



GEMS

مدرسة جيمس وينشستر الخاصة – الفجيرة
Winchester Private School

FUJAIRAH

GEMS Winchester School, Fujairah

Reading Policy

(Group and Guided Reading)



Policy First Adopted/ Last Reviewed	January 2023
Policy Holder	Julie Wickham
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Intent

At GEMS Winchester School Fujairah (WSF), we prioritise a High Performance Learning approach to foster confident, successful, and fluent readers among our students. Our comprehensive approach aims to cultivate competence in word reading, foster language comprehension, and cultivate a strong reading culture through exposure to diverse and high-quality texts throughout their academic journey at WSF. We firmly believe in the significance of systematic synthetic phonics as the bedrock of reading, enabling students to effortlessly identify letter sounds and read words with automaticity, ultimately enhancing their language comprehension and skill development. Through HPL ACPs we aim to develop precision in phonics application to support progress. As a majority of our students have English as an additional language, we are dedicated to implementing tailored teaching strategies that acknowledge English as an additional language, ensuring inclusivity and effective learning. By integrating literacy objectives across the curriculum, we provide optimal opportunities for students to enhance their reading abilities, emphasising both speed and accuracy.

We intend for all pupils to develop their reading skills as much as possible and will ensure this happens by:

- Laying a solid foundation through a rigorous phonics system in lower primary, emphasising regular practice to develop automaticity.
- Following a systematic reading programme with fidelity (Active Learn – Bug Club), encouraging consistent practice.
- Ensuring that all students participate in daily reading-focused lessons, providing ample opportunities for practice and meta-cognition development related to reading skills.
- Listening to each child read aloud at least once a week, allowing for practice and improvement.
- Intentionally moving from learning to read in foundational years to reading to learn, applying acquired skills through practice.
- Assessing and tracking students regularly to ensure that all students make consistent progress through practice. We aim to develop student confidence by helping students' become aware of their progress and encouraging them to persevere.
- Benchmarking reading against international standards, motivating students to practice and achieve higher levels.
- Providing additional support for students working towards expectations, offering extra practice opportunities. Collaborative strategies will be used to enhance confidence of lower performing students.
- Ensuring all staff are experts in the teaching of reading, guiding students in their practice effectively.
- Developing strong relationships between home and school to ensure support for home learning and additional practice. Developing an awareness in staff of the school and local community in terms of reading performance.
- Providing a range of reading material that is carefully matched to the child's reading level (Rocket Phonics readers and Active Learn Bug Club books), facilitating independent practice
- Ensuring all students have access to resource-rich libraries, encouraging practice and exploration including developing agility in students as they are challenged to take risks with the reading material they engage with.
- Intentionally teaching subject vocabulary to improve reading comprehension, reinforcing understanding through practice to ensure speed and accuracy
- Providing access to additional resources to support EAL students at all levels and age groups, facilitating practice tailored to their needs.
- Promoting a love of reading through regular practice, fostering a lifelong habit.
- Ensuring students apply their reading and literacy skills across the full curriculum, reinforcing learning



through practice in various subjects.

Implementation

Approach

At GEMS Winchester School Fujairah, we are dedicated to embedding the principles of High Performance Learning (HPL) in our implementation of the reading curriculum, ensuring that students develop not only strong reading skills but also key Advanced Cognitive Performance and Values, Attitudes, and Attributes like meta-cognition, perseverance and confidence.

We use the Rocket Phonics readers from KG1 to develop foundational reading skills. Rocket Phonics readers provide a rich variety of reading texts and visual resources, fostering meta-cognition, self-regulation, and intellectual confidence in our students as they embark on their journey to becoming confident and fluent readers and writers.

In addition, we use Active Learn Bug Club readers to further enhance progress with reading skills. Bug Club is a whole-school reading programme that links books with an online reading world to teach today's children to read. Combining rigorous pedagogy with fantastic design and technology, Bug Club provides the whole solution to teaching children to read. Engaging students in reading is at the core of Bug Club which supports the WSF approach to reading. It includes hundreds of books from a variety of genres with some of the best children's authors and illustrators to stimulate imagination and love for reading. Bug Club books have also been carefully levelled, supporting children in their early reading and guiding them through to becoming enthusiastic and independent readers. Automaticity, speed and accuracy are developed through consistent engagement with Bug Club readers.

Organisation:

- As a foundation for reading, from PreK to Grade 2 Phonics is taught daily for 40 minutes. These lessons include the reading of letter sounds, words, sentences and stories. This is usually the first lesson of the day. Strategies for developing confident readers through collaborative and fun activities are included
- From Grade 3 to Grade 5 guided reading lessons are taught three times a week for 50 minutes. This is usually the first lesson of the day.
- Due to the high percentage of EAL students as well as the variety of reading levels within a class, Guided reading lessons are personalised to ensure that student needs are met and progress is supported.
- Twinkl "Totally Pawesome Reading Gang" Guided reading plans and resources are accessed online by teachers. Teachers print plans that are suitable for the level of their teaching group and personalize them through annotations. Modifications to support EAL students are made where necessary.
- NGRT international assessments as well as Baseline assessments from Active Learn – Bug Club, are used to determine the reading age and level of the students to enhance performance.
- Key reading resources are printed and laminated for guided reading lessons. Online Twinkl and ActiveLearn Bug Club resources are also used.
- When staff are absent, the Guided reading lesson plans are easily accessible as teachers print plans and personalize them. Online Twinkl and Active Learn Bug Club resources are also accessible.
- All students from KG1 to Grade 5 are allocated Active Learn – Bug Club readers at their level. Reading from these books is completed during school and at home. This practice supports students developing comprehension, speed and accuracy.
- Reading groups participate in group reading sessions at least twice a week. .



- Students have an opportunity at least once a week to read out loud to the teacher or teaching assistant.
- Shorter reading bursts are included daily to enhance the student's opportunity to develop reading skills and become confident readers
- Lessons are structured across the curriculum to ensure opportunities for independent and group reading promoting critical and logical thinking.
- Reading is modelled by the teacher daily to students

Expectations / Targets

More than 90% of the students at WSF have English as an additional language thus our expectations and targets are aligned with this.

Pre-K focus on distinguishing sounds and blending and segmenting skills.

The Rocket Phonics program begins in KG1 and forms the foundation for reading skills.

Active Learn – Bug Club is implemented from KG2 to provide support for development of reading skills. Our expectation is that all students progress consistently to be competent and confident readers that match the level of their reading age.

Progression and Teaching sequence

There is a clear sequence of progression through the Active Learn – Bug Club reading scheme (see the overview of the scheme for more detail). Books are allocated according to each student's level and they progress from one set of books to the next. Active Learn Bug Club books are allocated in addition to Twinkl resourced Guided Reading Lessons to increase the opportunity for speed, accuracy and automaticity of reading skills.

Guided Reading Lessons

The teaching sequence of guided reading lessons within a week varies depending on the age and level of the students. As structured in Active Learn – Bug Club and Twinkl , the following approach outlines the standard progression of guided reading lessons over the week:

- Before reading: these sessions may include pre-teaching of phonics and high frequency words. They may also include the development of reading skills like encoding, decoding, using syllables etc. They also include talking about the front and back covers of books. The skill of predicting is encouraged at this stage of the lesson. This part of the lesson incorporates HPL meta-thinking skills to enhance the learning experience.
- During reading: Students read the text while thinking about certain questions posed to them before reading. Techniques and strategies for reading are modelled and students are supported and prompted to read. The teacher poses comprehension and critical thinking questions to students at intervals throughout the lesson. HPL analyzing skills are developed through critical and logical thinking
- After reading: content varies from comprehension questions to identifying language in the text. Critical thinking skills are encouraged as students engage with the text.
- Spoken language: students are provided with opportunities to use spoken language to demonstrate understanding for example retelling and sequencing.
- Writing skills: various tasks are set where students develop writing skills at their level. This may include pictures and labels, sentence and paragraph writing. Grammar and punctuation are developed through



SPAG activities . Precision with spelling is developed through focused spelling tasks

- Cross curriculum link ideas are available in guided reading lesson plans. The HPL linking ACP is intentionally planned for as students apply skills to read to learn in various contexts.

Group Reading

- Students are grouped in a class according to levels determined by the assessment strategies used for reading as listed under “Assessment”.
- Students have the opportunity to read with their group daily. In addition, students read out loud to the teacher or teaching assistant weekly.
- Groups are tracked and their progress is recorded on a Group Reading tracking sheet. Group reading promotes progress and mastery of reading skills to ensure speed, accuracy and automaticity.

Vocabulary

- Teaching vocabulary is a focus area to support the reading and language development of students especially with regards to EAL strategies. Linking is promoted through generalization and connection finding.
- Pre-teaching vocabulary needed for reading is implemented as key vocabulary is listed on the inside of book covers in Active Learn – Bug Club books. Key vocabulary for additional lessons across the curriculum is pre-taught.

Environment and resources

- A policy of “print everywhere” is followed in classroom and corridor displays to encourage the progression of reading.
- Learning environments are designed to support reading by including many reading resources and relevant vocabulary. HPL vocabulary is made more accessible through translations, picture and symbol support. Lessons include reading resources to support students’ language development.
- EAL resources are made available to support learning at school and at home.
- Reading material and resources are readily available in continuous play areas and enrichment corners to ensure students have constant opportunity to develop reading.
- The environment and resources are designed to support students HPL ACPs of realizing, linking and meta-thinking to ensure student progress

Assessment and Tracking

- The goal of assessment and tracking is to ensure student progress and develop intellectual confidence, resilience and perseverance as key characteristics in young readers.
- Baseline assessments are conducted within the first 6 weeks of a new year using Rocket Phonics or Active Learn Bug club assessments.
- At the end of each half term, the students are assessed at the reading level they have progressed to using Active Learn Bug Club assessments.
- Reading levels are recorded on online systems and passed on from year to year.
- Student progress is informed through a variety of methods. Guided reading lessons, weekly group reading sessions to the teacher or teaching assistant and weekly reading videos uploaded to Class Dojo form part of formative assessment for reading.
- Bug Club enables us to seek and interpret evidence about children’s reading progress. Informed judgements are supported by the wide range of assessment opportunities available to determine the skills that are secure and those that need more rehearsal. This range of possibilities will ensure that



assessment for learning is used effectively to pinpoint the 'next steps' for each student.

- We monitor through a range of methods and implement an assessment for learning approach to ensure that ongoing assessment informs planning. To build a more complete picture of the practice taking place in the school, we also have learning walks, featuring pupil voice, and opportunities to collaborate. Collaboration is a key value in developing competency and confidence in children.

Home learning

- Open communication with home is important and this is achieved through the home learning programme. Hardworking VAAs of practice, perseverance and resilience are encouraged through the home learning programme.
- We have an Active Learn Bug Club meeting power points and videos explaining the reading programme and how it works. The use of Bug- Club and Guided reading are further explained at parent meetings.
- Parents are kept in touch with how their child is doing through regular conversations over Class Dojo, feedback on home learning tasks as well as meetings and opportunities to discuss their learning, including termly Parent-Teacher conferences.
- Our Home learning programme supports the progression of reading by providing the following: selected reading books allocated to students electronically for daily reading. Bug Club quizzes ensure a fun way for students to evidence their reading comprehension while reading books at home.
- Additional support material – support books from Phonics schemes and word lists are sent home for reading practice.
- A weekly reading certificate is awarded in each class to celebrate student progress.

CDP

We aim to ensure student progress for reading in each Grade at least matches or is better than previous years. Our aim is to have all students' reading at or above their appropriate reading age. We believe that this is achieved through high-quality teaching, effective planning for next steps, additional support where needed and appropriate interventions. By promoting High Performance learning we practice the belief that all students can perform at a successful level with regards to reading. To ensure that all practitioners are experts in the teaching of reading, we ensure that regular training takes place. Where staff need more support, we encourage a culture of collaboration and sharing good practice. We invite teachers to watch their peers teach and access support from the middle leaders.