

Teaching Reading at The Bethlem and Maudsley hospital School

At our school we are passionate about reading as we know it is the key to almost all future learning. Reading is also a skill which can open up endless opportunities for enjoyment and discovery and all our departments have a wonderful selection of fiction and non-fiction books to motivate pupils.

If pupils are unable to read when they arrive at our school we consider the reasons and then develop a reading programme to help them acquire the skills that they need to make progress.

Reading is a combination of the following skills:

- Word reading(phonic decoding)
- Comprehension(understanding).

In the Primary/Middle Department we make use of the DfE recommended reading programme “Letters and Sounds”. It aims to build children’s speaking and listening skills in their own right as well as to prepare children for learning to read by developing their phonic knowledge and skills. It sets out a detailed and systematic programme for learning sounds and letters and there are six overlapping phases. More information about the programme and resources can be viewed on the following link: <http://www.letters-and-sounds.com/what-is-letters-and-sounds.html>

All teaching staff in the department have received training to deliver this programme and some pupils receive 1:1 teaching sessions to help them catch up and gain confidence. It is often an experience that pupils enjoy and it is terrific to see their confidence grow as they emerge as readers.

The teaching of reading is not limited to Primary/Middle and some of our older pupils will need an individualised reading programme. We have a wide range of reading materials that provide the tools to develop key skills without compromising on age appropriate interests. Young people can fall behind for many reasons and we aim to ensure that they are given the opportunity to move forward and acquire the essential life skill of reading.