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Phonics is a way of teaching students how to read and write. It helps students hear, identify and use different sounds that distinguish one word from another in the English language. Written language is best compared to a code, so knowing the sounds of individual letters and how those letters sound when they're blended, will support students to decode words as they practice their reading. To understand phonics is to know which letters to use when writing words. Phonics facilitates the matching the sounds of spoken English with either, individual letters or collective letters. Ultimately, teaching students to blend the sounds of letters will help them decode unfamiliar or unknown sounds by sounding them out.

'It is what you read when you don't have to that determines what you will be when you can't help it' - Oscar Wilde.

1. Purpose

At Stafford Hall School, we believe that every student has the right to high quality teaching and learning opportunities that will help them develop literacy skills which are functional, providing them with the opportunity to reach their potential whilst at school and after they leave.

English is a core subject and this should be reflected through the timetabling and time spent on literacy activities. Throughout the school week students in need will have the opportunity to engage in high quality phonics and begin to use phonetic approaches in reading and writing alongside a range of other reading and writing strategies. Spoken Language is also a focus and should reflect our whole school focus on the promotion of effective and functional communication.

2. Comprehension

At Stafford Hall School, we value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time our student's leave us, they will read confidently for meaning and enjoy reading for pleasure. We believe teaching every student to read is so important and in doing so, they are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary. This is promoted by our literacy co-ordinator who drives the early reading programme in our school. This staff member has extensive knowledge in delivering our phonics and reading programme, as well as supporting and monitoring our reading team.

3. Reading Intent:

At Stafford Hall School, we aim to develop reading literacy, through our DNA, the following attitudes:

Respect

Inspire

Support

Effort

At Stafford Hall School, our approaches and strategies reflect the requirements of the EYFS and National Curriculum. Reading is taught throughout the whole school as part of English and other curriculum areas. Reading is an integral part of the school day. Learning across the curriculum contributes to students development of language, since speaking, listening, writing and reading are, to varying degrees, essential in all lessons. We aim for our students to:

- Read easily, fluently and with good understanding, age and ability appropriate texts.
- Enhance their reading through strategies and skills: fluency, accuracy, understanding and response by engaging in wide range of literary genres/ types of texts.
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information.
- To develop digital literacy skills that helps readers to navigate the information on web.
- To understand and respond to literature drawn from a range of cultures and literary heritage.

4. Reading Implement

Reading for Pleasure:

This will occur for 15 minutes every day during PD sessions. This will be a mixture Guided Reading and independent Reading.

a. Guided Reading:

This is where the Tutors and students will select a book to read together. This strategy can cause issues in an SEMH environment. However, such opportunities can ask the students to strengthen their understanding of their school DNA. However, given that many of our students have suffered trauma – having an adult read to them can be therapeutic and aide their recovery.

b. Independent Reading:

This involves allowing a student to buy their own book. This sense of ownership can empower students. However, by allowing students to select their own book the likelihood of them reading it can increase. Therefore, the reading can feel pleasurable.

Recovery Reading:

This involves identifying which students are performing below age related expectations. We are able to baseline all our students and identify which students need additional support. Any student who is performing two years or more below age related expectations will take part in 1:1 reading intervention. The colleague leading 'Reading Recovery' will be Phonics trained and committed to student improvement. The strategy will involve:

- Using Barrington Stoke literature/books; these are age appropriate in regards to interest, but will also be age appropriate in regards to reading ability
- Students will be provided with three books from a wide genre - this will add to their Cultural Capital

- Whilst reading, the adult will record any errors, and help the student understand the error. The errors will be recorded in a reading high word frequency log.
- When the student has successfully completed the three books, they will be rewarded (200 credit per book). The student will also sit a reading test based on previous reading errors recorded in a high word frequency log (80%: 100 credits / 90%: 200 credits / 100%: 300 credits).

5. Reading Impact

We strive at Stafford Hall to create a strong, embedded reading culture through a rich language environment within classrooms and the wider school environment. In doing so, to nurture fluent, confident and independent readers who can transfer these skills across the curriculum and beyond. At the heart of it all, we hope for all our students to develop a love of books and reading which lasts a lifetime.

We encourage for parents and carers to play a role in supporting and developing children's reading skills and love of reading. This is encouraged through English homework and reading books which can be accessed via Google Classroom and student homework books. We recognise the value of parents and carers as essential components of the child's learning and development.

6. Phonics Intent

At Stafford Hall School, Phonics is taught so that it is accessible to all: every student knows more, remembers more and understands more. Phonics is a key dexterity which encourages the growth of early reading skills. We merge quality phonics instruction with exposure to a wide range of texts. In doing so, we promote reading for pleasure to provide our students with the necessary skills they need to have a successful beginning to their lives as readers.

7. Phonics Implementation

In order to implement our intent, we have:

- Developed a Phonics that uses elements of Twinkl Phonics .
- A scheme of work that teaches specific and relevant vocabulary
- Daily phonics lessons whereby the students learn new phonemes, improve their ability to segment and blend sounds, to thus apply this knowledge into their reading and writing.
- A progressive scheme of work where the teaching of phonics begins in Pre-school and progresses in line with student's readiness.
- A scheme of work where students learn the 44 common sounds in the English language and are taught how to blend these sounds to decode (read) words
- A rigorous assessment system that informs teaching
- A cohesive and consistent approach to teaching Phonics, where daily sessions follow the same structure: \ Revisit/Recap \ Teach \ Practise \ Apply \ Assess
- Regular reading opportunities and story times for all students during form time.
- Ensured that staff are equipped with the necessary professional development to deliver our curriculum.
- Opportunities for whole school and class enrichment on afternoons and feel-good Fridays.
- A subject leader who monitors teaching and learning to improve standards and outcomes.
- A curriculum that meets the needs of all students (including SEND and SEMH).

8. Phonics Impact

We hope for all our students at Stafford Hall to confidently secure their knowledge of phonics. In doing so, to securely blend and segment their words, in line with the phonics screening. More importantly, for all our students to secure a love for reading. We ought to maintain a culture where a secure knowledge of phonic sounds enables reading for pleasure as part of our reading curriculum.

We encourage for parents and carers to play a role in our students learning of phonics. This is encouraged through a range of phonics activities that can be accessed via Google Classroom and students homework books. This enables students to learn phonics beyond the classroom and for parents and carers to be part of this learning experience.