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| <b>Governors' Committee Responsible:</b> | Curriculum Committee             |
| <b>Nominated Lead Member of Staff:</b>   | Director of Learning for English |
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## Rationale

Literacy underpins the school curriculum by developing students' abilities to speak, listen, read and write for a wide range of purposes, using language to learn and communicate, to think, explore and organise. Helping students to express themselves clearly orally and in writing enhances and enriches teaching and learning in all subjects. All departments and all teachers have a crucial role to play in supporting students' literacy development. All teachers are teachers of literacy.

## Aims

The aims of this policy document are to:

- support students' learning in all subjects by helping teachers to be clear about the ways in which their work with students contributes to the development of students' communication skills;
- develop a shared understanding between all staff of the role of language in students' learning and how work in different subjects can contribute to and benefit from the development of students' ability to communicate effectively;
- recognise that language is central to students' sense of identity, belonging and growth;
- raise students' own expectations of achievement, thus raising standards;
- develop students' confidence and self-expression;
- promote knowledge and understanding of the students' standards of achievement and assessment in spoken language, writing and reading, and the identification of any areas of strength and weakness.

All teachers are teachers of literacy. As such, the staff of Ash Manor are committed to developing literacy skills in all of our students, in the belief that it will support their learning and raise standards across the curriculum, because:

- students need vocabulary, expression and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of subjects
- reading helps us to learn from sources beyond our immediate experience;
- writing helps us to sustain and order thought;
- language helps us to reflect, revise and evaluate the things we do, and on the things others have said, written or done;
- responding to higher order questions encourages the development of thinking skills and enquiry;
- improving literacy and learning can have an impact on students' self-esteem, on motivation and behaviour. It allows them to learn independently. It is empowering.

All schemes of work and some, although not all lessons, will include specific literacy objectives. These objectives will inform what is taught, how it is taught, what is learnt and how it is learnt. Literacy should also routinely form part of marking and feedback.

### **Implementation at whole-school level**

Language is the prime medium through which students learn and express themselves across the curriculum, and all teachers have a stake in effective literacy.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- **Senior Managers:** lead and give a high profile to literacy;
- **English Department:** provide students with knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write and speak and listen effectively;
- **Teachers across the curriculum:** contribute to students' development of language, since speaking, listening, writing and reading are, to varying degrees, integral to all lessons;
- **Parents:** encourage their children to use the range of strategies they have learnt to improve their levels of literacy;
- **Students:** take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs and making improvements;
- **Governors:** an identified governor could meet with staff and students and report progress and issues to the governing body and to parents in the governors' annual report.

### **Across the school we shall:**

1. Identify the strengths and weaknesses in students' work from across the school.
2. Identify literacy cross-curricular priorities for each year.
3. Seek to identify progression in the main forms of reading, writing, spoken language undertaken in each department and strengthen teaching plans accordingly.
4. Plan to include the teaching of literacy to support learning in all subject areas.
5. Review this literacy policy annually.

### **Spoken language**

We will teach students to use language precisely and coherently. They should be able to listen to others, and to respond and build on their ideas and views constructively. We will make the modelling of formal spoken language a Learning and Teaching priority in all subjects, including more widespread demonstrations of spoken model answers and the use of talk as a vital bridge between thinking and writing.

We will develop strategies to teach students how to participate orally in groups and in the whole class, including: using talk to develop and clarify ideas; identifying the main points to arise from a discussion; listening for a specific purpose; discussion and evaluation.

Staff training needs will be met through INSEDs and best practice and resources will be distributed at regular intervals.

## **Reading**

We aim to give students a level of literacy that will enable them to cope with the increasing demands of subjects in terms of specific skills, knowledge and understanding. This applies particularly in the area of reading (including from the screen), as texts become more demanding. Accelerated Reader is in use for students in Years 7 and 8 and all students in Year 9 have a 100-minute reading timetabled in the LRC.

We will build on and share existing good practice. We will teach students strategies to help them to: read with greater understanding; locate and use information; follow a process or argument; summarise; synthesise and adapt what they learn from their reading.

We will encourage reading for pleasure whenever possible and will share our passion for reading with students, across the curriculum. World Book Day and National Poetry Day act as our key opportunities to celebrate reading with parents and students.

## **Reading aloud**

The ability to read fluently and expressively is a vital life skill. It reflects a deep understanding of the texts we are reading as well as forming a fundamental building block of reading for pleasure. The ability to read aloud well is empowering. It enables students to pass on a love of reading across families and generations.

In order to support students' growth as expressive readers we will:

- Dedicate some tutor time to modelling expressive reading
- Include being read to within all KS3 reading lessons
- Provide opportunities to read aloud to an adult within all KS3 reading lessons
- Implement a peer mentor reading programme
- Explore more experimental methods for supporting the least able readers in our community
- Work with families to develop the reading skills needed by parents to support their children
- Identify opportunities to work with local feeder schools to develop the skills of younger students who may join our community in Year 7.

## **Writing**

It is important that we provide for co-ordination across subjects to recognise and reinforce students' language skills, through:

- Making connections between students' reading and writing, so that students have clear models for their writing;
- Using the modelling process to make explicit to students *how* to write;
- Being clear about audience and purpose;
- Providing opportunities for a range of writing including sustained writing.
- Making use a shared marking framework for commenting on the spelling, punctuation and grammar of students' writing.

We recognise that staff will need support with this and will provide training via INSEDs and materials will be available throughout the year.

## **Writing non-fiction**

Each department will teach students how to write in ways that are specific to that department's subject needs;

The text types are:

- information;
- recount;
- explanation;
- instruction;
- persuasion;
- discursive writing;
- analysis;
- evaluation;
- formal essay.

## **Spelling:**

Each department will:

- identify and display key vocabulary;
- revise key vocabulary;
- teach agreed learning strategies which will help students to learn subject spelling lists;
- concentrate on the marking of high-frequency and key subject words taking into account the differing abilities of students.
- test or revise high frequency words regularly;
- set personal spelling targets.

## **Assessing Literacy Across the Curriculum**

Available data from KS2, and reading age data gathered from the STAR reading assessments, should be shared across the curriculum and should be used to inform planning and to assist us in responding to early pieces of work.

The best assessment informs lesson-planning and target-setting and helps us to maintain the pace of learning for our students.

When assessing students' work across the curriculum we should value their oral contributions and listening skills alongside their reading and writing.

We should take into account students' performance in speaking and listening, reading and writing when assessing and reporting on students' progress in subject areas. The common Spoken Language assessment criteria used at GCSE level should be used across the school in all years.

When setting writing tasks we should make explicit to the students the key features of language which will be considered.

When responding to students' work we should:

- make comments which are positive and supportive;
- target specific areas for improvement (a selective and focussed identification of errors);
- give guidance on how to achieve the short-term targets set. For example, whilst "improve your spelling" is unhelpful and vague, the identification of a particular spelling error e.g. doubling of letters before adding -ing is specific and presents the student with a target which can be addressed;
- give priority to content, ideas, organisation and meaning above secretarial features; create opportunities for students to reflect on the quality of their own work and for meaningful self and peer assessment;

- SPaG comments should be clearly and regularly included in responses to students' work across the curriculum.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

We will make use of available data to assess the standards of students' literacy. Senior Leadership team, Director of Learning for English and Pastoral leaders will decide how to monitor progress in the school.

Possible approaches are:

- sampling work – both students' work and departmental schemes;
- observation;
- meetings;
- student interviews;
- scrutiny of development plans;
- encouraging departments to share good practice by exhibiting or exemplifying students' work.

## **Including All Students**

### **1. Differentiation**

Ash Manor School's students are entitled to our highest expectations and support. Some will need additional support and others will need to be challenged and extended. Strategies that we can use include:

- questioning;
- adjusting the demands of the task;
- the use of additional support;
- use of group structures;
- resources;
- making objectives clear;
- creating an atmosphere where students can and do effectively evaluate their own and others' work.

### **2. The more able**

We will seek to:

- identify able students accurately;
- promote ways of structuring learning for able students by using Framework objectives;
- develop a teaching repertoire which supports and challenges able students.

### **3. English as an Additional Language**

Our students learning EAL need to hear good examples of spoken English frequently and also to refer to their first language skills to aid new learning in all subjects of the curriculum. The use of their first language enables them to draw on existing subject knowledge and to develop English language skills in context. For example, a group of students can learn about paragraph organisation in their mother tongue.

### **4. SEN**

We will teach our students with special educational needs appropriately, supporting their learning and providing them with challenges matched to their needs, through using a range of teaching strategies such as guided group work, writing frames and high-quality oral activities modelled and scaffolded to ensure students are aware of the high expectations we have of them at all levels.

*Policy linked with*

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