



# Hetton School

*Respect. Learn. Achieve.*

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## **Whole School Literacy Policy**

### **September 2018**



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## **Rationale**

Literacy underpins the school curriculum by developing students' abilities to speak, listen, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including using language to learn and communicate, to think, explore and organise. Helping students to express themselves clearly, both orally and in writing, enhances and enriches teaching and learning in all subjects. All departments, teachers and support staff have a responsibility towards supporting students' literacy development.

We recognise that reading, and particularly reading for pleasure, has a direct impact on cognitive and social communicative development. Our aim is to develop each student's potential to the point where all students leave us functionally literate, and a significant majority are reading at, or above, their chronological age. We will quantify this development through a robust program of assessment and intervention. STAR Reading tests through the Accelerated Reader programme will advise and inform us of our impact in this area.

Additionally, our whole-school literacy programme focusses on students' writing skills. Similar to reading, the quality of a student's writing has a direct impact on their academic achievements in an increasingly wide range of subjects. Our aim is to develop each student's generic writing skills in order to be able to function in society, and to develop specific writing skills across the entire school curriculum so that it is not a barrier to achieving academic success in any subject.

## **Aims**

- Develop students' literacy skills to a level where they are fully literate members of society.
- Intervene with students whose literacy levels are seen to be significantly behind their age-related skill level in order to rapidly close the literacy gap with their peers.
- Support students' learning in all subjects by helping teachers to be clear about the ways in which their work with students contributes to the development of students' literacy skills.
- Increase students' standards of achievement in literacy and across the curriculum.
- Promote knowledge and understanding of the students' standards of achievement and assessment in literacy across the curriculum, and the identification of any areas of strength and weakness.
- Raise students' own expectations of achievement, thus raising standards and aspirations.
- Develop a shared understanding, between all staff, of the role of language in students' learning and how work in different subjects can contribute to and benefit from the development of their ability to communicate effectively both in school and in preparation for life.
- Recognise that language is central to students' sense of identity, belonging and growth.
- Develop students' confidence and ability to express themselves.



## **Key requirements of implementation**

We recognise that at the heart of improving literacy skills is the opportunity to practise them. Improving literacy and learning can have an impact on students' self-esteem, motivation, behaviour and attainment. It allows them to learn independently and is empowering. As such, it is important that teachers approach the teaching of literacy in a variety of ways in order to make this enjoyable for the pupil. However, a rigorous and coherent approach to the identification of what these literacy skills entail is essential. This approach will also include the process of feedback to students. Although the following is divided into three sections, speaking and listening, reading and writing, we recognise that the three modes of literacy are interdependent.

**Reading** - *reading helps pupils to learn from sources beyond their immediate experience and inspires them to acquire knowledge.*

- To create an environment where reading is promoted across the school.
- To provide time in school every week for all students to read.
- To support reading through a range of varied and appropriately differentiated reading resources.
- To promote and support reading in non-school hours.
- To implement a more robust assessment process in order to identify weakness and strength, which in turn is used to inform planning and intervention.

**Writing** - *writing helps pupils to sustain and order thought.*

- To provide students with a range of challenging writing tasks.
- To provide students with real audiences and creative writing outlets where possible.
- To support writing with frames or scaffolds where appropriate, and use modelling, within subjects.
- To ensure grammar, spelling and handwriting are supported in all subjects.
- To promote and support writing in non-school hours.

**Speaking and Listening** - *language helps pupils to prepare, reflect, revise and evaluate the tasks they undertake, and on the things others have said, written or done.*

- To raise awareness of the importance of speaking and listening across the school.
- To encourage a more systematic approach to the use of speaking and listening tasks in all subjects.
- To support all departments and subjects in embedding speaking and listening within their area.



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## **Promoting Literacy at Hetton School**

At Hetton School, literacy across school is driven by subject leaders, with a strategic overview from the teacher in charge of Literacy. However, it is the collective responsibility of all staff to ensure that literacy is constantly addressed in order to improve standards and raise levels of attainment.

### **Responsibilities**

- Senior leaders and middle leaders will lead and give a high profile to the school's vision for literacy.
- Teachers across the curriculum will take every opportunity to provide students with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write, speak and listen effectively.
- Learning support staff will provide additional scaffolding for students with identified literacy weaknesses.
- The Language Unit will support identified students with specific needs.
- The teacher in charge of literacy will lead the Accelerated Reader programme aimed at driving up standards of reading across the whole of key stage 3.
- The teacher in charge of literacy will support departments in the implementation of strategies and encourage departments to share good practice. They will regularly monitor students' progress in literacy and the impact of literacy interventions and review provision accordingly.
- The assistant headteacher who oversees literacy, with support from the SENDCo, will coordinate reading and writing intervention for students identified to be falling behind.
- Parents should encourage their children to develop their literacy skills through encouraging reading for pleasure at home.
- Students will take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs and making improvements.

### **Speaking and Listening**

All staff will:

- Lead by example, ensuring Standard English is used at all times and is expected in response.
- Challenge students when slang or inappropriate colloquialisms are used. Encourage the correct use of English in the classroom environment.
- Encourage students to correct their own speech when errors are drawn attention to.
- Create opportunities for talk in a range of contexts and forms: whole class discussion, small group discussion, paired discussion, individual contribution, role play etc.



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## **Writing**

All staff will:

- Insist on high standards of presentation of written work (model if necessary).
- Overtly teach writing in their subject – never assume that the student will know what structure or tone to employ. Use writing frames etc. to aid extended writing for those who need them.
- Promote punctuation, spelling and grammar within any writing task.
- Take every opportunity to expand vocabulary and range of expression. Be explicit about what vocabulary or key words you expect to find in any given piece of writing. The use of vocabulary 'starters' is particularly useful here.
- Insist on the use of full sentences, paragraphs and punctuation within writing tasks.
- Encourage pupils to incorporate part of the question in their written answers instead of copying the question out.
- Take opportunities for peer literacy marking, using the literacy marking policy. Deliberately focus on subject keywords for spelling and vocabulary learning.

## **Reading**

All staff will:

- Provide opportunities for reading as a class, in groups and as an individual. Encourage reading aloud if appropriate to task.
- Encourage further reading around the subject.
- Set reading and research tasks as part of class work and/or homework focused on books/newspapers/online articles etc.
- Promote skimming and scanning skills in lessons.
- Develop students' ability to locate and retrieve information; to select and interpret information; to collate supporting details within a text; to collate material from a variety of texts, including different types of text.
- Take every opportunity to promote the enjoyment of reading.

## **Marking**

All staff will:

- Mark books according to the whole-school literacy marking policy (appendix 1).
- Display the literacy marking poster, and refer to the literacy marking policy in students' planners.
- Focus on the correct written and verbal use (including pronunciation and spelling) of subject and examination keywords.
- Take opportunities to praise the effective and accurate use of literacy skills.



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## HETTON SCHOOL MARKING4LITERACY

Red literacy errors will be identified in your work with a circle.

Green literacy errors will be identified using the symbols.

Punctuation Error



Grammatical Error



Spelling Error



New Paragraph



Word Missing



Good Work



Purple Pen Progress



Peer/Self Assessment



**C3B4ME**  
BOOK BRAIN BUDDY

