

LITERACY POLICY

JUNE 2017



Ecclesfield
SCHOOL

Literacy is a key pillar of education and it is a core function of the school to equip our students with the skills required to be confidently and creatively literate. This policy sets out the school's commitment to the literacy of our students and clarifies how the school's commitment will be enacted by all staff and governors.

Date approved: 13th June 2017

Signed: (Headteacher)

Signed: (Chair of committee)

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Ethos

Ecclesfield School understands the power of education to transform lives, communities and society.

We aspire to achieve individual and collective excellence in all that we do through nurturing every student's unique potential, expanding their horizons and promoting their understanding of the invaluable contributions they can make as citizens in a global society.

By fostering our students' spirit of engagement, adventure and ingenuity, we will nurture all young people as fully-rounded individuals, providing them with the challenge and support they require to succeed. We will protect their childhoods, allowing our learners to carry their innate creativity, inquisitiveness and sense of wonder about the world throughout their lives.

Ecclesfield School recognises the importance of students leading rich and diverse lives and will encourage them to seize the opportunities available to them as a means of celebrating the joy and brief wonder of being young.

As staff at Ecclesfield School, we recognise the privilege we enjoy in working with every member of our community. We see it as our public duty to serve this community and to deliver for the students of High Green, Chapeltown and Ecclesfield outstanding outcomes and extraordinary experiences.

Students' Literacy Entitlement

Literacy is a whole school priority and the Literacy strategy is based on the principle that 'Every teacher is a teacher of English because every teacher is a teacher in English. We cannot give a lesson in any subject without helping or neglecting the English of our pupils' (George Sampson, 1921). We believe that all students of Ecclesfield School are entitled to lessons and experiences that develop them as literate individuals and that the delivery of such an education is a core duty of all staff.

In light of Teaching Standard 3, which enshrines the expectation that all teachers will promote 'high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject' (DfE, 2011), Ofsted will inspect the teaching of literacy, including reading, when evaluating students' achievement and the quality of teaching.

More importantly, because literacy is the gateway to all knowledge, the development of students as literate learners must underpin everything that we do. We have a responsibility to ensure that all our students receive their literacy entitlement and leave Ecclesfield School as confident and literate citizens, to give them the best possible start in the world. Given that improved literacy levels have a direct correlation to increased attainment and life chances, a systematic, whole-school approach to literacy is a necessity. In light of this, literacy must be seen in all parts of the school.

Statement of Intent

Ecclesfield School is committed to:

- Developing, maintaining and improving standards in literacy across the school.
- Ensuring consistency of practice, including methods, vocabulary, notation etc.
- Finding areas for collaboration between subjects.
- Assisting the transfer of students' knowledge, skills and understanding between subjects.
- Ensuring that all teachers are teachers of literacy.

Teachers will use all subjects to develop students' literacy. Confidence in literacy is a precondition of success across the national curriculum.

1. Key roles and responsibilities

- 1.1. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the implementation of this Literacy Policy and procedures.
- 1.2. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that this Literacy Policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including but not limited to ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 1.3. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for annually reviewing the Literacy Policy.
- 1.4. The Headteacher has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Policy.
- 1.5. The Headteacher will be responsible for ensuring the day-to-day implementation and management of this Literacy Policy and procedures.
- 1.6. The Assistant Headteacher (KS3 Progress) will be responsible for the impact of literacy-based interventions delivered by the Librarian and Literacy Manager, the SfL department and the English department.
- 1.7. The Assistant Headteacher (with MEA responsibility) is responsible for ensuring the M&A Policy explicitly refers to and supports the development of students' technical accuracy, including correct SPaG.
- 1.8. The Literacy Leader will be responsible for liaising with teachers across all of the departments to facilitate the delivery of literacy skills.
- 1.9. The English department will be responsible for teaching English specific skills and delivering Accelerated Reader.
- 1.10. The Librarian will be responsible for developing a whole-school reading ethos, providing current, accessible relevant and varied resources to support RFP and the school curriculum, and provide practical support for Accelerated Reader.
- 1.11. All teachers will be responsible for making and taking opportunities to develop literacy skills across their subjects.

2. Definitions

Although literacy includes reading, with fluency for knowledge and understanding, writing coherently and communicating (speaking and listening) effectively, it is not limited to this. Literacy is a broader set of skills which ensure students are ready 'to engage with challenging concepts, to make constructive connections between subjects and to learn from the thinking and experience of others' in cross-curricular links between subjects (Ofsted, 2013a).

3. Literacy audits

- 3.1. Whole department audits highlight areas of good practice and identify where opportunities to develop literacy skills can be maximised.
- 3.2. Individual staff audits allow us to identify PL needs across the wider school.

- 3.3. Based on the audits, the Literacy Leader will expand on the Literacy Toolkit to ensure support is available for all areas.

4. Our commitment to developing Literacy Skills

We will ensure that all members of staff:

- 4.1. adheres to the school's Literacy policy;
- 4.2. create a positive environment that celebrates literacy and provides students with role-models by celebrating the literacy successes of older students;
- 4.3. plan activities to allow students to learn and practice their literacy skills;
- 4.4. publicly display examples of high-quality literacy work from across the curriculum.

Individual departments will:

- 4.5. ensure that they are teaching literacy in a clear and consistent way, as set out by the 'Common Approach to Literacy' in the Literacy Toolkit booklet.
- 4.6. highlight the opportunities for the use of literacy within their subject and ensure that the learning materials that are presented to students match both their capability in the subject and their literacy demands.

All members of staff will:

- 4.7. have high expectations of all their students and ensure that the literacy content of their lesson is of high standard;
- 4.8. provide opportunities for students to develop their literacy skills in all lessons;
- 4.9. ensure they use the 'Common Approach to Literacy' in lessons in order to best support the literacy development of students;
- 4.10. Follow whole school policy and guidelines when marking students' work and providing feedback.

5. Supporting documentation

5.1. This policy will be supported by the following two documents:

- A literacy action plan that will form part of the whole school action plan. This will be reviewed three times during each academic year and rewritten every year to be in line with current priorities.
- A Literacy Toolkit booklet. This will be written and kept up to date by the Literacy Leader. It will set out a consistent way to approach literacy across the school, i.e. providing a 'Common Approach to Literacy' for all staff to follow.

Appendix 1: Subject specific literacy audit

Literacy Audit

Department: _____

The purpose of this exercise is for you to be able to identify 3 priority areas for your department – this will enable you to take a department approach to improving the literacy provision within your subject. You will need to look at all the evidence gathered through whole-school MEA activities (e.g. work scrutiny) as well as consider the findings of MEA activities which have taken place within the department.

Feedback from MEA activities about literacy in your department and suggested areas for development:

Work Scrutiny –

KS3 questionnaires -

Effective - Missed opportunity - Ineffective

Key area	RAG ● ○ ●			Comments/ evidence/ examples of how done	Action points
1 Communication					
1.1 Speaking and listening is incorporated into curriculum planning.					
1.2 Students speak in full sentences (with/ without the need for encouragement).					
1.3 Teachers model the language which Students are expected to use (including full sentences, key words etc).					
1.4 Teachers use questioning and discussion to further understanding of a topic.					
1.5 A variety of questioning methods are used to encourage speaking and listening.					

1.6 A range of activities are used to develop communication e.g. think pair share, talk-frames, 'no hands up', role play, wait time in questioning etc.				
1.7 There are planned opportunities to develop speaking and listening outside of the classroom e.g. through extra-curricular clubs.				
2 Reading				
2.1 Reading is incorporated into curriculum planning.				
2.2 Students have a number of opportunities to read independently in lessons.				
2.3 Students have a number of opportunities to read in groups during lessons.				
2.4 Guided reading takes place in lessons.				
2.5 Reciprocal reading takes place in lessons.				
2.6 Students are encouraged to read for pleasure through a list of recommended reading (subject specific).				
3 Writing				
3.1 Writing is incorporated into curriculum planning.				
3.2 Students proof read their own work (with/ without encouragement from teachers).				
3.3 Students are encouraged to use key words in their writing through a variety of activities e.g. matching activities, categorising, quizzes, questions in the pot (relating to key words) etc.				
3.4 Students are encouraged to write in full sentences.				
3.5 Teachers regularly give written feedback, using the school marking code.				
3.6 Students respond to the feedback.				
3.7 Students use a dictionary/ thesaurus to help them in written tasks and when proof reading.				
3.8 Students are provided with subject specific materials to support written work e.g. word mats, evaluation structures.				

3.9 Students are provided with generic literacy resources to support their writing, e.g. conjunctions board.				
4 Subject knowledge				
4.1 Teachers are secure in applying their literacy skills in their own subject.				
4.2 Literacy subject knowledge is secure and sufficient to teach the ability range within lessons.				
4.3 There is specialist literacy knowledge within the department e.g. someone trained in delivering phonics lessons.				
5 Learning Environment				
5.1 The classroom environments support communication through a range of visual cues.				
5.2 Key words are displayed in the classroom and used effectively.				
5.3 The classroom environments support communication through a range of visual cues and literacy support e.g. VCOP pyramids.				
5.4 There are no issues with the storage or retrieval of resources to support literacy.				
5.5 There are no gaps in the resources for literacy.				
6 General				
6.1 All members of the department understand the impact which literacy has on their subject.				
6.2 There is an ethos within the department that 'every teacher is a teacher of English'.				
6.3 The department uses the MLE to support literacy.				
6.4 The department supports literacy outside the classroom e.g. extra-curricular clubs, competitions etc.				
6.5 There is a literacy outcome in all lessons (where appropriate).				
7 SEN				
7.1 Opportunities are provided for teachers to find out more information about the specific needs of Students within the class.				

7.2 Clear guidance is provided for teachers so that they can effectively differentiate for Students who require additional support in reading, writing, speaking and listening.					
7.3 Strategies provided by specialists e.g. Speech and Language Therapists are implemented across the department.					
7.4 All TAs have the necessary skills and knowledge to support specific Students within your department area.					
7.5 Additional adults are used effectively to support literacy.					

Department Priorities:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Appendix 2: A Common Approach to Literacy

Every teacher is a teacher of English because every teacher is a teacher in English. We cannot give a lesson in any subject without helping or neglecting the English of our pupils. George Sampson, 1921.

A Common Approach to Classrooms

Strategies
<input type="checkbox"/> Display key words for your subject.
<input type="checkbox"/> Make sure annotated examples of what high quality work looks like are visible, with questions to promote thinking.
<input type="checkbox"/> Make sure your '... is reading...' poster is clearly visible to students who pass/ enter my classroom – talk to students about what you are reading.
<input type="checkbox"/> Make sure the learning objective for every lesson is evident. Students know what they are expected to learn and how they will demonstrate it.
<input type="checkbox"/> Make sure proof reading and presentation guidance is on display.

A Common Approach to Reading

Strategies
<input type="checkbox"/> Make hand-outs attractive and accessible, e.g. white space, bullet points, summaries, short paragraphs, reading age appropriate.
<input type="checkbox"/> Ask questions about a text that go beyond simple comprehension to explore the 'why' and 'how' of issues.
<input type="checkbox"/> Use a range of reading strategies to support reading e.g. reading aloud, paired reading, reciprocal reading, Pause Prompt Praise, talk about the text, ask students to make predictions about the text.
<input type="checkbox"/> Explicitly teach the reading skills needed for your subject e.g. skimming (gist of a text), scanning (finding key information), analysis, speed reading, active research.
<input type="checkbox"/> Give students a 'big picture', question or statement that helps them to understand why they are reading the text.

A Common Approach to Writing

Strategies
<input type="checkbox"/> Insist that students use the 'house style' for presenting written work and digital text. Explicitly refer to it.
<input type="checkbox"/> Explicitly refer to the literacy focus.
<input type="checkbox"/> Explicitly teach the essential conjunctions (e.g. however, because, as, so, although, while, despite...).
<input type="checkbox"/> Demystify spelling. Give students strategies to help them remember spellings, e.g. sounds, visuals, mnemonics, finding the shorter words within the word.
<input type="checkbox"/> Build in time for planning.
<input type="checkbox"/> Build in time for proof reading and re-drafting where necessary.
<input type="checkbox"/> Insist students respond to written and verbal feedback and act on literacy feedback.
<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure students have access to and use a dictionary and thesaurus when writing.
<input type="checkbox"/> Use literacy mats (or other guidance) to help students to work independently when writing.
<input type="checkbox"/> Be clear about the conventions of the writing you expect in your subject – audience, purpose, layout, key words and phrases, the level of formality. Use the templates provided by the English department as a starting point.
<input type="checkbox"/> Use a range of strategies for actively teaching writing, e.g. modelling, writing frames, collaborative writing, deconstructing texts and finding the features (this prepares students for 'reconstructing' the text type in their own writing. Features identified through 'deconstruction' become the success criteria for their own writing).

- Encourage students to use short sentences at the start and end of paragraphs and longer sentences in the middle.
- Ask students to reject the first word that comes to mind e.g. Making (reject and replace with 'constructing') the plastic apple was difficult (reject and replace with 'problematic').

A Common Approach to Speaking and listening

Strategies
<input type="checkbox"/> Model the features of your own subject language which you expect in group discussions and answers (key vocabulary, conjunctions, style etc).
<input type="checkbox"/> Give students thinking time before giving an answer (optimum for full engagement with lower order questions = 3-5 seconds, optimum for full engagement with higher order question = 10 seconds)
<input type="checkbox"/> Use less 'what?' questions and more 'why?' and 'how?'
<input type="checkbox"/> Increase the use of 'no hands up' (except to ask a question) or other teacher nomination strategies e.g. whiteboards or post-its.
<input type="checkbox"/> Give students time for oral rehearsal – briefly discussing their answers in pairs with 'Talk Partners' before being expected to say them aloud or write them.

A Common Approach to Vocabulary building

Strategies
<input type="checkbox"/> Explicitly teach the key words in my subject. E.g. repeat it 4 times and bracket the meaning after, use games such as odd one out, give them the answer, key letters, key word wall.
<input type="checkbox"/> Explicitly teach tier two and three vocabulary.
<input type="checkbox"/> Group the word rich with the word poor.
<input type="checkbox"/> Explicitly teach and mark the spelling of high frequency words.
<input type="checkbox"/> Model the use of key words.
<input type="checkbox"/> Be selective when teaching new vocabulary.
<input type="checkbox"/> Repeat repeat repeat.

Appendix 3: Library Policy

The Library exists to support the learning needs of the whole school.

It aims to be a central and integral part of school life and underlines the focus of the school in improving teaching and learning, raising literacy levels through a variety of reading development opportunities and promoting enrichment activities for all.

Aims:

1. To encourage greater use of the library by students of all ages and abilities by promoting a culture of reading for pleasure, learning and study.
2. To provide current, accessible, relevant and varied resources to support the curriculum taught in school.
3. To endeavour constantly to raise the level of reading capability of students by providing accessible and varied fiction and recreational non-fiction stock.
4. To provide a calm, bright, safe and welcoming environment for all members of the school community in which to work, learn and read.
5. To develop extra-curricular activities to enhance students participation in all forms of learning.

Objectives:

1. To develop and maintain a wide selection of materials that is easily accessed and reflects students of all abilities and interest levels.
2. To liaise with all members of staff to ascertain the exact curriculum needs of their subject.
3. To promote and support recreational reading by liaising with users and knowing current trends in children's fiction.
4. To encourage use of the Library by all sections of the school by having open access.
5. To foster a spirit of enquiry by enabling students to both find and retrieve relevant information.
6. To encourage reading for pleasure through use of display, competitions and literacy interventions.

