

Testwood School Literacy Policy



Key Responsibility Area:	JP
Last Review:	April 2023
Next Review:	April 2024

Revision History

Version	Date	Amendments	Initials
V2.0	01.05.20	Updated Governors to Trustees Included LSAs in responsibilities	JP
V3.0	26.04.21	Added Turn on the sub-titles hyperlink	JP
V4.0	29.04.21	Revision dates updated Literacy party changed to Literacy coordinator	JB
V4.1	28.04.23	Revision dates updated	

Philosophy

Literacy has been identified as a key focus for all schools. Many students start Year 7 with weak literacy which needs to be addressed to allow rapid improvement in students' standards of reading and writing. GCSEs reflect higher standards in literacy, something for which all Testwood students need to be equipped.

Purpose

The policy recognises that:

- good literacy is a key factor in raising standards across all school subjects
- poor literacy means poor performance and students need to read intelligently and express themselves clearly if they are to do well in any subject
- literacy skills can be fostered within subjects as part of reading, writing, speaking and listening
- to ensure success, all teachers and learning support assistants need to focus on agreed priorities for developing the literacy skills of students to enhance their chances as move through into further learning and work

The evolving practice aims to ensure that:

- the teaching of literacy skills is undertaken by all teachers (and LSAs)
- students recognise the transferability of literacy skills across all areas of learning
- there are similar expectations across all subject areas about teaching and learning for literacy
- all staff are made aware of how to deal with literacy issues as they appear within the subject
- all staff are systematic about the implementation of the strategy across the curriculum

To reinforce literacy skills across the curriculum, teachers should:

- work to the practices described in annex 1 including:
- using agreed strategies, e.g. writing frames
- employing successful new practice, e.g. shared (i.e. whole class) writing and reading
- assessing work in similar ways, to the same standards
- reminding students to apply the literacy skills they have learned in other subjects
- identifying the skills that are best taught through their subject
- using the same literacy vocabulary/terminology across the school

Key Objectives

All departments are expected to adopt common approaches to literacy, to ensure similar standards in:

- spelling and vocabulary
- active reading strategies
- reading for information
- making notes to support learning
- using the library/learning resource centre
- assessing for literacy
- the management of group talk
- listening
- non-fiction writing
- the use of different writing styles

Whole-school implementation - Outcomes:

As a minimum:

- all subjects will identify where they will plan, teach and mark to the key literacy objectives
- the literacy coordinator will:
 - identify which department will be responsible for which objectives
 - sample periodically the work of students for evidence of progress against the objectives
 - identify the training needs of staff to help them fulfil the objectives

Putting the policy into practice – Consideration of the following points will inform the developing practice to improve literacy skills:

- the evidence of Ofsted suggests that many of the objectives are being addressed by departments already, although there is clearly a need for more rigorous following up on the spelling, punctuation and grammar errors identified in students' work.
- the policy will inform the Literacy Action Plan, which will enable systematic implementation of the objectives, highlighting training and equipment needs
- whilst several literacy objectives are relevant to all departments critical departments will be selected for the implementation of the objectives most relevant to their subject.
- the implementation of this policy which will require staff training, will be planned over a period of time, the review point to judge progress.
- the literacy coordinator will be responsible for conducting the review of this policy.

This Policy was approved by the Trustees and will be reviewed bi-annually.

Date Policy agreed: April 2023

Date of Review: April 2024

Signature of Chair of Trustees:

May 2023

Annex 1

The development of working practices to support the Literacy policy

Common approaches to the development of literacy skills

Spelling and Vocabulary - Teachers will:

- secure the correct spelling of words on the high frequency 'General Spelling List' provided in the framework for teaching English: Years 7, 8 and 9. This is to be delivered through a tutor time activity. The literacy coordinator will supply the fortnightly lists – weekly subject specific spelling tests are also taking place in English lessons. .
- teach students strategies which will help them learn subject spelling lists
- prioritise the marking of high-frequency words and key subject words, and highlight rules where the error would relate to other words
- ensure appropriate use of the diary dictionary in which all spelling work, including personal spelling lists, games, learning activities and error corrections, should be logged
- test all logged errors each time students review marking.
- use key words glossaries, word banks and other strategies to provide support for subject-specific vocabulary
- Use the literacy marking key

Active reading strategies - Teachers will:

- review reading tasks in schemes of work and discuss how these can be most helpfully delivered to students
- use activities which encourage close reading, e.g. cloze, sequencing, text marking and text restructuring
- when using a text with a class, explicitly identify the ways writers of non-fiction match language and organisation to their purpose and audience
- help students to read accurately, and use correctly, vocabulary that relates to key concepts in each subject, distinguishing between everyday uses of words and their subject-specific use

Reading for information - Teachers will:

- explicitly identify texts or resources in which relevant information can be located
- make clear which information is relevant or otherwise
- review texts which are used in schemes of work and assess the demands on the reader. Modify those which are inaccessible to specific groups
- explicitly teach appropriate strategies for locating information, e.g. skimming, scanning and highlighting
 - Trial using, encouraging subtitles in television programme/Youtube 'Turn on the subtitles' campaign 01/03/21 <https://turnonthesubtitles.org/>

Accelerated Reader – Librarian and teachers will (for Year 7 and Year 8 children)

- Follow the programme for accelerated reader as laid down by the AR coordinator
- Ensure the appropriate resources and opportunities are available for full participation. Form tutors will support this by ensuring the consistency of Monday reading during tutor time.

Making notes to support learning - Departments will:

- define the type of note-making support for given tasks
- demonstrate to students effective note-making and how notes can be used to link and develop ideas

Using the library/learning centre - Departments will:

- review their planning to include library based research tasks
- develop and maintain a working partnership with the librarian
- promote the use of the school library to students

In addition:

- the literacy coordinator will liaise with the librarian

Assessing for literacy - Departments will:

- agree an assessment code and the use of selective marking
- adopt a marking system, such as formative assessment, which obliges the student to retry

The management of group talk – Departments will aim to improve the management of group talk by:

- making the management of group talk the focus of one departmental meeting in the academic year
- planning each substantial group work session to include decisions about size of groups, focus of task, expected outcome and strategies for group talk and feedback

Listening - Teachers will:

- where possible, include activities where students listen for and recall the main points of a talk, reading or television programme, reflecting on what has been heard to ask searching questions, make comments or challenge the views expressed
- audit listening demands, environments and opportunities within subject areas
- incorporate the explicit teaching of listening into relevant subject areas

Non-fiction writing - Critical departments will:

- teach students to write in ways that are special to the subject
- adopt the teaching sequence for introducing new types of writing (demonstration of sequence available from training video, 'Writing non-fiction')
- agree with the English department where the generic text types are best consolidated in Year 7: information, recount, explanation, instruction, persuasion, discursive writing, analysis and evaluation

Developing different writing styles - All departments will:

- display useful phrases to help link and develop ideas in writing
- define for students the appropriate style for pieces of writing
- demonstrate for students the way to organise and express their ideas through pieces of writing
- provide annotated examples of writing in the subject, so that students understand what is required