****

**LITERACY**

**POLICY**

**Dormers Wells High School**

**Maths, Computing and Applied Learning Specialist College**

**& Leading Edge School**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Ratified by Governors | June 2018 |
| Review Date | June 2019 |
| SLT Responsible | Mr S Marker |

**Literacy Policy**

**Principles**

At Dormers Wells High School we recognise that literacy skills are essential for our students to reach their potential in school and throughout life. High levels of literacy are empowering. We endeavour to develop these skills to ensure that our students can read for information and pleasure, communicate effectively and make rapid academic progress. Literacy underpins the school curriculum; competent literacy skills enable students to read, understand and access materials, including examination materials, so that they can achieve their educational potential and take a full and positive role in adult society. We understand the importance of having a rigorous whole-school literacy policy which is implemented systematically across the curriculum, where teachers ‘demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher’s specialist subject’ (Teaching Standards).

At Dormers Wells High School, we define literacy as being able to read, write and speak correctly and having the ability to use language appropriately. Articulacy is defined as the capacity to express an idea or feeling clearly. In this policy, we have integrated effective spoken language as one of the key aspects of literacy, along with reading and writing. Another key aspect of both spoken and written literacy includes the ability to communicate effectively in a range of contexts and for different purposes.

**Aims**

We are committed to developing a literate environment through modelling accurate and formal language at all times. Accurate and sophisticated use of literacy skills is recognised and praised. We are all expected to have high expectations of literacy use; all staff correct errors in literacy. Since 2015, a percentage of the marks of many GCSE exams are awarded to (SPAG) Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar along with their use of specialist terms. We understand that at any time in the school day spoken or written language should be appropriate. In lessons, class or home learning the norm is for academic language to be used. Whilst we are always aspirational for our students, we understand that no assumptions should be made about the comprehension of vocabulary. We know that it is important that all teachers help to teach and define all vocabulary and in particular academic or higher level language along with their own subject-specific vocabulary (Tier-3 words). We actively encourage students to read quality literature from the literary canon, which will inevitably enrich students’ vocabulary and syntax. Recommended reads are available through the English department or through the librarians. Students are also encouraged to build an impressive list of authors they have had contact with in preparation for their sixth form UCAS applications.

**Delivery of literacy**

The development of literacy is integral to all aspects of our school life. Literacy is delivered in the following ways:

* Through support and monitoring carried out by the school’s literacy lead in five key areas, as recommended by the National Literacy Trust:
	+ Reading Enjoyment
	+ Reading Skills
	+ Writing Skills
	+ Spoken Language
	+ Supporting Literacy
* English Language and Literature timetabled lessons
* Second language timetabled lessons
* Through support from EAL teachers
* Through support from the Curriculum Support Department, including the Year 7 Literacy Catch-up programme
* Through using the school and public library including reading lists
* Through DEAR time and each year group’s literacy-focused My Key Skills programme delivered through the pastoral curriculum on a weekly basis
* Through awareness raising and work by the Student Literacy Leaders and Student Librarians
* Through extra-curricular activities such as Speak Out, debating activities such as Debate Mate or ‘Spelling Bees’
* Through modelling formal academic language in spoken contexts
* Through staff development including whole staff training and literacy resource support via the CPD drive and staff bulletin
* Through the specific teaching of the characteristic academic language and vocabulary of an individual subject, e.g. using *denominator* as well as *underneath* in division
* Through effective modelling and scaffolding of writing
* Through staff choosing to focus on aspects of literacy through their own learning (e.g. for Masters Degrees in subjects such as the impact of articulacy on literacy and for NPQSL projects)
* Through pages devoted to literacy in the student Home Learning Diary
* Through reading for pleasure – all students should have the reading book that they are currently reading with them at all times and have access to three loans at a time from the school library
* Through the use of Accelerated Reader in Year 7, Year 8 and some students in Year 9
* Through engaging in literacy activities at the Breakfast Club

We understand the importance of developing reading for pleasure; the school library is at the very centre of our school. Our library staff are available before, during and after school to support students with developing the key skills of literacy.

**Literacy within the curriculum**

We recognise that it is the responsibility of staff to be aware of the conventions of good literacy and to identify and seek appropriate CPD and/or support if required.

We know that literacy should be embedded in teaching and learning. We expect all teaching staff and staff who work with students to be teachers of literacy. All schemes of work should be developed to embed literacy strands.

We know that teaching staff should be aware of the literacy requirements which underpin learning points for their lesson and should ensure that students have the necessary support to help them access the literacy requirements of their subject.

We commit to the following list of ten key literacy teaching points being used, where possible, in all curriculum areas. These focus on developing literacy through vocabulary development, speaking, listening and writing.

* Highlight new/key words in each lesson and instruct students to make a note of them.
* Have access to dictionaries in all form rooms.
* Define key Tier-2 and Tier-3 vocabulary, give examples and include activities to reinforce knowledge of these words during lessons. Include general academic language / literacy focus of the week along with subject specific language. Encourage students to use this vocabulary in both spoken and written tasks.
* Slow down your rate of speaking to students and use pause time or thinking time when questioning students.
* Limit the amount you speak and encourage students to speak more instead by giving meaningful opportunities for structured peer to peer interaction.
* Model academic language and Standard English when speaking and encourage students to speak and write formally too (‘Say it like a Scholar’).
* Encourage students to extend their verbal responses. They should attempt to use connectives and structure a verbal response as they would a formal written paragraph.
* Model high-quality written responses to a task to demonstrate what is expected, before students begin writing. Students could also mark or annotate these using the relevant mark scheme or assessment criteria. Alternatively, a sample could be modelled by the teacher or constructed by the class as a whole on the board.
* Students should plan their ideas for extended writing first; this will ensure their writing is well-structured and organised into paragraphs.
* Along with content, students should consider the style of writing required for their task as they write and ensure that their register is appropriate. They should always be aware of the format/text type (what), audience (who) and purpose (why) of their writing.
* Allow allocated time for proofreading at the end of a writing task. Students should check their use of punctuation, sentence structure and expression, vocabulary choice and spelling.
* Embed DIRT (Directed Improvement and Reflection Time) or green pen activities into the marking, assessment and feedback schedule.

**Reading**
We want our students to enjoy reading and to be able to use their reading skills to progress their learning and increase their competence so that they are enabled to cope with the increasing demands of the curriculum. We will teach students strategies to help them to read with greater understanding; extrapolate information; follow a trail or argument; summarise; synthesise and adapt what they have read. We will guide them on how to develop research and study skills. We will encourage them to have an analytical approach so that they understand how to unpick tests, questions, and hypotheses. Additionally, it is anticipated that the following reading strategies are used frequently:

* Scanning – encourage student to scan text for key information and or facts
* Skimming – reading an entire text quickly to get an overall understanding
* Intensive reading – reading for inferred meaning or literal or metaphorical
* Sequencing – ordering information
* Sorting and classification – categorising information

**Monitoring and evaluating literacy**

The impact of the literacy policy is monitored through the use of:

* lesson observations and the self-review observation record.
* book looks – SLT, Curriculum Leaders and Year Leaders.
* learning walks.
* student focus groups and committees.
* student surveys.
* regular marking of literacy.
* exam results and assessment outcomes.

The Literacy Policy was reviewed by the Leadership Team on 24th May 2018.

**Reviews and Operation of this Policy**

The Governors have overall responsibility for the operation of this policy and it will be reviewed annually.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Chair of Governors: Janpal Basran**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Headteacher: Róisín Walsh**