

The Oswaldtwistle School



Whole School Literacy Policy March 2023

To be reviewed March 2024

The Oswaldtwistle School

Literacy Policy

Literacy is a huge barrier to learning for a majority of our young people, largely as a result of the difficulties they have encountered in their learning journeys to date. In response, all members of staff work extremely hard to promote reading, writing, speaking and listening across the school as we fully recognise the importance of these skills for the long-term achievements and success of our students.

On entry, each student takes a series of baseline assessments linked to WRAT 5 and the Star Reading Programme. This in turn provides us with a number of useful reports that help us to identify and appropriately support individual students, especially those who require reading intervention. Further assessments during the course of the academic year allow us to monitor student progress in this area and evaluate the success of our literacy strategies and intervention programme.

Aims

- To foster a shared understanding of the importance of language and literacy in the learning process, and in the longer-term development of our young people.
- To improve students' standards of achievement in English and across the curriculum.
- To develop students' confidence and ability to express themselves and communicate effectively with others.
- To create a whole school literacy ethos that sees staff and students positively engaging with an extensive range of literacy activities that permeate school life. (Appendix 1 lists the overarching activities we use as a whole school to promote a positive literacy ethos.)

Promoting Literacy at OSSS

Literacy across the school is co-ordinated by the English Team and overseen by the Assistant headteacher, who is responsible for the Quality of Education within school. They in turn work very closely with the SENCO and wider staff team to secure the literacy vision. Literacy is recognised as being the collective responsibility of all staff and everyone works hard to deliver the varied activities that are in place to help secure our vision.

Responsibilities

- The English team will drive and co-ordinate the implementation of all literacy developments and strategies. They will regularly review the impact of their strategies by closely monitoring student progress and liaising with staff and students. In turn, strategies will be amended accordingly.
- SLT will ensure that the school's vision for Literacy is given a high profile.
- Teachers across the curriculum will take every opportunity to provide students with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write, speak and listen effectively.
- All staff will support the literacy ethos by promoting the strategies that are in place to encourage all students to develop and strengthen their literacy skills.
- Students will be encouraged to recognise their own literacy needs and identifying what they need to do to improve.

Promoting Speaking and Listening

- The importance of speaking and listening should be promoted by all staff and will adhere to our school's Speaking and Listening rules, which are on display in all classrooms.
- All staff should lead by example, ensuring that 'Standard English' is used at all times and in return, they should expect this from the students.



- Staff should always encourage students to use 'Standard English' instead of slang or inappropriate colloquialisms.
- Opportunities should be created for discussion in a range of contexts and forms: whole class, small group, paired, individual contribution and role play etc.
- Tutors should ensure that all members of their form take an active part in Friday registration's 'Newsround' activity and also encourage students to fully participate in the Tuesday 'Registration Quiz' to develop their speaking and listening, critical thinking and reasoning skills.

Promoting Writing

- Staff should always model high standards of presentation at all times and all work should be presented with date and title/Learning Objective.
- Students should be encouraged to write in extended form and to use the appropriate Literacy mats during their lessons. The literacy mats include: connectives, persuasive features, punctuation and sentence structures.
- Writing mats covering: articles, leaflets, posters, formal and informal letters, reviews and speeches, will also be provided to all staff so that they can support students on written tasks.
- Staff should model all pieces of writing and never assume that the student will know what to do. They should scaffold learning where necessary, using writing frames etc. to aid extended writing.
- Teachers and teaching assistants should insist on the use of full sentences when completing writing tasks and should state this visually (on the board or on the worksheet) and give an example of how to use the question to start the answer.
- Teachers and teaching assistants should promote good use of punctuation, spelling and grammar in all written task.
- Teachers should create opportunities for peer literacy marking, using the literacy marking key, they should focus on only one or two aspects per opportunity e.g., capital letters, grammar, spelling and punctuation. A child friendly model of our marking policy and its use will be given to all students and this should be used to support students in the development of their literacy skills.
- The use of dictionaries and thesauruses are actively encouraged in all lessons in an attempt to support students to extend their vocabulary and correctly spell an increasing number of words.
- The English Department will provide staff with an exemplar 'Literacy Target guide' to support teachers in identifying gaps in student's written work. This target will be linked to student's own personalised 'STAR' targets and evidenced on student's Progress Markers.

Promoting Reading

- Staff should provide opportunities for reading as a class, in groups and individually and encourage reading aloud, if appropriate to the task.
- In lessons, all needs should be met through a range of varied and appropriately differentiated reading resources.
- Reading and research tasks should be used in class and students should be encouraged to read books/newspaper articles on line etc.
- All staff will actively promote skimming and scanning skills in lessons.
- Teachers should promote the enjoyment of reading and share their reading 'joys' and experiences with their students.
- Group reading time takes place during every form time session, when the group select a book and read aloud in the classroom, in turn.



- Classroom teachers work hard to expand the vocabulary range of their students' by ensuring that they learn to pronounce, understand and use a maximum of 12 key words for each taught topic. In addition, they should be explicit about the key words they would expect to find in any given piece of writing and use frequent retrieval of knowledge exercises (ROK) to embed these words to the long-term memory of their students.
- The use of dictionaries and thesauruses is encouraged in all lessons, in an attempt to increase the vocabulary of our students along with their understanding of the language and in turn the fluency of their reading.
- Every two weeks, all departments will encourage reading by initiating a reading task and discussion relating to their subject. Staff will nominate a student for 'Reader of the Week' to encourage participation in reading.
- Staff will be given training on 'Guided Reading' and supplied with 'Guided Reading' mat, so that they support students when reading during lessons.

Marking for Literacy

- The literacy marking policy should be used by all staff when assessing students' work.
- The literacy marking key/posters should be on display in all classrooms.
- Staff should encourage self/peer marking of literacy with students marking their own or a partner's work with purple pen.
- Opportunities to praise the effective and accurate use of literacy skills should be seized.
- Mistakes should be identified with the appropriate symbols in the margin. If no margin is available, symbols can be placed next to the error.
- **NB** It is not policy to indicate every single mistake in students' work, especially when marking the work of students who have low levels of literacy in all areas of spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Staff should ensure that appropriate literacy targets are recorded on all Progress Markers and subsequently recognise attempts made by students to achieve these targets.

Appendix 1: Whole school literacy activities.

1. English Quizzes - Tuesday registration time.
2. Bedrock Learning during English lessons.
3. Group reading and SPAG booklets during form times (once a week)
4. Templates to be provided for each focus area.
5. Literacy mats, namely connectives, punctuation, opening words/phrases and paragraphs/guided reading, will be available in all classrooms to support writing across the curriculum.
 - a. Other ideas that we hope to trial this year include; guest speakers, library visits, a reading challenge, debates, drama and an English drop-down day that will include activities such as, learning a different language, role plays and designing a personal bookmark.
6. Subject specific vocabulary banks for each taught topic.
7. Whole school Literacy Marking Policy (child friendly version for students to place in books).

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