

Whole School Literacy Policy



The Cottesloe School

Policy Type:	Non-Statutory
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1. Context:

The National Literacy Trust states: *Lacking vital literacy skills holds a person back at every stage of their life. As a child they won't be able to succeed at school, as a young adult they will be locked out of the job market, and as a parent they won't be able to support their own child's learning. This intergenerational cycle makes social mobility and a fairer society more difficult.*

At the Cottesloe School, we understand the need to enable our students to be literate in order to help them '**Prepare, Aspire, (and) Succeed**' on their 'Cottesloe Journey' and further into life. Indeed, literacy is at the very core of this journey that students undertake with us, and we aim to support, guide and inspire them to become the best readers, writers and speakers (in all of their subjects) as they can be, in order to prepare them for lifelong learning.

2. Rationale and Goals:

We aim to develop skilful readers, confident writers and accountable talkers.

We wish to support those students who struggle with their literacy; encourage and challenge all students – whatever their abilities – to foster a love of reading and enable them to develop confidence in expressing their ideas. We endeavour to educate staff to understand that the responsibility for teaching literacy lies with all members of the school, regardless of their subject discipline. We also want parents to understand that discussing literacy and modelling good literacy practices in the home can enable students to make better progress in school.

3. Explicit Literacy Targets:

- To identify the weakest readers upon entry in Year 7, using KS2 data and Star Reading tests. The "weakest readers" are typically considered to be those with a reading age of under 9, meaning they struggle with reading at a level significantly below their chronological age and would likely require targeted interventions to improve their decoding and fluency skills.
- For Reading Intervention sessions, using the Lexia PowerUp and Core5 programmes to take place for readers with a reading age of 9 and below in order to enable these students to have access to more of the curriculum. *Lexia PowerUp aims to help older students who are behind in reading to catch up and develop the skills they need to succeed in secondary school and beyond, by providing a structured and personalised approach to literacy intervention, targeting specific skill gaps and promoting reading proficiency.* <https://www.lexiauk.co.uk/literacy-programs/powerup/>
- For staff to be trained to understand more about how students are taught to read earlier in their school career and how this needs to be understood to be able to make all students effective readers at secondary school.
- To further embed Disciplinary Literacy within the Curriculum – establishing Literacy Leads in all departments and focusing on the effective teaching of subject-specific vocabulary.
- For KS4 students to have developed the necessary reading skills across each of their subject disciplines in order to be able to access all examination reading materials.

- To improve achievement across the curriculum and in exam performance, particularly in the SPaG element of GCSE examinations.
- For students' average Reading Age across Year 7 to increase from 11 Yrs 2 months.
- For students' average Reading Age across Year 8 to increase from 12 Yrs 10 months.
- For Year 7 SEN (E + K) students' average Reading Age to increase from 9 Yrs 8 months.
- For Year 8 SEN (E + K) students' average Reading Age to increase from 10 Yrs 6 months
- To establish a greater link with our feeder schools – via Transition – to identify and support the very weakest Year 6 students before they start in Year 7.
- To provide a curriculum that allows students to continue to excel in English as the subject at the heart of literacy.
- For English staff to adapt the Silent Reading / Accelerated Reader sessions to read to the very weakest students rather than getting them to read independently for some of the sessions enabling them to benefit from 'Expert Reading'.
- To increase the validity of the Star Test Data by conducting the tests under examination conditions in the hall.
- To enable students to enjoy reading in Accelerated Reader sessions and the beginning of KS3 English lessons. For KS3 students to want to read as many books as they can in order to foster their love of reading and for this success to be given higher prominence in school.
- To embed Reciprocal Reading (Register and Read) into one form time a week in KS3 and KS4 to develop students' comprehension, inference, vocabulary and spoken language skills.

4. Roles and Responsibilities:

Governing Body:

To liaise with the Literacy Lead so that members of the Governing Body can observe Literacy initiatives in operation - including Reciprocal Reading in form time and Accelerated Reader lessons.

Senior Leadership Team:

- To support the prominence of literacy by ensuring that it is a key focus in the School Development Plan.
- To prioritise its importance when lesson dipping and carrying out PM observations.
- To liaise with the Literacy Lead regularly and assist, via lesson visits, to ascertain an accurate picture of literacy across the school.

Literacy Lead:

- To promote literacy initiatives across the school, including: Reading Initiatives – such as 'Y.A. Book Blether'; reinforcing the importance of

Disciplinary Literacy through CPD sessions; and promoting Form Time Literacy and World Book Day.

- To liaise with the Assistant Head for Teaching and Learning to ensure that literacy initiatives are embedded in the Teaching and Learning Policy.
- To visit lessons - including form times - across the curriculum to assess the efficacy of the adoption and promotion of literacy initiatives.
- To conduct audits and research into the latest literacy initiatives.
- To continue to cascade learning and research from an NPQLL - undertaken by the Literacy Lead in (2024) - in order to improve the literacy provision at The Cottesloe School.
- To continue to create and deliver bespoke whole-staff CPD - including delivery at the 'Teaching and Learning' briefings - in order to train staff in how to effectively deliver literacy initiatives within their subject disciplines and how best to support reading and vocabulary teaching, in particular.
- To use what is learned from CPD sessions to tailor more support for staff in teaching and embedding literacy initiatives.
- To closely liaise with CEO who is the Accelerated Reader programme lead.
- To liaise with SEN in order to ensure that Reading / Spelling Strategies are in place to support those students with the very weakest literacy skills.
- To work with the Transition Team in order to identify and support those students with the lowest literacy levels before they start Year 7.
- To liaise with the School Librarian to promote the library and ensure that this is a resource that is used by students.
- To ensure that the English Department is a model of excellence in teaching literacy and that Reading at the beginning of all KS3 English lessons is effective.

Curriculum Subject Leaders:

- To take responsibility for the teaching and development of literacy skills, including reading, writing, communication and their application in the curriculum.
- To ensure that all schemes of work have a literacy focus and that teaching of all aspects of literacy is evident in planning and assessment.
- To ensure that students make progress relative to starting points in literacy for their subject.
- To ensure that there is explicit teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar in lessons in line with exam specifications to maximise achievement.
- To ensure that all staff in their designated curriculum area are marking work and giving feedback on students' literacy skills – especially, spelling, grammar, punctuation and key vocabulary.

Teaching Staff:

- To provide students with explicit vocabulary instruction in order to enable them to confidently read, write and speak about their learning.
- To provide students with reading strategies which activate their prior knowledge and help them make predictions and ask questions in order to improve their comprehension.

- To provide students with explicit instructions, models and resources to help them plan, monitor and evaluate their writing, including correct spelling, punctuation and grammar with a focus on meaning.
- To guide students in how to engage in high-quality talk within the classroom. Teachers are to model high-quality talk which includes key subject-specific vocabulary.
- To actively encourage students to improve their own levels of literacy by raising its profile around school and encouraging reading for pleasure.

SEN Team:

- To implement tailored intervention plans - including Reading interventions - where students who are below the expected levels of reading and comprehension are best supported according to their level of need.
- To track and Monitor their progress rigorously and respond accordingly, liaising with the English Department.

Students:

- To ensure that they are properly equipped for their learning, KS3 students need to have a reading book with them at all times.
- To engage fully in their Accelerated Reader and English Reading lessons – being prepared to share their reading experiences with others.
- To take part in literacy competitions – such as on World Book Day or the Spelling Bee.
- To be proactive in learning their spelling corrections, research the meanings and etymology of key vocabulary and in completing literacy homework tasks.

Ongoing Professional Development for Educators:

- The Literacy Lead to train others based on her NPQLL.
- The Literacy Lead will be involved in the further development of disciplinary vocabulary teaching - by establishing a group of Departmental Literacy Leads - who will feed back to their departments and enhance their colleagues' knowledge and expertise.
- The Literacy Lead will research and then lead on further Disciplinary Literacy strategies in terms of writing and speaking and listening.
- The Literacy Lead will introduce and monitor the 'Register and Read' initiative.

Department for Education resources:

[‘Now the whole school is reading’: supporting struggling readers in secondary school - GOV.UK](#)

Links with other Policies:

- Teaching and Learning Policy.
- Curriculum Policy.

- Homework Policy.
- Assessment and Feedback Policy.
- SEND Policy.
- This also links to Objective 2 on the School Development Plan.

5. Defined Roles for Parents and External Partners:

- To actively encourage parents/carers to read with their children or discuss their own reading with them.
- For English staff to liaise with parents about their child's successes in Accelerated Reader and asking for their support if students are not reading enough or not remembering their reading books.
- For Governors to support in Accelerated Reader lessons – reading and discussing books with students.

6. Policy Evaluation and Review Planning:

Evaluation will take place at the end of the school year and, as part of the Literacy Lead's Performance Management targets. This policy will be reviewed annually.