

Burton PRU's Response to Developing Reading – Our Strategy

At BPRU our pupils join us with various gaps in their learning and a variety of reading ages that are lower than expected age related. Our response to developing student reading ability is outlined in this strategy. Our ultimate aim is to develop a love for reading, support students reach and maintain a functional reading age and navigate their next life step.

Progression of knowledge and skills – how students learn to read.

In an ideal situation students are taught effective reading methods during their primary school years which build the correct skills and knowledge to be able to be accomplished readers. If a student has missed elements within this process, or found it difficult to engage, it can affect how students read and at what level. In order to be able to read independently and at a functional age students require sufficient knowledge and skill base in the following areas:

Phonological Awareness – Students are aware and receptive to sounds. (TRT)

Decoding – Students learn the letter sound correspondence. (TRT)

Blending – Students use their knowledge of letters and sounds to blend and read unfamiliar words. (TRT)

Automaticity – Students are able to recall whole words automatically which initially comes from knowing the letters and sounds and the skill of blending. (Rapid Readers)

Fluency – Students are able to read with speed, accuracy and expression which comes from the automaticity/recall of words. (Rapid Readers and Reading for Pleasure)

Comprehension – Students are able to understand the meaning behind the text as working memory is not overloaded (the students are no longer “trying” to read, students are reading with automaticity and fluency creating more cognitive capacity to focus on the meaning of the text. (Rapid Readers and Reading for Pleasure)

Application – Students can read and understand the meaning of a text and later apply the information in a familiar or unfamiliar context. (Rapid Readers and Reading for Pleasure)

Initial assessment

On entry to BPRU all students complete a WRAT and L'Explore reading test. This helps to accurately identify the reading age of a new student and what intervention pathway they will be allocated.

Pathways

At BPRU we have three reading pathways to support and develop reading.

That Reading Thing:

TRT is our phonic intervention programme. It was carefully selected as it is designed to use with secondary ages pupils to support with reading. It is evidence-based and externally assessed by Professor Greg Brooks. Students work from sound to print using age-appropriate vocabulary and authentic reading material. The method is rooted in linguistic phonics but has grown its own way of working with older learners for the fastest possible results.

TRT requires about 1 hour per week one-to-one for 6-12 hours. After that, when confidence has increased, small group work is an option. Add in spelling and writing to complement reading practice. Some will need one-to-one for longer, especially those who are still embarrassed to read in front of peers. Once a student has developed their reading age to above 6 yrs they then move on to the **Rapid Readers** programme.

Rapid Readers:

Rapid Reader books are typically accessed when a student is secure in their knowledge of the phonetic code and can blend sounds to read unfamiliar words. We carefully selected this programme because the texts are engaging, cover fiction and non-fiction and feel appropriate for secondary aged students.

The Rapid Reader programme helps students with the recall of letter-sound correspondence (decoding), blending automaticity and fluency in reading. This is achieved through the repetition of prior learning previously covered in TRT. Students are grouped according to their stage in the programme. Students follow the programme and move up according to the progress made within sessions overtime.

Reading for Pleasure:

Reading for pleasure are for those readers who have a reading age of 10+. Books have been selected based upon content to support and engage readers. The purpose for pre-selecting the reading for pleasure books are to support a common reading topic / theme to help promote discussion with students about the current book being read as all students read the same book across the school. During reading sessions staff identify words and challenge pupils comprehension and understanding.

Reading for pleasure book selection 2024 / 2025					
HT1	HT2	HT3	HT4	HT5	HT6
Initiative not started	Initiative not started	Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane	I am Malala	I am Malala	The Boys on the Boat

Reading for pleasure book selection 2025 / 2026					
HT1	HT2	HT3	HT4	HT5	HT6
Long Way Down	Long Way Down	Maladapted	Maladapted	Girl Missing	Girl Missing

Some students find it challenging to engage in daily reading sessions. To support them reasonable adjustments are made to support behaviour and attitude to learning. Here are our reasonable adjustments expectations:

Exception 1: If a student is disengaging from the TRT /Rapid Reading books the student might be encouraged to read / look at a non- decodable book - the purpose of this is to develop and improve the students love of reading and return them to a decodable / Rapid Reading book as soon as possible.

Exception 2: Some students (a minority) may have established their own (unconventional) method of reading words. Typically, in this situation, we would focus on developing the students, fluency, comprehension and application. We would rarely take a student back to the beginnings of decoding and blending when they have already mastered the skill of word reading.

Exception 3: If a student is disengaging with the reading programme and their behaviour escalates, staff will use relational practice in an attempt to reduce behaviour escalation and engage student in another task / option.

Continual assessments:

Name	Assessment Timeframe Expectations	Assessment method
TRT	3 monthly cycle	WRAT and L'explore
Rapid Readers	At the end of each stage pupils will be assessed and progress to next stage if applicable.	Rapid Readers and L'explore
Reading for Pleasure	Twice per academic year on entry then 6 months later. If student is on roll for more than one year they will be assessed 2 times per academic year.	L'explore

The National Literacy Trust

As part of the school reading strategy we have also invested in 3 separate programmes from the National Literacy Trust. Each programme is designed to target students at different stages of their reading. All the programmes aim to support children who have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion.

Game Changers

The Game Changers programme is a targeted reading intervention which offers a unique approach to improving literacy skills through engaging and relatable content aiming to support vulnerable students.

Students who face exclusion often encounter literacy challenges. Research indicates that only 4% of excluded students pass their English and maths GCSEs compared to 64% in mainstream education. The Game Changers programme directly addresses these challenges by providing highly-scaffolded resources and relatable texts that resonate with students' experiences, therefore fostering a more positive attitude towards reading.

The programme includes stories of role models with lived experiences of school exclusion. These narratives are designed to inspire and motivate students, making reading a more enjoyable and meaningful activity. Additionally, football activities are incorporated to further engage students and promote physical activity alongside literacy development.

One of the key objectives of the programme is to improve students' attitude towards reading. Survey's have shown that more than twice as many young people enjoy reading after completing the programme. The shift in attitude is crucial for fostering a lifelong love for reading and empowering student to succeed academically and personally.

Empower

The Empower programme is a critical media literacy intervention designed for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 students. This programme aims to improve students' literacy skills by enhancing their ability to critically engage with digital media, discern misinformation, and express their perspectives safely online. Given the increasing importance of digital literacy in today's world, the Empower programme offers a valuable opportunity for schools to support students' reading and comprehension skills. By focusing on critical media literacy, the programme helps

students develop the ability to analyse and understand complex texts, which is essential for improving overall reading skills.

The Empower programme is designed to engage students with relevant and relatable content. These lessons cover topics such as the female experience online, misinformation, and digital resilience. By addressing real-world issues that resonate with students, the programme fosters a more meaningful and engaging learning experience, encouraging students to read and analyse texts critically.

Words that count

The Words that Count programme is a financial literacy initiative designed for young people aged 11 to 19. This programme aims to improve students' literacy skills by integrating financial education into literacy lessons.

Research shows a strong correlation between literacy and financial capability. Students with good reading skills are significantly more likely to have good financial skills. The Words that Count programme addresses this by providing students with the tools to understand and manage their finances, thereby improving their overall literacy through practical, real-world applications.

The programme includes a series of workshops and digital campaigns featuring community role models and influencers who share their financial literacy tips. These sessions cover essential topics such as budgeting, debt, credit, and money management, making the content highly relevant and engaging for students. By connecting literacy with financial education, the programme helps students see the practical value of reading and comprehension skills.

Intervention	When	Key Stage
Game Changers	Spring 1/2	3
Empower	Summer 1/2	3/4
Words that count	Autumn 1/2	3/4