



23 September 2026

Dear Parents/Carers

At The Howard, we believe that strong literacy skills are fundamental to success across the curriculum and beyond school. Reading confidently, communicating effectively and understanding subject-specific language are essential skills for academic achievement, future employment and lifelong learning.

Our literacy strategy focuses on two key areas: **promoting reading for pleasure** and **delivering high-quality literacy instruction**. A strong vocabulary is at the heart of this approach, helping students to understand complex texts, communicate their ideas and access learning in every subject. This is how we aim to support students in developing these skills:

Reading for Pleasure

Research shows that students who read regularly for enjoyment achieve better academic outcomes, develop stronger vocabularies and gain a broader understanding of the world around them. To support this, all students will have dedicated opportunities to read during the school day. Students should bring a reading book and reading log to school every day. Reading activities will take place during:

- **Learning for Life** (Week 1 Thursday)
- **Drop Everything and Read (DEAR)** 20-minute daily sessions
- **Fortnightly Literacy Lessons**, including paired reading opportunities with Sixth Form volunteers

The recently undertaken Bedrock Reading Test results will help us guide students towards appropriate books from our Learning Resource Centre. The LRC is open at both break and lunch for students to choose books from, with an extensive range of fiction and no-fiction texts.

In addition to reading in school, students are expected to read for **at least 30 minutes each week at home**. All reading should be recorded in their Reading Log, which should be **signed weekly by a parent or carer**.

Bedrock Learning

All students will use **Bedrock Learning**, an online platform that develops vocabulary, reading comprehension and language skills in their fortnightly literacy lesson. Bedrock is adaptive and after a brief 'placement' assessment, personalises learning for each student. The programme will be used during fortnightly literacy lessons as well as set for homework. Students are expected to complete **at least 30 minutes of Bedrock Learning between each fortnightly literacy lesson**.

Bedrock can be accessed at <https://app.bedrocklearning.org/> and students should sign in using their Office 365 account (with their school email address and school password). Students will need a pair of **cabled headphones** for literacy lessons, and these should be brought to every lesson.

Literacy Across the Curriculum

Literacy is not confined to literacy lessons. Across all subjects, teachers use our **"Pre-read, Read, Respond"** approach to help students access challenging texts, develop subject-specific vocabulary and improve comprehension. Departments also explicitly teach the skills needed to communicate effectively within their subjects and develop 'disciplinary literacy'.

Interventions

Where additional support is needed, students may be offered targeted literacy interventions such as additional phonics teaching or support with vocabulary, grammar or comprehension. Parents and carers of students receiving intervention support will be contacted separately.

Literacy Homework Expectations

Students are expected to complete:

1. **30 minutes of reading each week**, recorded in their Reading Log and signed by a parent/carer.
2. **30 minutes of Bedrock Learning between each fortnightly literacy lesson.**

Teachers will monitor participation and progress in both areas. The greatest gains in literacy occur when school and home work together. Thank you for your support in encouraging regular reading, signing reading logs and helping students complete their Bedrock homework.

Key Expectations

Students

- Bring a reading book and Reading Log to school every day.
- Record all reading in their Reading Log.
- Read for at least 30 minutes each week.
- Bring cabled headphones to literacy lessons.
- Complete 30 minutes of Bedrock Learning between literacy lessons.
- Parents and Carers
- Support and discuss reading at home.
- Sign the Reading Log each week.
- Help students remember their reading book and Reading Log.
- Provide cabled headphones for literacy lessons.
- Monitor literacy homework completion:
 - 30 minutes reading per week
 - 30 minutes Bedrock Learning per fortnight

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to working together to develop confident readers and successful learners.

Yours sincerely



Mr M Vowles
Assistant Principal