



THE ECCLESBOURNE SCHOOL

'Learning Together For The Future'

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Dear Parent / Carer

I write to inform you of initiatives we are undertaking to support your child's learning in English.

At Ecclesbourne, we consider it essential that your child's English curriculum supports the development of their literacy. Studies show that students who can read, write and communicate effectively are more successful in achieving success in their subjects across the curriculum.

Your child's literacy will be developed through work in their English lessons. However, to supplement this, the areas outline below are key foci for all year groups.

Personal Independent Reading

- We promote a 'reading rich curriculum'. Your child has access to a well – stocked school library and a full – time librarian who is an expert in young people's literature. Your child's teacher will promote and discuss reading with the class. They will have a reading lesson at least once a half term. During this time, they will be given the opportunity to explore the library shelves.
- Each of your child's Key Stage Three English lessons begins with ten minutes of personal independent reading. This means that your child is completing approximately thirty minutes of independent reading per week. During this time, teachers will discuss book choices one – to – one with students and offer advice and support regarding suitable book suggestions.
- We run book clubs for all year groups. Years Seven and Eight are welcome to attend 'Books and Biscuits' on a Wednesday lunchtime in the English Department. For Year Nine and above, we have a weekly book group in the library. If these activities appeal to your child, please advise them to speak to their English teacher.

Vocabulary Acquisition

- As part of their Key Stage Three English curriculum, your child will complete a weekly vocabulary acquisition task.
- Promoting understanding of key vocabulary is embedded into each of our Key Stage Three Schemes of Learning.

Reading Accuracy

- During Key Stage Three, your child will complete a weekly piece of 'Accountable Reading' homework. This requires students to closely read an article. This process has been modelled to them in lessons. This homework is followed up by a short weekly knowledge check activity. This is designed to check that your child is reading carefully and has understood what they have read.

- Whilst it is a delight to see many of our students taking joy from their reading, we realise that this is not the case for every child. For those who struggle to read for pleasure alone, we encourage them to view it as a life skill that will open the door to future success. Engagement in the activities outlined above support their learning in both their English lessons and the wider curriculum.

If your son or daughter is a little more reluctant to pick up a book, some of the strategies below can be helpful.

- As far as possible, try to establish a regular pattern of reading. If your child has regular homework time, could reading for fifteen minutes be incorporated into this time?
- The diet of reading can be fiction or non – fiction. For some, reading about a favourite sporting star or musician can be more enticing than reading a ‘made up’ story.
- Graphic novels are currently very popular. Some young people find this an engaging new genre. We have a number in the school library.
- Some young people find reading more enticing if they can read on devices such as E – readers or Kindles. If your child wishes to read on such a device, we recommend setting parental controls to safeguard them from viewing unwanted content.
- ‘Shared reading’ can be very effective. Sharing the reading of a text can model ‘how it should sound’ to a young person. It also offers the opportunity to discuss the text. Asking your child questions about what they have read can also encourage them to read with more purpose.
- Some books have films and audio versions available. These can be very useful for supporting or rewarding reading.

In supporting your child’s literacy, we work in partnership with the Learning Support Department to offer a comprehensive programme of help and intervention. We will be in touch, should we consider this beneficial for your child.

If you have any questions regarding information shared in this letter, or would like to discuss your child’s reading further, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

With kind regards,



Annie Bell
English Teacher / Head of PDC / Reading Intervention Co - Ordinator