

## Pool Academy

### Use of Year 7 catch up funding in 2019/2020

Expenditure relates to various school staff as well as specific interventions and projects outlined below:

Expenditure	Estimated Cost (£)
Accelerated Reader	£3005
Sparx Maths	£4500
Achieve 3000	£3500
Skills Academy- National Literacy Trust	£100
Team of literacy leads for faculties	£5000
Resources (photocopying, books, star badges)	£500
Maths tutoring – Summer Term	£1000
<b>Total</b>	£17605 – carry over to 2020/2021 is £3367

### General information

Pool Academy has been allocated £12,000 for the academic year September 2019 to August 2020 and has carried over £9017 from the previous academic year. This money is targeted at Year 7 students who joined Pool Academy having achieved below scaled score 100 in English and/or Maths in KS2 SATS. The purpose is to ensure that they catch up with their peers who achieved the 'secondary ready' benchmark at the end of Year 6.

The **average baseline reading age for the 2019-2020 Catch Up cohort is 7 years 9 months**. Due to this we have a number of strategies and interventions in place in order to cater for the broad range of needs.

The **average baseline maths standardised score for the 2019-2020 Catch up cohort is 91**.

### Reflections

Students with reading barriers struggle across the curriculum, including in maths; nationally, only 11% of students who achieved below national expected standards in English in KS2 have gone on to achieve 5 good passes in GCSEs including English and Maths (EEF, 2014). As a result, we understand that -- above all else-- we need to ensure that our students are fluent readers; we also understand that there is no 'magic wand' for students with persistent struggles with literacy, and that consistent monitoring plus targeted, timely interventions are essential. Our subject specific Literacy Leads, roles we created as a result of Catch Up funding, are responsible for providing a range of programmes and interventions to help struggling readers improve and achieve fluency.

## 2018-2019 Reading Impact Data - Overview

	Reading age average progress October to May
Year 7 Pupil Premium	9.03 to 9.83 +8 months
Year 7 Catch Up	8:24 to 8:95 +7.1 months
Year 7 whole Cohort	10.14 to 10.86 +7.2 months

### Analysis of results

Data shows that Accelerated Reader has made a difference to our students but it is not a tool to be used in isolation. Pool Academy has appointed an Assistant Principal (experienced in raising levels of literacy across a school) and has developed a range of strategies designed to significantly increase the literacy and numeracy of catch up students, as well as that of the wider student body.

## 2019-2020 School Year

### Accelerated Reader

The **Accelerated Reader (AR)** programme remains our key tool to help students develop stronger reading skills; **all Year 7, 8 and 9 students participate** as it allows us to monitor progress and put in place additional interventions where needed. AR is a web-based reading programme which provides opportunities for regular online (adaptive) testing of all aspects of reading. Pool Academy students take the Star reading test four times per year. AR also develops reading growth by guiding students to a vast range of books that are the right level of reading difficulty (ZPD) for them – and it encourages reading for pleasure by giving them free choice to select which books they want to read within their ZPD. Students take electronic quizzes on each book they read to monitor comprehension. A September 2017 EEF research project indicated that this programme is ‘effective for weaker readers as a catch-up intervention’ with +.24 effect size (3 additional months of progress).

Once a week, every participating student has a half hour, silent reading lesson with their English teacher who is responsible for monitoring progress, supporting students in finding the right books, and where necessary, contacting home. Students track what they have read on their AR reading sheets. To ensure full effectiveness of the AR programme, we have a ‘Literacy Lead’ for English and she is responsible for ensuring consistency of AR lessons across the year groups. We also celebrate achievements with the Star Reading programme and the end of year ‘Word Millionaire’ trip.

## Reading Interventions

We utilise the AR Star test results to monitor progress of our Catch Up, SEN and PP students; the Assistant Principal, the Literacy Lead in English and the SENCO analyse results and put in place interventions tailored to our struggling readers. In the 2019-2020 school year, the following literacy interventions are taking place in Key Stage 3:

- 1) **Reading partner small group intervention.** This is a bespoke programme delivered to students with significant reading deficits by the Literacy Lead for English. It is designed to address the gaps in student knowledge that impede literacy. With focus on a popular children's novel, the programme teaches students to read accurately and fluently with good comprehension. It intends to expand students' vocabulary, alongside encouraging a love of reading.
- 2) **Achieve 3000.** This is an online comprehension programme. By embedding a set routine, students learn to decode unfamiliar vocabulary and to understand it within wider contexts. Alongside, strengthening students' literacy skills, the programme also builds students' cultural capital by exposing them to a broad range of non-fiction texts, ranging on subjects from history to environmental studies. In essence, the curriculum offered comes with differentiated literacy instruction and promotes deep thinking on culturally significant topics.
- 3) **Read, Write Inc.** For a variety of reasons, some students face significant decoding barriers and need greater support to read accurately and fluently. Our close monitoring of student reading progress in 2018-2019 indicated a gap in our decoding provision, which we are beginning to address in the 2019-2020 school year with Read Write Inc for our weakest readers with phonics barriers. A research analysis of the effectiveness of synthetic phonics found significant positive results for this approach (*London School of Economics/American Economic Journal*, 2018); this is also the approach the DfE advocates for learning to read fluently.
- 4) **Reading Scholars Programme for catch up students – Reciprocal Reading (Skills Academy – National Literacy Trust).** This is a once a week intervention for English catch up students who are well below expected reading standards. It is run by the Assistant Principal in charge of literacy. King Alfred's is a pilot school for this National Literacy Trust programme called 'Skills Academy'; students undertake short reading activities based on the principles of 'Reciprocal Reading', which improves comprehension by helping students build predicting, questioning, clarifying and summarising skills. *EEF* research indicates that the Reciprocal Reading approach is particularly useful for FSM-eligible students (2019). In addition to building Reciprocal Reading skills, this intervention involves shared reading aloud of a novel; recent research indicates that uninterrupted reading aloud brings about rapid progress for 'poor readers' in particular (*Literacy Journal – UKLA*, 2019).

## Other strategies used to improve reading

In addition to the Key Stage 3 Accelerated Reader programme and the four targeted interventions, the Assistant Head in charge of Literacy, has increased literacy CPD for teachers and tutors. *EEF* research shows that 'quality of teaching is the single most important driver of pupil attainment' and that CPD is effective when it is 'supported by the school's leadership, sustained over at least two terms and includes expert input, peer collaboration and opportunities for teachers to consider and experiment with their learning and get feedback on their work' (2018). As a result, we have put in place literacy CPD and

resources with a clear and sustained focus on supporting struggling readers and teaching subject-specific vocabulary and academic reading.

- Year 7 tutors have been provided with a fully resourced '**Register, Read and Respond**' programme focusing on complex fiction and non-fiction texts/extracts that are read aloud by the tutor. Students learn academic (tier 2/3) vocabulary and respond to 'thought' questions.
- Tier 2/3 vocabulary is clearly identified in knowledge organisers alongside context sentences to provide examples. These are reinforced in lessons, building a bank of academic vocabulary for all students.
- The Assistant Principal in charge of Literacy has introduced a '**Word of the Week**' programme to all year groups. Focusing on Greek and Latin word roots, it is designed to give students the tools to decode tier 3 words
- Reading age information for each child is available to teachers on Arbor, enabling them to make adjustments for struggling readers (e.g. they need to read texts aloud to ensure comprehension).
- English specialists deliver the 'Read, Write, Inc' programme to our weakest students in year 7 and 8, all of whom struggle with literacy.

### **Sparx Maths**

In addition to the extensive work we are doing to improve literacy, we are also working to improve the maths skills of all Year 7 students, particularly those who entered Pool Academy with below expected progress in Maths.

Because Accelerated Reading has proved to be such a useful tool, we have invested in Sparx Maths and have enrolled all Year 7, 8 and 9 students in the programme. The head of the maths faculty will track data and attainment and is trialling the use of Sparx maths as a homework tool, as the programme allows teachers to identify individual gaps in learning and provide tailored practice. For the first time, in the 2019-2020 school year we can use AR and Sparx maths together to track overall progress for our Catch Up students.

### **Additional Maths Intervention**

- 1) **Tutorial maths Intervention.** Pool Academy has appointed a maths tutor to work with small groups of Year 7 students who are struggling in maths. These sessions will take place weekly in the morning and after school and are designed to improve students' understanding of number bonds and other basic mathematical knowledge.

### **Assessing impact**

The impact of interventions and programmes will be measured by comparing baseline AR, Sparx maths and Achieve 3000 data with end-of-year results. Additionally, we will have qualitative data on attitudes from the National Literacy Trust's reading attitude survey. Learning walks, Stakeholder feedback, literacy audits taken at the start and end of the academic year and internal data will help to measure the effectiveness of strategies.

## Sources

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