

Literacy Strategy: Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Why is Literacy so important?

Literacy is Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening. These combined skills improve our understanding of the wider world and enable us to communicate effectively with others. Developing these skills is one of the most important jobs of parents and teachers, good literacy skills enable young people to be successful and fulfil their potential in life. However, poor literacy skills hinder academic progress and social communication. This can have a negative impact on the life choices of a young adult.

What are the reading tests?

Reading tests enable professionals at school to know and understand the Reading Age (RA) of a young person compared to their Chronological Age (CA). All students at Haute Vallee will have an annual Reading Test so that we know every child's RA. We can then support students that struggle with their individual development of reading skills, whilst stretching and challenging those students who are confident readers.

For students with reading ages below their chronological age, reading tests may be more frequent, half yearly or termly. This shorter time period enables us to better understand the impact of the reading support programme 'Reading Plus' or the phonics development programme 'Lexia.'

What is the Literacy action plan?

The literacy Action Plan is a one year strategic plan outlining our aims and actions planned in the coming year. It forms part of an overall 3 year strategy and is closely linked to actions within the Jersey Premium Plan.

What are Literacy lessons?

Literacy lessons will occur in Years 7-9 as part of the curriculum for all students. In Year 7 Literacy is one of the main components of the Horizon programme. This further supported by a weekly Literacy lesson. In Years 8 and 9 Literacy lessons are timetables and are one hour per week, supported by an additional hours of English. Literacy lessons focus specifically on the development of skills in Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening. Students are grouped in Literacy lessons based upon their individual reading age.

What reading support and intervention will take place?

Students with a reading age two years below their chronological age will be offered 'Reading Plus' with the support of a trained teaching assistant. Reading Plus is an online reading intervention programme and requires 60 minutes regular support per week, every week to boost confidence and fluency in reading and understanding new vocabulary. For students with a reading age below 9.6, chronological age, additional support with the development of phonic (sounding groups of letters that make words) will be provided using a software package called Lexia. This will also be supported by a trained teaching assistant.

What is the six book reading challenge?

Every student is expected to read six books each academic year. This equals a minimum of one per half term. Students will be provided with some time in school each week to read, but are also expected to read on a regular basis at home.

What is the partnership with the Town Library?

Haute Vallee has a new partnership with the Town Library. We will be encouraging all students in Years 7-9 to become an active member and visit the library on a regular basis to take out books / e-books to read, or undertake learning projects. We also hope the mobile library will periodically visit our school so that students who may struggle to get to the Town Library, can still access new reading books of their choice. A reading book list can be found in the student planner.