

“We get to see our students’ confidence grow.”

We spoke with teachers at Park Academy School in West London about their experiences teaching *Read Write Inc. Fresh Start*.

“The SEN team teach Fresh Start to help children with low reading ages. We have all been on the two-day training course and have Development Days three times a year. Working closely with an external expert is invaluable. She is a great help in addressing specific gaps in our students’ knowledge. Fresh Start provides easy to follow teaching steps. It helps us analyse reading ability and group children whilst responding to their progress.”

“We assess our students on entry. We then use their reading level to determine how long they will be on the programme:

- September to December
- September to April
- Full year

While students on the first timeline move back to their mainstream classes quickly, the others transition to *Read Write Inc. Comprehension*. It is the bridge that allows them to access the full curriculum. We grouped the 30 students currently on Fresh Start in Year 7 according to their ability.

This helps to remove the stigma around intervention and ensure rapid progress. We run Fresh Start during English lessons. This ensures the students can access as much of the curriculum as possible. We often see them discretely sounding out words using ‘Fred Fingers’ or checking the A5 Speed Sound Chart we give them for the planners.”

School Name: **Park Academy**

Location: **West London**

Pupils on roll: **800**

Free school meals: **37%**

SEN: **21%**

Y7 with reading age below nine years six months on entry: **28%**

“We get a lot of feedback about the positive impact of Fresh Start on students’ confidence and ability to access lessons. All students make progress, regardless of why they need it. One EAL student, for example, joined the school with a reading age of five years and seven months. By April they had progressed to 11 years and two months. Another, on the autistic spectrum, made 32 months of progress.

“When students finish Fresh Start, we mark the transition with a graduation ceremony (pictured). They have gowns and are presented with a scroll. It means a lot to them. Their parents are involved in the process from the very start, and are informed of their child’s progress at each tracking point along the way. The graduation ceremony is a proud moment for everyone and a celebration of our students’ successes.

