



Our reading policy at Ark Charter Academy

How we teach your child to read...

Every child deserves success right from the start. We know that the sooner children learn to read, the greater their success at school. This is why we put reading at the heart of what we do.

When your child comes to Ark Charter Academy, we assess their reading ability and for those students whose reading age is 9 or below, we use a teaching programme called *Read Write Inc.* Fresh Start. They may have completed the *Read Write Inc.* Phonics programme at Primary School and may therefore be familiar with the style of lesson and understand how best to progress in these lessons. At Ark Charter Academy, we call this programme Smart Talk Reading. There are a number of Smart Talk activities and posters around the school and Smart Talk Reading is just one of them. All of our students need to learn that being able to 'Talk Smart' is what will make the difference between them and other young people when they leave us in Year 11.

Our aim is for students to complete the Smart Talk Reading programme successfully as soon as they can. The sooner they do this, the sooner they can make the most of their learning time at Ark Charter Academy. During their time in Smart Talk Reading, we group students by their reading progress for three lessons a week and re-assess students every half-term so that we can place them in the group where they'll make the most progress. We provide extra one-to-one sessions for students who need a bit of a boost to keep up.

How we encourage your child to read...

The first thing we do is to give students books we know they can read. Each student starts their Year 7 in the Library by completing a course called 'Choosing the right book for you'. We are also part of The Book Trust's Book Buzz, through which every child in Year 7 can choose a free book.

All students are required to have a reading book in their bag at all times – they will often be asked to read this during tutor sessions for example and so it is vital that it is a book that they can read and enjoy.

How we teach your child to spell confidently...

Throughout the school we have posters which encourage your child to remember tricky spellings. They use mnemonics and this is an example:

Smart Talk

Mnemonic [ni-monik]
A word, sentence or poem that helps you to remember something.

accommodate

comfy couch,
 mouldy
 mattress

HELLO, I'M
 MOULDY

When our teachers mark work, they will highlight that a word is spelled incorrectly by using the letters **Sp.** in the margin. An improvement task may be to for the child to write that word out correctly a number of times and/or use it in a sentence.

How we encourage your child to write clearly...

We run a handwriting session for students who need additional help. Some students are referred by their teacher and other students self-refer. Places are limited and so students are allowed to continue to attend as long as they need it on the condition that:

- They try their best
- They look after the equipment that we provide
- They follow instructions
- They behave appropriately

Your child will practise handwriting every day so that they can continue to improve their skills.

How you can help...

- Encourage your child to read every day for 20 minutes and to complete their reading log. Your child could read quietly to themselves, read to you or another family member for example or you could share the reading and enjoy the book together.
- Give your child somewhere clear and clean to complete their homework. This might be the kitchen table for example.
- It is not always easy, but try to ensure that they are working somewhere without too many distractions (no TV, IPAD, internet or music for example) as this will help them to focus.
- Allow your child breaks from homework so that they can remain focussed.
- Ensure that they come to school equipped with:
 - a pencil case with a pen, ruler and pencil. We write in blue or black pen and underline with a ruler and a pencil.
 - A reading book
 - A good night of rest
- Encourage your child to sit up straight with the correct pencil grip and in the correct sitting position from the very beginning.



If you have any questions regarding the Reading Policy, or anything else, please contact us.