

Policy: Whole School Literacy

Literacy is defined as the ability to read and write. It is also the ability to understand, use and apply what you read and to communicate effectively in writing as well as speaking.

Our aim is to ensure that our students are receiving **consistent**, **frequent** and **effective** teaching and learning of literacy that has an impact on their learning. It is the responsibility of all teachers to promote literacy skills throughout lessons. The guidelines outlined in this policy will help all departments achieve these aims.

Ofsted Outstanding-Our Aspiration

Teaching and Learning is outstanding if:

- 'Teachers embed reading, writing and communication and, where appropriate, mathematics exceptionally well across the curriculum, equipping all pupils with the necessary skills to make progress'.¹

The curriculum should allow and encourage students to:

- 'engage in specific activities that develop speaking and listening skills as well as activities that integrate speaking and listening with reading and writing'
- 'make extended, independent contributions that develop ideas in depth'
- 'make purposeful presentations that allow them to speak with authority on significant subjects'
- 'engage with texts that challenge preconceptions and develop understanding beyond the personal and immediate'
- 'experiment with language and explore different ways of discovering and shaping their own meanings'
- 'use writing as a means of reflecting on and exploring a range of views and perspectives on the world.'²

¹ Ofsted School Inspection Handbook

² *Improving literacy in secondary schools: a shared responsibility*, an Ofsted survey report

Literacy for Outstanding Impact

Literacy Objective One – Speaking and Listening

To improve the quality of students' spoken communication, recognising that audience, purpose and context may affect the way in which they present themselves.

Impact

In addressing this objective, we will encourage students to become more confident in expressing their ideas and more aware of their audience and purpose. They will have a wider and more fitting vocabulary which they will be able to employ in a variety of situations.

Literacy Objective Two – Extended Writing

To develop basic grammar skills and ensure students write effectively for different audiences and purposes.

Impact

In addressing this objective, students will become more confident writers and will be able to express their ideas more succinctly and fluently. We will ensure that students are more structured in their written responses, thinking carefully about the way in which they introduce, substantiate and develop their points.

Literacy Objective Three – Reading

To use a range of techniques to develop reading for meaning in order to enhance understanding.

Impact

In addressing this objective, we will ensure that students become more confident readers, which will ultimately support their understanding of key words. This should also help to extend their vocabulary and therefore allow them to express their ideas more clearly in both oral and written

responses. They should be able to access examination questions more easily, and ultimately it will help support the development of their writing skills.

Literacy Skills

Reading

- To read and understand a range of texts
- To be able to use the skills of skimming, scanning and close reading
- To be able to research (online and in books/the LRC) effectively
- To be able to review and adapt texts to show understanding

Writing

- To be able to plan and draft ideas and also edit and review effectively
- To be able to take notes
- To write in detail, for different audiences and purposes
- To use accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar
- To develop and extend vocabulary

Speaking and Listening

- To ask relevant questions and provide accurate and substantial responses
- To use formal and informal speech as appropriate
- To communicate in a variety of situations effectively (discussions, presentations, role play etc.)
- To speak fluently and confidently in discussions and debate to develop and think through ideas.

Suggested Strategies

Reading Strategies

Reader Leader

A small number of Year 7 and 8 students take part in a Reader Leader scheme for 10 weeks. This is a peer mentor scheme delivered by students in Year 10 and 12 and aims to support struggling and/or reluctant readers to raise literacy standards and confidence with reading. The leaders receive training in phonics, testing comprehension and strategies to support reading approaches and work on a one-to-one basis to deliver effective and supportive peer reading sessions to the younger students.

In Tutor Time

- Encourage reading for pleasure.
- Tutors could use the range of literacy resources on the p:drive to support and develop different areas of literacy.
- Students could develop a reading display wall of the books they are currently reading. This could be updated on a regular basis.
- Tutors could nominate a 'top reader' and 'best book' of each half term. For these categories, the tutor and students could decide on the criteria for choosing these students.
- The teacher reading alongside students can be really effective.
- Group reading, reading aloud or using e-books can encourage reluctant readers.

Across the Curriculum-Active Reading

- Students should be encouraged in every subject to read. To ensure that they have read, there should be a follow up task in class. They may spend 3 minutes talking to a partner about what the text is about to make sure that they are understanding what has been read
- Students could be asked to represent the information they have read in a picture or diagram to show their understanding of the text
- Teachers could provide the information from a specific section of a text in the incorrect order and get students to rearrange them in the correct order

Across the Curriculum-Developing Understanding

- Students could write 3 relevant questions they would like answered before reading a text. After reading the text, the students should be able to answer their questions to show that they understood what was read.
- Students could be provided with a list of challenging words which will be used in the text they will read in the next lesson. For homework they could find the meaning of the words and write them in a sentence.
- Play games such as key word Pictionary to develop understanding of subject-specific and more general vocabulary.
- Get students to discuss something they have read with a partner before exploring in more depth as a class.
- Play games like odd one out. Provide a list of 4 key terms/ideas (3 of which are similar). Students have to say which the odd one out is and why to show their understanding of vocabulary.
- Encourage students to look up or use synonyms to develop their vocabulary.
- Make key words an integral part of the lesson. Reinforce through spellings, use and definitions. One student could spell the word, one define it and one use it in a sentence.

- Teach the skills of skimming, scanning and close reading.

Across the Curriculum-Reading for Pleasure

- As subject teachers, provide displays of books you are reading (both subject related and for pleasure).
- Encourage reading around the subject-could be set as homework tasks.
- Provide subject-specific reading lists.

Writing Strategies

In Tutor Time

- Encourage students to keep a writing journal where they write creatively. It could be about a given topic (where they write in any form eg. poem) or related to something they did at the weekend. Encouraging writing for pleasure is important.
- Use the word of the week to develop vocabulary and test the commonly misspelt words. Set spelling tests to check spelling and allow students to see it is not just something that is important in English. The English department or Learning Support will have banks of spellings to support you. Again, spelling displays could be created from these and students could even work in groups and have group competitions/a class spelling bee.

Across the Curriculum-Marking Writing

- In accordance with the whole school marking policy, use the whole school marking code to identify errors in students' writing. Students should make corrections in green.

Across the Curriculum-Spelling

- Use the whole school marking code to identify incorrect spellings. Get students (either in lesson or for homework) to find the correct spelling and re-write it 3 times in green.
- When marking students' work, keep a list of the spellings that are spelt wrong consistently by students. Address these in the next lesson or as a spelling text. Make it clear to students where they are going wrong with the spelling.
- When teaching complex new vocabulary, help students to develop strategies for remembering the terms and spelling, such as mnemonics.
- Teach students the strategies for spelling such as look, cover, spell, check; exploring the root word; sounding out the syllables etc.
- Regular spelling tests.
- Subject specific glossary.

Across the Curriculum-Writing Skills

- Writing has different forms, purposes, rules and features. Therefore, students should be encouraged to identify the purpose and form before they begin to write. They should also discuss (either with their teacher or peers) the rules and features in order to have a clear understanding of what to do.
- Teachers should also show them examples of both mediocre and excellent pieces for them to see what they need to do in order to improve their writing skills.
- Get students to discuss their ideas with a partner before they write. This can be a useful part of the planning process. You could use mini-whiteboards of A3 paper to record ideas.
- Teach students how to plan-don't assume they know how. Talk them through the process.
- Model by writing at the same time as students. Talk through what you, and they, find easy and difficult about the process.
- Use connectives in talk to encourage their use in writing.
- When stating the success criteria for a PowerPoint presentation or an extended piece of writing, include a literacy objective such as: to include paragraphs and connectives, or to use more complex sentences.
- Reinforce the word of the week in lessons to extend students' vocabulary.

Speaking and Listening Strategies

In Tutor Time

- Encourage students to give presentations.
- Discuss what makes a formal presentation effective
- Give them clear success criteria.

Across the Curriculum-Encouraging Effective Speaking and Listening

- Make students aware of the need to speak formally.
- Encourage students to respond in full sentences both verbally and in writing.
- Encourage students to be active listeners.
- Use plenaries, for example, as a chance for students to ask, and respond to questions.
- Use podcasting or videoing to encourage effective spoken communication.
- Use starters as opportunities to encourage speaking skills. The teacher could sit in a different pupil's seat at the start of each lesson. Whoever's seat it is has to deliver the starter, which could be the same each lesson i.e. a recap of last lesson or a different task each time.
- Boost effective discussion skills by teaching students what makes an effective discussion and what the aims of their discussions are before putting them in groups to discuss ideas.
- Promote debates within lessons, but let students watch examples and discuss the features of an effective debate before they begin.
- Student-led starters. Students prepare the starter before-hand and then deliver it.

The Proof Reading
'High Five'!



Marking Code

What your teacher's marking means.

- CL- mistake with capital letter
- CE- calculation error
- EV- provide evidence
- EXP- expression
- FR- fragment
- GR- grammatical error
- H- handwriting is unclear
- IR- irrelevant information
- NP- new paragraph needed
- P- punctuation error
- S- simplify
- SP- spelling mistake
- U- units missing
- ^- something is missing



The marking code should be followed across the college to ensure consistency. Literacy errors should be identified by the teacher (or students if the work is peer or self-assessed) and the student should make the necessary corrections.

Command Words

These command words are relevant to departments across the college. They should form part of the shared vocabulary and should be reinforced in all lessons. The definitions are subject-specific and students should be made aware of this.

Advise	Analyse	Compare
Calculate	Conclude	Contrast
Create	Define	Describe
Develop	Discuss	Evaluate
Examine	Explain	Identify
Illustrate	Implement	Interpret
Investigate	Justify	Outline
Predict	Refine	Reflect
Select	Solve	Substitute
Suggest	Summarise	