



Midsomer Norton  
Schools Partnership



St Matthias  
ACADEMY

# Reading Curriculum Booklet 2025-26 (*Internal*)

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## 1. Reading Strategy Overview

*“Reading is the gateway skill that makes all other learning possible”*

*Barack Obama.*

### **Reading Intent:** What we want to achieve and why?

At St Matthias we know that reading is essential for all aspects of learning. It is a vital skill that will support our students in their future placements, but also to become successful citizens of the modern world. As a school, we endeavour to ensure all our students are taught to read with fluency, accuracy and understanding through a variety of targeted and cross-curricular learning opportunities. Above all, we want children in our school to become enthusiastic, independent and reflective readers.

Reading is arguably the most crucial literacy skill for cross-curricular success in school and preparing young people for the rest of their lives. The curriculum continues to be dominated by text, both in print and on screen, and our learners need to be able to read effectively in order to understand, make sense of and take meaning from the wide range of texts presented to them. For a significant number of learners who enter our schools with a reading age below their chronological age, the reading demands of the secondary curriculum in particular prove extremely challenging. This is often a significant barrier to learning for students who are referred to our academy. Secondary school pupils who continue to have difficulty accessing text have already struggled with learning to read for up to seven years. We aim to support those students to make rapid progress in their reading so that they can move on to their next placement with the tools required to succeed.

Through our whole school approach to teaching reading, small group targeted literacy sessions and individually targeted phonics intervention programme, we aim to:

- *Inspire students to develop a love of reading that lasts long beyond their school years; share with them an enthusiasm for literature and help students to recognise the value of reading as a life skill.*
- *Enable our learners to read confidently, fluently, accurately and with understanding.*
- *Allow opportunities for students to experience success with reading, develop confidence and build a positive attitude to reading.*
- *Close the gap so that all learners make progress and achieve their best.*
- *Expose students to a variety of high-quality texts and experiences that inspire and inform progress in reading.*
- *Ensure that students are exposed to a range of texts from different cultures, times and experiences to help develop their cultural capital and aid their understanding of the world around them.*
- *For reading, comprehension skills and vocabulary to be developed and promoted across the school in all areas of the curriculum so that learners' can see its importance to all aspects of life and for all staff to have the knowledge and tools to enable this.*
- *Provide pupils with the tools to access written English in a variety of contexts including phonological awareness, decoding skills, narrative, understanding and comprehension.*

### **Reading Implementation:** A multifaceted approach to serve our multifaceted community

In implementing our curriculum intent for reading we are aware of and seek to address contributing factors that may have inhibited reading enjoyment and progress up until now.

That students arrive to us with:

- negative experiences of education and reading in school

- consequent negative attitudes to learning and reading
- cultural and social contexts and pressures which have not encouraged nor enabled reading for pleasure

Reading is taught throughout the whole school and all teachers are teachers of reading. At St. Matthias, we strive to give pupils a stimulating environment, where reading is common and materials are presented in an attractive and inviting way.

In addition to reading across the curriculum at St Matthias Academy, all students receive small group intervention in reading. They have extensive opportunities to improve their reading skills in their targeted reading sessions throughout the week. These focus on specific development areas: vocabulary building to ensure they have the necessary vocabulary for life and for their academic curriculum and reading for pleasure, which allows them to develop a love of reading for enjoyment, using a wide range of books and other texts that they can choose from.

Students who are identified as working significantly below their chronological age are able to receive additional one to one phonics intervention to rapidly improve their reading skills. Students who struggle in school frequently have struggles with reading so regular and effective intervention can make a huge difference on their academic ability as well as their behaviour. Staff are trained to implement the Read, Write, Inc phonics intervention programmes which are designed to help students who are not yet confident and fluent readers.

### **Reading Impact**

The impact of reading is monitored across a range of progress measures linked to the broad provision and opportunities to display reading skills. Progress is centrally tracked and monitored by key staff as set out in section 2.

*Measurements for progress in reading are taken from:*

- **Primarily-** *Progress in Reading ages set by YARC across testing periods*
- *Progress in Vernon spelling tests*
- *Progress in RWI Phonics intervention assessments*
- *Progress in English summative assessment outcomes over time*
- *Improvement in SPAG skills from formative teacher marking*
- *Improved engagement and confidence in tutor reading tasks*
- *Improved engagement and confidence in lesson reading tasks*
- *Student self-assessment*

## 2. Reading Assessment and Monitoring Process

St Matthias delivers a comprehensive and regular process for measuring progress in reading ages for all students in all year groups. This process follows a regular timeline across each student’s individual stay within one of our schools with additional testing and screening in place as necessary.

### a. Process and schedule for testing Reading Ages

- All Students complete an online reading test on arrival using **York Assessment of Reading Comprehension (YARC)**, **Vernon Word Spelling Test** and **Read Write Inc (RWI) phonics** assessment to establish their baseline to assess for gaps in learning and decide which tier of intervention will be appropriate.
- Testing then repeats every 12 weeks to monitor progress against baseline and ensure the most effective support is in place.
- Retesting will follow this model:
  - *YARC to be reassessed every 12 weeks for students working below their chronological age (All tier 3 and 4)*
  - *YARC reading tracker to be updated at reassessment.*
  - *RWI assessments to be updated on the RWI tracker after each intervention*
- Dates for each reading test are set out in **Table 1**.

**Table 1** - Testing annual schedule (In line with MNSP Policy)

Year group	RA Assessment Point	Calendar Point	Age Related Expectation (ARE)	Minimum Age Related Expectation
7	Initial YARC assessment	Induction	11	9
	Re-Test for students under ARE	<i>Every 12 weeks</i>		
8	Initial YARC assessment	Induction	12	10
	Re-Test for students under ARE	<i>Every 12 weeks</i>		
9	Initial YARC assessment	Induction	13	11
	Re-Test for students under ARE	<i>Every 12 weeks</i>		
10	Initial YARC assessment	Induction	14	12
	Re-Test for students under ARE	<i>Every 12 weeks</i>		
11	Initial YARC assessment	Induction	15	12.6
	Re-Test for students under ARE	<i>Every 12 weeks</i>		

## b. Process and Profile for Establishing Reading Tiers

- Following initial testing, students are placed into 1 of **4 Reading Tiers**, set by results against age related expectations (ARE)
- Benchmarks for the profile of each Tier are set by Chronological Reading Age (CRA) and are set out in **Table 2- column 1**
- Test results are further screened by the Leadership and SENCO using additional data to ensure the weakest readers are identified and fully supported
- Each Tier is provided with bespoke intervention, support or challenge to promote meaningful progress in reading age regardless of ability

**Table 2:** Establishing Reading Tier profiles from YARC SWRT Testing

Reading Tier Profile of Student	Reading Age Range Across the Cohort Test 1				
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Tier 1- Students testing Sig + above their CRA	>14	>15	>16	>16	>17
Tier 2- Students testing in line with their CRA	10.6- 14	11.06 - 15	12.06 - 16	13.06- 16	14.06 - 16
Tier 3 - Students testing below their CRA	9 - 10.6	10 - 11.06	11- 12.06	12.6 - 13.06	12.6 - 14.06
Tier 4- Students testing Sig - below their CRA	< 9	< 10	< 11	< 12	< 12
Average Chronological Reading Age	11 - 12	12 - 13	13 - 14	14 - 15	15 - 16

## c. Monitoring and Recording Progress in Reading

- After each test point, a student's progression in reading is monitored to measure effectiveness of intervention and identify any further students needing additional support
- Each students Tier is then reviewed so that they may:
  - *Remain in that Tier*
  - *Graduate up to a higher tier due to more rapid progress*
  - *Move down to a lower Tier where progress in ARE has levelled or gone backwards*
- Responsibilities for monitoring and recording progress are set out in **Table 3 below**

**Table 3: Monitoring and Recording Responsibility**

Staff Member	Monitoring and Recording Responsibility	
	What	When
Tutor	Completion of the Tutor reading Programme	Tues, Weds, Thurs
English Lead in Home School	Completion of Reading Wise - RAG rated	Weekly
	Ensure Levelled texts and RWI interventions are taking place	Weekly
	YARC reading tests	Every 12 weeks
Reading Lead	Completion of the above	In line with above assessment

### 3. Intervention/Support/Challenge at each Reading Tier

Students in all Tiers are provided with targeted support to either support rapid progress or ensure appropriate challenge. These are set out in **Table 3** below. Further details of each support package are given later in this document

**Table 4: Support and Intervention for each Reading Tier**

Reading Tier	Intervention/Support/Challenge
Tier 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils in Tier 1 will complete vocabulary sessions on Reading Wise 2 times a week set at their level of challenge</li> <li>Be directed towards targeted texts that challenge texts in personal reading</li> </ul>
Tier 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils in Tier 2 will complete vocabulary sessions on Reading Wise 2 times a week set at their level of challenge</li> <li>Monitored and supported through additional challenge texts in personal reading</li> </ul>
Tier 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils in tier 3 will require a one to one reading session – Targeted texts comprehension on Reading Wise once a week, plus 2 sessions of decoding on Reading Wise.</li> <li>Monitored and supported through more ambitious but appropriate texts in personal reading</li> </ul>
Tier 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils in Tier 4 will likely require one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Write Inc. (RWI) intervention once a week and targeted decoding</li> <li>ZIP phonics or Decoding sessions on Reading Wise 2 times a week.</li> <li>Targeted texts comprehension on Reading Wise once a week</li> </ul> </li> <li>Increased testing schedule to monitor progress</li> <li>Monitored and supported with reading engagement through suitable texts in personal reading</li> </ul>

#### 4. Reading Support Programmes











St Matthias’ reading support is delivered across a range of programmes and packages each chosen to target specific reading development needs and to promote reading for pleasure and education.

##### a. Tutor Programme

Students in are able to improve and practise their reading skills through the agreed tutor programme which is set across all three sites.. The tutor programme is fully focused on developing strong reading skills , competence and enjoyment through regular engagement with carefully chosen texts.

The Tutor programme consists of the following elements and is set out in Table 4 below

- Two sessions of **Reading Wise**
- One session of literacy
- One session of reading for pleasure

Tutor Programme - Term 1				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Assembly 	Reading Wise 	Literacy 	Reading Wise 	Elsa 
Elsa 	Numeracy 	Reading for Pleasure 	Numeracy 	Assembly 

##### a. Reading Wise Tutor Programme

**Intent** : Reading Wise is an online programme aimed at KS3 and KS4 to deliver rapid reading improvement in reading by targeting individual needs for all Tiers.

At St Matthias, this programme is delivered as part of our Tutor Programme with students assigned to specific tasks, challenges and aspects of the programme depending on their Reading Tier and level of support necessary.

Reading Tier	Reading Wise Strategy
<b>Tier 4 (sig -)</b> : Students with a reading age under 6 years old identified as in need of phonics support	Complete the Zip Phonic sessions
<b>Tier 4/3</b> : Students with a reading age lower than their chronological age	Enrolled in the Decoding programme + Intervention

Tier 1 and 2: Students at or above their reading age	Complete vocabulary modules designed for their age and ability level
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**Implementation:** *The Reading Wise Programme is delivered as part of the Tutor Programme 2 times a week for at least 20 minutes of the 25 minute tutor time.*

*In line with the structure of the Programme, students work Individually on IT and completing either zip, decoding or vocabulary tasks based on the Reading Lead’s screening and assessment.*

*Completion and progress are monitored by the Reading lead. All tutors are trained on how to facilitate the programme and provide support to ensure the programme is run effectively across all sites.*

**Table: Roles and responsibilities for Reading Wise**

Role	Responsibility
<b>Teacher/ Tutor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To ensure sessions are planned for and resourced</li> <li>● To track engagement of reading programme in class charts</li> <li>● To ensure all literacy displays are maintained</li> <li>● To ensure <i>reading journals</i> are maintained.</li> <li>● To have key words displayed for all subjects</li> </ul>
<b>English Leads:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To ensure tutors are following tutor programme</li> <li>● To ensure reading journals are maintained</li> <li>● To update weekly Reading Wise tracker</li> <li>● To ensure issues with progress and engagement are addressed</li> <li>● To provide literacy intervention booklets and targets.</li> </ul>
<b>Literacy Lead:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Conduct reading learning walks during academic year</li> <li>● To monitor trackers</li> <li>● To monitor Reading Wise dashboard</li> </ul>

**b. Reading Wise - Levelled Text Sessions**

**Intent :** Students who are able to complete all the modules of Read, Write Inc but are **still below** their reading ages complete a reading intervention 1 to 1 session once a week.

**Implementation:** During this session students will engage with Reading Wise, levelled texts or biographies.

- Students log in to Reading Wise.
- Select either **Levelled Texts** or **Biographies** from the home page.
- Select one of the texts available by clicking on it. (green tabs are at the right age, red are for stretch)
- Complete all the tasks by following the guided steps.
- Once the tasks have been completed, students take the quiz for this section.

**Table: Roles and responsibilities for Reading Wise Levelled Sessions**

Role	Responsibility
<b>All RWI (LS) staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To meet once a term to discuss any issues and training needs.</li> </ul>
<b>English Teacher:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure 1:1 reading intervention are happening on site</li> <li>To ensure the tracker is completed</li> <li>To investigate why students are not making progress</li> <li>To meet with Intervention Leads at least once a term to discuss student progress and procedures</li> <li>To liaise with English HOD around progress for students on site termly.</li> <li>Run intervention sessions once a week for selected students.</li> <li>Update intervention tracker Levelled texts.</li> </ul>
<b>Reading Lead</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor overall progress</li> <li>Meet regularly with English team to discuss student progress and intervene where necessary</li> </ul>

**c. Read, Write, Inc -**

**Intent:** Read, Write, Inc is a target one to one support programme to support students within the threshold of reading intervention in **Tier 4** identified as needing support in developing phonic skills.

The aims of RWI are to:

- *reaching the expected standard of the phonics screening check*
- *teach pupils aural discrimination, phonemic awareness and syllable/rhyme awareness in order to encourage good spelling.*
- *encourage repetition and consolidation, so that spelling becomes automatic.*
- *encourage pupils to segment and blend.*
- *learn to read and write all 44 phonemes in the English language.*
- *teach pupils specific strategies to help them remember tricky words.*
- *ensure that the teaching of phonics is lively, interactive and investigative.*
- *encourage learners to apply their phonic skills in all curriculum areas through independent reading.*

**Implementation:** Read, Write, Inc interventions is held for all students who are placed in **Tier 4** target at the appropriate developmental stage. This is delivered across all our sites to ensure consistency and best progress in learning. Phonics intervention is delivered by teachers and LSAs who have had specific Ruth Miskin training.

- Students will have at least one one to one session a week
- Progress will be tracked and monitored by English Teachers and intervention staff on the RWI tracker.

**Table: Roles and responsibilities for Read, Write Inc.**

Role	Responsibility
<b>Trained Intervention Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To see necessary students once a week</li> <li>● To complete the tracker weekly, as below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>The date and status will need to be completed in the correct column</i></li> <li>▪ <i>All students should be entered weekly.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Students should be RAG'd according to engagement and attendance</i></li> <li>▪ <i>When a student leaves, they should be marked in grey and moved to the bottom of the spreadsheet.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>English Teacher Responsibilities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To ensure RWI interventions are happening on site</li> <li>● To ensure the tracker is completed</li> <li>● To investigate why students are not making progress</li> <li>● To meet with RWI Intervention Leads at least once a term to discuss student progress and procedures</li> <li>● To complete observation and meeting forms</li> <li>● To liaise with English HOD around progress for students on site termly.</li> </ul>
<b>All RWI staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To meet once a term to discuss any issues and training needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Reading Lead</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Monitor progress of all students using programme</li> <li>● Arrange training for staff implementing programme</li> <li>● Attend development days to ensure up to date training</li> </ul>

#### **d. Weekly Literacy Task**

**Intent:** The Literacy Task takes place once a week as part of the St Matthias tutor programme. It is intended to set and improve a student's individualised literacy targets and reading skills including vocabulary.

**Implementation:** *In each session tutors will carry out the following tasks:*

- **Literacy Booklet Tasks**

#### **e. Personal Reading**

**Intent:** *The personal reading session takes place once a week as part of the St Matthias tutor programme. It is intended to support reading for pleasure, engagement and commitment to regular reading.*

**Implementation:** *In these sessions Tutors will choose from a range of options to work with their individual classes. A tutor might, for example, choose to work through a class reader aimed at a specific level of challenge, interest or a specific focus for the personal development curriculum.*

*Tutors may also encourage personal reading in these sessions, being careful to guide students depending on the agreed need of the student. Support on the most appropriate reading choices are set through graded books to allow Tutors to sign-post students to suitable and appropriate texts.*

*Reading sessions are recorded in personal reading journals, which students may also use to record reading at home or at social times.*

## 7. Strategies for Supporting Reading in Every Lesson

As well as the target reading programme above, all teachers will follow the guidance below when presenting materials and engaging with students. This guidance is intended to facilitate better decoding and comprehension of reading materials

- **Pre-read the selected text:** This is essential in enabling teachers to spot any problems that your pupils may have accessing the text. Is the text suitable for all your pupils? What are the issues of vocabulary, layout, density of text, etc. they are likely to stumble across
- **Give regular reminders:** During any reading activities, remind pupils about the reading prompts and strategies they can use to access the text such as phonics.
- **Create a context:** When we read any new text we use our prior knowledge from the texts we have already read and the world around us to help us to make sense of the information. Creating a context using group discussion, diagrams, charts and summaries helps to support learners with limited prior knowledge and experience of reading a wide range of texts.
- **Model reading skills:** This is a crucial strategy and helps to make the skills of effective readers explicit and demystify the reading process. When modelling reading, teachers should share what they are doing and thinking as they read. Explore the key features of the text. What do you notice about the text? What kind of text is it? (Instructional, descriptive, evaluative, etc.) Share the reading strategies you are using. What do they do when something doesn't make sense or they come across a new word or phrase?
- **Check pupils' understanding through questioning:** Direct questions to students to help ensure that students have understood texts, prior to moving on.
- **Provide a range of reading opportunities:** In order to widen the reading repertoire, it is essential that we provide opportunities for pupils to read a variety of different texts. Evidence suggests that there is a positive relationship between reading frequency, reading enjoyment and attainment and has been reported as more important for children's educational success than their family's socio-economic status.
- **Check the presentation of our own resources:** This is particularly important for struggling readers and pupils with dyslexia. Consider the following when presenting text:
  - Use short sentences where possible.
  - Do not use elaborate fonts.
  - Select font size 12 or 14.
  - Leave spaces between lines.
  - Bulleted or numbered points are easier to interpret
  - Use headings and subheadings.
  - Use bold font to highlight words (italics and underlining can make words run together).
  - Print on pastel-coloured paper, e.g. pinstriped paper.
  - Avoid light text on dark background
- **Provide glossaries/displays:** Glossaries and displays provide useful support for unfamiliar vocabulary and key words. Try to include a visual representation alongside the selected word definition and provide a context for using the word, e.g. within a sentence supporting Reading in all Lessons.
- **Utilising phonics strategies:** It is expected that all teachers will be trained on and understand and implement the targets below for utilising phonics in their lessons.
  - *knowledge of phonemes*
  - *decoding*
  - *blending*
  - *segmenting skills*
  - *recognition of syllables*
  - *root words*
  - *strategies for spelling.*

## 8. Reading Opportunities Across the Curriculum

### a. English Curriculum Set Texts - Key Stage 3

The KS3 English curriculum at St Matthias allows students to read and engage with texts in more detail a wider and more targeted range of set texts. Text choices are rooted in the National Curriculum and adapted to our school's context to ensure a wider and more developed SMSC and Literacy experience.

#### Key Stage 3 English Curriculum set texts

KS3 NC- Unit	Text and Author	SMSC/Literary link
Poetry	<b>War Poetry (WW1 &amp; WW2)</b> By various	Canonical/reading engagement/ Historic interest- links to KS4
	<b>Poetry from Other Cultures</b> By various	canonical/reading engagement/ Historic interest- links to KS4
Contemporary Novel	<b>THUG</b> By Angie Thomas	Strong female protagonist/cultural diversity/tolerance/racism
	<b>Terror Kid</b> By Benjamin Zephaniah	Cultural diversity/tolerance/racism/adolescence -
	<b>The Breadwinner</b> By Deborah Ellis	Historic interest/Strong female protagonist/ complex narrative/loss and bereavement
Shakespeare/ Seminal Literature/ Drama	<b>Macbeth</b> By William Shakespeare	Canonical/Strong female protagonist Reading engagement/adolescence - links to KS4
	<b>Othello</b> By William Shakespeare	Canonical/Strong female protagonist Reading engagement/adolescence - links to KS4
	<b>Gothic Literature - Short Stories</b> By various	Canonical/reading engagement/ Historic interest- links to KS4
Creative Writing	<b>Dystopian Writing</b> By various	Canonical/ Reading engagement/adolescence - links to KS4
	<b>Short Stories from Other Cultures</b> By various	Historic interest/Strong female protagonist/ complex narrative/loss and bereavement

## b. Wider Reading Across the Curriculum

As well as through the English Curriculum and Tutor Programme, St Matthais embeds opportunities to read across every subject. Examples of these are set out below.,

Subject	Reading Opportunity	Intent
Art	<i>Researching Biographies of artists</i> <i>Descriptions of artwork</i>	Build subject specific descriptive vocab and desc
IT	<i>Reading &amp; searching through text on the internet</i>	<i>Building granular accuracy</i>
Food Studies	Reading a variety of recipes	Develop understanding of sequences and following written instructions
Maths	Reading key words and reading to extract key information from worded questions	Apply mathematical knowledge to real-life situations
Science	Reading diagrams and graphs	Extracting key information
DT	Descriptions of tools and their uses Descriptions of products Reading Health & Safety instructions and signs	Build subject specific vocabulary and descriptions
Careers	Researching careers and understanding the world of work	Build confidence in work-related vocabulary
PE	Reading instructions for games and researching aspects of health & fitness	Apply sequenced steps to practical activities, select key information to inform healthy choices
PSHE	Reading and researching around rights & responsibilities, the rule of law, personal finance and British values.	Developing active citizenship skills and knowledge to inform positive personal and social choices.