



# **Penkford Literacy and Reading Strategy and Policy**

**June 2021-2022**

# Penkford 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, fully recognising the importance of these skills for the long term achievement and success of our students.

On entry each student takes a series of baseline assessments linked to their EHCP and the Accelerated Reading Star 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 Penkford

Literacy across the school is co-ordinated by the English Team and overseen by the Assistant Headteacher 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 lead and give a high profile to the school's vision for literacy.

- The SENCO and Learning Mentor will meet with individual students and generate bespoke literacy packages for these students.
- 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 take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs and identifying what they need to do to improve.
- Parents will be encouraged to support their children by encouraging them to read for pleasure at home.

### **Promoting Speaking and Listening**

- The importance of speaking and listening should be promoted by all staff in line with the school's ABC Oracy rules which are on display in all classrooms.
- All staff should lead by example, ensuring 'Standard English' is used at all times and in return they should expect this from the students.
- Staff should challenge students when slang or inappropriate colloquialisms are used and in turn encourage the correct use of English in the classroom by encouraging students to correct their own speech when errors are drawn to their attention.
- Opportunities should be created for talk in a range of contexts and forms: whole class discussion, small group discussion, paired discussion, individual contribution, role play etc.
- Tutors should ensure that all members of their form take an active part in Friday registration's 'Newsround' activity, ensuring that they contribute to class discussions in line with the Oracy expectations.
- 3 'No Pen Days' are carried out each year in an attempt to promote speaking and listening skills through the delivery of alternative activities. Banners are hung in classrooms to promote this activity.

### **Promoting Writing**

- Staff should model high standards of presentation at all times and all work should be presented with date and title/Learning Objective which should be underlined.
- Students should be encouraged to write in extended form and to use the connectives and sentence openers 'mats' for support in this activity.
- Staff should model all pieces of writing and never assume that the student will know what to do. They should scaffold learning when 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.

- Teachers and teaching assistants should promote good use of punctuation, spelling and grammar in any written task.
- In the classroom opportunities should be created for peer literacy marking, using the literacy marking key. Focus on one or two aspects per opportunity e.g. capital letters
- Grammar, spelling and punctuation and handwriting should be appropriately supported in all subjects and the literacy marking policy is used to support students in the development of these skills.
- Tutors should encourage students to fully participate in the weekly form time SPaG exercises/activities.
- The use of dictionaries and Thesauruses is actively encouraged in all lessons in an attempt to support students' to extend their vocabulary and correctly spell an increasing number of words.
- Staff should encourage students to participate in the half termly literacy challenges, all of which have a writing focus.
- There is a whole school writing focus every half term which requires every subject teacher to devote time to completing the designated piece of extended writing. Support mats and templates are available for staff and students during this activity.

### **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 should promote skimming and scanning skills in lessons.
- Teachers should promote the enjoyment of reading and share their reading 'joys' and experiences with their students.
- Students are encouraged to join in with local initiatives e.g. the District's Reading Conference for reluctant readers.
- Independent reading time takes place every Friday during form time when students are expected to select and read a book within their range of readability. All form groups have their own library box which comprises a range of books in terms of genre and reading age.
- 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 quizzes to embed these words to the long term memory of their students.
- During registration time vocabulary skills are developed by encouraging students to look up and learn new words through a variety of Literacy games.

- The use of dictionaries 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.
- Half termly literacy challenges are also promoted, they all have a written focus and the winner of the competition receives a prize.
- Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) exercises are carried out by all teachers four times a year, and banners are put up in classrooms to promote this activity.

### **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 green 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. No Pen Days - (Banners to be in place on each occasion)
2. Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) sessions - (Banners to be in place on each occasion) All teachers will be expected to participate.
3. SPaG exercises - Tuesday registration time.
4. Literacy Games - every Wednesday during registration time.
5. Independent Reading challenge - Friday's form time.
6. The Penkford School Literacy Challenge – half termly challenges available to all students.
7. Half termly 'Literacy Focus Activities'. There is to be a different focus for each half term: speech writing, leaflet writing, article writing, review writing, posters and letter writing. All teachers are expected to participate in this with all of their groups, templates to be provided for each focus area.
8. Literacy mats, namely connectives, punctuation, opening words/phrases and paragraphs available for all classrooms to support writing across the curriculum.
9. A personalised spelling programme for each student, pupils being assessed weekly against a set of key words/terms during form time.
10. 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.
11. Subject specific vocabulary banks for each taught topic.
12. Whole school Literacy Marking Policy.