



William Brookes Academy Trust

Literacy Policy

February 2017



Literacy Policy
William Brookes Academy Trust
February 2016

This policy is due for review in two years

Statement of Intent

At William Brookes School, we strive to improve the ways in which we communicate with each other and to give our young people the best academic chances and access to the best opportunities in life.

1. Rationale

All teaching staff at William Brookes School are committed to raising standards of literacy due to our understanding that:

- improving literacy will have a positive impact on students' self-esteem, motivation, behaviour and learning
- if students can access texts, they can engage with their learning in a more independent way
- literacy is increasingly valued in the world of work and the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening are highly valued by our students' future employers, as well as improving success at GCSE, A Level and beyond
- students need language, a broad vocabulary, analytical skills and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of all academic subjects
- reading helps us to learn from sources beyond our immediate experience, as well as comprehend examination papers
- developing speaking and listening skills increases the confidence of communicators and active listeners,
- detailed responses to higher order questions encourage the development of thinking skills and enquiry.

2. Aims and Objectives

- to develop literacy skills in students so that they can access a range of texts and understand how to interact effectively in both written and verbal communication
- to foster students' confidence and clarity when speaking and their ability to become reflective listeners
- to promote ways in which all subjects can make a specific contribution to developing student's language through the teaching of subject-specific vocabulary and patterns of language
- to ensure that all students recognise the importance of literacy as a tool for personal identification, expression and inclusion in society
- to nurture a love of reading as part of student's life-long learning journey
- to expect and support students in communicating with clarity, precision and purpose whenever possible
- to support each other in developing a culture of *improvement* to achieve success rather than criticism leading to failure
- to make literacy part of all planning by focusing on how the requirements of tasks are communicated to and between students and how their work is then communicated to us.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 The Senior Leadership Team and Head teacher** will lead and give a high profile to literacy development and be responsible for monitoring progress across the school and assessing standards of students' literacy.
- 3.2 The Lead Literacy Coordinator/Literacy Team** will provide targeted intervention to students when their reading age is significantly lower than their actual age - as assessed upon entry into Year 7 and at key assessment points throughout KS3. These interventions focus on inference and deduction, reading for meaning and phonics skills. Students who are below their actual reading age will also be enrolled on the reading mentor programme and supported by students in the upper years of the school.

The Lead Literacy Coordinator is responsible for the management of the Accelerated Reader programme across the school.

Students who require additional support with core literacy skills will be placed in an intervention group for Humanities subjects, where a greater emphasis on writing and SPaG will form the lesson focus.

- 3.3 The SEND Department** will provide targeted intervention to students who require additional support with literacy, such as small spelling groups; 1:1 dyslexia specialist teaching; supported reading; the use of precision teaching programmes like 'Toe by Toe'. Students with a gap of 2 years between their actual and chronological age for reading will qualify for the catch-up literacy intervention programme. Students with a gap of between 1 and 2 years will be assigned a KS4 or 5 Reading Mentor.
- 3.4 Teachers across the curriculum** will aim to develop students' literacy through the promotion of effective strategies to support reading, writing and oral communication. Teachers will also complete marking which focuses on SPaG.
- 3.5 The Librarian**
Will promote reading across the school via the Accelerated Reader programme and encourage the development of vital research.
- 3.6 Parents and carers**
Will receive information about the strategies the school uses to support literacy as well as ideas and information on how they can promote literacy skills at home. Parents and carers have access to Home Connect to monitor their children's progress on the Accelerated Reader programme.

4. Reading

We want our students to develop a love of reading and to appreciate and understand the importance of reading for pleasure. Reading can aid spelling, help learners to be more critical and evaluative, and develop their vocabularies.

We aim to teach students strategies to help them to:

- read with greater understanding
- locate and use information
- follow a process or argument
- summarise, synthesise, challenge and adapt what they learn from their reading

In order to meet our aims and intentions, the SLT will work alongside the Lead Literacy Coordinator and the Librarian to ensure that good practice and usage of the library is promoted across the school by teachers, tutors and the pastoral team.

In addition, all students starting in Year 7 will be given a reading test to establish their reading ages. Students will then be directed to specific strands of intervention delivered by the Literacy Intervention Team and/or the SEND department. Students will be re-tested at key points during KS3 and their progress will be continually monitored.

All students across KS3 will follow a reading timetable where four dedicated sessions are focussed on silent reading as part of the Accelerated Reader Programme. Two are linked to tutor period and two take place during curriculum lessons on a rotation basis. Students who require additional support with reading will be attached to a reading mentor from the upper years of the school.

5. Writing

Students should have an understanding of how language should be adapted depending on purpose, audience and form. Students should be able to create writing which communicates confidently, accurately and effectively. They should also be able to respond to other texts succinctly and to demonstrate their competence in comprehension and understanding.

We aim to teach students strategies to help them to:

- make connections between their reading and writing
- identify models of writing through their reading
- provide opportunities for sustained written responses

In order to meet our aims and intentions, staff will be expected to follow their assessment policy, particularly with regard to literacy. When marking a piece of written work, teachers are expected to correct subject specific spellings by indicating where the error is for the student to write the correct spelling in their student planner. These spellings then form part of regular spelling lessons in English, where the teacher teaches the students strategies to learn those spellings.

Staff should also ensure that the need for high standards of written English are made more explicit to students. For example, if a task involves students writing it is advised that staff should:

- provide and explicitly teach success criteria
- produce differentiated writing frames and model both the planning and writing of these tasks.

Key words should be provided and students should be encouraged to use them. The use of self and peer assessment to refine the quality of written work should be utilised with clear and accessible guidance from the teacher.

We aim to encourage students to strive to be the best that they can be and teachers should encourage students to improve their written work continually in the pursuit of excellence.

Work will continue to share best practices, grouping subjects with similar written needs to connect subject specific terminology and approaches in relation to writing.

6. Communication

Our students should be able to communicate effectively in a range of formal or informal situations, both inside and outside of the classroom. A student's ability to express themselves effectively will be used on a day to day basis in their working lives and will be vital to them in situations such as interviews or presentations.

We aim to teach pupils strategies which will help them to:

- participate fully in pair and group discussions through their verbal communication
- discuss and evaluate information and ideas
- listen for a specific purpose.

In order to meet these aims, staff should encourage pupils to speak in Standard English (and the target language in MFL) and to develop an understanding of the influence of context on register and tone. Furthermore, when students are expected to work in groups, they should be made to understand the importance of making contributions to their group and enable others to share their ideas by listening to their contributions.