



Castleford
Academy

Part of Castleford Trust



Literacy Strategy



Care Aspire Succeed

Introduction and Priorities

At Castleford Academy, literacy is at the heart of learning and achievement. Our approach ensures every pupil develops the skills to read confidently, communicate effectively, and write with clarity and accuracy. The strategy focuses on six priorities:

- Reading for pleasure
- Reading for academic success
- Targeted support for struggling readers
- Vocabulary development
- Oracy
- Writing

Through evidence-informed practice, structured teaching and carefully designed interventions, we aim to inspire a love of learning, foster independence, and enable all pupils to access and excel across the full curriculum.

**“Once you learn to
read, you will be
forever free.”
Frederick Douglass**

. Reading for Pleasure

We nurture a culture of enjoyment around reading so pupils see it as an engaging and rewarding part of school life.

Reading Events	We host events throughout the year, including Author Visits and World Book Day, to inspire a passion for reading.
Library	Our well-resourced library provides access to a wide range of genres, encouraging independent exploration.
Reading Awards	Pupils who demonstrate enthusiasm for reading are recognised through rewards and assembly celebrations.
BookBuzz	Pupils in Years 7 and 8 select a free book from a curated list to encourage ownership and engagement in reading.
Extra Opportunities	Additional opportunities to promote reading include author visits, reading clubs, and library leadership roles

2. Reading for Academic Success

We develop fluency, comprehension, and confidence to ensure pupils can access and enjoy increasingly challenging texts across the curriculum.

Reading Aloud	Teachers model fluent, expressive reading to support accuracy, automaticity, and prosody.
Read Through Me	Form tutors read a range of fiction and non-fiction texts aloud to enhance fluency, comprehension, and cultural capital.
Carefully Chosen Texts	Selected literature exposes pupils to diverse perspectives and ideas, broadening understanding of society and the wider world.
Core 4	Our Core 4 reading strategies—Predict, Clarify, Question, Summarise—equip pupils to become active, strategic readers. These are embedded in English lessons, reading sessions, and form time.
Reading Awareness	Teachers use pupils' reading ages to inform lesson planning and adapt support appropriately.

3. Interventions to Support Struggling Readers

We provide targeted, evidence-informed interventions to ensure all pupils become fluent, confident readers who can access the full curriculum.

Diagnostic Testing	All pupils complete standardised reading tests twice per year, providing a Standard Age Score to identify those in need of additional support.
Targeted Support	A tiered system of intervention ensures pupils receive the right help at the right time. Programmes include Freshy Start/Talisman Series (Wave 1), Fluency and Comprehension intervention (Wave 2) and Reading Plus (Wave 3)—each designed to accelerate progress while minimising disruption to classroom learning.
Fresh Start – Systematic Synthetic Phonics	Supports pupils reading below age-related expectations to move towards functional fluency. Sessions are delivered in small groups to ensure focused, personalised support.
Talisman Series	For pupils emerging beyond or approaching the end of Fresh Start (Module 26 onwards), this initiative provides structured opportunities to read aloud with adult guidance, building fluency, confidence, and comprehension.

Comprehension and Fluency	A booklet-based intervention aimed to support pupils who have recently graduated from a phonics program. teaching approach designed to improve reading speed, accuracy, and expression while also strengthening understanding of text. It typically uses strategies like repeated reading, modelling, and guided discussion or questioning to help learners read more smoothly and make sense of what they read.
Reading Buddies	Peer reading buddies is a collaborative reading strategy where pupils are paired to reading aloud and supporting each other. It helps improve reading fluency and comprehension by providing practice, feedback, and shared discussion in a supportive peer setting.
Reading Plus	An adaptive online literacy programme that develops silent reading fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary through personalised practice.
Literacy-Trained Specialists	Trained SEND staff and HLTAs deliver interventions with expertise and consistency, ensuring high-quality, individualised support for pupils with the greatest need.

4. Vocabulary Development

We explicitly teach vocabulary to strengthen pupils' understanding and ability to communicate precisely across all subjects.

Word-Conscious Teaching	Teachers introduce, define, and contextualise key vocabulary in all lessons.
Key Word Planning	Each subject identifies essential vocabulary in long-term plans and lesson resources.
Explicit Vocabulary Instruction	Using the SEEC model (Select, Explain, Explore, Consolidate), teachers develop understanding of complex words, supported by references to etymology and morphology.

5. Oracy

We develop pupils' confidence and clarity in speaking, enabling them to express ideas effectively and participate in structured discussions.

Full-Sentence Responses (Assessment for Learning – Six Fundamentals)	Teachers promote high-quality talk by expecting pupils to speak in full sentences and use formal language. Routines such as “Say it again, better” and “I say, you say” support precision and clarity, with teachers modelling effective oracy through metacognitive thinking.
ABC Oracy (Assessment for Learning – Six Fundamentals)	The ABC framework (Agree, Build, Challenge) supports higher-order discussion and critical thinking as pupils learn to agree, build upon, or challenge the ideas of others.
Think–Pair–Share (Assessment for Learning – Six Fundamentals)	Pupils rehearse and refine responses with a partner before sharing with the class, reducing threat while increasing rigour and participation.
Extra Opportunities	Performances, leadership roles, debates, and public speaking events further strengthen pupils' confidence, communication, and oracy skills.

6. Writing

We develop pupils' ability to write clearly, accurately, and with increasing sophistication across all subjects. Teachers use modelling, examples, and scaffolds to support understanding, independence and improve writing quality.

Narrate Your Thinking (Assessment for Learning – Six Fundamentals)	Teachers model the writing process through the “I do – we do – you do” approach, narrating their thinking to demonstrate the cognitive steps behind successful writing.
Use Worked Examples (Assessment for Learning – Six Fundamentals)	Worked examples, including WAGOLs (What A Good One Looks Like) and WAGBOLs (What A Bad One Looks Like), are shared to clarify expectations and highlight key features of effective writing.
Use Visualisers and Exemplars (Assessment for Learning – Six Fundamentals):	Teachers use visualisers and exemplars to show how to structure responses, develop ideas, and write with clarity and precision.
Scaffold, Don't Simplify (Adaptive and Responsive Teaching – Six Fundamentals)	Teacher's scaffold learning rather than simplify it. Tools such as sentence starters, structure strips, knowledge organisers, word banks, and exemplars guide pupils in developing independence and accuracy in writing. Scaffolds are gradually removed as confidence and competence grow.
SPaG Marking	Teachers use focused marking to identify literacy errors, supporting accuracy and proofreading skills. Errors are marked using agreed codes and corrected by pupils in green pen to reinforce learning.
Handwriting	Teachers maintain high expectations for handwriting and presentation across the curriculum. Explicit instruction, modelling, and intervention support pupils in developing legible, fluent handwriting, enabling them to record their ideas efficiently and communicate effectively in writing. Opportunities for regular practice help pupils build automaticity, confidence, and pride in their work.
Magic Link Handwriting intervention	Using the Handwriting Legibility Scale, targeted intervention is provided through the Magic Link handwriting programme and Handwriting Club, supporting pupils in developing accurate letter formation (with a specific focus on the 'terrible ten': l, j, a, d, g, r, n, m, h and z, legibility, fluency, and writing stamina.



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