



Literacy  
Policy

May

**2017**



# AIMS

We seek to fulfil the needs of learners in a caring, happy environment, enabling them to realise their true potential as young people and citizens.

We aim to enable our learners to:-

**P**REPARE for adult life in a happy, caring and purposeful environment

**A**CHIEVE their full potential regardless of individual need

**C**ARE for everyone and encourage respect and tolerance

**E**NJOY education and rejoice in success



## **Introduction**

The following policy is focused on our commitment to adopting a whole-school literacy approach at The Whitby High School. This policy is designed to provide a framework for staff in keeping with the practices and principles established in the National Literacy Strategy. It reflects the current national drive to raise overall standards of teaching and learning; changes to the examination foci within certain departments, and feedback from the 2016 Inspection Handbook

Staff at The Whitby High School are united in the belief that it is our duty to ensure that students can communicate effectively. Literacy underpins the whole school curriculum. As a result, students need an extensive vocabulary; to be able to access meaning, and express themselves coherently. By improving students' literacy skills their chances of being independent learners and thriving, employable adults increases.

## **Aims**

- To provide a clear literacy framework to ensure consistent practice across the curriculum;
- Raise students' literacy levels across the curriculum;
- To maintain a uniform literacy marking policy;
- To determine departmental roles and responsibilities with regards to whole school literacy.
- To embed a whole school writing approach.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

What the Senior Leadership Team will do:

- Support whole school literacy initiatives;
- Observe literacy during lesson observations.

What the Literacy Co-ordinator will do:

- Complete a literacy audit;
- Provide departments with strategies to ensure that the three strands can be embedded within schemes of work;
- Develop a bank of literacy resources that can be used by all staff;
- Establish procedures for monitoring literacy across the curriculum;
- Provide INSET training.

What departments will do:

- Create subject-specific literacy mats, displays, and/or posters for key words;
- Support whole school literacy initiatives/foci;
- Provide opportunities, where appropriate within schemes of work, for extended writing within all Key Stages;

- Where appropriate, ensure that the three strands of literacy: reading, writing and spoken communication are embedded within schemes of work.

What every teacher will do:

- Incorporate literacy objectives, where appropriate, in planning, teaching and marking;
- Teach the spellings and meanings of key words in their subject;
- Use exemplar written material to model;
- Draw attention to the purpose, audience and linguistic features of texts;
- Refer to and recap the structural elements and particular elements of text layouts;
- Promote active reading within lessons;
- Equip students with essential skills, such as note taking, skimming and scanning and evaluation of work;
- Mark students' work in accordance with the whole school literacy marking policy;
- Reinforce standards of accuracy and presentation;
- Use Standard English when addressing students;
- Reinforce the difference between informal and formal writing and speech.

What form tutors will do:

- Support whole school literacy initiatives;
- Ensure the Word of the Week is read out;
- Promote independent reading within form time.

What parents/carers should do:

- Encourage their children to use the range of strategies they have learnt to improve their levels of literacy;
- Encourage their children to read as widely and frequently as possible;
- Support whole school literacy initiatives.

What students will do:

- Take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs and making improvements.

### **Whole-School Responsibility**

1. Identify the strengths and weaknesses in students' work from across the school, using the literacy mark scheme, where appropriate;
2. Adapt the identified literacy cross-curricular priorities for each year;
3. Seek to identify progression in the main forms of reading, writing, speaking and listening undertaken in each department and strengthen teaching plans accordingly;

4. Plan to include the teaching of literacy objectives to support learning in own subject area;
5. Review this literacy policy annually.

### **Speaking and Listening**

We will teach students to use language precisely and coherently. They should be able to listen to others, recognise the difference between informal and formal speech and to respond and build on their ideas and views constructively.

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; use formal and informal English in the correct situations; listening for a specific purpose; discussion and evaluation.

Staff training needs will be met through INSET, The Literacy Guide for Students, Staff and Parents and resources created for whole-school use by the Literacy Group.

### **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.

We will build on and share existing good practice. Within the constraints of subject-specific curricula, we will teach students strategies to help them to: read with greater understanding; locate and use information; follow a process or argument; summarise; combine and adapt what they learn from their reading.

### **Writing**

It is important that we reinforce students' language skills across the curriculum by:

- 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;
- explicit teaching of the format, layout and features of specific text types;
- explicit teaching of the differences between formal and informal writing;
- providing opportunities for a range of writing including sustained writing

**Writing: development of extended writing across the curriculum. [2016/17 priority].**

Each department will:

- teach and reinforce how to adapt extended writing skills in their subject.
- teach students the subject-specific vocabulary appropriate to their subject.
- provide examples of extended writing opportunities across their SCLs by September 2017.

Extended Writing opportunities include:

- Analytical essays.
- Evaluation.
- Editorials.
- Written presentations.
- Instructional writing.
- Letters
- Reports
- Scripts/speeches
- Hypotheses.




### **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.
- Track spelling progress.

## Literacy Marking Policy

Marking and feedback will lead to an improvement in student literacy and general presentation of work. Departments must incorporate the whole-school marking and literacy codes in their policies and implement them through their marking, according to subject-specific curricula.

Symbol		Meaning
✓		You have made a good/relevant point.
CL		You are missing, or do not need a capital letter.
^		You are missing something.
sp (margin)	Error circled in text eg: 	You have spelt something wrongly.
? (margin)	Error indicated in text 	This does not make sense.
P (margin)	Error underlined in text 	You have made a punctuation error.
//		You need to use a new paragraph.
To improve:		Your target is...
		Insert department target here
		Insert department target here

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

We will make use of available data to assess the standards of students' literacy. Senior managers, the Head of English, the RSL leaders and the literacy co-ordinator, will decide how to monitor progress in the school.

Approaches will include:

- sampling work – both students' work and departmental schemes;
- observation – student pursuit and literacy teaching;
- meetings;
- student interviews;
- scrutiny of development plans;
- encouraging departments to share good practice by exhibiting or exemplifying students' work;
- tracking students from across the school
- Standing item of discussion in departmental/faculty meetings.

### **Key Priorities Agreed for 2016/2017:**

- **Extended Writing**
- **Spelling of subject-specific vocabulary**
- **Review of school priorities will take place:**

### **October 2017**

**The Whitby High School is committed to raising standards of literacy in all its students, through a co-ordinated approach.**

**Every teacher has a role to play in this process.**