



Literacy Policy

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Review by: Summer 2024



Statement of Intent

At St Mary's, we are resolute in our belief that strong literacy skills are foundational to all academic success as well as being a non-negotiable life skill. Although many pupils will arrive at St Mary's with strong literacy skills, some will arrive needing help and support to catch their reading up to be in line with their chronological age. Our least advantaged pupils will be disproportionately affected by this.

As such, every teacher has a moral responsibility to develop students' competence in reading, writing and oracy in their own subjects. In doing so, pupils at St Mary's become confident users of language, enabling them to develop, better express themselves and achieve their full potential.

Implementation at Whole-School Level

We have developed a robust plan for the development of literacy skills across the curriculum, which has been based on relevant research and guidance from the Education Endowment Foundation, Alex Quigley as well as a host of other sources. The implementation of this policy requires a whole-school approach, and will include the following actions:

- Staff will be given in-service training to support this policy. Training on targeted vocabulary instruction, strategies to promote reading and questioning and promoting the development of oracy will be embedded throughout the annual CPD programme.

- Schemes of work will specify how literacy skills are reinforced within their subject areas.
- Staff will follow whole school policies on marking and literacy.
- Staff will be aware of the reading levels of their classes so they can challenge/support appropriately.
- Year 7-10 will have expert reading modelled to them by form tutors through the form reading programme.

Catching up struggling readers

- The reading levels of all pupils will be assessed on transfer. Key stage 2 data will be supplemented by NGRT and Probe tests. Pupils identified as weaker readers will receive targeted reading support.
- Those with the greatest need will receive the most intensive 1-1 interventions with a qualified “Thinking Reading” teacher.
- Pupils with a smaller need (though still behind expected levels) will receive interventions with the Teacher of Reading.
- Students in Years 7 and 8 requiring extra help with reading will be asked to attend guided reading sessions.
- Weaker readers will have their reading assessed more frequently to assess the progress being made.
- Parental engagement will be encouraged to promote wider reading and reading for pleasure at home.

The SENDCO, Literacy Co-ordinator and Teacher of Reading will advise teaching staff on supporting students with reading and writing difficulties.

Key Priorities 2023-2024

- *Embedding writing strategies introduced in 2022-23 through CPD to enable pupils to be challenged or supported with their writing skills.*
- *Expanding form reading to include a wider range of interesting, age-appropriate novels for pupils across years 7-10.*

- *Introducing and embedding the Thinking Reading programme for the weakest readers with the greatest need for support.*
- *Further developing the current offer of literacy enrichment opportunities to further encourage pupils to read for pleasure in their own time.*
- *Train staff on strategies for encouraging good oracy skills from all pupils.*

1. Key roles and responsibilities

- 1.0. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Literacy Policy and procedures of St Mary's Catholic High School.
- 1.1. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Literacy Policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including but not limited to ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 1.2. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for reviewing the Literacy Policy annually.
- 1.3. The Headteacher has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Policy.
- 1.4. The Headteacher will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Literacy Policy of St Mary's Catholic High School.
- 1.5. The Literacy Coordinator will be responsible for liaising with teachers across all of the departments to facilitate the delivery of cross-curricular literacy skills, in addition to developing a culture of reading for pleasure across the curriculum.
- 1.6. The Teacher of Reading will be responsible for implementing and developing targeted reading intervention across Key Stage 3.
- 1.7. The Thinking Reading lead will be responsible for the delivery of targeted intervention for our most struggling readers.
- 1.8. The English department will be responsible for teaching basic literacy skills.
- 1.9. Teachers will be responsible for developing literacy skills across their subjects, including implemented opportunities for reading and structured talk in lessons.

2. Reading guidelines

- 2.0. Years 7-10 will complete the Form Reading Programme with expert reading skills being modelled to them by their form tutors.
- 2.1. Staff will encourage pupils to read actively by using Reciprocal Reading strategies.

- 2.2. All students have access to books from the school LRC. Students should also be encouraged to join their local public libraries.
- 2.3. All subject areas should provide opportunities to read challenging texts, and to encourage wider reading to complement their subject knowledge.
- 2.4. All staff should be aware of the specific requirements of their subject and should prepare students where necessary. Staff should reinforce reading/study skills techniques taught in English such as skim-reading, note-taking, underlining key words etc, and should also implement reciprocal reading strategies.
- 2.5. Staff will take account of the literacy demands made by students in their lessons and plan support strategies to assist students. E.g. active reading strategies.
- 2.6. Staff should plan opportunities for students to show they understand information conveyed in different forms of text and from different sources.

3. Writing guidelines

- 3.0. Staff will encourage accuracy in writing by following the school's marking policies.
- 3.1. Throughout the year, staff will reinforce skills with students whenever they are engaged in writing tasks.
- 3.2. Staff will insist on a neat presentation. Students with poor handwriting should be referred to the SENDCO who will liaise with the appropriate staff to implement support.
- 3.3. Staff will assist students in the organisation of their writing, and will provide good models and writing frames where appropriate to support pupils with their writing.
- 3.4. Staff will help students to choose appropriate expression in writing, according to the task and type of writing required, by teaching the appropriate conventions.
- 3.5. Staff will reinforce basic skills in writing, reminding students of the importance of basic punctuation and paragraphing in the context of their work.
- 3.6. Staff will purposefully include targeted vocabulary instruction into their schemes of work in order to provide students with routine opportunities to develop their knowledge of key vocabulary and root words, suffixes and prefixes.
- 3.7. Students will be encouraged to plan and check their work. Staff should plan opportunities for students to convey meaning in a range of forms for different readers/audience.

4. Speaking and listening guidelines

- 4.0. Staff will encourage the development of speaking and listening through activities within each unit of work.
- 4.1. Staff will be trained on to structure talking opportunities in the same way they would structure writing tasks.
- 4.2. Staff are to plan opportunities for students to speak articulately in a range of contexts and for different purposes.
- 4.3. Systems such as Collaborative Group work structures are to be used to ensure active participation in group and class discussions.

5. Use of data

- 5.0. Reading data on all students will be available for all staff. Staff can then plan appropriately to challenge or support.
- 5.1. KS2 data will be available to all staff to assist in planning.
- 5.2. Pupils receiving reading interventions will have their reading assessed more frequently to assess their progress.

6. Key stage 3

- 6.0. Pupils at Key Stage 3 will be taught the following literacy skills across the curriculum:
 - Awareness of the sounds of language.
 - To spell and use an extensive and challenging vocabulary.
 - Word grammar.
 - Sentence grammar.
 - Reading and comprehension.
 - To love reading and books.
- 6.1. In English, pupils at key stage 3 will be taught to:
 - Develop an appreciation and love of reading, and read increasingly challenging material independently.
 - Understand increasingly challenging texts.
 - Read critically.
 - Write accurately, fluently, effectively and at length.
 - Plan, draft, edit and proof-read.
 - Speak confidently and effectively.

7. Key stage 4

7.0. Pupils will be taught to:

- Read critically with a high level of comprehension.
- Summarise and synthesise information.
- Evaluate a writer's choice of vocabulary, form, grammatical and structural features.
- To compare texts.
- Produce clear and coherent text and write effectively for a range of purposes.
- Write for impact.
- Present information and ideas vocally.
- Respond to spoken language.
- Use Standard English whenever and wherever is appropriate.