



The Mill Academy

Approach to teaching of Reading



Intent

At The Mill Academy, our approach to reading is derived from the HCAT Reading Curriculum, which is firmly rooted in the National Curriculum. Our aim is to develop children who read with fluency, enjoyment, and discernment. Pupils are regularly exposed to a wide range of high-quality texts and are given meaningful opportunities to analyse, discuss, and enjoy them fully.

Teaching is supported by the LIRA approach (Literal, Inferential, Reader Response, and Author Intent), which helps teachers plan and deliver lessons that ensure thorough coverage of all key reading skills. This model enables pupils to build literal understanding, make inferences, respond personally to texts, and explore the intentions of authors.

Our curriculum is progressive and carefully sequenced, with objectives and texts chosen to meet the needs of our learners. It is structured across different domains to guarantee broad coverage of reading skills, ensuring that children build knowledge and understanding year upon year. Our approach is underpinned by the Accelerated Learning Cycle and is designed to be ambitious and inclusive for all pupils, including those with additional needs.

Implementation

At The Mill Academy, reading is taught daily through lessons that focus on objectives from the HCAT Reading Curriculum. Lessons develop fluency and comprehension through structured teaching, high-quality teacher-led discussion, and shared exploration of stories, poems, and non-fiction. Pupils are exposed to a broad balance of reading skills by engaging with each of the curriculum domains.

Questioning and activities are carefully planned with the LIRA approach in mind, ensuring that children are challenged to think deeply and develop as confident, skilled readers. The texts studied are guided by the HCAT Reading Spines, which organise books by genre, year group, and lexile level to ensure both accessibility and challenge.

Each week, one dedicated session is devoted to promoting a love of reading. During this session, children select an age-appropriate book to enjoy independently or with support, both at school and at home. Home reading is monitored using reading records, and there is a clear expectation that pupils read at least three times a week outside of school.

Impact

At The Mill Academy, reading lessons are marked daily, with self, peer, and teacher feedback ensuring that children understand their progress and next steps. Reading is

assessed formally at two points during the year using HCAT year group trackers, which allow teachers to allocate levels and identify next steps for each pupil. These assessments are moderated within school to ensure accuracy and consistency.

Every pupil reads with an adult in school at least once every half term, with priority readers receiving additional support more frequently. The frequency, fluency, and comprehension of each pupil's reading are tracked in a dedicated reading file, alongside the use of reading records to monitor home reading. This ensures that every child is reading a book suited to their age and ability and that they remain on track with their fluency and comprehension.

Adaptations

At The Mill Academy, our reading curriculum is ambitious and inclusive. Each lesson includes a main activity where all pupils can practise and demonstrate their understanding, with scaffolds and extensions provided to ensure accessibility and challenge. Teachers and curriculum designers hold high expectations for all learners, including those with SEND, and the curriculum is never unnecessarily diluted.

Adaptations are carefully considered to meet the needs of individual pupils. Learning is sequenced in coherent chunks to enable children to build on prior knowledge. For pupils with complex needs, a personalised curriculum may be developed, always with ambition and high expectations at its core. Where working memory presents challenges, teaching is adapted to reduce extraneous load and emphasise key information.

Adaptations may include breaking learning into smaller steps, providing pre-teaching and consolidation time, and explicitly introducing vocabulary in advance. Pupils' support plans record individual adaptations, ensuring consistency of provision. We do not assume that practical tasks automatically support SEND pupils more effectively, as these can sometimes lead to distraction or overload. Instead, content is kept ambitious, with careful adjustments to delivery that ensure accessibility for all learners.

Example reading spines



YEAR 1 SELECTED TEXTS

Below are a range of texts for year 1 to be shared and enjoyed with children to encourage a love of reading.
These include fiction, poetry and non fiction.



Pool Is That You?



Funny Bones



Lost and Found



The Paper Dolls



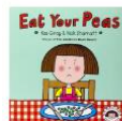
Meesha
Makes Friends



Man on the
Moon



The Light house
Keeper's Lunch



Eat Your Peas



Look Up



Smile Out Loud



The Storm Whale



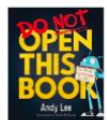
The Smeds and the Smoos



Supertato



Great Women who
saved the Planet



Do Not Open this Book



How to Wash a Woolly
Mammoth



Little people Big
Dreams: King Charles



Paddington



Deep - Sea Voyage



YEAR 6 SELECTED TEXTS (925-1150)

FICTION



Escape From Pompeii



Arthur and the Golden
Rope



The Hobbit



Alex Rider



The Arrival



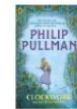
The River Boy



Operation Blackout



PAX



Clockwork or all
wound up



The Hunger Games



The Girl with Space
in her Heart



The Boy in the
Tower



Where the World
Turns Wild



Rumblestar



The Night Spinner



The Tale of Beedle
the Bard



Holes



Goodnight Mister
Tom



Letters from the
Lighthouse



Orphans of the Tide



SKELLIG



The House With
Chicken Legs



When We
Were Warriors



The Star-Spun Web



Windrush Child