

# Literacy and Oracy Policy

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Dorothy Stringer School – [www.dorothy-stringer.co.uk](http://www.dorothy-stringer.co.uk)

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## **1. Vision**

All students, regardless of their background or need, should leave Dorothy Stringer at the end of Year 11 with a high level of literacy. Our vision is to empower students to become creative, ambitious, critical and resilient learners who can read, write, speak, and listen with fluency and confidence. Through a whole school approach to literacy, we aim to equip students with the skills they need to achieve their academic potential, while preparing them for success in further education and beyond. Through enabling students to become confident in reading, writing, and speaking, we are developing their ability to contribute positively to a rapidly changing society. By fostering a passion for life-long learning, we endeavour to ensure that all students develop the skills they need to communicate effectively and live happy and well-rounded adult lives.

## **2. Aims**

- Ensure high standards of literacy across all subjects
- Promote critical thinking and analytical skills
- Support reading for pleasure and wider reading
- Develop writing skills for different contexts and audiences
- Enhance speaking and listening skills
- Foster independence and lifelong learning
- Track literacy progress

## **3. Whole-school commitment to literacy**

- Literacy is a shared responsibility, and all staff, regardless of subject area, play a role in developing students' literacy skills.
- All staff will understand disciplinary literacy and use it to help students to access the subject-specific vocabulary, writing styles and reading strategies that are unique to their subject.
- All teachers will explicitly teach Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary to allow students to fully access the curriculum in all subjects.
- Teachers will consistently model excellent literacy practices in lessons.
- Teachers will use the literacy marking policy to respond constructively to students' writing.
- Ongoing professional development and staff training will support staff in developing effective literacy strategies for their classrooms.
- Students who are identified as struggling with literacy will receive pupil specific interventions to support their development.
- Reading Age standardised tests in Year 7, 8 and 9 will enable teachers to identify students' literacy strengths and weaknesses.

- Teachers will encourage students to make links between cross-curricular literacy skills and how words can have different meanings in different subject areas.

#### **4. Supporting students with SEND (Special Educational Needs)**

We are committed to ensuring that every student, regardless of ability or need, can feel successful within our literacy-rich curriculum. Our Literacy Policy is designed to be inclusive and responsive to the diverse learning profiles of students with SEND.

- Students' literacy and processing ability is screened at the beginning of Year 7 to establish a baseline from which progress is measured. Reading progress is reassessed at the beginning of Year 8 and 9.
- Data from KS3 screening is shared with teachers so that they can make appropriate adaptations to teaching and learning.
- Literacy strategies will be differentiated and adapted to meet individual needs, ensuring that all students can access reading, writing, speaking and listening activities.
- Teachers will work closely with the SENCo to implement personalised strategies from the students' Provision Maps that address specific literacy barriers and support students' progress.
- Adaptive teaching is embedded in literacy tasks, across curriculum areas, to promote independence while reducing cognitive overload.
- The learning environment will be inclusive and nurturing, enabling students with SEND to build confidence and develop a strong literacy foundation.
- Assessment data will be used diagnostically to ensure timely and effective intervention, with regular reviews to track progress and adapt support as needed. The Specialist Literacy Teacher ensures that literacy needs are supported through appropriate access arrangement provision.
- Teachers will understand the literacy challenges that are associated with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, ASC, and ADHD.
- INSET and Twilight CPD sessions will be used to deliver specific literacy training so that there is a whole school, consistent, approach to literacy strategies and adaptation.

#### **5. Desired outcomes**

- **Students demonstrate advanced reading skills.** They can comprehend complex texts, recognise themes, and analyse content critically.
- **Students demonstrate strong proficiency in writing and speaking.** Students express ideas clearly and effectively with strong grammar and vocabulary. They are able to apply subject specific vocabulary.

- **Students are critical thinkers.** They can engage with texts critically, identifying underlying assumptions, arguments and biases, while forming reasoned judgements.
- **Students have strong analytical abilities.** Students can deconstruct and interpret the meaning of both written and spoken content, understanding subtle nuances. Students are able to grasp the cultural, historical and societal contexts behind a text.
- **Students are able to articulate ideas clearly,** tailoring their message to different audiences and/ or the question asked of them. They are able to speak confidently and persuasively, adapting their language for different audiences.
- **Students have strong technological literacy skills.** Students are adept at navigating digital platforms, discerning reliable sources and communicating through digital media.

## 6. Reading

- We aim to inspire a love of reading among all students, encouraging engagement with a broad range of texts, including classic literature, contemporary works, non-fiction texts and digital media.
- Teachers will employ a range of disciplinary reading strategies so that students can access texts across different subjects: predicting, scanning, skimming, close reading, inferring, annotating, visualising and linking.
- Students will be encouraged to read independently for enjoyment and pleasure. We will foster a culture of reading through a range of strategies including Literacy lessons which focus on reading aloud and sharing stories in a calm and nurturing environment; reading clubs and challenges; the central hub of the library; celebration of key dates in the calendar through membership of organisations such as the National Literacy Trust; communication with parents and carers to ensure that strategies for reading for pleasure are shared.
- Teachers will employ a variety of strategies, such as reciprocal reading, group discussions and reading aloud, to develop reading confidence and fluency in students.
- Teachers will explicitly teach students to be able to decode assessment/exam tasks.
- Students will be encouraged to have an interest in words, their usage, meanings, and etymology through the specific teaching of Tier 3 vocabulary.
- Students will have access to and engage with texts through a variety of Directed Activities Related to Text (DARTs).
- Students will have access to displays and resource banks of engaging reading material relevant to specific curriculum areas.

## **7. Writing**

- Writing will be prioritised across all subjects, with an emphasis on clarity, coherence, and creativity.
- Students will be taught the importance of planning, structure, organisation, and purpose in their writing.
- Students will be supported in developing subject-specific writing styles, including analytical essays in English, structured reports in science, and technical explanations in design and technology.
- Students will discuss and explore written tasks on word (vocabulary and spelling), sentence (linguistic devices, grammar, and punctuation) and whole text (structure, form, and presentational devices) levels.
- Teachers will use the literacy marking code to ensure that there is a focus on spelling, punctuation, and grammar (SPaG), and that high standards are maintained in all written work.
- Students will be able to make connections between reading and their own writing.
- Teachers will be trained to use 'Talk for Writing' strategies to build students' confidence prior to writing.
- Students will be given opportunities to write independently as well as collaboratively.
- Students will be able to adapt their writing to suit different audiences and purposes.
- Teachers will explicitly teach and model how to write cohesively in an appropriate style.
- Students will be able to use a variety of punctuation, sentences structures, paragraphs, and presentational features in their work.
- Teachers may celebrate student writing through publishing and displaying their work in the classroom or in corridor displays.
- Assessments of writing will be used to track student progress, identify areas for improvement, and provide tailored support.

## **8. Oracy**

- Oracy skills are vital for academic success and personal development. Our school's curriculum will provide students with ample opportunities to engage in debates, presentations, discussions, and group work.
- Oracy Champions are present in each department to promote and develop oracy strategies to support and engage all learners.
- The metalanguage for talking about talk will be explicitly taught to students and shared with all staff so that students are able to reflect on their own speaking and instructions on how to talk in the school environment can be precise.

- Students will be encouraged to express themselves clearly, confidently, and persuasively, with a focus on developing both the content and delivery of their spoken language.
- Social oracy will be discussed within tutor times and students are given opportunities to explore their use of appropriate social language.
- Oral communication will reflect disciplinary language, encouraging students to express ideas using appropriate vocabulary and conventions, such as persuasive language in debate or subject specific vocabulary.
- Teachers will model excellent oral communication and create classroom environments where students are encouraged to listen actively and respond thoughtfully to others.
- ACE strategies have been introduced across the curriculum to create a unified method of promoting oracy in lessons and developing discussions. ACE strategies aim to develop students' abilities to express themselves in increasingly developed ways by Agreeing with a point, Challenging an answer or opinion and then Exploring an idea.
- Oracy tasks will be integrated into subject-specific learning, giving students the chance to practise and develop their oracy skills in different contexts.
- Peer feedback and self-reflection will be encouraged to foster students' oracy skills and their ability to evaluate and refine their own contributions.
- Through focus on both academic and social oracy, there will be a greater emphasis on the power of talk, highlighting to students its ability to develop responses and better articulate their ideas and emotions.

## **9. Assessment and monitoring**

- Middle and senior leaders will audit and evaluate literacy provision across the curriculum.
- Consistent feedback will be provided by using the whole school literacy marking policy.
- Middle and senior leaders will ensure that disciplinary literacy is clearly identified as being used in schemes of work.
- Reading progress is assessed at the beginning of each KS3 year group. All teachers will ensure that literacy strategies are used to support students with a low reading age.
- Middle and senior leaders will monitor how tutor groups are using the reading programme in tutor time.

## **10. Enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities**

- To cultivate a love for reading, writing and oracy beyond the classroom, we will offer a range of extracurricular activities such as creative writing clubs, public

speaking competitions, drama productions and book clubs. Every school year the school celebrates book week.

- Students will be encouraged to participate in local and national writing competitions, Poetry by Heart, and debating societies, helping them to hone their literacy skills in a wide range of contexts.
- The school will regularly host literary events, such as theatre groups, author visits and writing workshops, to inspire students and expose them to new ideas and creative possibilities.
- The library will provide a wide range of stimulating fiction, non-fiction, and multi-media resources to support the curriculum.
- The library will promote reading for pleasure via social media and the SLG.
- The library will provide an annual induction programme for Year 7 students.

## **11. Parental involvement**

- We recognise the importance of strong communication between the school and parents.
- We are committed to maintaining positive communication with parents regarding students' literacy. While information may be shared through regular school communication, parents are always welcome to seek guidance on how to support literacy at home.
- Parents will be encouraged to engage with their child's reading and writing through guidance shared at parent -teacher meetings; communications home and through resources on SLG.

## **12. The literacy co-ordinator**

- Will meet with the Literacy team (AHT ic Teaching and Learning, Head of English, Librarian, Oracy co-ordinator, Specialist Literacy teachers) termly to review progress and plan.
- Will provide guidance and training on literacy for all staff through INSET.
- Will keep staff abreast of the latest initiatives and ideas in the teaching of literacy and will attend CPD to that end.
- Will provide subject specific support for departments where needed.
- Will liaise with the library to promote reading across the school.