



## DAME ALICE OWEN'S SCHOOL

### WHOLE SCHOOL LITERACY POLICY

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- Agreed by the Governing Body Curriculum Committee
  - Ratified by the full Governing Body meeting
  - To be reviewed (reviewed every 2 years)
- February 2015  
November 2015  
Autumn 2017

To be monitored by the School Literacy Co-ordinator (to be appointed) and the Headteacher

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#### Introduction

At Dame Alice Owen's School, we recognise that the opportunity to develop literacy skills is an entitlement for all students and the responsibility of the whole school community. The Literacy policy should be embedded in good learning and teaching practices.

Students already follow aspects of the National Literacy Strategy as well as the provision for speaking and listening, reading and writing laid out in the National Curriculum for English.

All elements of the school's literacy policy should be reflected across the curriculum, build on the strengths of existing practices and procedures, and reflect the needs of every student.

In addition, the school acknowledges the need to address Information Literacy. This encourages students to learn to process information and use ICT/the Library successfully (see separate Policy).

#### Aims of the policy

- to recognise that all teachers are facilitators of literacy through their subject
- to raise literacy attainment at every level of ability in all subject areas to ensure that we maximize the potential of every student, and
- to ensure that all students have the opportunity to become effective readers, writers and communicators.

## **Objectives**

- to recognise the potential of all students
- to assess the literacy attainment of all pupils more effectively
- to track student progress at all key stages and abilities
- to involve all staff in the assessment and facilitation of literacy; and
- to devise whole school strategies and systems for literacy development.

## **Management**

The Literacy Co-ordinator in conjunction with the SLT will lead and support literacy development by:

- regular, termly, audits of current practice and procedures
- collation and dissemination of information and data pertaining to literacy; and
- planning, organising and leading staff training.

## **Implementation**

Each subject will seek to promote students' appreciation of the links between speaking and listening, reading and writing and the value of each in their own subject areas. The whole school curriculum will ensure that the literacy needs of all students are addressed in the following ways:

- all departments will identify where they will plan, teach and mark to the key objectives in speaking and listening, reading and writing.

**In all subjects, students will have opportunities to improve their literacy skills by:**

*(In speaking and listening)*

- using talk for a range of purposes and audiences
- using talk to explore and evaluate
- using talk to ask and answer questions
- planning, discussing and evaluating their speaking and listening and that of their peers; and
- solving problems collaboratively.

*(In writing)*

- developing an enjoyment of their own writing
- writing in a variety of forms for different purposes and audiences
- planning, drafting and discussing writing; and
- using writing to organise thoughts and aid learning.

*(In reading)*

- developing an interest in a variety of texts, both literary and non-literary
- reading with understanding and enjoyment for a variety of purposes
- working out inferential meanings from textual matter
- developing an interest in words, their derivations and meanings
- using reading to research the subject area

- making effective use of school and public libraries; and
- using the Internet and other ICT texts effectively.

**In all subjects, teachers will aim to improve the literacy skills of pupils by:**

*(In reading)*

- identifying the most common types of reading ‘behaviours’ required by their subject
- presenting reading tasks at a suitable level- differentiating wherever possible
- drawing students’ attention to structure, layout, form, print and other signposts
- taking new students through any book they use regularly (e.g. text books) and showing them how to find their way around it
- showing students how to work on a text when they are expected to read alone (e.g. how to skim or scan, how to take notes, how to identify key points); and
- promoting reading (for pleasure and information) to students.

*(In writing)*

- offering students models for writing in a range of forms
- providing appropriate activities for all levels and abilities
- defining for students the appropriate style for pieces of writing
- demonstrating for students the way to organise and express pieces of writing
- providing annotated examples of writing in the subject, so that students understand what is required
- displaying useful phrases to help students link and develop ideas in writing
- helping students to draft writing through the subject context
- helping students with handwriting, spelling and presentational aspects of their writing
- teaching students to spell identified subject vocabulary; and
- providing constructive feedback on written work.

*(In speaking and listening)*

- appreciating talk as a valuable area of learning
- appreciate the differences between standard English and non-standard dialect forms
- developing ideas through pair & group work, drama and role play; and
- providing feedback on progress.

Each department will implement the school’s **‘Spelling Policy’**:

- to teach learning strategies which help students to learn subject spelling lists
- to prioritise the marking of high frequency and key subject words, highlighting rules where the error would relate to other words
- to use key words, glossaries, word banks and other strategies to provide support for subject-specific vocabulary; and
- to encourage the following method of learning spellings:
  - look-say-cover-write-check.

**In all subject areas, the organisation of lessons will aim to improve the literacy skills of students by:**

- providing a range of materials to support the subject topic
- providing texts at appropriate readability levels for all students (the layout, size and clarity of print, length of sentences and vocabulary appropriate to students)
- providing materials which are up to date and attractive
- designing activities that focus on identified subject vocabulary; and
- ensuring worksheets are clear, in presentation and language, and tasks are appropriately/helpfully worded.

In order to ensure the whole school curriculum provides for the literacy needs of all students in these ways, **each subject area** will be expected to:

- have in departmental handbooks, statements addressing literacy provision within the subject and on the VLE, in line with the policy
- ensure that all schemes of work refer to the literacy development and training activities; and
- provide a range of practical strategies to encourage the development of literacy e.g. wall displays, subject specific spelling lists, clear labelling, and provision of dictionaries, good quality worksheets and board work.

In addition, the wider school curriculum will also be expected to promote literacy through:

- the promotion of relevant school/national competitions e.g. Annual Poetry Reading Competition and Debating Society, and The D Factor
- use of form-time for reading and encouraging students to participate in 'Book Club' termly (this is a suggested read for individual year groups on VLE); and
- provision and funding of a range of Library events, including visiting speakers and writers at Key Stages 3, 4 and 5.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

All staff have a responsibility to reflect on their own practice in promoting, teaching and through their marking of literacy. Those in management positions have a further responsibility to ensure the policy is properly implemented in their specific areas. It is preferable for each department to nominate one person for the specific responsibility for Literacy development.

The effectiveness and implementation of this policy will be reviewed by the Literacy Co-ordinator in termly meetings with subject leaders and in conjunction with the SLT at Curriculum Committee meetings and throughout the academic year.

Jacqui Beaumont, November 2015

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