



Isaac Newton Academy Reading Policy

‘I declare after all there is no enjoyment like reading! How much sooner one tires of anything than of a book!’ (Jane Austen, ‘Pride and Prejudice’)

‘My father had left a small collection of books in a little room upstairs. From that blessed little room, Roderick Random, Peregrine Pickle, Humphrey Clinker, Tom Jones, the Vicar of Wakefield, Don Quixote, Gil Blas, and Robinson Crusoe came out, a glorious host, to keep me company. They kept alive my fancy, and my hope of something beyond that place and time . . .’ (Charles Dickens, ‘David Copperfield’)

‘The more you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go’.
(Dr. Seuss)

Aims

At Isaac Newton Academy our aim is to equip every student with the knowledge, learning power and character necessary for success at university and beyond. In order for every student to meet our challenging targets and high aspirations, our students must become highly proficient, fluent readers, able to read effectively and productively.

At Isaac Newton Academy we aim to systematically cultivate in our students the habit of reading, to develop their confidence in reading, and to ensure that they acquire love of reading that will last a lifetime.

The rich experience of reading that each student at Isaac Newton Academy encounters will support the development of their BRIDGES learning dispositions which are fundamental to being an effective learner and to success and fulfilment in life, for example: experimentation (B,) questioning (R), humanity (I), imagining (D), perseverance (G), empathy (E), absorption (S).

Ensuring that students have access to a wide range of challenging and engaging books and other reading materials and that they have opportunities to read for pleasure is a priority for the Academy. Students are provided with many varied opportunities to engage with written texts, through all subject areas, discrete reading lessons, Independent Learning tasks and during enrichment activities.

The importance of reading

Large-scale international research has demonstrated that reading for pleasure is ‘the most important indicator of the future success of a child’, (OECD, 2002). This is further supported by research by the

National Literacy Trust which consistently highlights the link between reading for pleasure and reading attainment and also the relationship between book ownership and literacy attainment.

A National Literacy Trust report, 'The Gift of Reading' (2011) concluded that 'The gift of reading is particularly important to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Our results have found that young people who receive free schools meals were less likely to report access to books e.g. 27% had never been given a book as a present compared with 17% of non FSM students and 17% had never been into a bookshop compared to 10% non FSM students.' The research also concluded that 3.8 million children in the UK do not own a book. The number of books in the home is directly linked to a child's reading levels; of those who do own books, half are above average readers and a third read at the expected level. At Isaac Newton Academy, in order to close the gap in attainment between socio-economically advantaged and disadvantaged students, we compensate for this deficiency through our teaching and encouragement of reading.

Doug Lemov in 'Helping students get the most out of reading' makes these key points:

- 'Reading is *the* skill. Teaching students to unlock the full meaning of the texts they read is the single most powerful outcome a teacher can foster. If your students can read well, they can essentially do anything.'
- 'If you teach, no matter the subject, you have the opportunity and the obligation to ensure that your students read more (and better).'
- 'We are what we read and how we read it and no other single activity has the capacity to yield so much educational value. And yet, students in many schools spend precious little time actually reading. Likely, they read for less than half an hour a day.'
- 'Research suggests that a ten thousand word vocabulary gap exists between students of privilege and students from less advantaged backgrounds by the time they reach tenth grade (Year 11). This disparity in and of itself may account for a significant part of the learning gap.'

At Isaac Newton Academy every employee is considered to be a teacher of reading and has a responsibility to promote and encourage reading.

Strategies for promoting reading at Isaac Newton Academy

- All Year 7 & 8 students have a one hour reading lesson in the Library each week
A love of reading and the habit of reading is developed from entry into the Academy and the Library is seen as the heart of the school. Reading lessons are carefully planned to reinforce positive reading behaviours, ensure that students make demonstrable progress in reading skills and extend each student's reading experience.
- All students' reading ages and levels are tested on entry to inform differentiated reading lesson planning and to decide which students should have additional reading intervention. All students' progress in reading is measured and monitored throughout the year (retested in June).

A baseline reading test and a reading age test at the beginning of Year 7 are followed up by half termly and end of year reading assessments in English. This enables close monitoring of each student's progress in reading and appropriate interventions put in place by the Head of English, if required. The reading levels and profile of each year group generated by the baseline tests are analysed and the findings presented to and discussed with all staff.

- *Interventions are put in place for students whose reading is below expectation on entry. Students entering the Academy with a reading age significantly below that expected of a child their age are given additional opportunities to practice reading in a 1:1 or small group setting with an LA or other adult. Small group guided reading sessions during reading lessons are also targeted specifically at students who read literally and with little understanding.*
- *Staff are trained on strategies to support students' reading across the curriculum. There is an agreed approach to reading across the curriculum, including the consistent use of strategies for supporting students with decoding texts/comprehension and vocabulary.*
- *All students are challenged to read widely and to experiment by reading a range of genre. The library stocks a diverse range of fiction and non-fiction texts. A dialogue about books and reading is encouraged by, for example, publishing students' book reviews on the Library Catalogue System; all staff regularly engaging in conversations with students about their reading; students making presentations about the books they have read in reading lessons. The librarian provides English teachers and form tutors with details of the books borrowed by each student in their class/form group to enable the teacher/form tutor to discuss book choices.*
- *All students are given a common fiction text to read and review before entry. The text forms the subject of key reading event in the first weeks of the autumn term (and will potentially include an author visit/book reading). Students' book reviews are displayed in the library and around the school.*
- *All adults in the academy are seen as readers and teachers of reading. Staff model good reading habits by, for example, reading the Year6-7 summer text, discussing books and reading during form period, sharing subject-based articles and texts in lessons, leading assemblies on reading and instigating displays that promote reading or visiting the student book club. There are photographic displays showing every member of INA staff reading. Form tutors facilitate discussions about students' reading during morning registration and ensure that the student librarians maintain a display board showing what the tutor group is currently reading.*
- *Reading skills are developed in all subject areas. Teachers use a range of reading activities and explicitly refer to and teach reading techniques to support students' reading in their subject. Departments have subject-related texts on display for students to refer to in lessons for additional research on a topic, for extension tasks or to loan for independent learning activities. For further detail see the INA 'Guide to Supporting Reading Across the Curriculum'*
- *The library is the centre of initiatives to promote reading*

The library is at the heart of the Academy. The librarian promotes a wide range of weekly and monthly initiatives and events to promote reading and encourage students to visit the library regularly. A programme of activities is published at the beginning of each term. Student librarians play an active role in promoting reading through, for example, being consulted on the choice of texts and involvement in planning the weekly library activities.

- The English curriculum supports students in making appropriate levels of progress in reading by the end of Key Stage 3
A well structured curriculum ensures that all students develop knowledge of quality literary texts, that they develop the skills and strategies to read for meaning and deep understanding, and that they understand the author's craft.
- Students' reading is monitored
The Librarian collects and analyses data on book loans and visits to the library. Students also record their reading in their reading journals during reading lessons which are monitored by their English/Reading teacher.
- Students are encouraged to persevere with their reading and are given recognition for doing so
Termly reading awards are awarded by the Chairs of Governors to the students in each form who have read the most books, those who have read the widest range of genre, and those who have increased their reading.
- Parents/Carers are involved in promoting and encouraging their child's reading
Parents/Carers are introduced to the INA Academy Reading Policy at a parents/carers' meeting in September of Year 7 and they are given guidance about how they can best support and encourage their child to develop the habit of reading.

See Helping Your Child To Read At Home.

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