



**The Castle Partnership Trust**  
ACHIEVE | BELONG | PARTICIPATE

**Literacy across the Curriculum**  
**Whole School Literacy Policy**  
**Date: September 2017**

**Executive Headteacher: Sarah Watson**

**Acting Headteacher at Court Fields School: Polly Matthews**

# Literacy Across the Curriculum

## Literacy

Literacy involves the ability to read and write; however, it is also the capacity to recognise, reproduce and manipulate the conventions of a range of texts and a variety of modes. Literacy and English are intertwined and it is an important aspect of our ability to communicate. There are also new forms of literacy (on-screen literacy and moving image media) to consider alongside the more traditional print literacy. Literacy is important because it enables students to gain access to the subjects studied in school, to read for information and pleasure, and to communicate effectively. Competent literacy skills enable students to read, understand and access examination materials, so that students are able to achieve their educational potential across the curriculum.

All departments and all teachers have a crucial role to play in supporting students' literacy development. **All teachers are teachers of literacy.** As such, the staff of The Castle Partnership Trust are committed to developing literacy skills in all of our students, in the belief that it will support their learning and raise standards across the curriculum, because:

- Literacy and learning can have an impact on students' self-esteem, on motivation and behaviour. Literate students learn independently. Literacy is empowering.
- Students need vocabulary, expression and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of subjects;
- Reading helps us to learn from sources beyond our immediate experience and understand different viewpoints;
- Writing helps us to sustain and order thought;
- Language helps us to reflect on, revise and evaluate the things we do, and the things others have said, written or done;
- Responding to higher order questions encourages the development of thinking skills and enquiry;

## Aims

The Castle Partnership Trust is committed to raising the standards of literacy for all of its students, so that they develop the ability to use Literacy skills effectively in all areas of the curriculum and as a platform for the demands of further education, employment and adult life.

Literacy underpins the school curriculum by developing students' abilities to speak, listen and communicate, to think, explore and organise. This includes helping students to express themselves orally and in writing. The Castle Partnership Trust aspires to have literate

schools. The literate school produces powerful communicators across the curriculum. Powerful communication comprises:

- The successful application of reading and writing skills;
- The ability to converse effectively in a range of contexts and for different purposes.

### **Objectives**

1. To open up personal pathways to success central to personal expression and active participation in society, economy and culture.
2. To develop competent literacy skills and also enable students to read, understand and access examination materials, so that students are able to achieve their educational potential across the curriculum.
3. To personalise learning in order to create a coherent learning system tailored to the individual student.
4. To approach literacy across the curriculum in relation to students' abilities to think and learn.

### **Delivery of Literacy**

“Although it is right that key literacy skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening should be taught primarily in English lessons, there is a clear intention in recent Government statements of policy for these skills to be reinforced and applied with accuracy across other subjects.”

*(OfSTED Inspecting communication, reading and writing (literacy) Year 3 to Year 11. Guidance and training for inspectors. Autumn 2011 page 35)*

All schemes of work and most, although not all lessons, will include specific literacy objectives. These objectives will inform what is taught, how it is taught, what is learnt and how it is learnt. Literacy should also form part of lesson plenaries when it is appropriate to the focus of the lesson.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- **Senior Managers:** lead and give a high profile to literacy;
- **English Department:** provide students with knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write and speak and listen effectively;
- **Teachers across the curriculum:** contribute to students' development of language, since speaking, listening, writing and reading are, to varying degrees, integral to all lessons;

- **Parents:** encourage their children to use the range of strategies they have learnt to improve their levels of literacy;
- **Students:** take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs and making improvements;

### **The English Department**

In addition to all the whole-school aspects of this policy, the English teachers at The Castle Partnership Trust have a leading role in providing students with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write, speak and listen effectively.

The English department is well placed to offer good advice and expertise.

The role of the English department includes:

- Identifying literacy priorities, targets and objectives and other particular contributions they can make;
- Using data to identify curricular targets;
- Adapting the department development plan to achieve these.
- Supporting and coaching staff, when needed, in the use of the Talk 4 Writing (T4W) programme

### **Literacy development across the curriculum will require:**

- All teachers to understand that they are teachers of literacy;
- A whole-trust CPD programme that offers T4W strategies that can be implemented to encourage student progress in different subject specialisms
- A shared understanding among teachers of the relationship between language and learning, and how the work undertaken in different subject areas can contribute to the development of literacy skills;
- Teachers to be aware of the language demands made upon students in their subject areas;
- The development of consistent approaches and appropriate resources within subjects to improve their students' use of language;
- The development of a similar literacy curriculum between KS2 and KS3, and, KS3 and KS4 to ensure progress over time. KS5 literacy skills to be considered in KS4 to allow for easy transition post-16;

- Sharing of good practice between colleagues throughout the trust to ensure consistency of approach and the support of colleagues where needed;
- Evaluation via the school monitoring process.

### **Literacy and Learning at The Castle Partnership Trust**

The framework for literacy and learning identifies three main areas for development.

#### **Learning through talk /speaking and listening comprises:**

- Using talk to clarify and present ideas;
- Active listening to understand;
- Talking and thinking together.

Talk is our main means of communication in everyday life and is fundamental to the development of understanding, and so the Trust continues to use the T4W programme to develop literacy further.

We will teach students to use language precisely and coherently. They should be able to listen to others, and to respond and build on their ideas and views constructively. We will develop strategies to teach students how to participate orally in groups and in the whole class, including using talk to develop and clarify ideas; identifying the main points to arise from a discussion; listening for a specific purpose; discussion and evaluation.

Staff training needs will be met through the sharing of best practice and useful strategies as outlined in the T4W process.

#### **Reading and learning from text comprises:**

- Developing research and study skills;
- Reading for meaning;
- Understanding how texts work.

At The Castle Partnership Trust we want our students to enjoy reading, to be able to use their reading to help them to learn and to become more confident and competent in reading. We aim to give students a level of literacy that will enable them to cope with the increasing demands of subjects in terms of specific skills, knowledge and understanding. This applies particularly in the area of reading (including from the screen), as texts become more demanding.

We will build on and share existing good practice. We will teach students strategies to help them to read with greater understanding; locate and use information; follow a process or argument; summarise; synthesise and adapt what they learn from their reading.

### **Learning through writing comprises:**

- Using writing as a tool for thought;
- Structuring and organising writing;
- Developing clear and appropriate expression.

Many lessons include and depend on written communication. We want our students to develop increasing confidence and competence in writing so that they can write in a widening variety of forms for different purposes e.g. to interpret, evaluate, explain, analyse and explore. It is important that we provide for co-ordination across subjects to recognise and reinforce students' language skills, through:

- Making connections between students' reading and writing, so that students have clear models for their writing;
- Using the modelling process to make explicit to students *how* to write;
- Being clear about audience and purpose;
- Providing opportunities for a range of writing including extended writing.
- Using scaffolding and supportive techniques to talk through, visualise and plan writing before undertaking extended writing

### **Assessment and Monitoring**

The Trust has a Whole School Marking Policy (Appendix A) which identifies the key aspects of literacy that each department addresses in its marking of students' work.

### **Learning environment**

The Castle School Partnership Trust is committed to providing:

- Displays of reading material relevant to the topic or national curriculum subject; each classroom promotes subject-specific vocabulary which students are encouraged to use regularly;

- High quality reading material, which is up-to -date, relevant and balanced in its presentation of ethnicity, culture and gender;
- Access for students to the school library; access for students to a good quality range of texts during lessons;
- Dictionaries, glossaries and lists of appropriate subject vocabulary that are available during lessons, and which students are encouraged to use;
- Access to appropriate audio visual equipment;
- A classroom environment which is conducive to good literacy practice.

### **Lesson plans**

Lessons within the school include reference to the skills or strategies to be used, taught or reinforced, including as appropriate:

- Making clear the intended purposes of reading within our curriculum e.g. describe, repeat, interpret or analyse texts read;
- Teaching and giving opportunities to practise skimming for overall meaning, scanning for key points, words or phrases, or close reading;
- Teaching and giving opportunities to practise sifting and selecting information and taking notes from texts;
- Teaching and enabling students to infer and deduce meanings, recognising the writer's intentions;
- Teaching and giving opportunities to research and investigate using printed words, moving images and ICT texts;
- Teaching how to use quotations selectively to support points and link them to students' own comments.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

We will make use of available data to assess the standards of students' literacy.

Possible approaches to monitoring are:

- Sampling work – both students' work and departmental schemes;
- Observation – student tracking and literacy teaching;
- Meetings;

- Student interviews;
- Scrutiny of development plans;
- Encouraging departments to share good practice by exhibiting or exemplifying students' work and peer observation.

## **Inclusion**

The Castle School Partnership Trust students are entitled to our highest expectations and support. Some will need additional support and others will need to be challenged and extended. Strategies that we can use include:

- Questioning;
- Adjusting the demands of the task;
- The use of additional support and structured writing;
- Use of group structures;
- Resources;
- Making focuses clear;
- Creating an atmosphere where students evaluate their own and others' work;
- Opportunities to reflect on work and make improvements.



## **Appendix A**

Extras

Marking Key

- Your work will be marked in pencil or red ink
- Errors will be circled
- Sp = spelling error
- p = punctuation error
- e = poor expression or grammatical error
- // = new paragraph
- L = poor presentation/ layout/ no under-linings etc.