Rugby High School Literacy Policy

Literacy is explicitly defined as the four strands of language – speaking, listening, reading and writing.

'Within various levels of developmental ability, a literate person can derive and convey meaning, and use his or her knowledge to achieve a desired purpose or goal that requires the use of language skills, be they spoken or written. '(http://www.bridgew.edu/library/cags_projects/ldubin/Definition%20of%20Literacy.htm)

All teachers are teachers of literacy. All members of staff have responsibility for the delivery of literacy across the curriculum. Effective delivery of literacy will broaden students' knowledge and experience, increase students' abilities to learn for themselves, build self-esteem and promote the development of good relationships. Literacy is the key to improving learning and raising standards across the curriculum: it 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. The School recognises the link between strong literacy practice and outstanding teaching and learning, enabling all to students to achieve in all subjects. Poor levels of literacy impact negatively on students' self-esteem and progress.

Aims
The aims of this policy are to promote:

- a shared understanding between students, staff and parents of the role of language in learning and how work in different subjects can contribute to, and benefit from, the development of students' ability to communicate effectively
- knowledge and understanding of assessment standards in speaking, writing, reading and writing and the guidelines for assessing literacy.
- to identify ways in which staff and parents can support students' learning and the development of students' communication skills to enable students to realise their potential in speaking, listening, reading and writing

Roles and Responsibilities
- **Senior Leadership Team** – to lead giving a high profile to the development of literacy skills across the curriculum, to ensure the Literacy Policy is kept up to date and reviewed regularly
- **Learning support team (including SENCO, learning support manager, learning mentors** – to assess students in all aspects of literacy and identify students with actual or potential difficulties, to share this information with staff and provide systems of support and monitoring
- **English Dept** – to provide resources for staff to complement the teaching of literacy in their own subject area, provide staff training as appropriate
- **Staff** – 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
- **Students** – to take responsibility for developing their own literacy skills using the support available
- **Parents** – to encourage students to use a range of strategies to improve their literacy skills

- **Governors**– to oversee the Literacy Policy and ensure it is kept up to date

Speaking and Listening

Speaking and listening are key literacy skills, our main means of communication in everyday life and fundamental to the development of understanding. Research has shown that they are the literacy skills most used in the world of work. Speaking and listening skills underpin all learning and are the start of all other literacy skills.

'Conversation orders the concepts which are encoded in writing and decoded in reading. However, speaking and listening skills are also important skills in their own right. Their absence inhibits not only other learning, but social and emotional development, and later employment opportunities.'

(Sir Jim Rose, Review of the Primary Curriculum)

At RHS staff will teach students to use language precisely and coherently. We recognise that listening is an essential skill in its own right. Students should be able to listen to others and to respond to and build on their ideas and views constructively.

We will encourage students to:
- participate in groups and in whole class discussion
- discuss and evaluate
- use talk to clarify and develop ideas
- take steps to actively increase their vocabulary
- use varied and specialised vocabulary
- adapt their speech to a widening range of circumstances including paired work, group work, discussion and speaking to a larger audience
- speak individually to different groups of people with increasing confidence
- develop the ability to communicate using a range of registers and to use standard English when appropriate
- speak for a range of purposes, for example to narrate, analyse, explain, reflect, evaluate
- listen actively for a specific purpose. listen with understanding and respond sensitively and appropriately
- identify the main points to arise from a discussion.

The school also offers students opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills in extra – curricular activities such as inter-form debates, Sixth Form debates, form assemblies and projects such as national science and engineering projects and young enterprise schemes.

Reading

We recognise the importance of students being able to read fluently and confidently a range of different texts for different purposes. We acknowledge that students need a variety of skills to be able to read with understanding, locate and use information; follow a process or an argument; summarise, synthesise and adapt what they learn from their reading. We want students to be able to become confident, independent, critical readers. We believe that reading for pleasure is an important source of enjoyment and enrichment. To promote reading, in addition to reading weeks, the school runs a series of book groups, participates in the Carnegie Award shadowing; the Warwickshire Reading Awards and has a 'Book of the Week' scheme. Weekly recommended reads for Parents, Sixth formers and students are included in the school newsletter.

We will:
- create opportunities in lessons and form times for students and teachers to silent read and share and compare reading experiences
- produce short reading lists of appropriate texts including web based resources (organised on a departmental basis) and incorporate them into schemes of work in order to support students' understanding of topics covered.
- use "FROG" to share reading resources with students, via the Literacy page and Departmental pages
- encourage departments to create a termly reading week when homework is suspended and students are instead asked to read extension or background texts and report back to the group on their personal responses to the texts that they have read.

We will provide opportunities across the curriculum for students to read:
- and follow written instructions
- with understanding descriptions of processes, structures and mechanisms
- and engage with narratives of events or activities.

We will provide opportunities for students to learn how to:
- sift and select and take notes from text
- research, scan, select and evaluate internet texts effectively.
- Use BYOD effectively when undertaking research

We will provide opportunities for students to:
- follow up their interests and read texts of varying lengths
- report to the group on subject specific current events using news media
- question and challenge printed information and views.

Writing

Many lessons depend on written communication. We want our students to develop increasing confidence and competence in writing so that they are able to:

- write in a wide variety of forms for different purposes using the range of text types i.e. information, explanation, instruction, persuasion, discursive writing, analysis, evaluation
- communicate meaning to a reader using a range of technical vocabulary and an effective style, organising and structuring sentences grammatically.
- present their writing clearly using accurate punctuation, correct spelling and legible handwriting.

We will reinforce writing skills through:
- using the modelling process to make explicit to students how to write
- being clear about audience and purpose using the text types.
- providing opportunities for a range of writing including sustained writing
- using a common approach to marking and correction (see Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy)
- providing and using key words and other strategies designed to extend students' vocabulary

- encouraging students to reflect on their own written work, through a range of learning activities including "green pen" reflection and peer and self - assessment

The school, through curricular time, form time and PSHE will also help students develop their "netiquette", and how to communicate effectively and appropriately via email and other social media

Extra – curricular opportunities also allow students to develop their written skills, through contributions to the school newsletter, creative writing club membership, competitions, editorial work for the school magazine and the online creative writing journal "Illuminate".

Literacy Assessment

Baseline Testing
Literacy assessment is part of the whole school assessment and baseline assessment procedures. Students' KS2 scores and in – school baseline assessments are used to set an end of Key Stage target, and to ascertain if any students require further standardised screening tests or early school intervention.

Group Standardised Screening Tests currently used, include:
Reading: The Edinburgh Reading Test 4 – Interactive version (ERT4i)
Writing: Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting (DASH)
Spelling: Diagnostic Spelling Test – Secondary (DST-S)

The whole school uses SISRA to calculate a "flightpath" for each student, and enables teachers and departments to keep track of student progress, and intervene where necessary

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Assessment
In line with the school 'Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy', feedback given to students will incorporate both positive comments and specific areas for improvement with a literacy focus where appropriate. Where a piece of work highlights a recurrent error across the group, staff will allocate a short time slot for an active learning strategy to address the error. See ARR policy for further details including a common marking key. The school uses 1- 9 levels (see RHS ARR policy for details).

Celebration of students' literacy and achievements

The school celebrates achievements of students, through praise in feedback (oral and written), postcards and letters home for outstanding work and effort. Displays of students' work also help celebrate and showcase a range of literacy skills.

Reporting
Staff will take into account students' performance in speaking and listening, alongside reading and writing when assessing and reporting on progress in individual subject areas.

Identification of Need

Literacy difficulties may be identified by teachers, parents or students themselves as they continue to progress through the school. Students will be further assessed by the learning support team, who will then identify appropriate interventions and strategies of support. Termly attainment checks and subsequent interventions will also highlight where there is need for additional support.

Sources of Support for Students

Posters sharing key aspects of literacy (e.g. vocabulary/ common abbreviation for corrections/ commonly misspelt words) to be displayed in classrooms
Students identified as having a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) such as dyslexia may be eligible for exam access arrangements such as extra time, rest breaks or use of a laptop.

Dictionaries in classroom are available and students are encouraged, when appropriate, to use BYOD to reference dictionaries/ thesauruses.

Support for students experiencing literacy difficulties may be delivered by the SENCo or a member of the BOOST team including the SEN Teaching Assistant and cross-age student mentors, trained to deliver literacy support at an individual level or within a classroom situation.

Parents are encouraged to support their daughters' literacy and are welcome to contact the SENCo or a member of the English Department for advice on how to best do this for their child.

Sources of Support for Parents
- Reading lists and a range of support materials can be accessed via the school's FROG Literacy Page.

   http://www.rugbyhighschool.co.uk/

   http://www.literacyshed.com/the-poetry-shed.html

Sources of Support for Staff

Training will be provided to familiarise staff with the Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy and the Literacy Policy and their practical application, through Staff meetings. In addition sessions on grammar, punctuation and spelling rules, dictionary skills and how to teach them will be held for staff to access as the need arises. Literacy training is on the Twilight training programme for staff. The Headteacher, the English Department and SENCo are also available and willing to give advice and support as required.

Teachers can access support online:

http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/schools_teaching?gclid=CP7auYas6MwCFXMz0wod8g4IsQ

https://www.teachit.co.uk/literacy

http://www.readingrockets.org/teaching/experts

Monitoring

We will monitor this policy by:

- sampling work
- observing lessons and conducting learning walks
- conducting student interviews

Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the 'Assessment Recording and Reporting Policy' and 'Presentation Policy'. The former contains specific guidance about the marking of work including the correction of errors. The later establishes guidelines for how work should be set out.

Date of Review

This policy will be reviewed in 2019.