

Literacy Policy

The National Literacy Strategy defines literacy as: ‘the ability to recognise, understand, use and manipulate the conventions of language.’ Competence in literacy is, therefore, essential to understanding in all subjects. The strategy further asserts that literacy skills are most effectively developed as part of a coherent and consistent framework, which is applied in all areas of the curriculum, consequently the teaching of literacy skills must be the remit of all teachers. Reading, writing, speaking and listening are essential skills; competence in them facilitates access to the curriculum and subsequent improvements in learning.

In order to improve the standard of literacy throughout the school, the following strategies are in place:

- The Whole School *Written English Policy* (see below) outlines the expectations of all teachers in the teaching of key terms and the importance of written expression;
- A literacy strand exists in all schemes of work, which may focus on text type, appropriate vocabulary, reading and research strategies or the use of DARTs activities;
- In response to the DfE’s Literacy Strategy, four literacy priorities for each of Years 7 to 9 have been agreed. These are:

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
1	Spelling	Vocabulary	Vocabulary
2	Sentence construction and punctuation	Paragraphing and cohesion	Stylistic conventions
3	Reading for meaning	Research and study skills	Group discussion and interaction
4	Plan, draft and present	Persuade, argue and advise	Analyse, review and comment

- Key terms for each subject are in student planners for KS3 pupils and should be regularly referred to by subject staff. They are also displayed in subject rooms;
- An English Support Club is held once a week in the lecture theatre, where senior pupils act as tutors for lower school pupils with weaknesses in aspects of literacy. All departments may refer pupils to English Club with an outline of the area of weakness, although this is not to act as a substitute for targeted, differentiated support;
- The Library Officer provides advice and encouragement to pupils in their choice of texts for all subjects;
- Displays of book choices are also available around the school, and displays in classrooms should be ‘text rich’ in order to promote literacy;
- Displays throughout the school show examples of good written work;
- Daily assemblies support the value of reading and tutor groups take responsibility for the presentation of junior and senior assemblies based on the weekly theme;

- Headteacher's commendations and the merit system reward all aspects of literacy, not just written work;
- Much encouragement is given to pupils to enter poetry competitions and participate in extra-curricular drama.

Further to these strategies, detailed pupil profile information (KS2 results, VR scores, CATs, and Spelling Age Tests) enables the identification of pupils with lower levels of attainment in English and literacy skills. These pupils are then supported within English lessons and through paired reading during library sessions in Year 7. This targeted help is further reinforced through English support club. Pupil progress is discussed at monthly departmental and tutor meetings and also at Subject Leaders and SLT/Heads of School meetings.

In the rare event that a pupil should still be experiencing difficulty with literacy in Year 9, arrangements may be made to withdraw them where possible from option subjects which they are not continuing at Key Stage Four, in order to provide intense literacy support.

The academy also strives to further develop the range of teaching styles used to meet pupils' diverse learning styles and share good practice within the school.