

Literacy for Learning Policy Our Lady and St Bede Catholic Academy

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LITERACY FOR LEARNING POLICY

1. Rational

- 1.1. Our Lady & St Bede Catholic Academy recognises the essential importance of literacy in order to raise our students' attainment and progress, as well as to equip our students with the necessary skills to be successful in life. Literacy is integral to our core purpose: to inspire confident learners to thrive in a changing world.
- 1.2. The development of an effective literacy skillset (speaking, listening, reading and writing) is fundamental to the achievement of a rich and fulfilling education and life after education. We use these skills every day in order to communicate with and make sense of the world around us. At Our Lady & St Bede Catholic Academy, we recognise that at the heart of improving literacy skills is the opportunity to practise them. Improving literacy and learning can have an impact on students' self-esteem, motivation, behaviour and attainment. It allows students to learn independently and is empowering.
- 1.3. Our Lady & St Bede Catholic Academy's curriculum is underpinned by developing students' abilities to speak, listen, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including using language to learn, communicate, think, explore and organise. Helping students to express themselves clearly, through the development of vocabulary, both orally and in writing, enhances and enriches teaching and learning in all subjects and prepares the student for life after school.

2. Aims

- 2.1 Our Lady & St Bede's Literacy Policy and Practice is based on the seven recommendations from the Education Endowment Foundation, which aims to support a consistently excellent, evidence-informed education system in England that creates opportunities for all children and young people, regardless of their family background. Please see:

 https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/improving-literacy-in-secondary-schools/. The recommendations are based on the key concept of disciplinary literacy and it aims to support teachers in all subjects with strategies to help students read, write and communicate effectively. See Appendix
- 2.2 Support students' learning in all subjects by supporting teachers to be clear about how their work with students contributes to the development of students' literacy skills.

A: Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools: Summary of recommendations. The seven recommendations, embedded in our literacy policy, are highlighted in bold.

- 2.3 Increase students' literacy and confidence with literacy across the curriculum.
- 2.4 Raise students' own expectations of achievement, thus raising standards and aspirations.
- 2.5 Develop a shared understanding, between all staff, of the role of vocabulary in students' learning and how work in different subjects can contribute to and benefit

from the development of their ability to communicate effectively both in school and in preparation for life.

2.6 **Prioritise 'disciplinary literacy' (subject-specific) across the curriculum** and support staff to implement effective literacy development and wider achievement across the school.

3. Vocabulary

- 3.1 Teachers will provide targeted and explicit vocabulary instruction in every subject.
- 3.2 Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary will be prioritised, which students are unlikely to encounter in everyday speech.
- 3.3 Teachers and subject leaders will have considered and identified which words and phrases to teach as part of the curriculum planning.

4. Speaking and Listening

- 4.1 Teachers and Teaching Assistants will encourage students to participate widely in lessons. Lessons will be planned in which students are regularly required to be actively involved in speaking and listening. **Appendix B**: **Developing Literacy Skills**
- 4.2 Participation in lessons is a key indicator of engagement and thus is monitored through lesson observations.
- 4.3 Provide opportunities for structured talk in lessons and model high-quality talk, for example including key vocabulary and metacognitive reflection.

5. Reading

- 5.1 Word conscious students can more easily access the breadth of the curriculum at secondary school, as well as finding ways to understand unfamiliar content. Teachers use strategies to explicitly teach students key vocabulary to develop their word consciousness in every subject.
- 5.2 Teachers develop students' ability to read complex academic texts by developing reading strategies, such as activating prior knowledge, modelling, and prediction and questioning.
- 5.3 Teachers use available data on students' reading abilities in order to make informed choices about appropriate texts and to plan support for students, so that they can successfully access texts. We promote reading for pleasure across the school through a range of planned activities. **Appendix D: Policy on Reading.**

6. Writing

6.1 Our whole school aim is for every student to produce writing to be proud of. The Literacy Lead and Literacy Co-Ordinator works closely with Subject Leaders and

departments to develop effective strategies for the teaching of the written text types used in their subject. Subjects are expected to have a clear idea of a 'gold standard' of writing. Subject-specific guidance documents are to be found in the Literacy folder on sites. **Appendix E: Policy on Writing.**

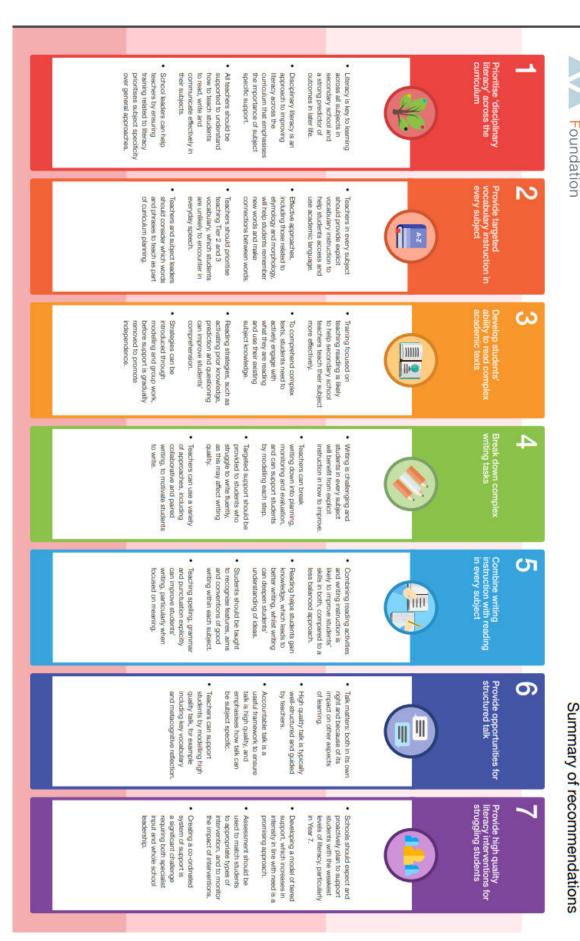
- 6.2 Teachers are to break down complex writing tasks and provide explicit instruction and a variety of tools can be used to support pupil progress, such as modelling, targeted support, collaborative and paired writing.
- 6.3 Teachers will combine writing instruction with reading in every subject. Reading helps to gain knowledge and deepen understanding. Students will be taught to recognise features, aims and conventions of good writing in each subject.
- 6.4 The school's Feedback Policy ensures that teachers' marking of writing reinforces correct English punctuation, grammar and spelling. **Appendix F: Policy on Marking/Feedback and Appendix G: Literacy Marking Guidelines.**
- 6.5 Work will be marked for literacy using the following symbols:

Code	Meaning of code
SP	Incorrect spelling – write out the correct spelling x3
Gr	Grammar
С	Capital letter
٨	Missing word
//	New paragraph
Pυ	Punctuation
Ś	Unclear meaning /clumsy expression
\checkmark	Very good
√	
U/L	Underline
FS	Use full sentences

7. Literacy Interventions

- 7.1 Targeted literacy interventions take place to support students. Interventions will be organised by the Literacy Co-Ordinator. Students with lower SATs literacy scores, or who have been identified by their teacher, could be selected to take part in one or more of the school literacy interventions. The interventions usually target KS3 students but bespoke programmes are delivered to KS4 students. The interventions include:
 - Reading Support and Comprehension: once or twice per week during timetabled lessons. These will be delivered by teachers and teaching assistants.
 - Access to the Lexia Programme for pupils identified with dyslexia during form time.
 - The Handwriting Club is also available to support students.

Appendix A: Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools: EEF Summary of Recommendations.



SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Endowment

Appendix B: Developing Literacy Skills summary

Top 5 tips for developing talk

- 1. Always structure group work to meet the needs of the task. Do students need to work in small or large groups? Are friendship groups appropriate or do you need to select which students work together? Are you going to need to group by ability?
- 2. Be clear about why students are talking; give all speaking and listening tasks clear outcomes and success criteria.
- 3. Consider your role when students are working in groups. Will you need to support a particular group? How will you ensure groups remain on task?
- 4. Try to vary the strategies you use for organising group talk. (Rainbow, Jigsaw, Envoy etc.)
- 5. Model effective talk.

Top 5 tips for developing listening skills

- 1. Provide a focus or a hook for listening tasks, e.g. a specific question for each group.
- 2. Give students a format for recording information to support retention, e.g. diagram, flow chart, note-making frame.
- 3. Before a task, model listening and note-making.
- 4. Break up the listening into chunks and gradually increase the complexity and demands of tasks to build up listening stamina.
- 5. Plan regular group activities where students are required to feedback and listen to each other; ask them to build on the information they hear to encourage close listening.

Top 5 tips for developing reading skills

- 1. Pre-read any text you plan to use with students. This will help you to spot any potential issues re: vocabulary, layout etc.
- 2. Model the reading of any new or challenging text. Discuss the reading strategies you are using, any difficult vocabulary and any specific features of the text that students need to be aware of.
- 3. Ensure any reading activities have a clear purpose. Why are students reading? (To make notes, answer questions, for understanding etc.).
- 4. Regularly remind students about the reading strategies they can use to access texts, e.g. skimming, scanning, and close reading.
- 5. Use DARTS activities (directed activities related to text) to encourage active reading, e.g. sequencing, reconstruction of a text.

Top 5 tips for developing writing skills

- 1. Use the teaching sequence for writing to structure the writing process for your students, particularly when the text type is unfamiliar.
- 2. Model the writing process for your students. What type of text is it? What are the key features of the text?
- 3. Provide examples of the texts the students are going to produce.
 Annotated examples of texts from a previous year group are particularly useful as students can see how and why texts are successful and what they need to do to reach a particular level/grade.
- 4. Ensure any writing task has a clear audience and purpose. Why are students writing? Who is the writing for? Try to provide 'real' audiences for writing.
- 5. Encourage students to plan their writing and provide time for them to check their ideas through (and make changes where appropriate).

Top 5 tips for developing spelling and vocabulary

- 1. Avoid word wallpaper. It is important to have keywords displayed in your classroom, but only useful if they are actively used by students and referred to during lessons.
- 2. Display key vocabulary in context, ensuring a disciplinary approach to literacy.
- 3. Consider the importance of tier 2 vocabulary. Students find words such as 'evaluate', 'explain', 'compare' and 'contrast' challenging as they have a variety of meanings across the curriculum.
- 4. Provide students with a range of spelling strategies for the key vocabulary in your subject. The SEEC (Select, Explain, Explore, Consolidate) model provides options.
- 5. When marking written work, pay attention to the organisation of writing, spelling and vocabulary use alongside content. This gives students the message that the organisation of writing, spelling and the correct use of vocabulary are important across the curriculum. Draw attention to but do not explicitly correct errors and allow time for students to reflect upon these.

Appendix C: SEEC (Select, Explain, Explore, Consolidate)

Select

- How difficult is this reading material to understand?
- What words are most important to understand the text or topic?
- What words are unlikely to be part of a child's prior knowledge?
- What words lack helpful, directive contexts?
- What words appear repeatedly in a text and a topic?
- What words are interrelated and help children know additional words?
- What words are frequently encountered in many subject disciplines ['Tier 2' words]?

Explain

- Say the word carefully (remember the importance of 'phonological awareness'?)
- Write the word (this offers opportunities to reference common sounds or letters in the word)
- Give a student-friendly definition e.g. obtuse not very sensitive or slow to understand
- Give multiple meaningful examples e.g. the prince was being deliberately obtuse
- Ask for student examples and clarify multiple meanings or any misconceptions

Explore

- Explore the etymology and common word parts.
- Explore any common word families, interesting synonyms or antonyms for the word/s.
- Explore words used differently in different disciplines.
- Explore multiple-choice questions that offer examples of the word.
- Explore understanding of the word with peers.
- Explore understanding with children restating the meaning of the word/s in their own words.
- Explore further questions prompted by the word.
- Explore related images or ideas evoked by the word.
- Explore strategies to remember the word e.g. mnemonics.

Consolidate

- Repeated exposure and use
- Test and learn
- Using the word in the world
- Research and record

Appendix D: Policy on Reading

POLICY ON READING

Member of Staff Responsible for the Policy: Assistant Headteacher/Head of

English & Literacy Co-Ordinator

Date on which this Policy was last reviewed: 28th May 2021

Date on which the Policy will next be reviewed: June 2021

Dissemination of the Policy:

All Staff, Governors

1. Introduction

Improving the literacy skills of all our students requires a determined, collective effort. It follows, then, that all of us working at Our Lady & St Bede Catholic Academy has a responsibility for helping our students become confident and independent readers. To support our students all of us will adopt specific vocabulary and reading strategies in our day-to-day lessons across the curriculum. We will model the enjoyment of reading across the whole school and promote reading to students as a lifelong skill.

2. Our school-wide aims are to:

- 2.1 Provide our students with the skills and strategies necessary to develop into competent and fluent readers, including the explicit instruction of vocabulary;
- 2.2 Encourage the enjoyment of books and reading so that the students develop a life-long enjoyment of text;
- 2.3 Develop a critical appreciation of what they read;
- 2.4 Develop research and study skills, using library and class texts, in conjunction with the Internet and other electronic means;
- 2.5 To develop a critical appreciation of the writing of others to emulate these skills in their writing;
- 2.6 Encourage care and ownership of books.

3. Every Subject Area will:

- 3.1 Have its own subject-specific strategies for vocabulary instruction that teachers will use to deepen the reading skills of students in their subject;
- 3.2 Have identified key vocabulary for schemes of learning that require specific teaching;
- 3.3 Use relevant assessment methods to monitor students understanding of key vocabulary.

4. All subject teachers will:

- 4.1 Ensure that students read, or listen to appropriate text in all subjects every week;
- 4.2 Explicitly outline what types of reading they require from students in their subject area, such as skimming and scanning, information retrieval or reading for inference and understanding;
- 4.3 Model reading for understanding in their subject area;
- 4.4 Explicitly guide students to use their textbooks effectively, these may include dictionaries, thesauruses or other subject-specific texts;
- 4.5 Give access to complex texts using a range of strategies to enable students to understand;
- 4.6 All students will have the opportunity to practise common assessment rubrics and will be given guidance in understanding these.

Appendix E: Policy on Writing

POLICY ON WRITING

Member of Staff Responsible for the Policy: Assistant Headteacher/Head of

English & Literacy Co-Ordinator

Date on which this Policy was last reviewed: 28th May 2021

Date on which the Policy will next be reviewed: June 2021

Dissemination of the Policy:

All Staff, Governors

1. Introduction

At Our Lady and St Bede Catholic Academy we believe that every pupil deserves to be 'word rich' and to have the habits of the 'word rich'. Many of our students enter our school with sound levels of literacy. Others come to us with these skills still emerging. The 'word rich' self-regulate as a matter of course; they use their existing knowledge to absorb more; they are resilient writers who have gained resilience through having strategies to overcome their obstacles to literacy. They are more likely to be playful with language and to manipulate for effect. Every pupil has the right to be 'word rich', to become confident, independent writers who reflect upon and edit their writing. We believe we can help them achieve this through consistent, simple reminders to help them to develop good habits when writing.

2. Our school-wide aims are to:

- 2.1 Promote and champion the importance of checking work thoroughly;
- 2.2 Teach our students to be self-correctors, editing during the writing process;
- 2.3 Encourage pride in writing;
- 2.4 Celebrate great writing and great progress in writing;
- 2.5 Prepare our students for the increased challenges associated with curriculum and examination changes.

3. Every Subject Area will:

- 3.1 Have subject-specific strategies that teachers will use to improve the writing skills of students in their subject;
- 3.2 Have an awareness of the different types of writing expected of students in their subject, and how to model and scaffold accordingly;
- 3.3 Use dedicated improvement and reflection time to develop their literacy skills.

4. All subject teachers will:

- 4.1 Adhere to their department-tailored 'Marking for Literacy' guidance;
- 4.2 Mark using the School's Literacy Codes, highlighting but not necessarily repairing errors;
- 4.3 Feedback to students areas in which they can make improvements, outlining the strategies needed;
- 4.4 Provide timely reminders to students, encouraging them to check their work through and act upon feedback given;
- 4.5 Draw attention to the act of writing, encouraging an awareness that will create good habits;
- 4.6 Encourage a high standard of presentation in their subjects, encouraging students to strive for 'Pride in Presentation' instilling a sense of pride in their writing and presentation.

Appendix F: Policy on Literacy Feedback

Member of Staff Responsible for the Policy:

Assistant Headteacher/Head of English & Literacy Co-Ordinator

Date on which this Policy was last reviewed: 28th May 2021

Date on which the Policy will next be reviewed: June 2021

Dissemination of the Policy: All Staff

What is feedback?

Feedback is a central part of a teacher's role and can be integral to progress and attainment. Research suggests that providing feedback is one of the most effective and cost-effective ways of improving students' learning. The studies of feedback reviewed by the EEF found on average the provision of high-quality feedback leads to significant progress over the course of a year.

Feedback can take different forms: peer, self, group, teacher marking, or verbal. Great teachers use a combination of these, choosing the best form as appropriate to the learning. The best feedback, whether it is written or verbal, will give students a clear sense of how they can improve, with students responding and making progress as a result.

1. Aims of Feedback

- 1.1. To help students make progress;
- 1.2. To provide strategies for students to improve;
- 1.3. To give students dedicated time to reflect upon their learning and put in the effort to make improvements;
- 1.4. To inform our planning and structure the next phase of learning;
- 1.5. To facilitate effective and realistic target setting for student and/or the teacher;
- 1.6. To encourage a dialogue to develop between student and teacher;
- 1.7. To encourage students to have a sense of pride in their presentation of work;
- 1.8. To correct mistakes, with a focus on Literacy/Vocabulary skills.

2. Principles

Our Lady & St Bede School's feedback policy (see also **Teaching and Learning Policy 5.2 Marking**) aims to promote consistent and high standards of feedback. This policy sets down the general principles that subjects must use to draw up their own specific policies to suit their curriculum needs. There must be a commonality of approach to ensure that in all subjects, across all attainment ranges, students are given the same opportunities to maximise their learning and achievement. The general principles are:

- 2.1 Feedback should be timely and responsive to the needs of the individual student so that they can actively engage with the feedback;
- 2.2 A dialogue, both verbal and written, should be created between teacher and student. When marked books are returned to students it is essential to allow time (teachers may use dedicated improvement and reflection time) for students to read the comments and engage with the feedback;
- 2.3 Feedback is a part of the school's wider assessment processes which aims to provide an appropriate level of challenge to students in lessons, allowing them to make good progress.
- 2.4 Where appropriate students should be encouraged to assess their own work against the learning objectives and success criteria;
- 2.5 Peer, group and self-feedback is a valuable tool for learning that should occur regularly, but it needs to be well structured by the teacher;
- 2.6 Pupils will receive regular feedback each term, as set out in the school's Assessment Policy. To ensure consistency, schemes of learning/progress maps will be annotated with which pieces of work will include detailed feedback;
- 2.7 Eliminating unnecessary workload will be at the forefront of any decisions related to marking and feedback.

3. Type and frequency of verbal feedback

- 3.1. This is the most frequent form of feedback;
- 3.2. It has immediacy and relevance as it leads to direct student action;
- 3.3. Verbal feedback may well be directed to individuals or groups of students; these may or may not be formally planned;
- 3.4. Recent research has shown that verbal feedback was highly valued by all cohorts of students, particularly lower learners.

4. Type and frequency of written feedback

- 4.1. There are two types of written feedback: short marking and developmental;
- 4.2. The frequency of each type of written feedback will vary between subjects and key stages; agreed minimums should be clear in the marking policies of each subject area (see also **Teaching and Learning Policy 5.2 Marking**);
- 4.3. Some more practical subjects may well not have detailed written feedback;
- 4.4. Detailed feedback will identify the strengths and strategies for improvement that students will then act upon (this may be in the form of WWW and EBI);
- 4.5. Maintenance marking may identify specific issues such as keywords, literacy/vocabulary and presentation issues; students should act upon these.

5. Type and frequency of peer feedback

- 5.1 This is shown by research to be one of the most effective modes of feedback. Effective peer feedback is rigorously structured and modelled by the teacher;
- 5.2 Written peer feedback should be clearly titled and underlined as 'Peer Feedback';
- 5.3 Students need to be well trained over time to effectively peer assess one another. This process will be led by the subject teacher.

6. Type and frequency of self-feedback

- 6.1 Akin to peer feedback, students need an explicit and clear structure to identify their learning needs;
- 6.2 Teachers should share success and/or assessment criteria where appropriate.

7. Type and frequency of group feedback

- 7.1 Group feedback, if delivered well, can be used to help students to reflect on their learning. Using clear guidelines, led by the teacher, students can self-assess their work.
- 7.2 Group feedback, can significantly reduce teacher workload and if used well and appropriately be used as dedicated reflection and improvement time.

8. Literacy and numeracy feedback

- 8.1. If the literacy standards of our students are going to improve, we must all give appropriate and targeted feedback. For students to take pride in their work they must realise that spelling, grammar and punctuation are not just important in English lessons but are essential for successful communication everywhere. It should be monitored in both short marking and developmental written feedback;
- 8.2. Work to be marked for literacy must follow the Literacy Marking Codes (see Marking for Literacy Guidelines see **Appendix G: Marking for Literacy Guidelines**).
- 8.3 We all have a duty to be vigilant about standards of our students' numeracy where appropriate. For example, concepts such as graphs, ratio, proportions etc. should be monitored accurately across the curriculum.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 9.1 Subject Leaders must ensure their departmental feedback policy supports the school policy. This policy should clearly identify the type and frequency of feedback in subjects;
- 9.2 Subject Leaders undertake quality assurance to ensure feedback is allowing students to progress their learning. This may involve informal conversations, or more formal interviews, with students; work scrutiny, learning walks, etc.

9.3 Subject Leaders will check departmental feedback as part of the quality assurance process. Line Managers will regularly discuss and evaluate the quality of feedback as part of the Line Manager meeting process.

APPENDIX G: MARKING FOR LITERACY GUIDELINES

CORRECTING SPELLING ERRORS

- Spelling errors should be indicated in the margin with an Sp code (when appropriate) and the word underlined.
- Generally, the teacher will allow time, either in a lesson or as part of homework, for students to correct underlined spelling errors themselves. The teacher should give the correct spelling in red in the margin. However, it is recognised that in subjects where students are learning to write in a foreign language, it may be more appropriate for teachers to correct spelling errors.
- It is recognised that it may not always be appropriate for every spelling error in a
 piece of writing to be corrected. Corrections may be limited to subject-specific
 keywords and words it is felt students 'ought' to know. Correcting of spelling errors
 should be limited to 3 per page.
- Teaching staff should remain sensitively aware when correcting the work of students with a Specific Learning Disability, in line with the guidelines in their IEPs.
- Departments should devise their own spelling correction strategies. It is suggested that students correct spellings in the margin or neatly on the page, three times in green pen using the 'look, say, cover, write, check' approach. The word could then be added to their spelling list at the back of their exercise book.

CORRECTING GRAMMAR AND PUNCTUATION

- Punctuation and grammar errors should be indicated in the margin with a pu (punctuation) or gr (grammar) code, when appropriate, and the phrase underlined.
- It is recognised that it may not always be appropriate for every punctuation or grammar error in a piece of writing to be corrected. Corrections may be limited to subject-specific and examples it is felt students 'ought' to know. Correcting of spelling errors should be limited to three per page.
- Teaching staff should remain sensitively aware when correcting the work of students with a Specific Learning Disability, in line with the guidelines in their IEPs.
- Departments should devise their own follow-up strategies for improving punctuation and grammar. An example might be including a literacy comment and/or objective when marking pieces of work or whole class intervention using the Teams Literacy folder. It is recognised that where students are learning a foreign language, punctuation and grammar correction will necessarily be more detailed than in other subjects, and those language teachers will need to use a wider range of codes and marking for literacy strategies. Where this is the case, departments should develop the marking code below and this should be attached to the back cover of pupil exercise books.

MARKING CODES

Code	Meaning of code
SP	Incorrect spelling – write out the correct spelling x3
Gr	Grammar
С	Capital letter
٨	Missing word
//	New paragraph
Pυ	Punctuation
Ś	Unclear meaning /clumsy expression
\checkmark \checkmark	Very good
√	
U/L	Underline
FS	Use full sentences

Subject-specific marking for literacy codes may be used alongside the above, or necessary adjustments to the above code can be made, e.g. for pieces of work where there is no margin.