicate effectively in their subjects.

2. Provide targeted vocabulary instruction in every subject

Teachers in every subject provide explicit vocabulary instruction to help students access and use academic language. Effective approaches, including those related to etymology and morphology, will help students remember new words and make connections between words. Teachers prioritise teaching Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary, which students are unlikely to encounter in everyday speech.

3. Develop students' ability to read complex academic texts.

Training focused on teaching reading is likely to help secondary school teachers teach their subject more effectively. To comprehend complex texts, students need to actively engage with what they are reading and use their existing subject knowledge. Reading strategies, such as activating prior knowledge, prediction and questioning improves students' comprehension.

4. Break down complex writing tasks

Writing is challenging and students in every subject benefit from explicit instruction in how to improve. Teachers break writing down into planning, feedback and reflection, and support students by modelling each step. Targeted support is provided to students who struggle to write fluently, as this may affect writing quality.

5. Combine extended writing instruction with reading in every subject.

Combining reading activities and writing instruction improves students' skills in both the areas. Reading helps students gain knowledge which leads to better writing, whilst writing can deepen students' understanding of ideas. Students are taught to recognise features, aims and conventions of good writing within each subject.

6. Provide opportunities for structured talk

Talk matters: both in its own right and because of its impact on other aspects of learning. High quality talk is typically well structured and guided by teachers, e.g.: Debates. Accountable talk is a useful framework to ensure talk is high quality, and emphasises how talk can be subject specific e.g. MUN competitions.

7. Weekly spelling tests:

KS3 students have weekly spelling tests which are subject and topic specific. KS4 students are provided with a list of judicious vocabulary and are motivated to use them in their imaginative writing tasks.

7. Provide high quality literacy interventions for struggling students.

8. Parental Engagement

Encourage parental involvement in students' reading habits by communicating the importance of reading at home. Share information about the school's reading policy with parents and provide suggestions for fostering a reading-friendly environment at home through regular workshops.

G. Home Reading

We work in partnership with parents, so students develop a love of books and reading. Daily reading at home and at school ensures children make good progress in developing reading skills, whatever their age. Encouraging children to read widely, in and out of school, across both fiction and non-fiction, helps 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.

Reading widely and often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Students in the Primary School have the opportunity to read to an adult using ORT leveled reading books at least once a week. We use Oxford Reading Tree book bands to ensure books are the correct level of challenge for children to make good progress. PM Benchmark assessments each half-term ensure that progress is tracked and students are reading books that reflect their current reading level. Leveled readers (ORT) are sent home weekly for students to read and they can also choose a text (MyOn) to read at home twice a week as well as books from the school library. Reading passports communicate reading progress between home and school, and include teachers' and parents' feedback ensuring a consistent dialogue.

H. Assessment

Students at Newlands are assessed in reading using PM benchmarking as part of baseline assessments each year, along with taking the NGRT reading assessment. Through data analysis of PM benchmarking and NGRT, students are assigned ORT book band levels which form the basis of guided reading groups. Half termly Lexile assessments through Myon Reader help to track reading progress and provide students with a 'Lexile reading range' in which they are able to select library books from. This ensures that book selection contributes towards reading progress and is of an appropriate challenge.

I. Reading Across the Curriculum:

Newlands school supports the National Agenda of the UAE with a comprehensive and effective 'Reading Across the Curriculum' approach. To support a growth of knowledge and strive for above expected progress in English, Math and Science, whilst also developing strong Arabic skills, we promote a love of language across the entire curriculum.

Key vocabulary for students is displayed and pre-taught, allowing all groups of students access to the curriculum; texts are carefully selected to have a cross-curricular approach and are shared and read by students and teachers. Students are taught to read for a variety of purposes within a range of lessons across the curriculum, developing their knowledge of language and purpose.

This approach enables students to develop a contextual approach to reading, and gives them opportunities to develop and practice reading across the entire curriculum. All lessons identify key vocabulary that is specific to the unit or lesson being taught. These are pre-taught to students where appropriate and when not, are taught in context through the lesson. Subject specific and key vocabulary is encouraged through peer discussion and when engaging in whole-class discussion.

Through lessons such as history, geography and science: non-fiction texts are shared with students to provide further opportunities for reading, text analysis, discussion and vocabulary growth. Students are encouraged to read with a purpose, with roles such as geographers, historians, translators, and detectives.

Classroom displays reflect the RAC approach at Newlands, with each display featuring subject specific vocabulary that is linked to the specific unit or topic being taught.

J. Inclusion (SEN and EAL)

Pupils with difficulties in learning to read or with Special Educational Needs have their needs identified promptly and interventions provided that will accelerate their progress. Progress is measured and tracked to ensure they are catching up with their peers. Additional teaching and support is provided through 1:1 reading with an adult, extra guided reading in small groups and daily Phonics sessions.

In Phase 2 additional teaching is provided through regular 1:1 reading with an adult, and pre-teaching of key vocabulary to support children's understanding. A dedicated EAL support teacher is provided at Newlands, and students with EAL needs are identified and have two sessions per week with the EAL support teacher.

K. Parent and Community readers

As part of our emphasis on a strong relationship with parents and the wider Newlands community, parents and adults from the community visit Newlands weekly to listen to students read. This provides valuable opportunities for those who are learning to read, or who require practice and support, chance to read aloud receive extra support in doing so. Parent and community readers hear students from across the school and liaise with the homeroom teacher to provide feedback.