



Literacy Policy

Furze Platt Senior School Literacy Policy

At Furze Platt Senior School, we believe that literacy is essential to student success.

Literacy underpins everything we do and a sophisticated skill set in terms of reading, writing and spoken communication provides students with greater opportunities for future learning and success in life. Lacking vital literacy skills holds us back at every stage of our lives, so literacy must be the bedrock of teaching and learning.

Consequently, as teachers in every subject, we must embed these fundamental skills so we can further develop the abilities of our students in accessing all aspects of life.

At FPSS, we support the literacy of all students through 'disciplinary literacy'; this is the idea that we should teach the specialized ways of reading, understanding, and thinking used in each academic discipline, such as science, history, or literature. Each field has its own ways of using text to create and communicate meaning. Increasing the literacy of students in a particular subject will help to improve their overall literacy.

All teachers have a shared responsibility for the teaching of literacy across the curriculum. It is essential that high standards of literacy, both oral literacy and writing, is modelled by staff at all times. Whilst English teaching makes an important and distinctive contribution to the literacy development of our students, we believe all teachers have a shared responsibility. Even with effective teaching in English lessons, "progress will be limited if this good practice is not consolidated in the 26 out of 30 lessons each week in a secondary school that are typically lessons other than English."¹ Therefore, all teachers must recognise and promote the importance of literacy in their subject as a set of transferable skills.

Students who arrive at Furze Platt Senior School with literacy difficulties will be systematically supported through specialist interventions to enable them to make *rapid* progress.

Aims

At Furze Platt Senior School we aim to:

- support students in their pursuit of high standards of literacy and to support teachers in their delivery of literacy skills in class;
- ensure students see literacy skills as important in all subject areas, and in life itself;
- ensure that staff are in full possession of all information they need to implement the literacy policy;
- ensure staff are given opportunities to share good practice and to work together to move literacy forwards at FPSS;

¹ Didau, D. (2014) *The secret of literacy: Making the implicit, explicit*. United Kingdom: Independent Thinking Press.

- ensure that literacy is prioritised in every department via curriculum, pedagogy and strategies so that all understand that literacy can be improved in lessons;
- ensure that access to and equality of provision is available to all students within the literacy strategy;
- ensure that the library plays a key role in helping to improve literacy by encouraging a love of reading for pleasure for all.

In order to achieve these aims, we believe that we need to support our students to develop the following skills:

Oral Communication

- use their skills in speaking and listening to explore, articulate and extend their understanding of texts and ideas and transfer them to different aspect of life.
- use talk to question, hypothesise, speculate, evaluate, solve problems and develop thinking about complex issues and ideas;
- be able to articulate their learning experience clearly and confidently, e.g. explain to another student or adult what they have learned and how it has helped them in the given context;
- have an extended technical vocabulary with which to discuss and evaluate their reading and writing;
- use their abilities in oracy to become confident communicators in speaking, listening and writing.

“spoken language forms a constraint, a ceiling not only on the ability to comprehend but also on the ability to write, beyond which literacy cannot progress.”²

Reading

- read with confidence, accuracy, fluency and understanding;
- read with enjoyment and discrimination;
- develop their powers of imagination, critical awareness and thinking;
- be able to orchestrate a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, morphemic and contextual) to monitor their reading and correct their own mistakes;
- understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately;
- have an interest in words, their usage and meanings and an extensive vocabulary used appropriately for different purposes.
- understand the conventions of different fiction and non-fiction text types and be able to use these conventions confidently as readers;
- use appropriate reading strategies to extract particular information, e.g. highlighting, skimming, scanning and zooming;
- be able to research independently and make notes from a variety of sources, including the Internet;
- to develop their critical awareness and thinking in order to access and apply powerful knowledge.

² Debra Myhill and Ros Fisher, *Informing Practice in English: A Review of Recent Research in Literacy and the Teaching of English* (London: Ofsted, 2005), p.4

“Every hour spent reading is an hour spent learning to write.”³

Writing

- plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing from notes to a finished form;
- understand the conventions of different fiction and non-fiction text types and be able to use these conventions confidently;
- be confident users of spelling, punctuation and grammar;
- use subject specific vocabulary appropriately;
- be able to write cohesively in an increasingly sophisticated style, using varied punctuation, varied sentence structures, paragraphs and technical devices;
- employ a range of discourse markers to give writing shape and direction; □ adapt their writing to suit audience and purpose.

Roles and Responsibilities

Literacy is not a bolt-on extra – it should be at the very core of all of our lessons. We can't 'do' literacy separately from our subjects; we all have the shared experience of being teachers of literacy.

The Literacy Co-ordinator will:

- ensure that the Literacy Policy is reviewed annually;
- ensure staff and students feel encouraged and supported in their efforts to raise literacy skills;
- work in collaboration with literacy reps and HoDs to ensure materials are provided for developing literacy;
- provide training and INSET for staff on priority areas for development;
- liaise with key people to embed a culture of literacy throughout the school;
- liaise with the school librarian to encourage a love of reading for pleasure;
- liaise with key people, including parents and SENDco where further literacy support has been identified as a need for a student
- conduct an annual audit of staff to ensure that CPD on literacy meets need.

All teachers will:

- play an active part in developing literacy at FPSS;
- encourage students to see high standards of literacy as a key to progress; □ model appropriate language and have high expectations of students' literacy;
- model and praise examples of the behaviour expected of a good communicator;
- plan regular opportunities to develop and support literacy through a variety of activities;
- ensure that they are familiar with the specific literacy demands of their subject and ensure sufficient coverage of these skills in their lesson planning;
- ensure marking and assessment responds to students' literacy, in line with the school marking and feedback policy;
- ensure students are provided planned reflection and improvement time to develop their literacy skills.
- ensure that they are aware of the prior attainment data for students in their teaching groups, relating to English results at KS2 and 4, as well as reading age and spelling age where available, and that this is reflected in their planning;

³ Literary Non-Fiction: The Facts, **The Guardian** (21 September 2012). Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/sep/21/literary-nonfiction-the-facts>.

- maintain an up to date knowledge of students with SEN re: literacy in their teaching groups and reflect this in their lesson planning;
- direct the work of LSAs in lessons to support individual students where necessary and appropriate;
- use the school library to support reading for pleasure in their subjects as appropriate;
- play an active role in helping to move literacy forwards by sharing good practice.

All Subject Leaders will:

- ensure that 'subject specific literacy' is clearly identified in schemes of learning, and that there is obvious progression through the key stages;
- ensure that opportunities for the development of literacy skills are highlighted in departmental planning;
- monitor the work of the department with regard to the inclusion of subject specific literacy strategies in lesson planning;
- encourage models of good practice, e.g. modelling and close collaboration between colleagues in order to promote literacy developments;
- explore opportunities to create real purposes and contexts for writing, speaking and listening through competitions, blogs, etc...
- seek to use the library to support reading in their subject areas;
- appoint a department literacy representative to attend all literacy meetings.

All Heads of Progress will:

- ensure that reading is a part of the pastoral curriculum on a regular basis in tutor time;
- ensure that there is an appropriate selection of short stories/articles with areas for discussion that students will read and discuss in tutor time.

The English Department will:

- provide students with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write and speak and listen effectively;
- track and monitor the progress of all students across these areas, intervening and offering small group support where students have weaker literacy skills;
- liaise with the Literacy Co-Ordinator, SENDCO and LSAs to ensure there is appropriate support for students with SEN re: literacy;
- promote good reading habits and the importance of reading for pleasure;
- lead on the collation and promotion of meta-language for literacy that can be used across all subjects;
- promote oracy and its central importance in removing barriers to learning and developing cognitive and critical thinking skills;
- lead on approaches to support literacy, drawing on educational research and innovative and transferable approaches.

All students will:

- correct work with literacy skills in mind, recognising their importance to learning and their lives.
- see literacy skills as useful elements across the curriculum providing small achievable steps to overall improvement of grades;
- act on feedback to improve literacy skills;

- take pride in improvement of key literacy skills
- be given opportunity to use the library to develop their reading for pleasure.

The Learning Support Department

The SENDCO will:

- ensure that all members of teaching staff are aware of students with SEN re: literacy and have an up to date copy of the SEN register;
- lead, monitor and evaluate Learning Support literacy interventions for students with SEN re: literacy;
- liaise with the Literacy Co-ordinator and Subject Leaders for English to ensure appropriate support in lessons for students with SEN re literacy;
- provide training for LSAs on how to effectively support students with weak literacy skills;
- monitor and evaluate the work of the LSAs in relation to supporting students with SEN re: literacy;
- track and monitor the progress of students with SEN re literacy.

Learning Support Assistants will:

- provide effective support within lessons, as directed by the subject teacher, to ensure that students with weak literacy skills can access and engage with lesson content. This may include:
 - (i) preparing differentiated materials;
 - (ii) providing Individual or small group support within the main lesson;
 - (iii) providing individual or small group teaching away from the main lesson;
 - (iv) managing the classroom to enable the teacher to deliver instruction to individuals or small groups.
- support the subject teacher in delivering the curriculum content of the lesson and so enable the student to make good progress in line with their abilities.
- To ensure that homework is written legibly in students' planners where necessary.

Monitoring of Policy Impact and Staff Support

- Regular book reviews to ensure the literacy marking code is being implemented across the curriculum.
- Literacy walks will be conducted as part of learning walks to enable best practice to be shared and to encourage staff to have frequent conversations about literacy in the classroom.
- Training and INSET will be provided for staff on priority areas for development.
- Annual staff audit to ensure staff feel supported and are confident in how to embed the teaching of literacy in their curriculum area.
- Testing of students before and after intervention, where appropriate.
- Tracking of targeted students at critical data points and their reading ages.
- Increasing use of student voice to seek views on literacy support.