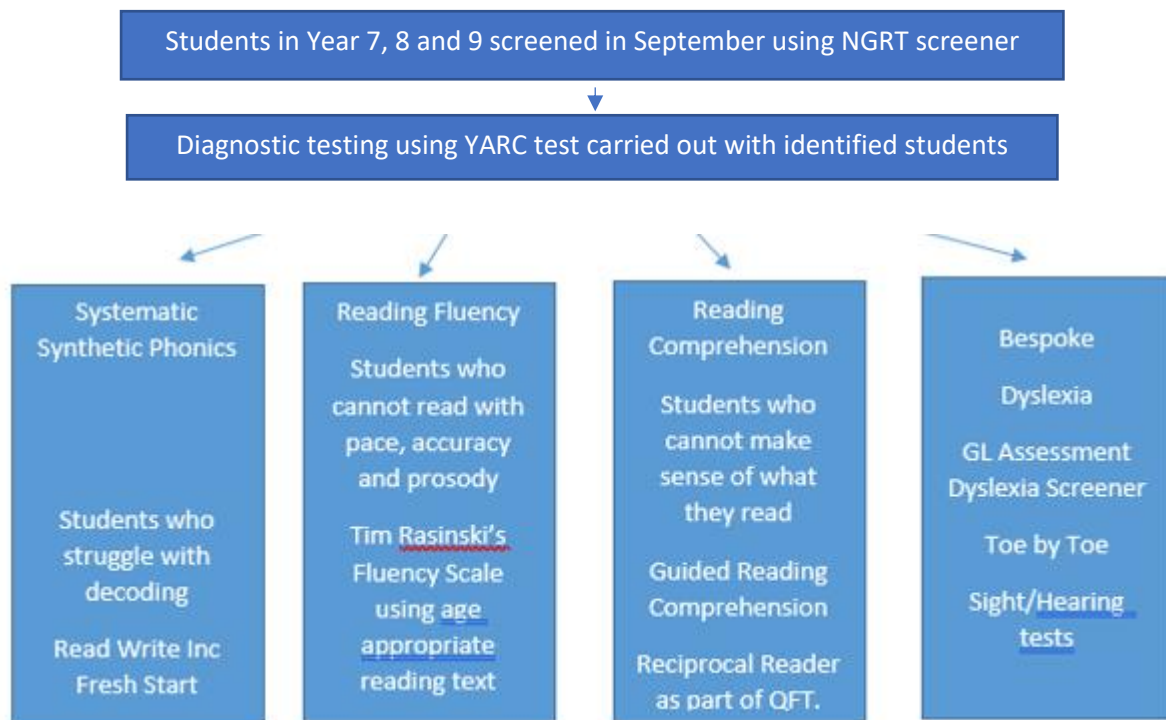


## Reading Interventions at Priory Belvoir: Information for Parents

At Priory Belvoir, we understand that reading is fundamental to education. We know that learning in the wider curriculum depends increasingly on literacy. Pupils who cannot read well enough do not have full access to the curriculum. Those who fail to learn to read early on often start to dislike reading. They read less than others – and less often – and do not accumulate the background knowledge and vocabulary from reading that their peers do, widening the gap and falling behind.

To address this, and to enable access to all to our curriculum, we are robust in our approach to identifying struggling readers. We screen our students immediately upon entry, and at the start of every academic year in Key Stage 3. We follow up the screener with diagnostic testing – including phonics and dyslexia screeners and fluency and comprehension checkers.

We are forensic in our analysis of our data. We place students immediately on appropriate interventions, adopting a rolling timetable for this so that no students' access to the curriculum is narrowed. We have a regular assessment and tracking of performance schedule to ensure students graduate between and from interventions in a timely manner.



### Phonics Pathway

Phonics is a body of knowledge that is necessary for pupils to learn to read and spell, at whatever age. Because of the complex alphabetic code of English, young children learning to read are taught explicitly the correspondences between letters and sounds (graphemes and phonemes), as well as the skill of blending the individual sounds together to read. The skill of segmenting words into their individual sounds is needed for spelling.

Word reading and spelling are 'reversible processes'. Reading involves blending sounds to say a whole word; spelling involves segmenting a whole word to identify the sounds in it. Evidence shows that teaching phonics is the best way to teach children to read words.

To decode words, children are taught to look at graphemes in written words from left to right and to say each corresponding phoneme in turn. Then they blend the phonemes to say the whole word. For example, children: 1. see the written word 'cat' 2. say the corresponding three phonemes /k/ /a/ /t/ 3. blend the three phonemes to say the word 'cat'.

To encode words, children are taught to identify the phonemes in spoken words first. This is also referred to as 'segmenting' spoken words. Then they write the graphemes that represent the phonemes. For example, the children: 1. hear the spoken word 'dog' 2. say 'dog' – /d/ /o/ /g/ 3. write the three corresponding graphemes 'd', 'o', 'g' to spell the word 'dog'.

At Belvoir, we use Ruth Miskin's Fresh Start Phonics programme for students who are identified as requiring this following a screening test resulting in a reading age of less than 9 years old, and a subsequent diagnostic test.

Fresh Start is a systematic synthetic phonics programme for older readers who are struggling. It teaches them to read unfamiliar words accurately and therefore read texts with understanding.

Students who are on this pathway either receive 1-2-1 intervention with a trained reading student support assistant, or work in small group with students at a similar stage with a trained reading student support assistant. They receive this intervention three times a week for 20 minutes, and are withdrawn from curriculum lessons on a weekly rolling programme, meaning they are not removed from the same lesson every week as this would narrow their access to the wider curriculum.

### **Reading Fluency Pathway**

Fluent decoding allows us to understand what we read. Because the reader has gained accuracy and automaticity in word reading, the brain's resources are available to focus on lifting the meaning from the page: connecting the words and sentences, and making connections across the text. As pupils gain fluency, their motivation increases: they start to enjoy reading more and are willing to do more of it.

Researchers generally define and measure fluency in terms of the number of words within a passage read correctly per minute. As well as speed, accuracy also influences fluency.

Fluency gives the reader the choice to read at a speed that allows for comprehension and can be adapted to the purpose of the reading. Beginner readers, however, whatever their age, do not have a choice about speed because they are still engaged in decoding the words on the page. Pupils do not pass through a magic barrier and suddenly become fluent. There is no point in pupils reading speedily if the words they read are wrong – for example, if they read 'place' for 'palace'. Equally, accuracy on its own is not useful, unless they can read at a sufficient rate to support comprehension. Both accuracy and speed are essential. Researchers have also suggested prosody (reading with expression) as an indicator of fluency. However, a reader is unlikely to show a good grasp of prosody if they cannot already read the words with appropriate pace.

At Belvoir, we use the Priory Federation's Reading Fluency's programme for students who are identified as requiring this following a screening test resulting in a reading age above 9 years old but are still below their chronological age, and a subsequent diagnostic test.

Students who are on this pathway either receive 1-2-1 intervention with a trained reading student support assistant, or work in small group with students at a similar stage with a trained reading student support assistant. They receive this intervention three times a week for 20 minutes, and are withdrawn from curriculum lessons on a weekly rolling programme, meaning they are not removed from the same lesson every week as this would narrow their access to the wider curriculum.

The sessions entail a 'cold' read (or a first read) of an appropriate text, followed by a modelled reading by the SSA, showing how to read using the correct pronunciation, how to read to punctuation and with expression, exploration of vocabulary and meaning within the text and coaching of the student with repeated readings. At the end of the week, the student delivers a 'hot' read (final reading) which showing improvements in their fluency after repeated practises.

What you can do at home to help your child:

A copy of the booklet your child is working on will be sent home with your child (and they are also available on the website) at the start of the intervention. Please listen to your child practise reading their allocated extract at least one, or ideally three times a week.

### **Comprehension pathway**

Reading is one of the principal ways we learn new things. So, a key way to improve comprehension is for pupils to read a lot and to listen to and talk about texts read to them. Vocabulary knowledge and background knowledge are likely to overlap considerably in the classroom. The more a reader knows about the topic, the easier it is for them to integrate new information from the text with what they already know to build a mental model.

To support pupils' comprehension, we need to build both pupils' knowledge of words and the ideas that they represent. Some pupils, however, will struggle with comprehension. This is likely to be because they do not have sufficient vocabulary or background knowledge.

At Belvoir, we use our own guided reading programme for students who are identified as requiring this following a screening test resulting in a reading age just below their chronological age, and a subsequent diagnostic test.

Students who are on this pathway work in small group with students at a similar stage with a trained reading student support assistant. They receive this intervention three times a week for 20 minutes, and are withdrawn from curriculum lessons on a weekly rolling programme, meaning they are not removed from the same lesson every week as this would narrow their access to the wider curriculum.

The sessions entail reading an appropriate text, and working through the four stages of reciprocal reader : prediction (discussion of what you think the text will be about prior to reading), clarification (exploration and clarification of vocabulary), questioning (directed questions about the meaning in the text, ensuring students re-read certain parts where the answers are to be found) and summary (students put the meaning of the text into their own words, providing a brief summary)

***Text taken from The Department of Education's 'The Reading Framework', published July 2023.***