



Alderman White School

A member of The White Hills Park Trust

Literacy Policy

Statutory or non-statutory:	Non-statutory
Author/Reviewer:	S Zhang
Approved by Governors:	
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1. **Rationale and aims:**

“Literacy is key to learning across all subjects in secondary school and a strong predictor of outcomes in later life.”

[Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools | EEF](#)

“Teachers should develop students’ spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for students, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects.”

[National curriculum in England: framework for key stages 1 to 4 - GOV.UK](#)

The Teachers Standards state that teachers should “demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher’s specialist subject.”

[Teachers' standards: overview](#)

We are committed to developing literacy skills in our students, in the belief that it will support their learning and raise standards across the curriculum, as:

- students need vocabulary, analytical skills, expression, and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of subjects.
- language helps us to reflect, revise our beliefs and evaluate ourselves and others.
- developing effective speaking and listening skills builds confidence.
- responding to higher order questions encourages the development of thinking skills and enquiry.
- reading helps us to learn from sources beyond our immediate experience.
- writing helps us to sustain and order our thoughts.
- improving literacy and learning can have an impact on students’ self-esteem, on motivation and behaviour; it allows them to learn independently.
- literacy skills are essential to higher education and employability.

All teachers are teachers of literacy, and are expected to ensure that their own speaking, listening, writing, and reading of English support students in developing their language and vocabulary well. We recognise that some staff may have SEND needs, for example in relation to dyslexia, hearing, or speech. We will ensure that colleagues are supported to model literacy if necessary and ensure that adjustments are made in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. We will discuss with colleagues what adjustments or support they require and how we can support this.

2. **Skill Development**

2a. Oracy

We recognise the importance of high-quality discussion, questioning and dialogue with students, in supporting students to explore and formulate their ideas and high quality written responses.

The following strategies will be used to encourage high quality and meaningful talk in the classroom:

- Use of Think - pair – share to check for understanding

- Respond – build – challenge prompts to structure group discussion
- Opportunities for group work or to present ideas to a group or the class

2b. Reading

“Wide recreational reading expands pupils’ knowledge about the world and about language, as well as their understanding of subject-specific academic and technical vocabulary.” [The reading framework](#)

Reading varied texts of a suitable level for 20 minutes per day will significantly develop a student’s reading ability which will support their academic progress.

DEAR time

All students in Year 7-10 are expected to have a suitable reading book with them in school and to read for 10 minutes of DEAR (“drop everything and read”) at the start of tutor time. During the 10 minute DEAR session at the start of lesson 5, teachers may set a subject related DEAR task or ask students to read their own reading book. Teachers are encouraged to set a short DEAR question or task to increase reading accountability.

Library Lessons

All students in Year 7 and 8 have a fortnightly library lesson as part of the English curriculum. This uses the STAR reading test and Accelerated Reader programme.

- Students are allocated a reading band based on the outcome of a reading comprehension test.
- Students are encouraged to read a range of texts in or around the reading band.
- On completing each text, they complete a quiz to test comprehension.
- Additional interventions are put in place for students whose reading age is below their chronological age – this includes individual or group reading with an adult during library lessons for students on watch or requiring intervention.

Disciplinary reading

All subjects are encouraged to introduce students to authentic, subject specific texts that are suitably challenging, with activities that encourage them to access and interrogate the text.

Teachers are encouraged to model reading aloud while students follow the text, and to support opportunities for students to read aloud eg. popcorn reading, as well as to provide appropriate opportunities for students to read individually or in pairs.

Promoting reading for pleasure

The school:

- participates in local and national reading for pleasure initiatives, such as Carnegie and Brilliant Book Awards
- maintains a vibrant and well-curated library stock that responds to student interests and requests.
- build networks with other schools within the trust to share good practice, especially at the transition from primary to secondary school.

2c. Vocabulary

All Curriculum areas should identify key vocabulary in each scheme of learning and actively teach, model and check for understanding of pronunciation, spelling, meaning and appropriate use.

Teachers should be mindful of any Tier 2 vocabulary and check that students understand its meaning in the context of the subject, revisiting this regularly.

2d. Writing

Oracy activities, regular reading and precise teaching of vocabulary will all support the development of students writing skills.

We will teach students:

- to write clearly and with technical accuracy in terms of spelling, punctuation and grammar,
- To draft and edit work where appropriate
- To write in different styles and to recognise the importance of audience and purpose
- To be able to summarise, write succinct responses, and sustained writing
- including encouraging and pro

Modelling and scaffolding will be used to support students.

At times, feedback and target tacking will focus on improving writing, technically or in terms of style or precision.

3. Roles and Responsibilities:

Literacy and Library TLR postholder: To lead the whole school literacy strategy, sharing strategies and approaches with all staff, and ensure that the library inspires a love of and engagement with reading for all students.

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

Teachers across the curriculum: provide a consistent approach to students in the development of language, since speaking, listening, writing, and reading are integral to all lessons.

Students: understand what strategies are being used in lessons, take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs, make improvements using such strategies and commit to reading widely outside of school. Students are to use green pen in all subjects to develop an understanding of common errors in their work and how to improve their literacy standards across all subjects regularly.

Parents: should encourage their children to read at home and write with accuracy.

SENCO: the SENCO and Teaching Assistants will identify appropriate support for students requiring urgent intervention, and co-ordinate the process for assessment for exam access arrangements.

Library Team: the library is pivotal in supporting the development of literacy and provides a secure supportive working environment to develop project or research work. The Library assistants should:

- help promote reading for pleasure across the school
- provide facilities and support to encourage independent reading and writing

Each academic year, key staff will identify and implement new approaches through INSET and Teaching and Learning Briefings.

Governors: governors may meet with staff and students (e.g., at link visits) and report progress and issues to the governing body.

4. Assessment

Oracy: students oracy skills will mainly be monitored through lesson visits.

Reading: STAR reading tests will be used to measure reading comprehension in Year 7-8.

Vocabulary: This will mainly be assessed through subject assessment tasks.

Writing: Writing is assessed through the No More Marking tasks carried out in English lessons in Year 7 and 9.

Literacy skills will all be assessed as part of the assessments carried out in each subject area.

5. Targeted Intervention and Support

KS2 reading test data and Accelerated Reader scores are used to identify students for urgent intervention. Interventions will be graduated according to need and may include:

- Group and individual reading with active reading techniques such as prediction, questions to check for understanding during library lessons
- Y7 TAs support 1:1 reading with students with reading ages significantly below chronological age during DEAR time daily using short comprehension books.
- Switch-On* reading strategies are used in 1:1 sessions for approximately 20 minutes, focusing on word recognition and language comprehension.
- Literacy sessions are timetabled in the Nurture classroom to address and practise KS2 literacy skills which may not be embedded, as well as KS3 literacy skills.
- Handwriting and touch-typing sessions run on a weekly basis to support students identified as needing additional support and practice in these written communication skills.

*Switch-On is a research-based diagnostic strategy which identifies common errors in a student's reading, e.g. omitting words, struggling to blend - allowing the adult to target these skills.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy is reviewed annually and approved by the Local Governing Body.