



Inspire Academy

Literacy Policy

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1. Rationale

- 1.1 Students' ability to communicate effectively, to share their interpretation of their world, and to ultimately contribute to their community, is determined by their

development of literacy skills. We recognise that having high levels of literacy opens the door to success for our students in school and later in life. Literacy underpins our curriculum; it is the responsibility of all our teachers and support staff to enhance our young people's life chances by implementing this rigorous literacy strategy across all subject areas.

2. Introduction

2.1 Our Literacy Policy is shaped by a contextual awareness that many young people who join Inspire Academy arrive with low aspirations, lacking self-confidence and with poor attendance; as a result, they have significant gaps in their literacy development and a reading age significantly below their chronological age. We recognise that improving literacy can positively impact on students' mental health, self-esteem, motivation, behaviour, and attainment.

2.2 Our approach to literacy is evidence based and informed by research, particularly the findings of the Education Endowment Foundation – Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools. They have seven recommendations:

1. Prioritising disciplinary literacy across the curriculum.
2. Providing targeted vocabulary instruction.
3. Developing student's ability to read complex texts.
4. Breaking down complex writing tasks.
5. Combining writing instruction with reading in every subject.
6. Providing opportunities for structured talk.
7. Providing high quality literacy interventions

3. Aims

- 3.1 **Reading** - To be fluent readers, having a positive attitude towards books and reading, reading widely for pleasure and information. To monitor their own reading and correct their mistakes. Know about the ways in which texts are structured.
- **Writing** - Have fluent and legible handwriting. To enjoy writing in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences, adapting their language and style for different purposes. Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting language and style accordingly. Be able to plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing.
 - **Vocabulary Development** - Have a wide range of vocabulary, and understanding of grammar and linguistic conventions. Being interested in learning the meaning of new words.
 - **Oracy** – To communicate effectively in all aspects of school life. To competently speak in paired/group discussions and be able to clearly explain their understanding and ideas. To listen carefully and respectfully to other students.
 - **School Culture** - To ensure that a culture of literacy permeates the school; with celebrations of student's literacy development conveying the message that the development of literacy skills is paramount to success. To continuously use a range of assessment data to drive improvements, ensuring staff use available data to

inform their practice, adjust instruction and make decisions to enhance student's learning.

We will prioritise 'disciplinary literacy' across the curriculum. Disciplinary literacy emphasises the importance of subject specific support, it recognises that literacy skills are both general and subject specific, emphasising the value of supporting teachers of every subject to teach students how to read, write and communicate effectively

4. Reading

4.1 Within our setting we recognise that reading strategies need to be carefully applied and adapted in different subjects. However, these generic reading strategies will be used across all subjects;

- Modelling the reading process by reading to and with the class.
- Directly teaching reading strategies to students (e.g., skim, scan and select; annotation, highlighting), and the skills of inference and deduction required for the subject discipline.
- Ensuring that there is a range of opportunities in lessons for solo, paired and whole class collaborative reading.
- Activating students' prior knowledge and trying to make meaningful links with what they already know about a topic.
- Asking students to predict what might happen as a text is read.
- Encouraging students to generate their own questions about a text to check their comprehension and monitor their subject knowledge.
- Summarising the meaning of sections of the text to consolidate and elaborate upon their understanding
- Selecting reading materials to be used in lessons that take into consideration the reading ages of their class and are appropriately scaffolded to meet student needs.
- Promoting reading for pleasure and engaging in discussions about wider reading.
- Staff to model what they have read recently and reading next.
- Promote the use of the local public library.
- Implementing Our Excel Reading Continuum to enable students to read accurately and speedily in line with their chronological age.

4.2 We will ensure that we provide adequate resources to each class;

- An individual copy of the book/text students are reading.
- Dictionaries and thesauruses available in all classrooms.
- A library area that meets the recommendations in the 2023 reading framework, where students can access a wide range of subjects, including fiction, non-fiction, modern and traditional stories. We will refresh the library at least once a year, as new books are published and as our school welcomes new teachers and students.

5. Writing

- 5.1 Students must be able to **transcribe**, that is, physically write or type and **compose**, generating ideas and translating them into words, sentences and structured texts. Finally, students must use **executive functions**, to enable them to make plans, motivate themselves and review and redraft texts. The complexity of writing means it can place a heavy burden on students' working memory. Staff can support students to break down complex writing tasks and help students to become fluent in as many of the processes involved in writing as possible.

We will support students to develop their writing skills by;

- Giving students the opportunity to write independently within lessons.
- Planning opportunities for extended writing and progressively building their extended writing stamina over time.
- Giving students opportunities to write clearly in a variety of forms and for different audiences, with clear shared expectations of outcomes.
- Live modelling the thought processes and actions involved in drafting, writing, and re-writing.
- Sharing models and student exemplars of high-quality work, as well as discussing how other examples could be improved.
- Supporting weaker writers where appropriate with scaffolding, sentence starters, paragraph and writing frames, key words, and teacher modelling, whilst allowing for the growth of independence over time.
- Challenging most able writers through extension questions and extended writing opportunities and by removing scaffolds and frames.
- Providing opportunities for the full writing cycle – planning, drafting, and editing of work, and encouraging developing writing through supportive, formative assessment.
- Maintaining high expectations of the presentation, spelling, and grammar in written work. Reminding students of the technical accuracy expectations they should be demonstrating. Encouraging all students to 'Strive for 5'
- Staff to model high standards of writing in all their lesson resources, whiteboards, feedback to students and displays.
- Upon completion of a writing task, students are encouraged to read through and check their writing.
- Marking students' work for literacy using the codes set out below and ensure students take responsibility for correcting their mistakes whilst we explicitly teach misconceptions.

5.2 Marking and feedback codes

We will adopt a consistent whole school approach to the marking and assessment of literacy. This will give feedback to students which will help them to improve their use of literacy in all subjects and to help identify future targets for literacy teaching.

All formative and summative assessments are marked for literacy as well as content and use the following codes to support development.

SP	Spelling
P	Punctuation
T	Tense
WW	Wrong word
Λ	Word omitted
NS	New sentence
//	New paragraph
CL	Capital letter

Where a student has made several mistakes, the teacher will focus on the key vocabulary linked to that lesson topic and consistent mistakes made. The marking code must be displayed in every classroom and DIRT time (directed improvement and reflection time) will allow students to act upon this feedback.

6. Vocabulary Development

- 6.1 We will support students to develop secure knowledge of the specialised and technical vocabulary needed to access the secondary curriculum. Vocabulary instruction will focus on Tier 2 (High-frequency words found in many different subject disciplines) and Tier 3 (Subject specific vocabulary).

Vocabulary instruction in lessons should use a range of examples including:

- The Frayer Model
- Etymology and morphology
- Exploring common word roots
- Undertaking 'word building' activities
- Encouraging independent word-learning strategies
- Using graphic organisers
- Undertaking regular low-stakes assessment
- Consistently signposting synonyms
- Combining vocabulary development with spelling instruction

Our 'word of the week' will focus on Tier 2 vocabulary and students will be recognised for using this word in the right context throughout the week across all subject areas.

7. Oracy

- 7.1 The EEF acknowledges that 'talk' has the potential to improve reading and writing outcomes, enhance communication skills and increase students' understanding across the curriculum.

School staff will support the development of oracy skills through;

- Explicitly teaching and modelling the conventions for talking and listening.
- Recognising and rewarding good speaking and listening skills.
- Modelling good practice and demonstrating to students the difference between proper English and slang.
- Providing a range of opportunities for structured talk in lessons e.g. to investigate, debate and discuss questions, ideas, and opinions.
- Provide opportunities to verbally articulate answers before writing them down to check understanding and refine planning.
- Provide opportunities to work in groups of different sizes and develop the skills to communicate effusively.
- Actively planning the sequence of questions to be used in a lesson, but also encouraging students to pose their own questions.
- Ensuring further questions are used to probe, extend, and challenge thinking.
- Using sentence starters and prompts to help students to structure and extend their responses.
- Picking up on unnecessary fillers (um, err) and repetition (like, well).
- Picking up on grammatical errors.
- Encouraging students to refine their answer into full sentences.
- Pausing after asking questions, to encourage a more thoughtful response. Give appropriate thinking time.

8. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

8.1 This policy will be reviewed annually.

8.2 We continue to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and the implementation of this Literacy Policy in our school through a range of strategies including;

- Learning walks
- Reviewing teacher's assessment and feedback
- Half termly student progress review meetings
- Planning scrutinies and book scrutinies
- Student voice feedback

8.3 Staff professional development sessions will upskill all staff to be able to effectively implement this Literacy Policy. A range of CPD opportunities will be explored;

- School level CPD
- Support from School Director of School Improvement
- Moderation and collaboration with Trust Secondary Schools
- Moderation and collaboration with Trust Primary Schools
- Trust network days – reading, writing and oracy
- Trust network CPD events
- NPQ Leading Literacy

8.4 Our key milestones for 2025-26:

Reading	Writing	Vocab Development	Oracy	Interventions
1) To have developed a school library with a wide range of texts. 2) Staff to be trained on how to assess reading ages. 3) Staff to be confident using Reading Plus. 4) Staff to be confident using a range of class reading strategies. 5) To begin to develop a culture of reading for pleasure.	1) A consistent approach to literacy marking. 2) A school wide focus on improving extended writing. 3) Purchase visualisers for Key Stages 3 and 4. 4) High standards of staff modelling.	1) Tier 2 word of the week embedded across all classes. 2) Tier 3 vocabulary expertly taught across all subject areas and evident in learning walks and student's books. 3) Further TA training on phonics interventions.	1) Explicit modelling and high expectations of speaking and listening in class. 2) Lesson planning/resources to evidence the questions used in lessons. 3) To introduce Kagan Co-operative Learning structures.	To be in place weekly: 1) Handwriting 2) Phonics 3) Reading

9. Links to other policies

9.1 Curriculum Policy

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy