



COMMUNICATION, READING AND WRITING (LITERACY & ENGLISH) POLICY

Introduction

At Tor View School we identify Communication, Reading and Writing as the most important skills for all of our learners. We deliver these skills through our individual target teaching (**Key Skills**). The appreciation of books and words is taught through **English** lessons and a broad and balanced age appropriate content is provided throughout our learners' school career.

Subject Aims

- To develop effective Communication, Reading and Writing skills in all learners, developing their individual potential to the full.
- To foster an enjoyment of literature and language through exposure to a range of multi-modal texts.
- To develop initiative and ability to work both independently and in co-operation with others across the curriculum.
- To reflect the key learning stages within our school and offer appropriate subject material and teaching experiences, taking into account current research.

Delivery Across School

Individual targets are identified in accordance with our Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy. These are taught specifically through Key Skills Lessons following the guidelines in our Key Skills Policy Document. A minimum of thirty minutes each day is dedicated to Communication, Reading and Writing Key Skills. An additional fifteen minutes each day is dedicated to teaching reading.

Each age phase has a recommended allocation of time for Communication, Reading and Writing. However, it is at the discretion of the teacher to identify the priorities for the pupils in their class. Speech Therapy sessions are included in the Key Skills allocation where these are appropriate to learners. Below is a summary of dedicated time to each area of focus but teacher's use their professional judgement to plan suitable teaching opportunities.

Foundation Stage and Key Stage One

Communication, Reading and Writing is taught through Continuous Provision. The setting and resources enable learners to explore literacy and be guided in developing their skills. Key Skills are taught throughout the day, learners are

withdrawn on an individual daily basis. In addition learners have shared text experiences sharing a different big book story and song every week.

Key Stage Two

English is taught for three lessons each week; one lesson focuses on fiction texts and one lesson focuses on non-fiction texts. There is a half termly switch in focus on reading and writing for the different types of text. The third lesson is dedicated to Speech Therapy and is delivered in ability sets.

Key Stages Three and Four

English is taught at least twice a week based on age appropriate texts identified from the National Curriculum. In Key Stage 4 an additional sixth Key Skills lesson is timetabled to look specifically at fine motor skills and/or extended writing. Functional Skills are taught by all teachers and are assessed and accredited in the summer term for Year 11 pupils where appropriate.

Key Stage Five

Adult Literacy is taught once a week based on functional appropriate texts from the Core Curriculum.

Learners work towards accreditation with Open Awards. The curriculum and accreditation determines that the learners cover Communication, Reading and Writing.

Functional Skills are taught by all teachers. Leaving students (for those who it is deemed appropriate) complete Functional Skills Tests in the summer term of their leaving year. These tests are externally accredited.

Intensive Support Centre

Literacy objectives are taken from individuals Statement of Special Educational Needs and broken down into specific communication targets to support the development of functional communication skills. Over the course of the academic year these targets are broken down and taught in small manageable steps during daily Key Skills lessons. These targets are also delivered within sessions within the curriculum such as Sherborne Developmental Movement and Therapeutic music to consolidate and encourage functional communication and social communication.

Communication

Objectives

- To teach active listening and understanding of language.
- To teach expression and choice making skills.
- To teach social communication skills.

Throughout the school all teachers are aware that communication is an essential skill which is an integral element of all subjects and activities. It is the responsibility of all members of staff to provide opportunities to develop and generalise individual learner's communication skills. In addition staff should model appropriate language and grammar whilst modifying their speech to suit

the needs of the learner. It is our priority to teach functional communication skills to all learners.

Learners are made aware of language to reflect purpose and audience. They are encouraged to; perform, present, chat, imitate, babble, discuss, debate and share information.

Tor View encourages multi-modal approaches to communication and offers a total communication environment.

Resources

At Tor View all teachers are trained in specialist speaking and listening strategies. Teachers liaise with Speech and Language Therapists to review targets and plan next steps. Tor View now have an employed Speech and Language Therapist to support pupils and staff. Teaching assistants are also trained in many of these strategies and training is offered to parents.

The following resources are used throughout the school –

Makaton

Derbyshire Language

Intensive Interaction and Jabadao

Narrative Therapy

Tac Pac

Sherborne

Sensory Stories including use of puppets

Picture Exchange Communication (PECS)

Alternative and Augmentive Communication (AAC) including iPads and VOCAs

Communicate in Print

Objects of Reference and Objects of Focus

Emotional Support Packages

Small Steps to Success

Reading

Objectives

- To read, share and access books and literature.
- To teach a variety of reading strategies including synthetic phonics, visual and kinaesthetic methods.
- To teach functional reading skills including e-literature.

Throughout the school all teachers are aware that reading is an essential skill which is an integral element of all subjects and activities. It is the responsibility of all members of staff to provide opportunities to develop and generalise individual learner's reading skills. The school is committed to provide a literacy rich environment to allow learners every opportunity to generalise their reading skills for example in FE learners read signs in the environment.

Each department follows a reading scheme which allows progression throughout the school. In Primary the scheme is based on the Oxford Reading Tree, in Secondary on Wellington Square and in FE on Dockside. Learners have individual reading books which can form part of their homework. A reading test is carried out each May to determine the reading age of each learner – we use the Salford Reading Test. Learners have a daily reading opportunity at school supported by a member of teaching staff.

Synthetic phonics or the pre-requisite skills are taught to all pupils through their Key Skills sessions. A multi-sensory approach is used in teaching phonics to allow for access difficulties (Downs Syndrome research – Snowling, Nash & Henderson 2008 <http://www.down-syndrome.org/reviews/2066/>). Tor View have developed a synthetic phonics programme, based on Letters & Sounds and elements of Read Write Inc, which caters for the needs of our learners. This programme is called STEPs to Phonics.

Alongside phonics, learners also learn to read high frequency words and exception words (National Curriculum, 2014). Pupils use flashcards and multi-sensory methods to learn these words. Once pupils have learnt all 300 words then they are encouraged to extend their vocabulary by reading varied age appropriate texts.

The school library is centrally located within the school. All learners have access to the library and to topic boxes which link to curriculum areas. FE and some Key Stage 4 learners access a local public library.

Resources

Reading schemes – Oxford Reading Tree, Wellington Square, Dockside and extension readers.

Letters and Sounds

Phonic Code Cracker

Read, Write Inc

STEPS to Phonics

Adapted resources for pupils with visual impairments, dyspraxia, dyslexia etc

Big books, library books, multisensory books

Literacy/National Strategy word lists and resources

Technology e.g. photostories, iPad, i-postcards

Small Steps to Success.

Writing

Objectives

- To teach systematic fine motor skills; grasp, letter formation, handwriting.
- To teach a range of spelling strategies.
- To teach grammar, vocabulary and punctuation.
- To develop compositional skills and encourage the enjoyment of writing.
- To teach functional writing skills including email and text messaging.

Throughout the school all teachers are aware that writing is an essential skill which is an integral element of all subjects and activities. It is the responsibility of all members of staff to provide opportunities to develop and generalise individual learner's writing skills.

Learners demonstrating the potential to become a cursive hand writer whilst in the primary department will be taught the 'towards cursive' style within the letter family groups (please see examples in appendices). Once learners have reached secondary if they are producing legible text then composition will take priority. Teachers should use the 'towards cursive' style in all their writing.

Alongside handwriting learners will be encouraged to compose texts using word processing packages, mobile phones, emails, social networking sites etc. All computer generated teaching materials should use the font Sassoon CR Infant, Ariel & Open Dyslexia Fonts.

Learners also learn to spell from the statutory words lists (National Curriculum, 2014), high frequency words and exception word lists. Pupils use flashcards and multi-sensory methods to learn these words. Spelling tests and homework are set on a weekly basis linked to these words. An annual spelling test is carried out each May to determine the spelling age of each learner – we use Daniel and Diacks spelling test.

Resources

High and medium frequency wordlists for spelling tests
Towards cursive – letter formation sheets
Tactile resources e.g. plastic letters, sand tray
Writing implements e.g. gripper pencils, non-slip mats, angled writing boards
Handwriting books
Adapted keyboard and mouse
Spelling Made Easy
Sassoon CR Infant font
Ariel Font
Open Dyslexia Fonts
Small Steps to Success

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