MAGHULL HIGH SCHOOL

Literacy Policy

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

In the context of this document the term "literacy" is used to embrace all aspects of language development – reading, writing and oracy.

Introduction

Literacy is one of the fundamental elements of learning. It concerns the way pupils access and interact with every kind of written text. High standards of literacy lead to success, both at school and in adult life. Maghull High School is committed to raising standards of literacy in order to raise standards and attainment across the curriculum. We recognise that the development of literacy skills is an entitlement for all pupils and the responsibility of the whole school community. These skills are crucial in enabling our pupils to cope with the demands of examinations, higher education and future employment. The Literacy Policy should be embedded in good learning and teaching practices within every department. All elements of the school's policy should be reflected across the curriculum, build on the strengths of existing practices and procedures, and reflect the needs of every pupil.

Maghull High School recognises that:
- pupils need vocabulary, expression and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of different subjects
- reading helps pupils to learn from sources beyond their immediate experience
- writing helps pupils to sustain and order thought
- language helps pupils 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 pupils' self-esteem, on motivation and behaviour
- improving literacy allows pupils to learn independently; it is empowering
- improving spoken literacy gives pupils confidence when interacting in formal contexts

Aim of the policy

For teachers to embed literacy, identifying specific opportunities to develop literacy and equipping all pupils with the necessary skills to make progress.

Objectives
- To ensure clarity of whole school systems and approaches to support the literacy of all pupils
- To ensure all staff understand their responsibilities in relation to literacy so that we can provide an enriching environment for our pupils
- To support the development of a curriculum which enables the improvement of academic language and voice in all subject areas so that pupils are equipped with the skills required for success at GCSE and beyond

- To implement a whole school approach to the encouragement, support and monitoring of literacy across the curriculum
- Maghull 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

Responsibility for Literacy

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 pupils' academic and formal language whether through modelling Standard English in conversations with each other or teaching subject specific academic language in lessons.

Leadership of literacy

The SLT literacy lead will:
- oversee the effective deployment of the team
- ensure that all pupils are tested three times annually with Star Assessment
- ensure that appropriate intervention is implemented
- ensure that appropriate CPD is delivered

The Literacy Coordinator will
- support the delivery of the school's literacy policy
- work with departments to support the delivery of whole school literacy
- assist with literacy intervention work
- carry out termly audits of current practice
- collate and disseminate information pertaining to literacy

The wider school curriculum will be expected to promote literacy by:
- the accurate testing of reading ages of pupils in years 7 and 8 three times annually
- catch up literacy program, as well as additional small group teacher interventions for those in receipt of catch up premium funding
- monitoring of our Accelerated Reader scheme at KS3 to engage all pupils in reading
- the provision of regular library time in and out of school for pupils and ensuring that the library is central to the success of the Literacy Policy through departmental input into the library
- enrichment activities through the library to encourage a love of reading
- promoting reading for pleasure
- the use of morning tutorial for reading for pleasure and coverage of literacy within the PD curriculum
- celebrating pupils' achievements in literacy across Maghull High School
- encouraging parents to take an active role in the promotion of reading

In all subject areas, the organisation of lessons will aim to improve the literacy skills of pupils by:
- demonstrating to pupils the extent to which literacy skills are valued
- encouraging and reinforcing consistent standards of language use in pupils that is appropriate to their ability and maturity
- ensuring that pupils acquire a level of literacy that will enable them to cope with the increasing demands of subjects in terms of specific skills, knowledge and understanding
- providing a range of materials to support the subject topic
- increasingly providing texts at appropriate levels for all pupils (the layout, size and clarity of print, length of sentences and vocabulary appropriate to pupils)
- providing materials which are up to date and attractive
- designing activities that focus on identified subject vocabulary

Each department will:
- emphasise the central importance of literacy in the teaching and learning of individual subjects
- identify and monitor the integration of literacy skills in the development of Schemes of Learning relating to each subject area, including subject specific vocabulary and tier two vocabulary
- create subject specific key words to be displayed in department areas and on Firefly
- provide a range of practical strategies to encourage the development of literacy e.g. wall displays, subject specific spelling lists, clear labelling, and provision of dictionaries, good quality worksheets and board work, information that supports literacy on Firefly
- seek to identify progression in the main forms of speaking, listening, reading and writing undertaken in each subject area and strengthen teaching plans accordingly
- ensure progression in Information literacy skills, including skimming and scanning skills, through Schemes of Learning
- adhere to the literacy marking symbols (see Appendix A)
- share good practice by exhibiting or exemplifying pupils' work
- regularly evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work and identify literacy cross-curricular priorities for each year group

In all subjects, teachers will aim to improve the literacy skills of pupils by:

 Learning Through Talk – Oracy skills
Maghull High School:
- model effective examples of successful speaking and listening for pupils, showing them how to use language precisely and coherently
- accentuate the differences between standard English and non-standard dialect forms and modelling appropriate language in the classroom
- 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

- Teach pupils how to participate orally in groups and in the whole class, including:
- using talk to develop and clarify ideas
- identifying the main points to arise from a discussion
- listening for a specific purpose
- discussion and evaluation
- Structure tasks in lessons so that pupils know the purpose for their listening, providing note-taking frames as appropriate
- Provide pupils with the opportunity for public speaking in a formal setting such as in lessons and through debating competitions

Learning Through Reading - Comprehension
Maghull High School:
- promote reading for pleasure
- show pupils strategies to help them to (see Appendix C):
- read with greater understanding, enabling pupils to infer and deduce meanings and recognise the writer's intentions
- skim and scan to locate and use information
- follow a process or argument
- give opportunities to practise sifting, selecting information and taking notes from texts
- develop the ability to summarise
- synthesise and adapt what they learn from their reading

- review and monitor the reading demands placed upon pupils in each subject area, ensuring that reading for understanding is explicitly taught
- ensure that a variety of differentiated reading texts are available to help develop the reading skills of all pupils. Ensure these are at appropriate levels and are linked with Star Reading, where applicable
- provide opportunities to research and investigate from printed words, moving images and ICT texts
- ensure that pupil texts are suitably challenging to encourage inferential reading skills
- ensure that pupils understand the purpose of texts - whether the text being used is informative or explanatory or instructional or discursive, or persuasive or descriptive and consequently which reading skills are appropriate to use with the written materials provided
- reinforce the understanding of subject-specific words and terms and tier two vocabulary
- encourage wider reading and independent reading in a variety of forms including newspapers, books and magazines
- act from the belief that reading cannot be an acceptable barrier to learning

Learning Through Writing
Maghull High School:
- write in a wide variety of forms for different audience e.g. Letter, report, newspaper article, journal etc. and for different purposes for each piece of writing e.g. to interpret, evaluate, explain, analyse and explore

- consider all major writing tasks in terms of purpose, audience and form, and teach the most appropriate skills to meet the requirements of the task
- use a modelling process to make explicit to pupils how to write
- make connections between pupils' reading and writing, so that pupils have clear models for their writing
- set high expectations in terms of presentation using accurate punctuation, correct spelling, Standard English and legible handwriting
- review Schemes of Learning and signpost different non-fiction text types.
- encourage pupils to develop good drafting skills
- provide generous opportunities for sustained writing
- ensure that communications around the school and internally are correctly spelt and punctuated
- teach the relevant ways of paragraphing writing and linking paragraphs

In addition, in order to enhance spelling, each department will:

- revise key vocabulary
- teach agreed learning strategies which will help pupils to learn subject spelling lists
- test or revise high frequency words regularly
- set personal spelling targets
- encourage pupils to correct and learn their spelling mistakes

Assessment

There is an expectation that all teachers within the school will provide feedback on literacy skills using the literacy marking symbols (see Appendix A). For each class, every opportunity should be taken to ensure that:

- literacy assessment is used to inform lesson planning and target setting, and to maintain the pace of learning for all pupils
- grammar, punctuation and spelling errors are marked and pupils encouraged in correcting their mistakes
- the criteria for written and discussion based work in terms of tone, style, conventions, audience and structure are shared and discussed
- where appropriate, literacy objectives will be embedded into lessons

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- all staff have a responsibility to reflect on their own practice in promoting the importance of literacy through their teaching and marking
- each department will be issued with a checklist of methods that they could draw upon to promote literacy. This can be used to assess current schemes of learning and identify further opportunities for incorporating the teaching of literacy (see Appendix B)
- those in leadership positions have a further responsibility to ensure the policy is properly implemented in their specific areas
- the effectiveness and implementation of this policy will be reviewed by SLT and middle leaders during quality assurance processes

- literacy will be evaluated through whole school self-evaluation reviews calendared throughout the year, incorporating lesson observations and work scrutiny

APPENDIX A: Literacy marking Symbols

Symbol	What it means	What you need to do
sp	The circled or underlined word is spelled incorrectly.	Find out the correct spelling of the word and correct the error in your book. Write out the correct spelling three times.
p	Either punctuation is missing, or is being used incorrectly.	Identify what the error is and correct it. Check through the rest of your work to see if you have repeated the mistake.
c	A capital letter is missing, or is being used inaccurately.	Correct the error.
//	A paragraph break is needed here.	Start a new paragraph when your writing changes focus. Check the rest of your work to see if you have paragraphed correctly.
we was ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Grammatical error, such as verb or tense disagreement – or the sentence does not make sense.	Correct the error by making sure you are using the right verb form, or re-write the sentence so it makes sense.

APPENDIX B: Checklist of ways to promote literacy within the curriculum

Speaking	Listening
What are our aims for our pupils? To be able to…. • express and clarify ideas and explain their thinking • use varied and specialised vocabulary • speak for a range of purposes: narration, analysis, explanation etc. • adapt speech for paired and group discussions and larger audiences with confidence **Useful strategies** • 'Think, pair, share' and 'no-hands-up' • Vocabulary lists and glossaries • Vocabulary cards to prompt discussion • 'Ignite and Spark' debates • Using sentence stems • Fed in facts • Rebuttal tennis • What's the question? • Talking points • Pupil presentations – posters or power point	**What are our aims for our pupils? To be able to…** • listen for comprehension • pick out key words and technical terms • identify the register of language used and the main points being made • recognise cues to speak, and respond sensitively and appropriately **Useful strategies** • 'Pay attention, Pause, Paraphrase' and 'Say it Once' • Video clips/podcasts used with questions or What/How/Why grids • Pupils taking on the role of chair or scribe • Pupils creating questions during listening • Numbered turn-taking – to ensure participation/Talk tokens
Reading	**Writing**
What are our aims for our pupils? To be able to… • read fluently, accurately and with understanding • use techniques such as skimming, scanning, and text-marking to aid their approach to a text • locate, select and synthesise information from a wide range of sources including print, media and ICT • read critically, with an awareness of style, register and authority **Useful strategies** • Directed Activities Related to Text – DARTS (See Appendix C) • Mind maps, highlighting, SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Recall, Review) • Establishing key vocabulary • Illustrating from a text- using description to create diagrams/images • Sharing reading experiences • Providing extension reading lists	**What are our aims for our pupils? To be able to…** • communicate meaning with an effective style, structuring sentences grammatically and whole texts coherently • present writing clearly, using correct spelling, accurate punctuation and legible handwriting • command a wide-ranging and technical vocabulary • write in a widening variety of forms for different purposes and audiences e.g. to interpret, evaluate, explain, analyse and explore • use word-processing, presentation and other ICT conventions correctly **Useful strategies** • Topic sentences • PEE writing frames • Modelling and annotation of writing • Success criteria linked to purpose, audience, tone and conventions • Display connectives and academic discourse markers • Consistent marking for SPAG

APPENDIX C: DARTS (Directed Activities Related to Text)

This technique has evolved to use reading as a way of learning a 'subject'. Its aim is to foster independent reading and actively engage the learner with text. One of its principles is that reading is no longer seen as a solitary activity, but can involve a small group or pair of learners. The technique can be used at any level and with any kind of text.

The following strategies are considered to be DARTs

Gap Fill

These activities require the learner to understand context and vocabulary in order to identify the correct words or type of words that belong in the deleted parts of a text. Words are deleted from a passage according to a word-count formula or various other criteria, e.g. all adjectives, all words that have a particular letter pattern. The passage is presented to learners, who insert correct words in the gaps as they read, to construct appropriate meaning from the text.

Prediction

Using prediction helps learners to get an idea of the general organisation, major topics and subtopics of a piece of text. It can involve learners using the beginning or the appearance (title, headings, illustrations, layout, etc.) of a piece of text to predict what comes next or in creative writing, what happens next.

Following prediction, before reading on, learners ask themselves questions, e.g. 'What would I need or want to know about this topic?'

Sequencing

Introducing learners to sequencing can help them understand the importance of coherence and cohesion within a piece of text. The process involves the learners reorganising jumbled pieces of text into a logical order but could also be adapted into on-screen 'drag and drop' computer activities.

Whole group analysis/collaborative activities

Interpreting text does not have to be a solitary activity. Learners working as a group can draw on a range of strengths which can benefit less assured readers.

Reconstruction of text

Asking learners to reconstruct text into diagrams, tables, flow charts or drawings may assist their understanding.

Questions/discussion

This can be carried out in pairs, small groups and whole group. There are different ways to use questioning, for example:

• the teacher frames the questions

• learners question each other in pairs or small groups

• the teacher asks a thought-provoking high order or open question and asks learners to consider and discuss, nominating one member of the group to respond

Topic sentences

The topic sentence is usually the first sentence of the paragraph. Focusing on the first sentence of a paragraph gives the reader an idea of what the paragraph is going to be about and can enable him/her to map a complex text. This activity can be linked into the prediction activity above.

Paragraph heading

Encouraging learners to give an appropriate heading for each paragraph or section of the text can support them in understanding the whole passage. This could be linked to the topic sentences activity above.

Skimming and scanning are frequently confused and it is important to teach readers that they have distinctly different aims.

Skimming involves rapid eye movements across lines of text to absorb the overall theme.

To understand the gist of a text the learner skates over the title, subtitles, sub-headings, illustrations and captions of a text and then may go on to read the first and last paragraph.

Scanning involves rapid eye movements across the page, skipping most of the text but concentrating on specific detail. It may help the learner to remember what scanning means if the teacher compares the skill with that of a hospital scanner, i.e. searching for specific diagnostic information.

The learner searches for key words or ideas – highlighting, underlining or listing parts of the text that deal with a specific issue. This is useful when studying or looking to find specific information from a book or article quickly as there is not always time to read every word.

Activities that involve **skimming and scanning** can develop readers' engagement with their own reading skills, encouraging them to become more analytical in the process of reading

Paraphrasing and summarising - in order to complete either of these tasks successfully, accurate comprehension of the text is required.

Paraphrasing involves the learner putting a passage from source material into his/her own words. For learners engaged with an English language GCSE programme, this is a particularly useful skill to develop when wanting to borrow from a source without plagiarising.

Some tips when teaching paraphrasing:

• Explain that it is important that the learners use their own words when introducing the topic but that they should make it clear that they are presenting someone else's ideas, e.g. According to Donald Trump ………

• Learners should use alternative wording to the author's throughout the paraphrase.

• It is important the learner cites his source.

Summarising involves the learner putting only the main idea(s) only from the source material into his/her own words. This is a useful skill when making notes.

Pair work

Working in pairs can improve the effectiveness of many activities designed to develop reading and writing, as well as supporting the building of confidence and fluency in speaking and effectiveness in listening and responding.

Teachers may need to be pro-active in the organisation of pairs for each learner to gain the most from the use of the strategy, by matching learners with complementary strengths and skills. Learners need to understand that they are expected to undertake the activity as a pair and not work individually although sitting side by side. Teachers need to be explicit about how the activity can be approached, such as:

• joint pre-reading of texts

• each putting forward their ideas in turn

• deciding who keeps notes

• sharing tasks such as dictionary search

• drafting and editing together

A few ideas for paired activities. Learners can:

• work in pairs on a writing task, sharing ideas on planning, structure, grammar and spelling

• practise communication skills by describing an item without showing or naming it to their partner, who has to guess what it is

• read a text together, taking it in turns to read aloud

• peer coach each other in skills such as ICT, map reading and dictionary or thesaurus searches

• prepare a review of a book, magazine article or poem