



Kingsdale Foundation School

Reading Strategy 2026–27

1 Purpose and strategic aims

Reading enables pupils to access an ambitious curriculum, participate fully in school life and develop independence. Kingsdale will combine explicit teaching in every subject, assessment-led intervention and a strong reading culture. This strategy covers Years 7–13 and connects classroom practice with English, Learning Support, the library and families.

Disciplinary literacy

Departments will explicitly teach the vocabulary, text structures and reading processes their subjects require. Pupils will learn to interpret evidence in History, causal explanations in Science, conditions in Mathematics and language choices in English. Academic reading will become increasingly independent through the sixth form.

Curriculum access

We will identify reading barriers before arrival wherever possible, assess specific needs and begin matched support promptly. Appropriate scaffolds and accessible formats will enable pupils to engage with challenging subject content while targeted teaching develops their reading skills.

Oracy integration

Structured speaking and listening will help pupils rehearse vocabulary, explain interpretations and justify ideas using textual evidence. Teachers will model subject language and provide supported discussion before independent writing.

Strategic leadership

We take a coordinated whole-school approach to reading. The Director of English and Learning Support leads the strategy in partnership with English leadership and the SENCo. Our priorities are early identification, effective teaching, timely intervention and sustained progress. The targets in this strategy set out what we aim to achieve by July 2027.

The strategy is informed by the DfE Reading Framework and evidence on secondary reading. Impact will be judged through pupils' skills, curriculum access and engagement, rather than programme completion or enrichment participation alone.

2 Reading principles and classroom expectations

Phonics and accurate word reading

Pupils with decoding gaps receive systematic synthetic phonics after diagnostic assessment. Trained staff follow the programme sequence and use matched decodable texts, teaching blending rather than guessing from pictures or context. Subject teachers model pronunciation and explain unfamiliar technical words.

Fluency

Teachers will model accuracy, automaticity, phrasing and expression. Supported rereading, echo reading and paired practice will build fluency. Short oral reading checks will distinguish decoding difficulties from language comprehension needs. Pupils will prepare before reading aloud and will not be publicly exposed to tasks that undermine confidence.

Vocabulary

Departments will teach essential subject terms and academic vocabulary in context, including pronunciation, roots and word parts where useful. Pupils will revisit and use vocabulary in speech, reading and writing. Language departments' vocabulary books, personalised glossaries and the school's word of the week will reinforce this work. Bedrock supports vocabulary development in Years 7 and 8 alongside explicit subject teaching.

Comprehension and oracy

Teachers will build background knowledge and model how to clarify meaning, identify main ideas, infer from evidence, summarise and monitor understanding. Paired rehearsal and structured discussion will help pupils explain and test interpretations. Sentence stems, wait time and alternative response routes will support pupils with communication needs.

A shared routine adapted to each subject

- Before reading: establish the purpose, activate relevant knowledge and explain essential vocabulary.
- During reading: model the subject's reading process, pause at useful points and check understanding.
- After reading: discuss, explain or write to apply knowledge and revisit vocabulary.

Accessible presentation and individual adjustments

Teachers use Edukey and Pupil Passports to implement individual adjustments consistently. Support includes advance access to essential texts, chunked passages, keywords, glossaries, reduced copying and additional reading time, matched to each pupil's needs. Resources use clear, left-aligned text, readable sans serif fonts and sufficient spacing. Pupils receive explicit help with charts, diagrams, abbreviations and complex instructions. We maintain academic challenge and review scaffolds as independence grows.

3 Transition assessment and early intervention

Year 6 to Year 7 transition

The transition lead, English and Learning Support will analyse available KS2 reading results, teacher assessments and existing provision before entry. Meetings with feeder schools will identify pupils whose decoding, fluency or comprehension is insecure, including pupils whose test results may mask a specific difficulty. Parent information and pupil voice will inform the initial profile.

- Request reading information for every incoming pupil and follow up missing records. Record pupils below the KS2 expected standard and pupils with known reading support needs.
- Arrange targeted feeder-school discussions about successful strategies, intervention history and remaining gaps; do not rely on a single test score.
- We will deliver a shared reading transition project with feeder schools, using accessible book choices, discussion prompts and vocabulary activities. For the 2027 intake, materials will be prepared during spring and used during summer transition.
- Create a provisional support list before arrival. For pupils already admitted in 2026, complete outstanding transition checks during the autumn review.
- Begin matched intervention within the first half-term for pupils identified before arrival. Provide interim classroom adjustments while assessment is completed. Apply the same prompt response to later entrants.

Screening and diagnostic follow-up

NGRT provides a standardised overview of reading attainment. We will screen 100% of Year 7 by the end of the first half-term, with catch-up testing for absence and new entrants. Our annual assessment calendar schedules reading assessments across cohorts using tests within their age norms. CAT results inform a wider learning profile but do not replace reading assessment.

We interpret Standard Age Scores and component information alongside classroom evidence. Reading ages inform this assessment but do not provide a diagnosis or a fixed label. Diagnostic follow-up identifies specific gaps in phonics and other reading skills. We review unexpected results in the context of test conditions, attendance, language background and previous evidence. We distinguish language acquisition needs from SEND.

The graduated response

Every flagged pupil will receive appropriate diagnostic follow-up and a provision decision within four school weeks. Checks will distinguish decoding, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension needs. Record the starting point, teaching focus, frequency, responsible adult and review date; share relevant adjustments through Edukey. Review programme assessments and classroom transfer at the end of each intervention cycle. Continue, adapt, intensify or conclude support on the evidence, with SENCo review and specialist advice where needed.

Reassessment will follow test guidance on forms, timing and age norms. Exit requires sustained skill development and classroom transfer, with a follow-up check; a single increased score will not automatically end support.

4 English and Learning Support provision

Weekly literacy lessons and buddy reading

Years 7, 8 and 9 have one timetabled hour each week dedicated to reading and literacy, with library access. English will sequence vocabulary, fluency and comprehension teaching alongside sustained independent reading and discussion of curriculum texts. Assessment will inform additional support.

English manages buddy reading: Year 7 pupils read with Year 11, and Year 8 with Year 12. Older pupils will receive guidance on modelling fluent reading, supportive correction and questions about meaning. Sessions will use age-respectful, high-interest texts selected with the younger pupil. English will record attendance and review confidence, fluency and understanding. Peer reading complements specialist teaching; it does not replace phonics intervention.

Wandle phonics and catch-up teaching

We use Wandle screening and diagnostic assessment with Years 7 and 8 to identify gaps in reading. The Director of English and Learning Support uses diagnostic outcomes to match pupils to targeted teaching and intervention. Trained teaching assistants deliver support in form time, following the programme's sequence, assessment schedule and required teaching frequency. Additional teaching time will be allocated where pupils need it to complete the programme and practise reading.

Bedrock for Years 7 and 8

Bedrock provides structured vocabulary and language practice for Years 7 and 8. English sets the weekly expectation, monitors completion and provides supervised access for pupils who need support. Teachers revisit selected words and assess retention and transfer into unfamiliar reading, discussion and writing. We evaluate platform progress alongside independent evidence of learning.

Literacy Gold and supported homework

Learning Support provides Literacy Gold as an additional online resource, with home access and supervised use of four computers and headphones in SN4 at lunchtime or homework club. Selection will follow assessed need, and staff will review relevant reading and spelling skills. Provider descriptions and software completion will not be treated as evidence of local impact. Daily Learning Support homework club offers teaching assistant support in the LSC or SN2; English also provides homework support and additional Year 11 sessions after school, on Saturdays and during holidays.

Dyslexia Club and nurture reading

Dyslexia Club runs on Thursdays at 3.40 pm and supports reading, spelling, metacognition, writing, assistive technology and oracy. Individual goals will guide review. Years 10 and 11 can access lunchtime revision support, with targeted workshops and enrichment opportunities. Identified sixth-form pupils can receive time-limited dyslexia support.

Trained teaching assistants provide targeted nurture reading before or after school on a one-to-one or one-to-two basis, using appropriate Barrington Stoke texts to develop fluency, prosody, stamina and confidence. Accessible books also support library and English provision. They are not a phonics programme; pupils with decoding gaps need matched decodable texts as well.

5 Curriculum access and sixth form reading

Departmental implementation

Each department will identify its main reading demands, including source material, extended explanations, instructions, diagrams and digital texts. Planning will show where teachers model these demands and pupils practise them. Heads of Department will sample planning and pupil work to check whether reading teaching improves subject understanding.

Our research-informed practice includes explicit vocabulary teaching, modelling, supported repeated reading and comprehension instruction. Teachers model summarising, questioning and clarifying before pupils use these strategies in paired and group discussion. Staff adapt routines to their subject and evaluate their effect on pupils' learning.

Assistive technology and accessible formats

Microsoft 365 is available to pupils on roll. Staff teach appropriate use of Read Aloud and Dictate for homework, listening to learning materials and proofreading typed work. Pupils use audio alongside reading and annotating a text when this supports access. These tools complement direct teaching of reading and are used within our existing arrangements for access to devices.

We are developing access through RNIB Bookshare to provide accessible curriculum texts for eligible learners with a print disability. Learning Support manages eligibility and account arrangements and matches accessible formats to pupils' needs. Individual overlays support comfort or tracking where these are helpful. Staff refer visual concerns for appropriate eye-care advice.

Exam access arrangements

Learning Support and the exams team arrange individual examination support in accordance with current JCQ and awarding-body requirements. Decisions draw on the required evidence and the pupil's normal way of working. Examination reading pens, human readers and computer readers are provided according to individual eligibility and the rules for each assessment. Staff record effective everyday adjustments and refer concerns promptly.

Sixth form expectations

A-level departments will specify academic reading expectations, including preparation before lessons, independent reading beyond the core text and increasing stamina with extended material. Reading lists will distinguish essential and extension texts, with a clear purpose, manageable deadlines and guidance on note-taking.

Teachers will model disciplinary reading of scholarship, criticism, research and other relevant sources. Pupils will learn to identify arguments, evaluate evidence, compare interpretations, distinguish claims from conclusions and reference sources appropriately. Academic vocabulary will be explicitly taught, revisited and applied in seminar discussion and extended writing.

At entry to Year 12, subject teachers will review prior reading information and early work to identify pupils struggling with academic texts. Referrals to Learning Support will lead to age-appropriate assessment and targeted help with fluency, vocabulary, comprehension or dyslexia-related needs. Time-limited support, accessible formats and structured reading plans will be reviewed with subject staff. Post-16 support will retain the intellectual demands of the course.

6 Reading culture leadership and implementation

National Year of Reading and the Reading Festival

The National Year of Reading will provide a visible whole-school focus. Kingsdale's campaign for 2026/7 will use weekly bulletin notices, Monday tannoy messages, form-time slides, mystery reading prompts and a simple weekly challenge. Staff book recommendations and reading T-shirts will invite conversations about books. Campaign activity will connect pupils to library stock and sustained reading habits.

The Kingsdale Reading Festival takes place on Saturday 21 November 2026 with parents and pupils welcome. Author talks and questions, booksellers, book signings and library games and activities will connect reading with family participation. Staff will plan accessible participation and review attendance, pupil feedback and subsequent borrowing.

Reading clubs, book clubs, book swaps, peer reading and diverse, accessible book choices will continue beyond the campaign. Staff will help pupils choose books and discuss reading without making participation dependent on purchasing a book. Parents will receive practical advice on shared reading, book choice and short supportive routines at home.

Responsibilities and resources

- Director of English and Learning Support: coordinate the strategy with English leadership, oversee assessment-led support and report outcomes to senior leaders.
- SENCo and Learning Support: oversee the graduated response, intervention records, individual adjustments and specialist liaison.
- English leadership and Heads of Department: sequence literacy provision, manage Bedrock and buddy reading, embed disciplinary reading and review classroom transfer.
- Transition and sixth-form leaders: secure information at entry, coordinate referrals and check that pupils receive prompt support.
- Library staff and reading leads: maintain accessible stock, support book choice, coordinate enrichment and monitor borrowing and pupil voice.

Our resource planning covers NGRT and Bedrock licences, Wandle membership and training, matched texts, Literacy Gold access, staffing and protected teaching time, device access, library stock, CPD and enrichment. Senior leaders oversee the budget and funding allocation. We prioritise assessment and teaching capacity and review resources at each strategic checkpoint.

Three strategic review points

- December 2026: review baseline data, screening coverage, diagnostic follow-up, intervention capacity, transition records and Bedrock access; evaluate the reading campaign and festival.
- March 2027: evaluate intervention progress, classroom transfer, Bedrock learning, buddy reading and pupil feedback; adjust provision and CPD and prepare feeder-school transition work for the next intake.
- July 2027: evaluate targets and outcomes by starting point and pupil group; report strengths and gaps to senior leaders and governors and set priorities for 2027–28.

CPD will build on training from dyslexia specialists, Speech and Language Therapists and reading development work. It will cover assessment interpretation, subject reading, vocabulary and structured talk. Intervention staff will receive programme-specific training, with follow-up checks of teaching and pupil learning.

7 Success measures and evaluation

By July 2027, we aim to achieve the following targets. We will measure progress against autumn baselines and use the December, March and July reviews to evaluate impact and respond to gaps in provision.

Measure	Target by July 2027	Evidence and lead
Year 7 screening	100% screened by the end of the first half-term; absence and later entrants assessed within four school weeks of return or entry.	NGRT register; transition lead and Learning Support
Diagnostic follow-up	100% of flagged pupils receive appropriate diagnostic follow-up and a recorded provision decision within four school weeks.	Assessment and provision log; Learning Support
Early intervention	100% of pupils identified before arrival begin matched support within their first half-term.	Transition and intervention records; Learning Support
Intervention attendance	Above 90% attendance across scheduled intervention sessions, reviewed individually where attendance is lower.	Session registers; intervention leads
Reading attainment	At least a 20% relative reduction in the proportion below NGRT SAS 85 in the same matched cohort between autumn and summer.	Comparable NGRT results within age norms; assessment lead
Library borrowing	At least 15% increase in loans per pupil against the equivalent prior-year period, and a 10 percentage-point increase in pupils borrowing at least one book.	Library records; library lead
Reading confidence	At least a 10 percentage-point increase in pupils reporting confidence with age-appropriate reading, using the same survey questions and matched responses.	Autumn and summer pupil survey; reading leads
Bedrock participation	At least 90% of Years 7 and 8 meet the weekly expectation in at least 80% of teaching weeks.	Platform records; English leadership

Measure	Target by July 2027	Evidence and lead
Bedrock learning	At least 80% of a representative matched pupil sample improve on a delayed vocabulary check; at least 70% use sampled taught words accurately in a new reading or writing task.	Baseline and delayed checks, with work samples; English leadership
Buddy reading	At least 90% of planned sessions delivered; at least 80% of participating younger pupils show progress against their individual fluency, comprehension or confidence goal.	Session logs and entry and exit checks; English leadership

We will use NGRT SAS 85 as a monitoring threshold alongside diagnostic assessment and classroom evidence. The target is a 20% relative reduction in the proportion of pupils below this threshold: for example, from 25% to 20%. Pupils receive support according to their assessed needs, including where their overall score is above this threshold.

Interpreting the evidence

We will report cohort sizes, missing results, late entrants and assessment conditions alongside outcomes. Evaluation will consider SEND, disadvantage, EAL and other relevant pupil groups, taking account of starting points. Session records will distinguish attendance from delivery. Library comparisons will use equivalent periods and a documented baseline.

We evaluate programme mastery, reading accuracy, fluency, comprehension, subject work and pupil voice alongside standardised results. Our evaluation focuses on sustained learning and classroom transfer, including sixth-form academic reading. We assess each programme's contribution using the evidence available. Concise records and anonymised pupil journeys show the identified barrier, teaching, progress and remaining need.

Reference guidance

DfE The Reading Framework: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-reading-framework-teaching-the-foundations-of-literacy>

Ofsted Supporting struggling readers in secondary school:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/now-the-whole-school-is-reading-supporting-struggling-readers-in-secondary-school/>

JCQ Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-reasonable-adjustments/>

RNIB Bookshare eligibility: <https://www.rnibbookshare.org/about/who-qualifies>