ST. DAVID'S HIGH SCHOOL

LITERACY POLICY

Reviewed by Governors
October 2024

LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

"Language is the prime medium through which pupils learn and express themselves across the curriculum, and all teachers have a stake in effective literacy."

Rationale:

Literacy is one of the fundamental elements of learning; it concerns the way learners' access and interact with every kind of written text. High standards of literacy lead to success, both at school and in adult life. St. David's High School is committed to raising standards of literacy in order to raise standards and attainment across the curriculum. St. David's High School recognises that:

● Students need vocabulary, expression and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of different subjects;
● Reading helps students to learn from sources beyond their immediate experience;
● Writing helps students to sustain and order thought;
● Language helps students to reflect on, revise and evaluate the things they do, and to reflect on and evaluate the things others have said, written or done;
● Responding to higher order questions encourages the development of thinking skills and enquiry;
● Improving literacy and learning will impact on students' self-esteem, on motivation and behaviour;
● Improving literacy allows students to learn independently;
● Improving spoken literacy gives students confidence when interacting in formal contexts.

Purpose of policy

● To ensure clarity of whole school systems and approaches to support the literacy of all students;
● To ensure all staff understand their responsibilities in relation to literacy so that we can provide an enriching environment for our students;
● To support the development of a curriculum which enables the improvement of academic language and voice in all subject areas so that students are equipped with the skills required for success at GCSE and beyond;
● St David's High School recognises that, for literacy to play an important role as a vital instrument of learning, teachers across all curriculum areas need to create an environment which provides contexts and conditions to facilitate the development of the core skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Broad guidelines

Students will come to school with very different literacy experiences, capabilities and skills. To enhance student learning a number of strategies will be employed including:

- Identification and assessment of strengths and weaknesses by the use of in-house procedures together with information provided by feeder schools;
- Seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular literacy links;
- Improve the provision for more able learners in literacy;
- Address the imbalance between girls' and boys' achievement;
- Maintain staff awareness of key literacy strategies;
- The identification of 'target groups' for intervention in addition to SEN identified at KS3 and KS4;
- The implementation of a structured and focused programme of learning to raise literacy levels;
- The reinforcement of the above by a departmental approach across the curriculum where learning activities integrate different aspects of language;
- Establish robust systems for target setting, tracking and monitoring student progress and use these systems to plan and implement regular, targeted and personalised intervention actions to ensure students' maintain expected rates of progress;
- Promote reading for pleasure as well as for the development of literacy and communication skills through the Library and national events like World Book Day;
- Celebrate students' achievements in literacy across the school;
- Promote vocabulary through Word of the Week;
- Provide targeted vocabulary instruction through every subject using strategies such as the Frayer model;
- Staff to implement a whole school approach to Literacy Across the Curriculum; Guidance on Reading [Appendix 1]; Guidance on Spelling [Appendix 2]; Guidance on Writing [Appendix 3] and a whole school policy on marking [Appendix 4] and Oracy [Appendix 5]

Roles and Responsibilities

Senior Leadership: to lead giving a high profile to the development of literacy skills across the curriculum.

English Faculty: to provide pupils with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write, speak and listen effectively.

All Staff across the curriculum: to ensure that literacy is embedded in lesson planning and contribute to the development of speaking and listening, reading and writing skills according to the Literacy Policy.

Literacy Coordinator: to support departments in the implementation of strategies, encourage departments to share good practice (training sessions) and to provide resources for staff to complement the teaching of literacy in their own subject area.

Parents: should encourage their children to read at home and access the literacy resources available on the school's website.

Pupils: should understand what strategies are being used in lessons, take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs and commit to reading widely outside of school.

Monitoring and Evaluation:
All members of the school community are responsible for the promotion of literacy through high expectations of written and spoken literacy. All staff in school have a crucial role to play in developing students' academic and formal language whether through modelling Standard English in conversations with each other or teaching subject specific academic language in lessons.
Monitoring and Evaluation rests primarily with the class teacher, Heads of Department, Literacy Co-ordinator and ultimately with the Headteacher. Systems to monitor and evaluate practice need to be explicit in departmental policy.

Possible approaches to monitoring are:

- Sampling work and departmental schemes;
- Observation – pupil tracking;
- Meetings;
- Pupil interviews;
- Encouraging departments to share good practice.

Interventions for Literacy:
We aim to provide early, tailored intervention designed to increase rates of progress and secure learning for groups of learners that puts them back on course to meet national expectations. This support is carefully targeted according to the individual needs of our students and is delivered by teachers who have the skills to help learners achieve their learning goals. The progress of learners is closely tracked for impact.

APPENDIX 1: GUIDANCE ON READING

Reading
Reading develops students' potential as learners. Students should enjoy reading, use their reading to help them learn and to develop increasing confidence and competence in reading so that they are able to:

- Read and follow instructions;
- read and engage with narratives of events or activities;
- follow up their interests and read texts of varying lengths;
- question and challenge printed information and views;
- read and explore ideas and theories;
- follow a process or an argument;
- learn how to sift and select, and take notes from a text and read to locate and relocate information;
- apply techniques such as skimming, scanning and text marking effectively in order to research and appraise texts;
- develop higher order reading skills which include, analysis synthesis and evaluation;
- read between the lines using inference and deduction;
- Use reading to research a wide range of texts.

Classroom strategies to support reading
Teachers should:

- use available data on students' reading levels and ages in order to make informed choices about appropriate texts and plan appropriate support for all students in order that they may successfully access texts;
- take opportunities to demonstrate pleasure in reading;
- that, where possible reading is planned into the assessment schedule and marking routines;
- provide a selection of subject specific books which students have access to and can use to extend their knowledge;
- create opportunities in lessons and form time for students and teachers to silent read and share and compare reading experiences;
- ensure that reading is extended within and beyond the classroom (e.g. by creating reading homework tasks).

Activities which encourage close reading

These activities are most effective when worked on by a pair or small group as the discussion of possibilities leads to a close look at the text.

Cloze activities

Filling the gap involves the reader in actively constructing meaning. Skills include:
- paying close attention to the meaning of the sentence
- choosing a word that fits grammatically
- using one's existing knowledge of the topic
- working out what is likely from the rest of the text
- working out what will fit with the style of the text – e.g. whether a word has already occurred in the sentence
- attending to the sense of the whole sentence by reading and repeating if necessary.

Sequencing

Sequencing activities involve reconstructing a text which has been cut into chunks. Skills include:
- reading and rereading
- paying close attention to the structure of the genre
- paying close attention to link words
- hunting for the logic or organising principle of the text – e.g. chronological order
- using previous experience and earlier reading.

Text marking

Text marking includes underlining, annotating or numbering the text to show sequence. Skills may well include:
- skimming or scanning to find specific information
- differentiating between different categories of information
- deciding what is relevant information
- finding the main idea(s)
- questioning the information presented in the text.

Text restructuring

Text restructuring involves reading and then remodelling the information in another format. For example, flow charts, diagrams, Venn diagrams, grids, lists, maps, charts, concept maps or rewriting in another genre. Depending on the format, skills used with include:
- identifying what is key and relevant in a text
- applying what they know in a new context
- remodelling the content and the format of the text
- awareness of the characteristics of different genres
- critical reading
- summary and prioritisation

- writing as well as reading skills.

APPENDIX 2: GUIDANCE ON SPELLING

All subject areas need to have an approach to Spelling that ensures: -

- that students are given every opportunity to develop their spelling abilities – *within context;*

- that every member of the department is provided with a dictionary for reference;

- that an agreed set of subject specific words are displayed in departmental classrooms;

- that a regular testing of key subject specific words is built into departmental schemes of work;

- that there is a consistent method of marking and a clear strategy for the correction of spelling mistakes. See marking policy;

- that when spelling mistakes are identified, 'sp' is put in the margin and where appropriate the correction is written by the teacher and if the same mistake is repeated, the error is marked only once;

- that, when appropriate, we will remind the students of the approach – **Look** it up, **cover** it up, **write** it up, **check** again;

- that if common errors are discovered within a form, class discussion takes place – this might form the basis of a future spelling test to correct the error(s);

- that, if a well-known rule of spelling is frequently broken [e.g. i before e except after c], the rule and how to apply it should be pointed out;

- that an able student will have most of his/her work corrected;

- that individuals with spelling difficulties will have key words corrected;

- that all subject staff actively encourage students to use personal spelling dictionaries.

1.	Short words ending in l, s or f, double the last letter e.g. tell, fuss
2.	No English word has a "q" without a "u" e.g. question, squeeze
3.	No English word ends in "v"
4.	a. To make a word ending in a vowel + "y" plural, add an "s" e.g. toy – toys b. To make a word ending in a consonant + "y" plural, change "y" to "ies", e.g. try – tries N.B. This also applies when adding "ier", e.g. heavier, or "iest" e.g. easiest
5.	Some words have a silent "e" e.g. hope, pine
6.	"I" before "e" except after "c" e.g. believe, receipt. This is a useful rule but is not always correct – especially in scientific terms e.g. protein, nucleic acid

APPENDIX 3: GUIDANCE ON WRITING

<u>**Writing**</u>

The majority of lessons include and depend on written communication. All teachers need to address writing development as well as subject content. Teachers should provide planned opportunities across the curriculum for learners to:

- write in a variety of forms for different purposes e.g. to interpret, evaluate, explain, analyse and explore;
- make notes from reading, film and discussions;
- write collaboratively with other students;
- write coherently about a wide range of topics, issues and ideas;
- craft their writing, showing an improved control of grammatical structure and of a differentiated vocabulary;
- develop ideas and communicate meaning to a reader using wide-ranging and technical vocabulary and an effective style, organising and structuring sentences grammatically and whole texts coherently;
- present their writing clearly using accurate punctuation, correct spelling and legible handwriting;
- apply word processing conventions;
- make notes from a variety of sources - printed word, moving images and ICT texts;
- use writing to plan organise and record;
- write logs and journals in order to clarify thoughts and develop new understanding;
- plan, draft, discuss and reflect on their writing and use re-drafting skills across the curriculum;
- present some writing for display or publication.
.
Classroom Strategies to Support Writing

Teachers should:

- draw attention to the purpose and intended readers of each piece of writing.
- encourage learners to write for a range of intended readers. For example, writing to explain a scientific principle to a younger audience, writing guidance for peers on an aspect of the subject, writing to agencies to elicit information or to express a viewpoint;
- use modelling process to make explicit to students how to write independently without scaffolding;
- provide opportunities for a range of writing including sustained writing;

- provide students with a range of challenging writing tasks;
- pay close attention to writing as a learning tool (the process of writing) as well as a product of the learning;
- help learners appreciate the differences between standard English and non-standard forms of the language;
- help students to recognise the appropriate form for their written responses so that they know when to respond in note form and when more formal constructions are required;
- expect high standard of presentation in most of learners' finished writing;
- provide good models of particular kinds of writing;
- provide dictionaries, glossaries and lists of appropriate subject vocabulary as standard classroom resources;
- Use the 'Frayer model' to break down unfamiliar words;
- help learners to use a range of strategies to learn spellings.

APPENDIX 4: WHOLE SCHOOL LITERACY (MARKING) POLICY

The development of literacy skills is the responsibility of all teachers. Our aim is to develop students' knowledge, understanding and skills relating to the use of language. To do this most effectively there needs to be a coherent approach, clear goals and common expectations across the school.

Books should be marked at least once per fortnight with general comments. For every monthly cycle, there should be at least one piece of work that is marked in detail with a strength (What Went Well) and target (Even Better If.)

There should be evidence of marking for literacy to include either:
  a. General Literacy Check
      Sp = Spelling error identified (with evidence of learning afterward)
      N.P. = Paragraphing error identified (with evidence of learning afterward)
      P = Punctuation error identified (with evidence of learning afterward)

      OR

  b. Specific Literacy Check
      Literacy marking in accordance with any literacy objectives set or skills taught in relation to your subject.

Marking Policy
When a student's work is marked the following symbols should be used:

^	A word left out or to show where to add more writing.
Sp	There will be a spelling mistake in this line (underlined) and the correct spelling will be given to the student.
N.P (margin) **//** in the work.	You should have started a new paragraph here.
P	Punctuation mistake (the teacher corrects this).
?	This part (underlined) is confusing.
CAPS	You're missing out capital letters.
Exp	Re-read your work and check that the sentence or paragraph makes sense.
Tense	The wrong tense has been used – check the rest of your work.
TD	You need a title and date.

U	Underlining has not been done.

Subjects that involve statistics and graphs should also use the following codes:

G	Something is wrong with your graph here.
N	Show your working out and units.

All work should be marked in a red or green pen (except coursework when a pencil can be used).

The following letters can be used to indicate the effort of a piece of work:

E = Excellent
G = Good
S = Satisfactory
I = Inconsistent
U = Unsatisfactory

Subject teachers may not wish to indicate all errors in each piece of work, as this could be demoralising for the student. A number of errors, however, should be brought to the student's attention so that he/she is made aware that the teacher is considering spelling and punctuation skills.

It is recommended that only two or three spelling errors should be identified in a single piece of work. The student should be encouraged to learn these spellings. She/he could write them in the back of the exercise book and a little class time should be provided for the students to test each other.

EXPECTATIONS
Teachers are expected to ensure that:
- students receive selective written feedback at regular intervals;
- written feedback is predominantly encouraging and constructive;
- the learning objectives and learning outcomes are the reference point for written feedback;
- students are told exactly what is expected from their written work and how they can achieve success;
- peer and self-assessment are regularly used to enable students to become immersed in the assessment criteria;
- over the course of a term when marked work is returned to a class, time is set aside to allow each student to respond to the teacher's comments and improve their understanding in relation to the learning objective for the work;
- rewards are given in line with the school and departmental rewards

procedures when students have **improved** their work and made **progress** in their learning.

APPENDIX 5: ORACY

Talk is our main means of communication in everyday life and is essential to students' thinking and learning. Learners should be increasingly competent and confident in Speaking and Listening so that they are able to:

- become increasingly proficient when contributing to a cohesive discussion;
- use full sentences when giving responses in class discussion, group or paired work;
- speak with the clarity and confidence to convey a point of view or information;
- change how they speak to suit different purposes (e.g. to narrate, explain, analyse, reflect and evaluate) and audiences (e.g. peers, teachers, visitors, larger audiences)
- use an increasingly rich and varied vocabulary range when presenting their thoughts and ideas;
- use effective speaking and listening skills in a variety of learning situations (paired, group and whole class discussion)
- listen when understanding and respond appropriately;
- identify and retain the main parts emerging from discussion;
- identify the underlying themes, implications and issues raised by talk, reading or programmes.

Classroom strategies to support Oracy

All lessons across the curriculum should provide opportunities for learners to engage in purposeful talk, both formally and informally.
Teachers should:

- ask higher order questions to encourage the development of thinking skills and enquiry;
- ensure that all students contribute to group and class discussion by prompting or directing students to assume responsibility for the content or direction of discussion;
- create challenging discussion by using questions to draw out extended answers, encouraging learners to explain and justify their views;
- when planning, consider pace and timing so that purposeful talk is maintained;
- provide activities where students work in pairs or groups;

- model effective examples of successful speaking and listening for students, showing them how to use language precisely and coherently;
- place explicit value on oral work as well as written work recognising that discussion of topics is usually an essential precursor to any written work;
- provide students with the opportunity for public speaking in a formal setting such as assemblies and in lessons and through debating competitions.

Some of the following activities should take place:

- asking questions as well as answering them;
- explore and describe events, activities and problems,
- explore and develop ideas with others;
- reporting back to a wider audience in order to consolidate ideas and understanding;
- investigating and solving problems collaboratively;
- evaluating experiences and reflecting on learning;
- talking at length and adopting the 'expert' role;
- planning, organising and reviewing activities.