



# BENSHAM MANOR *School*

## Literacy Policy

Last reviewed: September 2026



At Bensham Manor School, we recognise that communication and literacy are fundamental to learning, independence and lifelong opportunity. We believe every student has the right to develop the knowledge, language and literacy skills needed to communicate effectively, access learning confidently and participate fully in school and adult life.

As a specialist secondary SEND school, we recognise that students develop literacy through different pathways and at different rates. We maintain ambitious expectations for every learner, celebrating meaningful progress from individual starting points while enabling every student to achieve the highest level of independence possible.

Our values of Safe, Ready and Kind underpin every aspect of literacy. We create an environment where students feel safe to communicate, ready to learn and supported with kindness, respect and dignity.

## 1. Evidence-Informed Approach

Our literacy curriculum is informed by the National Curriculum for English, the DfE Reading Framework (2023), the SEND Code of Practice, Ofsted's Telling the Story: The English Education Subject Report and Education Endowment Foundation guidance on improving literacy. These principles place high-quality classroom teaching, systematic phonics where appropriate, explicit vocabulary instruction, reading fluency, disciplinary literacy and purposeful communication at the heart of effective literacy provision.

## 2. Our Literacy Principles

**Reading:** Students develop word recognition, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension through explicit teaching and access to ambitious, diverse texts.

**Phonics:** Students requiring decoding support receive systematic synthetic phonics through Twinkl Phonics. Personalised pathways using Lexia Core5 Reading and Lexia PowerUp Literacy complement classroom teaching.

**Writing:** Students write for meaningful audiences and purposes through planning, drafting, editing and improving.

**Oracy:** Rich classroom discussion, questioning and collaborative learning develop confident communicators.

**Vocabulary:** Tier 2 and subject-specific Tier 3 vocabulary are explicitly taught across every curriculum area.

## 3. High-Quality Teaching

High-quality classroom teaching is the foundation of literacy development. Every member of staff models accurate language, explicitly teaches vocabulary, adapts teaching to meet individual needs, provides purposeful opportunities for reading, writing and discussion, and uses assessment to inform next steps. Assessment-informed interventions complement, rather than replace, excellent teaching.

## 4. Personalised Support

Assessment identifies students requiring additional support. Depending on need, students may access Twinkl Phonics, Lexia Core5 Reading, Lexia PowerUp Literacy, Accelerated Reader, myON, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, AAC, assistive technology and adaptive teaching. These approaches provide personalised support while maintaining inclusion within the wider curriculum.

## 5. Developing a Reading Culture

Students engage daily with high-quality literature through classroom reading, independent reading, library provision and shared reading experiences. Reading is promoted through Accelerated Reader, myON, classroom libraries, World Book Day, Pyjamarama Day, author visits where appropriate and carefully selected texts reflecting diverse cultures and perspectives.

## 6. Assessment

Teachers use formative, diagnostic and appropriate standardised assessments to identify strengths, barriers

and next steps. Assessment informs curriculum planning, classroom teaching and intervention, ensuring every student makes meaningful progress from their individual starting point.

## **7. Monitoring and Review**

The policy is monitored through curriculum evaluation, lesson visits, work scrutiny, assessment information, student voice and professional dialogue. It is reviewed annually to ensure continued alignment with national guidance and the evolving needs of our students.