



**ReadingWise**

# Consilium Academies

ReadingWise Case Study

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## About Consilium Academies and ReadingWise

Laura Chivers is an English Education Advisor at Consilium Academies. Consilium Academies are a multi-academy trust comprising seven secondary schools and one specialist provision, located in the North West and North East of England and Yorkshire. Their commitment as a trust is to serve socially deprived communities by providing safe, supportive, and positive educational environments.

Consilium Academies use a ReadingWise Universal Offer to target and support every learner in their academies. The Universal Offer includes small-group targeted Decoding and Comprehension interventions combined with the Vocab module for all pupils in each school.

## When did you first come across ReadingWise?

I first came across ReadingWise at another multi-academy trust. It was introduced as part of an initiative to improve literacy across the trust, and I was immediately intrigued by its potential to address diverse literacy needs within a single framework.

## What made literacy one of your top priorities and when?

Literacy became a top priority when we realised that reading fluency is fundamental to academic success across all subjects. Our main priority is that all our students are fluent readers. This goal acknowledges that each student has a unique starting point, and we aim to support all students while simultaneously extending learners who are already fluent. This priority was solidified in our strategic plan as we noticed the varying levels of literacy skills among our students and the direct impact these skills had on their behaviour, attendance and overall academic performance.

## Why did you decide to use ReadingWise as part of your plan?

Our decision to use ReadingWise was influenced by the robust research behind it; in particular the Department for Education funded research. The results were particularly compelling for students with special educational needs and disabilities and those eligible for pupil premium, which closely align with the demographics of Consilium. Furthermore, my own experience seeing the positive impact of ReadingWise in-school led to my choice to drive this forward across Consilium Academies.

The plan for implementing ReadingWise was a collaborative effort between myself, the English Education Advisor, and the Director of School Improvement. From here we presented the plan to the trustees. What stood out to the trustees was the comprehensive nature of ReadingWise: it combined the functionalities of three different programs into one, making it easier for both staff and students to use, and it was also more cost-effective.

## What was your rationale behind the Universal Offer?

The Universal Offer which prescribes intervention where needed, and Vocab module support for all, was critical because we are still dealing with the effects of COVID-19, which has created significant gaps in literacy. This tailored approach caters to individual students, classes, and year groups, ensuring that it's not a one-size-fits-all solution but rather a personalised learning experience according to the specific areas that need to be addressed.

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## What was your rationale behind all Consilium schools using ReadingWise as part of their literacy strategy?

De-implementation was a key factor — schools were using different methods with varying levels of success. We needed a unified approach that covered phonics, decoding, and comprehension — essential components for all students. ReadingWise met all our criteria. We wanted all our students, regardless of the school they attend, to have access to the same high-quality literacy support, which we consider the gold standard. This consistency makes it easier for staff and students and ensures equity across the trust.

## How do you use baseline assessments to target support?

We use the NGRT on all students, and single word reading tests (SWRT) on specific students to nuance the data. Both assessments are externally verified, and we are satisfied that the NGRT and SWRT testing provides us with a consistent and reliable measure of reading skills. This standardisation eliminates the pitfalls of internally created tests, which can be biased or inaccurate. Clear and accurate reporting to parents and carers is essential, and using these assessments helps achieve that.

## How has the rollout been so far?

The rollout of ReadingWise has been really successful, largely due to the support provided to schools. It empowers literacy leaders to effectively implement the program. There are safety nets in place, including literacy leads, myself, and our ReadingWise Community Admin, ensuring that support is always available. The ethos of ReadingWise aligns with our values, it is friendly and supportive. This reduces stress for the staff and reflects our organisational culture well.

## Do you feel better equipped to support struggling readers?

Yes, definitely. The clear pathway provided by ReadingWise ensures that all students — whether they are EAL learners, slightly behind, or significantly behind — can progress towards becoming fluent readers. For learners without specific need for literacy intervention, the Vocab module provides a brilliant way to acquire and retain new vocabulary. Schools have seen notable improvements in phonics and comprehension, particularly for their weakest readers. Regular meetings with literacy leads help us stay updated and address any issues promptly, providing a level of support that is invaluable. I'm really looking forward to seeing how this progresses.



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