

Review Date: Summer 2018

All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.

Department for Education: Statutory Guidance, National Curriculum in England: English (2014)

Rationale

At The Kingsmead School we believe that 'every teacher is a teacher of English' (George Sampson).

We recognise the role and responsibility of every staff member, in supporting all of our students in their acquisition of language, building of their communication skills and development of their skills in reading and writing. We acknowledge the impact literacy has on the life chances of our young people, and therefore strive to equip all of our students with a level of functional English that allows them to be successful in all that they choose to do.

School Aims for Literacy

- Have the highest expectations of all students
- Raise individual literacy attainment at every level of ability
- Where appropriate, change the attitudes of our students so that they recognise the value of language acquisition; the importance of clear communication; developed skills in reading and writing and of reading for pleasure
- Develop our students' ability in literacy, across all subjects and departments, by taking the implicit and making it explicit
- Aim for consistency across the organisation, across departments and between classrooms and adults (teachers, LPSAs, support staff) working with our students
- Model, as adults, that we are life-long learners of literacy with our own different strengths and weaknesses

Department Aims

- To use their Department's Literacy Development Plan to promote ongoing reflection of their existing approaches to literacy within their subject, implement new strategies and ensure good practice across all bases/classrooms
- Routinely reflect on their curriculum (and taught specifications) to ensure it is suitably differentiated in content; allow for opportunities for the development of language acquisition and purposeful activities for speaking and listening; teach reading skills pertinent to the subject and development of written skills as appropriate
- Mark for literacy using Kingsmead Marking policy, setting differentiated literacy targets that meet individual students' needs
- Internally quality assure the setting of literacy targets and monitor their impact on the quality of work produced, identifying the need for specific interventions where appropriate e.g. access arrangement testing, use of a reader/scribe, more differentiation of tasks

- Internally quality assure the use of literacy in the classrooms across the department and monitor the impact on students' progress within the subject
- Access and implement literacy CPD opportunities where appropriate

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors: Meet with SLT, Middle Leaders and Head of English and Literacy to report and review progress across the school, to ensure the best outcomes.

Senior Leaders: Monitor and support all staff to ensure they have the best opportunity to progress. Ensure that the expectations of Literacy are high and that if it isn't, it is challenged appropriately. Work with staff to ensure that students get the appropriate interventions when necessary.

Head of English and Literacy: Support and work with staff across bases to ensure literacy is embedded into the curriculum. Where it has been identified that expectations are not high enough and that opportunities for literacy are not being identified and met, work with departments/individuals using a mentoring approach.

English Department: Support staff across bases with understanding students' individual literacy profiles and targets. Deliver the skills required of students (according to their levels) to make progress in language acquisition, reading, writing and speaking and listening. Through regular and robust assessment processes, monitor progress routinely and identify and set new targets appropriately. Identify the need for specific interventions/the need for access arrangement testing and facilitate these processes.

Heads of Subject: Maintain and develop a culture of literacy being everybody's business. Ensure that all team members plan for literacy opportunities, have high expectations and mark/assess for literacy in speaking and listening, reading and writing.

Lead Practitioner: With the support of the Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Subject, evidence better than expected progress in all subjects, ensure that the quality of literacy delivery is high and that the expectations of teachers are also high. Work with individual members of staff (in a coaching role) where it has been identified that opportunities for literacy are not being fully identified and met.

Monitoring and Review

- Individual 'Department Literacy Development Plans' and meetings with Head of English and Literacy
- Calendared Quality Assurance processes including: department meetings, lesson observations, learning walks and work scrutiny
- Monitoring and quality assurance by SLT
- Reporting to Governors by SLT, Middle Leaders and Head of English and Literacy

Practice and Procedures

In Classrooms/Learning Environments

- Have key words for the subject/topic on display and use LKWs (lesson key words) to support the acquisition/exploration of pertinent vocabulary for the lesson.

- Develop the use of interactive wall displays that students feel compelled to read – use questions as headings rather than headings/statements.
- Have annotated examples of writing/produced work on display.
- Use learning objectives so that students know what they are expected to learn and how they will demonstrate it (where appropriate, explicitly state where reading, writing, language acquisition, speaking and listening is a part of either stage).

Communication/Speaking and Listening

- Embed subject specialist language in our explanations to promote language acquisition and higher quality, more ‘academic’ writing from students.
- Use our own talk to: model how we use language to think, express ideas, develop our knowledge, ask questions of ourselves and act appropriately in different settings, including how we convey our own feelings/emotions.
- Model good speaking and listening skills in different types of talk, including: presentations, exploratory discussions, debates, formal/informal discussions.
- Model how to use talk of the right quality for different tasks: to express ourselves, to construct arguments, to solve problems, to pose questions and to comprehend texts.
- Promote ‘exploratory talk’ as way of using spoken language to encourage deeper thinking.
- Reflect on the purpose of our talk and the type of questions we are using: aim for less ‘what?’ questions and engage in more exploratory talk using ‘why?’ and ‘how?’ questions.
- Allow for thinking time and, where necessary, model this ourselves as adults who think before we speak.
- Consider our body language/ mannerisms/gestures and the sense of purpose we convey by how we present ourselves when communicating/talking in different forms.
- Use talk to model social etiquette; reflecting on our use of tone, intonation, volume, manners and use of praise/gratitude as well as the use of accuracy in spoken language (e.g. ‘we was’ vs ‘we were’).

Reading

- Have a developing awareness of phonics/approaches for teaching reading, to support students who have very weak reading abilities.
- Know the reading age/ability of the students in front of you; meet their needs with the texts you read with them/to them.
- Model how we, as readers, read. Talk about reading and share our opinions on what we are reading and why.
- Take opportunities to read texts aloud to students; make opportunities to listen to students read to us (where possible and dependent on the climate/culture established within lessons).
- Teach reading explicitly through modelling, scaffolding, supporting as appropriate, the reading skills needed in different subject areas.
- Ensure materials that you intend to use in your teaching – particularly read by students - are engaging and differentiated to meet the different literacy levels of the students being worked with, with the reading age of students being taken account of.
- Remind students of generic but important core skills – when to skim a text for the main points or scan for a key word and how to quote directly from a text or refer to a text as part of a verbal/written justification.

- Actively use key words/subject specific vocabulary as a teaching resource; look at their spellings, revisit what they mean and acknowledge their use in texts.
- Promote the notion of reading for pleasure and of independence in reading as a life-skill; look to identify and remove/address students' trigger points for 'avoiding' reading and where appropriate, help students overcome potential anxieties/inhibitions around reading.
- Develop more DARTs (directed activities related to texts) that require students to engage with texts in a more substantial way.
- Develop students' analytical skills in reading; moving beyond basic comprehension towards analysis and evaluation.
- Teach research skills to promote the safe use of the internet (recognising 'Google' as a gateway rather than a source of information) as well as modelling the decisions we make as independent researchers; model what makes one resource/source more viable/trustworthy/useful than another.

Writing

- Encourage students to see the value of writing by shifting the focus from *what* they are writing to *how*. Through the setting of authentic writing tasks that are relevant and contextualised with intended outcomes clearly shared, model that writing is a process.
- Set the tone for any piece of writing by showing it is a process involving decision making. Think about the 'what' and 'how' by using PAF (purpose, audience and format) to promote this as a natural process students engage in independently.
- To demystify any task, teach writing by writing. Work collaboratively with students to model writing – the opening sentence/paragraph or approach to the piece of written work in question.
- Expect the use of varied sentence lengths and structure: actively promote the use of varied sentence lengths – short and long – discuss what connectives would be applicable in the set task.
- Model the different ways sentences can be opened, to have more impact and also show more command over our written content.
- Be clear about your expectations for the use of punctuation in your subject. Again, reinforce this through punctuation wall displays and you modelling how you are punctuating your work.
- Promote the process and value of proofreading. Again, explicitly model approaches.

Acquisition of Vocabulary and Spellings

- Have key words for the subject/topic on display, using visuals where appropriate, both in classrooms and corridor displays.
- Explicitly teach subject key words – refer to spelling strategies we could employ to promote their accurate use.
- As set out in the Kingsmead marking policy, mark for accurate spelling and correct application of subject specific vocabulary.
- Model our own approach to remembering the spellings of tricky words to help demystify spelling for our students.
- Where appropriate, model the use of phonics as an approach to sounding out tricky words.