

The Totteridge Academy: Literacy and Numeracy Catch-Up Policy

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Updated September, 2025

Literacy and Numeracy at The Totteridge Academy

The Totteridge Academy is an inclusive school that celebrates individuality and diversity. We have high expectations of all of our students and work to ensure children are working at their expected age in Literacy and Numeracy and put intervention in place if they are below it. United Learning have the catch-up target of all students working at age related expectations in English, Maths and reading age by the end of Year 8.

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At TTA we want all our students to be excellent communicators, helping them interact with the world around them. It is therefore vital that they are taught the skills of effective reading, writing and speaking.

Literacy is foundational for success in school and later life. Students who cannot read, write and communicate effectively are highly unlikely to access the challenging academic curriculum in secondary school and more likely to have poor educational outcomes across all subjects. (Rickets, J., Sperring, R and Nation, K. (2014))

The skills of literacy are used in every subject and activity in school and as such are a priority for all areas of school life. With good levels of literacy, we unlock the curriculum and provide a foundation for excellence in all subjects, giving our students the experiences and opportunities to be the best they can be.

In order to deliver this, we will:

- Ensure that all students are supported to become **fluent readers**.
- Ensure that students are taught how to read and write academic texts in **different subjects**.
- Develop students' **vocabulary**, ensuring that they learn both subject specific terminology as well as academic vocabulary.

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- Provide opportunities for students to **explore and celebrate a variety of texts and perspectives**, providing a wider cultural experience.
- Support the **development of writing** in all subjects.
- Teach students how to develop their **spoken language** skills.
- Ensure our full and rigorous **curriculum is made accessible** for all students, including those with literacy and numeracy needs.

The Goal at TTA:

- Boost a passion for reading across the whole school and introduce topics that students and staff are passionate about which span the curriculum and extra-curricular.
- Work to ensure all students' reading ages are within 6 months of their chronological age by the end of Year 8.
- Develop students' writing skills by teaching them explicitly how to think and write academically to explore more than one idea in a sentence.
- Develop students' oracy skills by: encouraging appropriate tone, volume, and pace; asking students to 'say it as they'd write it'; ensuring students get a wide range of opportunities to speak publicly.

To access the curriculum, students need to have the skills required to read age-related reading materials. This needs to be a focus for all teachers in all lessons.

Intervention:

1. Intervention is based on **diagnostic assessment** using the **NGRT** assessments. Students in KS3 are assessed twice per year (with an additional assessment taken for those who complete an intervention programme to measure the impact of this).
2. The LSA team work with the Literacy lead on **1:1 and small group intervention**.
3. A **phonics programme** is in place for struggling readers who have gaps in their phonic knowledge. This is done via 1:1 and small group intervention, with 2 of the team as phonics specialists, as well as Literacy Planet, which has a phonics programme to follow. Our Catch-Up and Well-being Lead and learning support team are also phonics trained and support students on a 1:1 basis.
4. Students have access to **appropriate reading books**. Students are encouraged to use the school, and local libraries. 'Book of the Month' is a feature in the student/parent/carers weekly Newsletter.

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5. **Frequent monitoring** is in place for all intervention students (and those who have 'graduated' out of intervention). Intervention is monitored through NGRT testing and questionnaires for students and staff once an intervention programme has been completed.

Literacy in the Curriculum:

Departments think specifically about how students are accessing reading, writing, oracy and literacy within their curriculum. We:

- Ensure that all students are supported to become fluent readers – through our tutor reading programme and tutor reading strategies that run throughout the curriculum and across all lessons;
- Ensure that students are taught how to read, write and talk about academic texts in different subjects – through our rigorous subject curriculums and by every subject teacher.
- Develop students' vocabulary, ensuring that they learn both subject specific terminology as well as academic vocabulary – through our 'word of the week', development of explicit vocabulary instruction in lessons and tutor time, and training for staff as well as a carousel training rotation on reading, explicit/implicit vocabulary instruction, and word and sentence-level questions.
- Provide opportunities for students to explore and celebrate a variety of texts and perspectives, providing a wider cultural experience – we have thought carefully about our tutor reading text choices to ensure variety, interest, challenge, and develop a passion for reading.
- Support the development of writing in all subjects – through our 'Writing Revolution' at TTA to teach students sentence-level writing skills. This has been done through regular training and carousel sessions.
- Teach students how to develop their spoken language skills – through our oracy units, Jack Petchey Speak-out Challenge, and Year 7 speaking competition. As well as cold-calling in lessons to ensure that all students have the opportunity to speak and are guided with this.
- Ensure that staff are flagging spelling, punctuation and grammar errors in books and students are purple penning these.
- Communicate reading ages on report and send strategies home and to students to help develop their reading skills outside of school as well.
- Complete Sparx Reader for 30 minutes per week.
- Year 7 Speech Competition

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All of this is underpinned by: bi-annual NGRT reading tests, analysis of the results, letters home to parents with updates and support strategies, support strategies for staff and training on supporting our weakest readers. Every student's reading age, EAL level and language, and SEND need is on our Classports so that teachers know the needs of the students within their classroom and how to support these.

Tutor Reading Programme

Our Whole School Tutor Reading Programme is an important part of wave one Literacy provision. Students have fluent reading modelled to them and take part in reading with their tutor and tutor group for 70 minutes (2 x 35 minute sessions).

We run our whole-school tutor reading programme with every student in Years 7-11. Books have been chosen to develop students' passion and love of reading, as well as to expose them to a wide range of topics and authors. Staff use the same techniques when reading including: tracking with bookmarks, 'pick up please', 'freeze finger, track me', bridging, emphasis and flair, notices on board, knowledge organisers for every book with key information and questions, stop/define/contextualise key words, moral discussion topics.

- The books that are read are carefully chosen according to the purpose of the programme. Students are provided with a text that they are unlikely to engage with independently. The books seek to gain a balance between challenging, non-linear structures, different eras and writers, and student enjoyment.
- Each child in the room has a copy of the same book – they have TTA-bookmarks in their books so that they can find the page easily as well as track when reading.
- The child follows, ensuring that they are *reading* and not just *listening*. A simple way to monitor this is to use a bookmark or reading rulers to follow along in the text.
- We use common strategies to ensure that students are engaged, participating, reading out loud, and that reading time is optimised:

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Tutor Reading Strategies

Snappy

- ☐ Notices up
- ☐ Equipment check during reading
- ☐ Book monitor
- ☐ Students using bookmarks
- ☐ "Hold finger, track me."

Control the Game

- ☐ Reader unpredictable
- ☐ "Pick up please, Joye."
- ☐ Bridging
- ☐ Longer chunks for stronger readers

Modelling

- ☐ Emphasis and flair
- ☐ Focus and commitment


Vocabulary

- ☐ Stop, Define, Contextualise, write on board

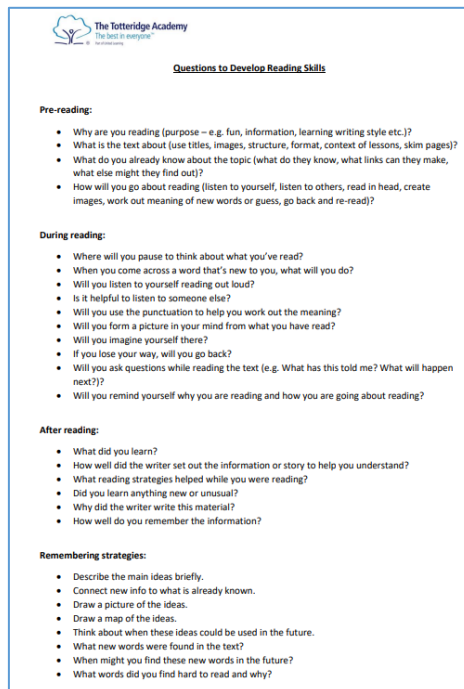
Read vs Talk

- ☐ Re-cap
- ☐ 1 discussion for: understanding idea/moral discussion/student question

We explicitly teach, model and scaffold comprehension for all students, helping them become expert readers. Teachers do this according to the reading needs in their subject. However, there are general reading strategies that can be taught to all students as a foundation for reading and Literacy, as well as metacognition questions to support reading:

<div>  The Totteridge Academy The best in everyone™ Part of United Learning </div> <div> Supporting Literacy in the Classroom </div>	
Area of Literacy	It Will Help if You:
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage students to read every day and talk to them about what they are reading. Encourage students to read out loud in lessons using tutor reading strategies If students are unsure of vocabulary, ensure they learn new words and record them. Talk to students about the purpose of texts and their reading of them. Introduce a range of text types and styles within lessons. Set work and homework that will develop students' reading around a topic.
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct students' grammar in their written responses. List key words and check students' understanding of them in lessons and homework. Pronounce, define, and contextualise the key words. Support students with planning, structuring, drafting, writing, proof-reading, and editing. Right is right: only accept complete, high-quality answers with key vocabulary and grammar.
Oracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be positive and have high expectations for clarity and volume: "That is such a great idea; please can you say it again but louder this time so the whole class can benefit." Clarity of expectations: "I would like you to use your classroom voice when speaking so that everyone can hear your great contributions." Model what speaking at the right volume 'sounds like' and looks like (shoulders, head up, eye contact etc.) Use right is right to ensure correct vocabulary and correct writing structures: "Now say it as if you were writing it." "Now say that sentence but using the key word from today's lesson." "Now say that sentence but use a u-turn subordinating conjunction." Use no opt-out: "Now say the whole thing together to give me a full response." Ensure students are accountable for listening and responding: "What do you think of Kate's idea?" Use volume gestures for least invasive intervention: Hand to ear/facial/hand pointing up/pointing at key word/mouth. Use other students to gauge volume and hold one another accountable / get used to taking responsibility if they can't hear. Circulate consciously (move further away from the speaker). Look at the rest of class when speaker is talking.
Tutor Reading Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use your knowledge organisers every time you read to re-cap, ask key questions, and define key vocabulary. When reading: Stronger readers reading longer chunks; Bridging – tutor reads segments between students; Switch readers by saying, "pick up please Joye."; When pausing for discussion say, "hold finger, track me." Ensure every student in the group is tracking using their bookmark All take part – encourage everyone to read (even if a shorter chunk for some) Maximise the amount of time spent reading

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Literacy and Numeracy Catch-Up Provision at The Totteridge Academy

Total funding provided: £7000

Literacy and Numeracy:

- **Learning Support Assistant Support** (approximate cost per hour: £16.58)
 - Numeracy Intervention
 - 1:1 and small group support in lessons – 55 x 50 minutes per week
 - Literacy Intervention
 - 1:1 and small group support in lessons – 55 x 50 minutes per week
 - Reading Intervention
 - 1:1 Reading sessions during tutor time with Literacy co-ordinator and the Learning Support team – 6 x 30 minutes per week
 - Intervention in small groups – 25 x 30 minutes per week
 - EAL support
 - EAL co-ordinator with focus on specific intervention and support strategies
 - Lessons and intervention for Home Languages exams
 - EAL intervention group
 - Literacy and Numeracy Homework Support:
 - Daily homework support after school and at lunchtime
 - Learning Resources Centre open daily after school with staff support

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Numeracy

- **Times Table Rock Stars** - £129.27
 - Students use this programme to develop their accuracy and speed with times tables. This is monitored through assessments and baseline tests so that the impact can be regularly evaluated.
- **Sparx Maths** – £5,304
 - Students watch an online learning video and complete tests and assessments. Teachers track effort, accuracy, and time spent on the programme so that they can set personalised targets, interventions, and tasks.

Literacy

- **Sparx Reader** – £4,200
 - Students take an initial assessment to ascertain their reading level. Then, level-appropriate books (usually 2-3) are released to their personalised 'Library'.
 - Students read these books and complete tests and quizzes as they go to check comprehension, reading level, and reading speed.
 - The teacher sets a specific amount of reading per week and monitors this. Teachers then set personalised intervention and tasks accordingly.
- **Literacy Planet** - £750
 - 50 student credits to enable 50 students to complete online phonics, Literacy and reading programmes to increase their skills in these areas.
 - "Literacy Planet is a research and evidence-aligned literacy program, combining the science of reading, great storytelling and the psychology of game play to create a learning experience that educators and students love.
 - With LiteracyPlanet's curriculum guides, quickly and easily determine the skills that students need to build on at all stages of their literacy development. Our curriculum guides also identify the prerequisite and requisite skills that will fill gaps in understanding and prepare students to complete classroom tasks or practice."
- **Tutor Reading Programme** (approximate cost per year: £3,000):
 - Training to maximise development of students' reading and literacy skills
 - 2 x tutor time per week (50 minutes per week) spent with whole tutor group reading and tutor leading
 - Students reading the same book to develop reading skills and reading for pleasure
 - A wide range of books per year group to develop knowledge, understanding, and enjoyment of writers, genres, and content
 - Students track using TTA bookmarks
- **Department and Subject Vocabulary:**
 - Key spellings per subject in student planners
 - Subject teachers run regular spelling tests to develop spellings and key subject vocabulary.
- **Literacy Intervention** (approximate cost per year: £2000):
 - Achievement Programme intervention with a focus on Literacy

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- **Annual Literacy Quiz:** £10 p.a.
 - A competition against other Barnet Secondary Schools which develops students' knowledge and understanding of reading and fiction, as well as their teamwork
- **Read for Barnet Event:** £100 p.a.
 - Students write book reviews which are then entered with prizes to be won
- **Carnegie Shadowing:** £50 p.a.
 - Students read and review eight books shortlisted by a panel of authors and librarians
- **Lexia – Dyslexia Screener** - £250
 - An online dyslexia screener providing guidance for support and intervention as a result
- **Reading Clubs and drop-ins** - daily
 - Daily drop in to the library (before school, break, lunch, and after school) as well as weekly lunchtime reading

Monitoring and Evaluation of Literacy and Numeracy

- NGRT Assessments for Reading and Spelling Ages taken in Term 1 and Term 3 – £2, 415 (for all KS3 students 2 x per year + a third assessments for those in intervention, taken in Term 2).
- Ongoing formative assessments in lessons.
- Bi-annual formal assessments, the scores of which are recorded in the School Reports and sent home.
- United Learning Assessments for comparative data across all UL schools.
- Tracking of scores to look at reading and spelling ages compared to actual age.
- Sparx Reader also do reading age assessments and send analysis of this so we can track effective reading and impact with reading ages.

Supporting Students and Families

- Heggarty Maths and Timestable Rockstar login details and statistics are communicated with parents so that they can monitor and support students' use of these programmes at home.
- The Literacy Lead communicates reading lists, reading strategies, and updates on events and opportunities through the school newsletter, as well as at Parents' Evenings.
- The Literacy Lead has created 'one-pagers' for Supporting Literacy to go into staff Classport Folders. All reading ages for KS3 are on Classports (as well as reports) so staff can see specific reading ages and use the support strategies.
- Reading ages (previous and current) go in reports home, along with parent-facing equivalent 'one-pager', metacognition strategies, and key information to support reading.

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Data Analysis

The NGRT reports provide a wealth of data which United Learning share. Please see the reports and school spreadsheet analysis for further details.

GCSE Results: <https://www.thetotteridgeacademy.org.uk/results>

United Learning	Academy
Reviewed	Annually
Date Authorised	September 2025
Review Date	September 2026