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AMBASSADOR
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AMBASSADOR INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY MANKHOOL

READING POLICY

Whole School

Reading for pleasure | Reading for learning | Reading for life

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September 2027	Paul Gardner, Vice Principal & Head of Secondary	Principal/VP	

Reading sits at the heart of the AIAM curriculum. Reading belongs to everyone.

1. Purpose and Philosophy

At Ambassador International Academy Mankhool (AIAM), reading sits at the heart of our curriculum. We believe that reading is fundamental to academic success, language development, knowledge acquisition, imagination, critical thinking and lifelong learning. Our ambition is that every student becomes a confident, capable and enthusiastic reader who reads widely, frequently and independently.

The AIAM reading journey is intentionally ambitious: from a love of books and storytelling in the earliest years, through systematic phonics and developing fluency, to breadth, independence, intellectual curiosity and engagement with significant texts in Secondary.

Reading is not the responsibility of English, Primary or the Librarian alone. Reading belongs to everyone. Every member of staff contributes to developing confident, capable readers, regardless of subject or role.

2. Aims

- develop a genuine and lifelong love of reading;
- ensure every student receives appropriate teaching, challenge and support to become a successful reader;
- develop secure phonics knowledge and decoding skills where appropriate;
- develop fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and critical reading;
- provide access to a rich, diverse and high-quality range of texts;
- encourage students to read widely beyond texts encountered in formal lessons;
- develop independence and positive reading habits;
- build strong partnerships with families around reading;
- celebrate reading as a visible part of school culture; and
- ensure reading is supported across the curriculum and not confined to English lessons.

3. AIAM Reading Principles

Principle	What this means at AIAM
Reading for pleasure	Students experience reading as enjoyable, rewarding and meaningful, not solely as an assessed or homework activity.
Reading for learning	Students encounter texts that broaden knowledge, vocabulary, understanding and perspectives across the curriculum.

Principle	What this means at AIAM
Reading for life	Students develop independence, learn to select appropriate texts and understand the value of reading beyond school.
High expectations with appropriate support	All students are expected to progress from their starting points, with scaffolding, intervention and challenge where required.
Whole-school responsibility	All staff model positive attitudes to reading and support vocabulary, comprehension and confidence within their subject or role.
Books and human interaction remain central	Technology may enhance reading, but should not displace books, discussion, handwriting, collaboration or human interaction where these are more appropriate.

4. The AIAM Reading Journey

AIAM's reading provision is designed as a coherent journey in which each phase establishes the knowledge, habits and dispositions required for the next.

Phase	Core ambition	Key provision
ECC	Develop language, communication and enjoyment of books	High-quality texts, storytelling, language-rich provision and library experiences.
PKG	Build language, early literacy and foundations for phonics	Rich language, stories, rhyme and Phase 1 Little Wandle in Term 3.
KG1	Develop systematic phonics, decoding and reading enjoyment	Little Wandle, individual reading, guided reading, home reading and library.
KG2	Develop secure phonics, fluency and comprehension	Little Wandle, individual and guided reading, home reading and library.
Grade 1	Secure transition from phonics to independent reading	Little Wandle decodable books where appropriate, then library provision.

Phase	Core ambition	Key provision
Grades 2-5	Develop independent reading, volume and breadth	Accelerated Reader, ZPD books, free choice and Reading Millionaire culture.
Grades 6-8	Develop breadth, independence, sustained reading and critical engagement	1,000 Pages Challenge, protected reading, library access, MYP Language and Literature and student leadership.
Grades 9-12	Develop intellectual curiosity through significant texts	The developing AIAM 100 model, student choice, discussion and debate.

5. Early Reading and Phonics

Reading begins from the earliest stages of a child's experience at AIAM. Early Years places language, communication and reading at the heart of learning. All Early Years staff are language teachers, and high-quality texts, storytelling, songs, rhyme, vocabulary and meaningful conversation should be woven through play, continuous provision, inquiry and adult-led experiences.

5.1 Reading Culture in Early Years

- daily shared stories and purposeful book talk;
- high-quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry;
- songs, rhymes and rich oral language;
- books available within continuous provision;
- weekly library experiences and opportunities such as mystery readers; and
- purposeful conversations that build vocabulary, comprehension and enjoyment.

The school ambition is that children are exposed to 100 carefully selected books before the end of Term 1, establishing a rich culture of reading from the beginning of their AIAM journey.

5.2 Systematic Phonics

AIAM uses Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised as its systematic phonics programme within the relevant Early Years and Primary provision. Progression begins with communication, listening, language and early mark-making in ECC, moves to Phase 1 Little Wandle in Term 3 of PKG, and develops into daily systematic phonics in KG1 and KG2.

Phonics teaching should be systematic, appropriately sequenced and responsive to developmental readiness. Children should not be accelerated through the programme before foundational knowledge is secure.

5.3 Operational Provision

Detailed arrangements for baselining, book allocation and exchange, frequency of individual or guided reading, home-school diary routines and term-specific implementation are set out in the current AIAM EY & PY Reading & Phonics Provision operational document. This allows annual arrangements to be refined without requiring amendment to the policy.

6. Reading in Primary

Primary reading combines systematic development of reading skills with a strong emphasis on reading widely and for pleasure. The curriculum is underpinned by the IB PYP framework and English National Curriculum benchmarks, supporting coherent progression in knowledge and skills.

6.1 Grade 1

Where appropriate, Grade 1 students continue to use books linked directly to Little Wandle. Once a student has completed, or is no longer accessing, the phonics programme, they transition to the wider school library provision.

6.2 Grades 2-5

Accelerated Reader supports independent reading and helps staff and students select appropriately challenging texts. During regular library access, students should combine books within their Accelerated Reader Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) with free-choice reading for enjoyment.

6.3 Reading Volume and Culture

AIAM has an intentionally ambitious culture of reading volume. By Grade 3, students are challenged to become Reading Millionaires by reading one million words across the year, with Grades 4 and 5 progressing towards multimillionaire milestones. Milestones should be recognised and celebrated while preserving the central purposes of enjoyment, comprehension, breadth and appropriate challenge.

7. Reading in Secondary

As students progress into Secondary, the reading journey develops from the foundations of fluency and reading volume towards breadth, independence, critical engagement and intellectual curiosity. Reading has two interconnected purposes: reading for pleasure and reading for learning.

The Secondary Reading Programme complements MYP Language and Literature and contributes to communication, research and thinking Approaches to Learning skills. Students should increasingly see themselves as independent readers who can sustain reading, select and recommend texts, and engage critically with increasingly sophisticated material.

7.1 The 1,000 Pages Challenge

Every student in Grades 6-8 is challenged to read a minimum of 1,000 pages across the academic year. The challenge is intended to establish sustained reading habits while preserving student choice over books, genres, authors and formats.

Students should be encouraged to read beyond the minimum expectation and to view the challenge as a personal reading journey rather than simply a numerical target. Reading volume must not be pursued at the expense of comprehension, enjoyment or appropriate challenge.

7.2 Protected Reading and Book Choice

Grades 6-8 should experience regular protected opportunities for independent reading within the school week. English lessons should include sustained reading alongside purposeful book talk, recommendation and reflection. Independent reading should not routinely be converted into an additional written assessment task.

Secondary students should have regular access to the library. Staff should balance guidance with student agency, supporting students to explore unfamiliar genres and authors and to select texts that offer an appropriate balance of accessibility, interest and challenge.

7.3 Reading within MYP Language and Literature

Students should encounter increasingly challenging literary and non-literary texts that develop literary knowledge, vocabulary, cultural awareness, critical thinking and appreciation of different voices, perspectives and experiences. They should learn to read closely, infer, analyse, evaluate, compare and respond with increasing independence. Independent reading complements, rather than replaces, rigorous study of significant texts.

7.4 Progression beyond Grade 8

As AIAM expands into Grades 9-12, the school intends to develop the AIAM 100: a collection of 100 significant texts through which students develop intellectual curiosity, breadth and discussion. The precise structure will be developed as the Secondary School expands and incorporated into future policy review.

8. Reading Across the Curriculum

Reading is a whole-school responsibility. Students encounter subject-specific vocabulary, instructions, explanations, arguments, sources and increasingly complex texts across the curriculum. Teachers should therefore explicitly support the reading demands of their subject rather than assuming that reading development belongs solely to English.

- teach and reinforce subject-specific vocabulary;
- support students to engage with increasingly complex texts and sources;
- model how expert readers approach texts within the discipline;
- encourage discussion, questioning and connections with prior knowledge;
- develop confidence when students encounter unfamiliar vocabulary and ideas; and
- support relevant IB Approaches to Learning, particularly communication, research and thinking.

9. Reading for Pleasure, Culture and Student Leadership

AIAM will actively promote reading as something valued, enjoyed and shared. Celebration should strengthen intrinsic reading habits rather than reduce reading to rewards or numerical targets.

- reading milestones, certificates and Reading Millionaire recognition;
- book recommendations, discussion, displays and reading events;
- mystery readers, book clubs and House activities;
- Library Ambassador activities and other student leadership opportunities; and
- opportunities for students to influence the reading environment and recommend books to others.

The library should operate as an active reading space rather than solely as a book-borrowing facility, supporting browsing, recommendation, discussion, events and student leadership.

10. Assessment, Monitoring and Intervention

Assessment of reading is used to understand strengths, identify gaps and inform teaching, adaptation, challenge and intervention. Reading should not be reduced to a single test or isolated judgement.

Phase	Approach
Early Years	Continuous, predominantly observation-led assessment, including phonics and early literacy assessment where relevant. Little Wandle assessment and ongoing reading practice inform grouping, teaching and support.

Phase	Approach
Primary	Teacher assessment and reading evidence are used alongside relevant programme data to understand what students know, understand and can do and to determine next steps.
Secondary	Diagnostic information, teacher knowledge of students as readers, curriculum evidence, reading engagement and progress towards the 1,000 Pages Challenge are considered together. Standardised data, where available, is used alongside classroom evidence rather than in isolation.

Where concerns are identified, staff should consider classroom adaptation, targeted intervention and communication with relevant colleagues and families. Tracking reading volume provides useful information about engagement but is not, by itself, an assessment of reading attainment.

11. Inclusion, Adaptation and Challenge

Every student should have equitable access to high-quality reading experiences. Teachers are responsible for using their knowledge of students and available assessment information to provide appropriate support, adaptation and challenge.

Provision should take account of Students of Determination, English Language Learners and other students requiring additional support, using relevant Class Context Sheets, IEPs and school referral processes. Students who read fluently or demonstrate advanced comprehension should also encounter sufficient breadth, complexity and intellectual challenge.

12. Home Reading and Partnership with Families

AIAM recognises families as important partners in developing successful readers. Home reading should build positive habits, language, vocabulary and enjoyment while supporting the progression appropriate to each phase.

Phase	Expectation
Early Years	Families are encouraged to share stories, discuss books, revisit favourite texts, practise phonics where appropriate, sing rhymes and enjoy decodable books when children are ready. The emphasis is on a positive shared experience.

Phase	Expectation
Primary	Regular home reading forms part of the school's homework expectations. Approximately 15-20 minutes daily is recommended, with arrangements for reading records and communication set out in current phase guidance.
Secondary	Students are expected to sustain independent reading beyond formal lessons as part of developing reading independence and meeting the ambitions of the Secondary Reading Programme.

Staff should communicate positively with families about reading habits, reading for pleasure, progress where appropriate, the care of school books and how to support children without creating unnecessary pressure.

13. Libraries and Reading Environments

Reading should be visible and valued within the physical environment of the school. Primary classrooms should provide inviting, accessible reading areas with diverse, age-appropriate, high-quality texts. Students should be able to select and return books with increasing independence.

Language Arts environments should include relevant vocabulary, reading strategies and resources that actively support current learning. Across the school, libraries and reading spaces should reinforce the message that books are an integral part of school life.

14. Digital Reading and Technology

AIAM takes an intentionally measured approach to technology. Digital texts and tools may be used where they enhance access, learning or engagement, but should not displace books, discussion, handwriting, practical learning or human interaction where these are more appropriate.

Students should therefore experience a healthy balance of print and digital resources, consistent with AIAM's wider approach to purposeful and limited technology use.

15. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Senior Leadership Team	Set strategic direction, resource reading appropriately and ensure reading remains central to curriculum and school improvement.

Role	Responsibilities
Head of English / Relevant Phase Leaders	Maintain coherent progression, support staff development, monitor provision and assessment, identify improvement priorities and lead relevant phase or Secondary reading programmes.
Class and Subject Teachers	Deliver high-quality reading instruction appropriate to phase and subject, know students as readers, use assessment to inform teaching, provide support and challenge, and communicate appropriately with families.
All Staff	Model positive attitudes to reading, develop vocabulary and language within their role, encourage reading and raise concerns through appropriate channels.
Librarian	Support a strong whole-school reading culture, effective library provision, book selection, library access, reading initiatives, student leadership and collaboration with teaching teams.
Students	Engage positively with reading, care for shared resources, develop independence and contribute to the reading culture of the school.
Parents and Families	Support positive reading habits at home, engage with relevant home-school communication and encourage reading as an enjoyable and worthwhile part of everyday life.

16. Quality Assurance and Review

The effectiveness of reading provision should be evaluated through evidence gathered over time. This may include assessment information, student work, student voice, reading engagement, library use, curriculum review, learning walks, professional dialogue and parent feedback.

As a founding school, AIAM will continue to refine its reading provision as cohorts grow and new phases open. Where an aspect of provision is not yet defined, it should be developed through the school's normal leadership and approval processes rather than assumed to constitute an existing requirement.

The policy is reviewed annually, or earlier where required, to ensure that provision remains coherent, ambitious and responsive to students' needs.

17. Related Policies and Operational Guidance

- AIAM Staff Handbook
- AIAM Learning and Teaching Policy
- AIAM Assessment Policy
- AIAM Inclusion Policy and related procedures
- AIAM Homework guidance
- AIAM EY & PY Reading & Phonics Provision (current academic year)
- Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme guidance
- AIAM safeguarding procedures
- AIAM technology and digital learning guidance

Annual operational arrangements, including detailed book-allocation schedules, reading-record routines, specific implementation dates and named personnel, are maintained through the Staff Handbook and relevant phase or operational guidance rather than fixed within this policy.