



**St Cuthbert's
Catholic High School**

Live life in all its fullness

Whole School Literacy Policy

2017 - 2018

Person responsible for Policy:	Literacy Lead/Senior Leadership Team
Committee responsible for Policy:	Curriculum & Outcomes
Date To Governors:	14 November 2017
Date Agreed:	September 2017
Review Due:	September 2018 and annually thereafter
Is this Policy to appear on school website:	Yes

Strands from Mission Statement:

Developing the gifts, talents and aspirations of all students and staff (Matthew 7:12)

Providing the best education for all students and helping them to live life in all its fullness (John 10:10)

Vision

At St Cuthbert's Catholic High School we believe that literacy skills are central to the development of learning, personal and social development and to lifelong learning, thus giving students the opportunity to contribute to the development of a successful life, where they can appreciate, enjoy, understand, evaluate, discuss and make informed choices and decisions.

All students should experience a balanced literacy skills environment regardless of perceived ability and background. Literacy in its widest sense should be valued.

We recognise that all modes of language contribute to the development of literacy: Talking, Listening, Reading and Writing. By using these modes of language for specific purposes in specific contexts students can develop knowledge, understanding and skills for learning.

As literacy is central to learning in all areas of the curriculum it is the responsibility of **all** teachers to endeavour to deliver and promote high standards of literacy in **all** lessons.

What is Literacy?

The point of literacy is to promote the skills students need to access the whole school curriculum confidently and effectively and also prepare them to communicate and think critically in all aspects of their lives.

The policy is here to reinforce the principles of literacy skills needed in all areas of the curriculum to enable students to appreciate that there is a common expectation of these skills in all lessons. The policy supports a common approach across the school to ensure consistency between subjects and avoid confusion due to conflicting methods.

We are committed to:

- Securing high standards of literacy across the school through developing a whole school Literacy Policy which enables staff to access support and guidance.
- Ensuring that a consistent approach to literacy is adopted by all staff to re-inforce the skills needed and keep student confusion to the minimum.
- Ensuring an effective cross-curricular approach and identifying opportunities; indicating and facilitating areas for collaboration.
- Assisting in the transfer of skills and understanding between all subjects.
- Ensuring that students are aware of what is expected of their literacy skills.
- Liaising with the Literacy Co-ordinator whenever support for a literacy activity or joint approach is required to ensure consistency.

Consistency in teaching literacy is achieved when:

- Literacy skills are taught consistently and systematically across the curriculum.
- Expectation of standards of accuracy and presentation are similar in all classrooms.
- Teachers are equipped to deal with literacy issues in their subject both generically and specifically.
- The same strategies are used across the school: the teaching sequence for writing; active reading strategies; planning oracy for learning,
- The literacy learning that students are doing in English, and specific intervention programmes, is consolidated in other lessons,
- Teachers use the same terminology to describe language.
- Common literacy targets are agreed for each year group and are built into subject plans.

Students:

Oracy

Students should be able to:

- Listen and carry out instructions.
- Explore and develop ideas with others, through their talk.
- Ask questions as well as answer them.
- Work collaboratively with others

Spelling and vocabulary

Students should be able to:

- Correctly spell the subject specific key words
- Understand the meaning of the subject specific key words
- Use subject specific key words in context in their writing

Reading

Students should be able to:

- Read and follow written instructions.
- Read to explore and to develop understanding.
- Sift, select and take notes from the text.
- Access their textbook, including format and index
- Select from written material, reformulate, question and challenge what they read in textbooks, encyclopaedias, and newspapers or from ICT sources

Writing

Students should be able to:

- Use writing to plan and organise.
- Plan, draft, discuss and reflect on their writing, using ICT, where appropriate.
- Write for a range of purposes and audiences.
- Make notes in a variety of formats, e.g. brain storming/spider diagrams.
- Write about the subject using different ways of opening, developing, linking and completing paragraphs.

Year 7 Students should be able to:

1. Use talk as a tool for clarifying ideas
2. Listen for and recall the main points of a talk, reading, or television programmes, reflecting on what has been heard to ask searching questions, make comments or challenge the views expressed
3. Identify and report the main points emerging from discussion.
4. Use appropriate reading strategies to extract particular information.
5. Infer and deduce meanings using evidence in the text, identifying where and how meanings are implied
6. Identify, using appropriate terminology the way writers of non-fiction match language and organisations to their intentions.
7. Use writing to explore and develop ideas.
8. Organise texts in ways appropriate to their content.
9. Recognise the cues to start a new paragraph and use the first sentence effectively to orientate the reader.

Year 8 should be able to:

1. Provide an explanation or commentary which links words with actions or images.
2. Listen for specific purpose, paying sustained attention and selecting for comment or question that which is relevant to the agreed focus.
3. Use Talk to question, hypothesise, speculate, evaluate, solve problems and develop thinking about complex issues and ideas.
4. Make notes in different ways, choosing a form which suits the purpose.
5. Recognise bias and objectivity, distinguishing facts from hypotheses, theories and opinions.
6. Analyse the overall structure of a text to identify how key ideas are developed.
7. Use writing for thinking and learning by recording ideas as they develop to aid reflection and problem solving.
8. Develop different ways of linking paragraphs, using a range of strategies to improve cohesion and coherence.
9. Explain complex ideas and information clearly.

Year 9 Students should be able to:

1. Use Standard English to explain, explore or justify an idea.
2. Identify the underlying themes, implications and issues raised by a talk, reading or programme.
3. Discuss and evaluate conflicting evidence to arrive at a considered viewpoint.
4. Synthesise information from a range of sources, shaping material to meet readers' needs.
5. Compare the presentations of ideas, values or emotions in related or contrasting text.
6. Analyse how an author's standpoint can affect meaning in non-literary texts.
7. Record, develop and evaluate ideas through writing.
8. Integrate diverse information into a coherent and comprehensive account.
9. Write with differing degrees of formality relating vocabulary and grammar to context.

Inclusive Approaches

We strive to support all students' achievement in Literacy; for all students to achieve their full potential the school will ensure that:

- Gifted and talented students will be supported by using a framework of challenging objectives;
- Students with special educational needs will be taught in an appropriate manner in accordance with individual targets set in student individual educational plans (the school's Special Educational Needs Policy provides more precise detail)
- The school will introduce a variety of targeted intervention initiatives aimed at more vulnerable groups (i.e. Y7 catch-up cohort, LA students, pupil premium students)
- The creation of a 'reading for pleasure' ethos is promoted via registration time, lunchtime, assemblies etc. to engage children with the reading habit, putting books at the heart of their learning. Staff, Students and parents need to share a reading ethos in order to help all these people see reading as important and also as something that is enjoyable.

Cross curricular Literacy

Literacy underpins the student's ability to access all areas of the curriculum and express their knowledge and understanding.

All lessons include and largely depend on oral and written communication. The teacher explains, questions, describes, organises and evaluates in the classroom and does this mostly through talk, and sometimes through writing.

Students often answer, discuss and work out their ideas through talk.

They commonly write in order to record, summarise, note, show evidence of understanding and develop analyses and arguments. Successful learners read to gain access to and evaluate information and ideas from a range of texts and sources.

It is therefore the responsibility of all teachers to support and contribute the development of literacy skills.

It is important that we work together to ensure we equip students with basic life skills in literacy and identify opportunities for cross-curricular and literacy development.

Collaboration between The Literacy Co-Ordinator and other subject areas can have different purposes:

- Collaboration can help to raise standards in ALL subjects.
- The Literacy Coordinator can support the work of other subjects.
- Other subjects can provide a context for Literacy.
- Collaboration can help students make connections

All Subject Teachers should:

- Ensure that 'subject specific literacy' is clearly identified in schemes of work, and that there is obvious progression through the key stages.
- Ensure that they are familiar with the specific literacy demands of their subject and plan to cover these skills in their lessons.
- Use the agreed strategies in order to teach Writing, Speaking, Listening and Reading skills.
- Be aware of appropriate expectations of students and difficulties that might be experienced with literacy skills.
- Ensure they are familiar with the Literacy Policy and Literacy and Learning subject specific materials.

Subject Areas should ensure that:

- A copy of the Literacy Policy is available to all staff:
- Key words are displayed clearly in each classroom
- The Literacy Audit is available to all staff
- Schemes of Work identify explicit opportunities for Literacy to be taught
- They receive support from Literacy Coordinator if and when required.

Implementing the Literacy Policy and Development

Improving attainment in Literacy is a key target for whole-school development.

We aim to:

- Agree whole school strategies for literacy and ensure all staff are aware of these.
- Ensure appropriate training in these strategies is offered to all staff as required.
- Encourage Subject Areas to consider areas for collaboration and cross-curricular Literacy development.

Strategies for Promoting Literacy

Whole School

In order to ensure that all students are taught literacy skills in an effective manner, the school will ensure that:

- Staff know what the specific objectives are for reading and speaking and listening through effective CPD led by the Literacy Co-ordinator.
- Staff share effective strategies for embedding literacy within Subject Areas.
- Staff share Literacy Focus to be implemented by all staff during lessons. Literacy Coordinator to publicise the focus and to provide necessary support materials where possible via website and/or paper-based booklet.
- Weekly Literacy Focus to feature as a Target for all students during that week and to be displayed as part of the Learning Objectives for that week.
- The Literacy Co-Ordinator to offer CPD opportunities where necessary.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be regularly reviewed and updated by the Literacy Coordinator and Subject Leaders. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation will involve:

- Learning Walks
- Work scrutiny
- Scrutiny of schemes of learning
- Student Voice
- Use of "IRIS" to record examples of effective practice

Guidelines for Implementing Literacy in the Classroom

Correcting Spellings

When homework is handed in teachers should be checking spelling, grammar and punctuation as a matter of course. When students spell a word inaccurately it should be corrected in red pen after the error has been highlighted in blue (“Beat The Blues”)

How to learn spellings

All departments should have regular spelling tests, testing key terminology within each topic. Different methods for learning spellings are taught within the English Department and are as follows:

- **Mnemonics** – learning a word by making up a rhyme, sentence or saying out of its letters i.e. **NECESSARY** = **N**ever **E**at **C**arrots **E**very **S**econd **S**aturday **A**fter **R**eally **Y**awning. Or **SCARCELY** = **S**ome **C**reatures **A**re **R**eally **C**lever **E**specially **L**arge **Y**aks.
- **Read – Cover – Write** – Students read a word, try to remember it, cover it up and try to re write it.
- **10 Times Rule** – Writing a word down ten times enables students to remember it easily.
- **Deconstructing words** – Breaking words up into their component parts enables smaller chunks of the word to be learned one at a time and also assists with other words that may follow the same pattern.
- **Phonics** – Learning the sound patterns of words.

Correcting Errors in Punctuation

Errors in punctuation should be corrected by inserting the ^ symbol if a punctuation mark has been omitted (e.g. full-stop, question mark etc).

Correcting Errors in Sentence Structure

When a student makes an error in his/her sentence structure this can be underlined with a wavy line.

Correcting Errors in Paragraphing

When a student forgets to insert a paragraph or any other structural device (e.g. sub-heading) then the letter ‘p’ can be inserted in the margin.

Templates for writing essays in each subject

It is acknowledged that formal essay writing in each subject can be very specific. For example an essay plan in science may be very different from an essay plan in History or English. It is therefore suggested that students should be provided with **essay templates** on a regular basis.