

HASSENBROOK SCHOOL Specialist Technology College



LITERACY POLICY

Rationale

- Literacy underpins the school curriculum by developing students' abilities to speak, listen, read and write for a wide range of purposes, using language to learn and communicate, to think, explore and organise. Helping students to express themselves clearly orally and in writing enhances and enriches teaching and learning in all subjects. All departments and all teachers have a crucial role to play in supporting students' literacy development.

Principles

- Literacy supports effective learning
- Literacy supports the raising of standards
- Every teacher is a teacher of literacy
- Literacy is an entitlement of all learners
- Through becoming more literate, pupils are more able to fulfil their potential
- Literacy is most effectively imparted where colleagues actively model good practice
- Our commitment towards literacy will be evident both within our classrooms and our schemes of work

Aims

- The aims of this policy document are to:
- **support students' learning** in all subjects **by helping teachers to be clear** about the ways in which their work with students contributes to the development of students' communication skills.
- **develop a shared understanding between all staff** of the role of language/literacy in students' learning and how work in different subjects can contribute to and benefit from the development of students' ability to communicate effectively
- recognise that language is central to students' sense of identity, belonging and growth
- raise students' own expectations of achievement, thus raising standards (AFL)
- develop students' confidence and self-expression
- promote knowledge and understanding of the students' standards of achievement and assessment in speaking and listening, writing and reading, and the identification of any areas of strength and weakness (AFL)

Aims of the three language modes

- Although the following is divided into three sections, Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing, we recognise that the three language modes are interdependent.

Speaking and Listening

- Talk is our main means of communication in everyday life and is fundamental to the development of understanding. Good speaking and listening skills are vital to success in the workplace and all other social contexts. We want our students to develop increasing confidence and competence in speaking and listening so that they are able to:
- clarify and express their ideas and explain their thinking
- adapt their speech to a widening range of circumstances including paired and group discussions and speaking to a larger audience
- use varied and specialised vocabulary
- speak for a range of purposes e.g. to narrate, to analyse, to explain, to reflect and evaluate
- listen with understanding and respond sensitively and appropriately

Reading

- There is an increasing amount of research supporting the important role of reading on life long learning and success in the workplace. We want our students to enjoy reading, to be able to use their reading to help them learn and to develop increasing confidence, independence and competence in reading so that they are able to:
- read fluently, accurately and with understanding
- become independent and critical readers and make informed and appropriate choices
- select information from a wide range of texts and sources including print, media and ICT and to evaluate those sources
- apply techniques such as skimming, scanning, and text-marking effectively in order to research and appraise texts

Writing

- Many lessons include and depend on written communication. In the workplace, a letter of application is often the first form of communication with a prospective employer. We want our students to develop increasing confidence and competence in writing so that they are able to:
- write in a widening variety of forms for different forms for different purposes e.g. to interpret, evaluate, explain, analyse and explore
- support students by the effective use of writing frames
- 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 and understand the principles of authoring multi-media text
- provide dictionaries, glossaries and lists of appropriate subject vocabulary and encourage students to use them
- help students to use a range of strategies to learn spellings including:
 - look - say - cover - write - check
 - making connections between words with the same visual spelling pattern
 - exploring families of words

Resources

- We should aim to provide:
- discrete literacy lessons to support those with weaker literacy levels
- displays of reading material relevant to the topic or national curriculum subject and of relevant vocabulary
- relevant material at appropriate levels of interest and difficulty and from a range of text types
- reading material of high quality which is up to date, relevant, and balanced in its presentation of ethnicity, culture and gender
- some texts in the first languages of students acquiring English as an additional language
- access to school and public libraries and to ICT sources of information
- access to appropriate audio visual equipment
- review displays in classrooms and shared areas to create an environment which is conducive to good literacy practice

Literacy and the library.

- The library provides a facility that is essential for the development of successful learning and is pivotal in supporting the whole school literacy programme. Members of the school community will use the library for course-related and recreational purposes as well as be able to access information in a variety of formats other than books.
- To ensure that the library is able to support literacy across the whole curriculum, there are a number of areas that staff should bear in mind:
- Reading is not the preserve of the English Department and should be encouraged throughout the whole curriculum. The library can supply classes with book lists and book boxes on a particular theme or topic to encourage additional reading across the whole curriculum.

- If staff set homework which requires research to be carried out in the library, they must first consult with the Learning Resource Manager to make sure the planned homework can be effectively supported.
- All staff should be familiar with the resources available and the opportunities offered by the library. This can be achieved by individual members of staff visiting the library, departmental/school-based INSET sessions, regular communications to staff of new acquisitions by the Learning Resource Manager.
- The Learning Resource Manager makes every opportunity to provide innovative displays to promote literacy and encourage a lifelong love of reading. Competitions and quizzes are held on a regular basis to promote reading in a positive manner.
- The Learning Resource Manager will be responsible for evaluating the use of the library by students and staff. Regular stock editing will take place to ensure resources are relevant and up to date.
- Reader development is an important role for the library. The library is uniquely placed to make a significant contribution to the encouragement of reading and the creation of a reading culture across the whole school community.

Assessing Literacy across the Curriculum

- When assessing students' work across the curriculum we should value their oral contributions and listening skills alongside their reading and writing
- We should take into account students' performance in speaking and listening, reading and writing when assessing and reporting on students' progress in subject areas
- When setting writing tasks we should make explicit to the students the key features of language, purpose and audience which will be considered for assessment
- When responding to students' work we should:
- Follow the agreed school marking policy – see appendix A
- make comments which are positive and supportive
- target specific areas for improvement (a selective and focussed identification of errors)
- give guidance on how to achieve the short-term targets set. For example, whilst "improve your spelling" is unhelpful and vague, the identification of a particular spelling error e.g. doubling of letters before or adding -ing is specific and presents the student with a target which can be addressed
- consider content, ideas, organisation as well as secretarial features
- create opportunities and encourage proof reading of work and allow time for redrafting of work
- create opportunities for students to reflect on the quality of their own work and for peer assessment

This policy must be read in conjunction with:

- **The Learning and Teaching policy**
- **The Schemes of Work Policy**
- **The Assessment Policy**
- **The Homework Policy**
- **The School Behaviour Policy**

Marking Your Work

Teachers across all subjects in school will use the following codes in your books where you need to review and correct your work:

- sp** = spelling error
- ww** = wrong word (including homophones such as their/there)
- p** = punctuation
- ?** = it does not make sense
- gr** = grammar
- f** = factual error
- //** = a new paragraph is needed
- ul** = please underline titles and dates
- g** = gender (MFL only)
- aa** = adjective agreement (MFL only)

