



LITERACY POLICY

Responsibility	Naomi Flanagan
Date of last review	February 2017
Date of next review	February 2018

“Teachers should develop pupils’ spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects” (DfE, 2014, p.10)

All teachers are teachers of literacy. As such, the staff of Perschore High School are committed to developing literacy skills in all of our pupils, in the belief that it will support their learning and raise standards across the curriculum, because:

- pupils need to develop vocabulary, expression and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of subjects
- reading helps us to learn from sources beyond our immediate experience;
- writing helps us to sustain and order thought as well as to communicate;
- language helps us to reflect, revise and evaluate the things we do, and on the things others have said, written or done;
- responding to higher order questions encourages the development of thinking skills and enquiry;
- improved literacy is empowering. It can impact on pupils’ self-esteem, on motivation and behaviour and also create independent learners.

Implementation at whole-school level

Language is the prime medium through which pupils learn and express themselves and all teachers have a stake in promoting effective literacy and language development.

Teachers will focus on word, sentence, text level. Key words will be on display in classrooms and on the website. Word of the Week to be disseminated via Weekly Bulletin.

The expected **form** of a piece of writing, i.e. short answers (one or two word answers), or continuous prose, e.g. summary writing, diary entries, report writing, should be clearly modelled to students in advance.

Closing the Gap activities will have a Literacy focus.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Senior Managers:** Lead and give a high profile to literacy;
- **English Department:** Provide pupils with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write, speak and listen effectively;
- **Teachers across the curriculum:** Contribute to pupils’ language development since speaking, listening, writing and reading are, to varying degrees, integral to all lessons;
- **Literacy co-ordinator:** Supports departments in the implementation of strategies and facilitates the sharing of good practice.
- **Parents:** Support their children in applying the range of strategies they have learnt to improve their levels of literacy;
- **Pupils:** Take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs and making improvements;

- **Governors:** A nominated governor could meet with staff and pupils and report progress and issues to the governing body and to parents in the governors' annual report.

Across the school we shall:

1. Identify the strengths and weaknesses in students' work from across the school.
2. Seek to improve the literacy of all staff in order to build the confidence to comment on students' literacy.
3. Plan to include literacy in Closing the Gap activities.
4. Review this literacy policy annually.

Speaking and Listening

We will teach pupils to use language precisely and coherently. They should be able to listen to others, and to respond and build on their ideas and views constructively.

We will develop strategies to teach pupils how to participate orally in groups and in the whole class, including: using talk to develop and clarify ideas; identifying the main points to arise from a discussion; listening for a specific purpose; discussion and evaluation.

Reading

We aim to give pupils a level of literacy that will enable them to cope with the increasing demands of subjects in terms of specific skills, knowledge and understanding. This applies particularly in the area of reading (including from the screen), as texts become more demanding.

We will build on and share existing good practice. We will teach pupils strategies to help them to: read with greater understanding; locate and use information; follow a process or argument; summarise; synthesise and adapt what they learn from their reading.

We will use AR programme to promote and monitor reading in Years 8 and 9.

Writing

It is important that we provide for coordination across subjects to recognise and reinforce pupils' language skills, through:

- Making connections between pupils' reading and writing, so that pupils have clear models for their writing;
- Using the modelling process to make explicit to pupils *how* to write;
- Being clear about audience and purpose;
- Providing opportunities for a range of writing including sustained writing.

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG)

To improve spelling, students need opportunities for practice and consolidation. Spelling rules and patterns are taught in English, but reinforcement by other departments is invaluable.

All staff should indicate incorrect spellings by underlining the word and writing 'sp' in the margin. Where appropriate, the correct spelling should be written in, particularly for those students who find it difficult to use a dictionary.

Teachers should use their professional judgement when determining how many spellings to correct. It might be useful to focus on departmental key words, or, at Key Stage 3, vocabulary from the bank of common misspellings. All departments are responsible for ensuring that students are

able to spell words particular to their subject. The Literacy Coordinator organises and provides specific spelling intervention.

Students should always be expected and encouraged to use punctuation marks correctly, including capital letters, full stops, commas, colons, semi colons, inverted commas, speech marks, apostrophes, question marks and exclamation marks.

Please circle errors. Where punctuation has been omitted, please add the necessary punctuation mark and circle the omission to draw the student's attention to this error.

Students should be confident in their use of written Standard English, both formally and informally. They should always be encouraged and expected to write in clear and grammatically correct sentences organised into coherent paragraphs and whole written texts.

Teachers from departments other than English are not expected to deliver lessons on grammar, though they should draw students' attention to grammatical errors in their writing and encourage them to develop their proficiency in this area.

Where a new paragraph is needed and has not been used, the sign // should be written in to draw the student's attention to the error. It can be helpful for teachers to model a paragraph plan for students in advance and provide guidance on how many paragraphs are expected.

Students should always be encouraged and expected to use the correct form of verb tense in their writing e.g. past, present, future, infinitive, passive, active. Where a student has used the incorrect tense, the phrase should be underlined and 'verb tense' should be written in the margin to draw the student's attention to the problem.

Presentation

Every piece of work should be clearly headed and dated. Students should be encouraged and expected to proof-read their work, checking for spelling and punctuation errors, omissions and repetitions. Particularly where written work is to be seen by others, students should be supported in their endeavours to reach this goal.

Handwriting should be in printed or cursive styles. Bubble-style handwriting should not be accepted. Students should be encouraged and expected to use different forms of handwriting for different purposes, print for labelling maps or diagrams; a clear, neat hand for finished, presented work; a faster script for notes.

Students should be able to produce legible upper and lower case letters in one style and use them consistently (i.e. not randomly mixed within words). Please circle errors.

Do not accept a piece of writing that is illegible. It should be re-written!

Monitoring and Evaluation

We will make use of available data to assess the standards of pupils' literacy. Senior managers, the Head of English and the Literacy Coordinator will decide how to monitor progress in the school.

Possible approaches are:

- sampling work – both pupils' work and departmental schemes;
- observation – pupil pursuit and literacy teaching;
- meetings;
- pupil interviews;
- scrutiny of development plans;
- encouraging departments to share good practice by exhibiting or exemplifying pupils' work.

Including All Pupils

1. Differentiation

Pershore High School pupils are entitled to our highest expectations and support. Some will need additional help and others will need to be challenged and extended. Strategies that we can use include:

- varied questioning;
- adjusting the demands of the task;
- the use of additional support;
- use of group structures;
- diversity of resources
- making objectives clear;
- creating a positive atmosphere in which pupils can evaluate their own and others' work.

2. The more able

We will seek to:

- identify able pupils;
- promote ways of challenge
- develop a teaching repertoire which supports and stretches the most able pupils.

3. English as an Additional Language

Our pupils learning EAL need to hear good examples of spoken English and also to refer to their first language skills to aid new learning in all subjects of the curriculum. The use of their first language enables them to draw on existing subject knowledge and to develop English language skills in context. For example, a group of pupils can learn about paragraph organisation in their mother tongue.

4. SEND

We will teach our pupils with special educational needs appropriately and sensitively, scaffolding their learning and providing them with challenges matched to their needs, through using a range of teaching strategies such as guided group work, writing frames and supported oral activities.

5. Literacy Across The Curriculum

In order to support the embedding of cross-curricular literacy, we have established a Literacy Working Group, which meets termly to discuss initiatives, share resources and good practice as well as identify departmental priorities and progress.

Teaching staff will be supported through voluntary CPD sessions, the guidance of the Literacy Coordinator, provision of relevant resources and collaborative long-term planning.

Classroom literacy walls will reflect the Word-Sentence-Text level approach of the National Framework for English and the weekly Bulletin will include a literacy focus.

6. The Library

The Library is pivotal in developing and supporting students' literacy skills and fostering in them the desire to read for pleasure. Our involvement with Worcestershire Schools Library Service and participation in the annual Worcestershire Teen Book Awards allow students to meet popular contemporary authors and foster their love of literature.

Through the Library, students are encouraged to take part in a variety of competitions to develop their reading, writing and discussion skills. A team of dedicated junior librarians act as reading role-models, promoting Library services and resources.

The Library is also central to the implementation and development of the Accelerated Reader scheme. The Library resources the programme and the Literacy Coordinator makes related data available to all staff. Accelerated Reader will often form the basis of Key Stage 3 Library lessons.

During ERIC (Everyone Reading in Class), our focus is firmly on the promotion of reading, whatever form the written material might take. Students are invited to read magazines, newspapers, graphic novels and non-fiction books; some tutors have chosen to read aloud to their groups or make use of audio books. Students may also choose to access blogs, short films or commentaries which have cross curricular relevance.

The Literacy Coordinator will ensure that the library is a welcoming and stimulating environment, which is conducive to maintaining a love of reading.

7. Parental Involvement

We recognise the importance of parental involvement in raising children's Literacy levels and would encourage parents not only to read with and to their children, but to also discuss reading choices. A visit to the local library or use of the mobile library would provide opportunities for doing this and we would hope that parents also encourage use of the school library, where students' input into stock choices is welcomed.

Public libraries often run initiatives to engage young people in reading such as the Summer Reading Challenge and parents may wish to encourage their children's involvement, as well as ensuring that they are a member of their local library.

Charity book shops are often a valuable resource of varied and affordable reading material, and we would promote the reading of a wide variety of texts, which might encompass newspaper articles, comics, graphic novels, auto/biography and a range of fiction.

Useful websites designed to support Literacy development include:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks3/english/>

<http://freerice.com/#/english-vocabulary/1472>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/english/games>

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/library-services.aspx>

<http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/>

<http://www.worldbookday.com/>

<http://www.what2learn.com/content/samples/Literacy/literacy.htm>

<http://www.educationquizzes.com/ks3/english-spelling/>

Assessment

Available data from KS2 should be used to inform planning and to assist us in responding to early pieces of work. We can also use this data to set numerical and curricular targets for each cohort.

The best assessment informs lesson planning and target-setting and helps us to maintain the pace of learning for our pupils.

For detailed guidance on marking, see our marking policy.

The English Department

In addition to the whole-school aspects of this policy, the English teachers at Pershore High School have a leading role in providing pupils with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write, speak and listen effectively.

The English department is well-placed to offer good advice and expertise.

The role of the English department includes:

- A key role in identifying literacy priorities, targets and objectives and particular contribution they can make;
- Making a contribution to the action plan;
- Using data to identify curricular targets;
- Writing the department action plan to achieve these.

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

Signs to be written when marking (either in passage or in margin as explained in this document).

Sp	Spelling error
~~~	This does not make sense
^	A word has been left out
//	New paragraph needed
VT	Wrong verb tense
P	Punctuation error
C	Capital letter error
WW	Wrong word used

All errors should be circled or underlined as stated in the document.

All students will have their own copy of this glossary of abbreviations and symbols from the English Department.