



ANSFORD ACADEMY
LEARNING TOGETHER TO LEAD OUR LIVES

Curriculum, Assessment and Teaching and Learning Policy Suite

LITERACY AND COMMUNICATION POLICY

Status:	Discretionary
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Renewal Period:	Yearly
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Section 1: Definitions

What is Literacy and Communication in Education?

Reading/writing/oracy: To be literate is to be able to read, comprehend and react to ideas in texts and language. It means being able to use language to communicate both in spoken and written forms. Communication is an intrinsic life skill.

Non-verbal communication: To be literate is to be able to read and communicate in a variety of different kinds of languages and texts – visual as well as verbal.

Literacy as participation: Messages, ideas, feelings and identity are all facilitated through language and texts of all kinds. To be literate is to be able to take control of these forms in order to participate as a member of society.

Section 2: Rationale

Why is communication important?

Lacking vital communication skills holds a person back at every stage of their life. As a child, they will not be able to succeed at school, as a young adult they will be locked out of the job market, and as a parent they won't be able to support their own child's learning. This intergenerational cycle makes social mobility and a fairer society more difficult.

People with low communication skills may not be able to read a book or newspaper, understand road signs or price labels, make sense of a bus or train timetable, fill out a form, read instructions on medicines or use the internet.

Low levels of communication undermine the UK's economic competitiveness, costing the taxpayer £2.5 billion every year ([KPMG, 2009](#)). A third of businesses are not satisfied with young people's literacy skills when they enter the workforce and a similar number have organised remedial training for young recruits to improve their basic skills, including Literacy and communication (National Literacy Trust).

Therefore, we as a school, must be 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:

- 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.
- Writing helps us to sustain order and thought.
- Language helps us to reflect, revise and evaluate the things we do, and on the things others have said, written or done.
- Responding to higher order questions encourages the development of thinking skills and inquiry.
- Improving literacy and learning can have an impact on students' self-esteem, on motivation and behaviour. It allows them to learn independently and feel empowered.
- Having an understanding of reading age data enables preparation for the demands of GCSE papers across the curriculum

Section 3: Implementation at a Whole School Level

It must never be the view that literacy can only be taught and addressed within the subjects of English or Languages, because this leads to inconsistencies in expectations and a lack of opportunity to apply skills across the curriculum.

Implementation includes:

- Use of Bedrock Vocabulary
- Use of diagnostic tools such as Literacy Assessment Online and how this data can be used to inform planning
- Literacy marking policy
- Oracy within the English curriculum and other areas of the school
- Reporting of literacy data such as oracy grades and reading ages.

Section 4: Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Governors

- Evaluate policy and quality assure ensuring accountability of the different staff involved.

4.2 Headteacher

- Ensure approach is in line with school priorities and provide critical challenge of those accountable.

4.3 Senior Leaders

- Lead and raise the profile of whole school communication development.

4.4 English Department

- Provide students with knowledge, skills and understanding in: reading, writing, speaking and listening effectively.
- Identify gaps in skills and put interventions in place (including Literacy Assessment Online and Bedrock).

4.5 SEND Team

- Intervene with students lacking in basic literacy skills inhibiting their access to the whole school curriculum. Further details of intervention are outlined later in the document.

4.6 All Teachers

- Are required to demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of written and verbal communication including the correct use of Standard English, regardless of the teacher's specialist subject (Teachers' Standards).
- Contribute to students' development of language since speaking, listening, writing and reading are integral to all lessons.
- Model subject specific vocabulary use.
- Liaise with the English Department and SEND Team over concerns with a student's literacy skills as part of the whole school strategy.

4.7 Tutors

- As above with additional responsibility for the promotion of Bedrock vocabulary and providing weekly independent reading opportunities as part of the Tutor Time Reading Programme where students are read to and respond through questioning and comprehension tasks.

4.8 Parents

- Encourage their children to use the range of strategies they have learnt to improve their levels of communication.

4.9 Students

- Take increasing responsibility for recognising their own communication needs and making improvements.

Section 5: Improving Literacy and Communication across the Curriculum

5.1 Keep it simple but be consistent:

- Insist on speaking and writing in full sentences.
- Talk, question, model and write.
- Prioritise oracy.
- Talk to write.
- Read to write.
- Ask students to proofread their work. There should always be a focus on technical accuracy.
- Encourage and model Standard English.
- Challenge students to re-phrase ideas.

- Provide students with plenty of opportunities for extended responses, writing and speaking.
- Challenge students to always elaborate on ideas and interpretations.
- Use the school's marking policy to focus on students' Literacy and their Next Steps. This should include identifying basic punctuation, spelling and grammar errors.

It is the responsibility of both staff and students to raise standards of communication. This begins with the expectation that students should respond in full sentences and in Standard English; teachers are expected to model this, to challenge poor oracy, and to provide students with the language necessary for high-level responses.

5.2 Reading

- Integral to developing students' wider reading and reading for pleasure is how teachers read with students and model reading processes through a range of teaching methods and approaches.
- Teachers must foster thinking and talking about texts by creating an environment of rich dialogue and response towards all types of text. The reading of images and film, fiction, poetry and non-fiction is vital in developing talk and response - the starting point for comprehension.
- Students are encouraged to read collaboratively in pairs or groups as well as on their own.
- Students are encouraged to read aloud with their teacher, when appropriate for the task.
- Students are encouraged to use specific reading strategies (skimming, scanning, annotation, highlighting, reading for detail, reading digital texts and reciprocal reading) and become used to making their own choice of the most appropriate strategy. Students should also use the index and glossary; identifying key points and making notes; summarising; or using more than one source.
- Teachers monitor the level of text so that students are challenged but not alienated by what they are reading, using all available data including reading ages on SIMS.
- The importance of reading enjoyment and engagement is explicit throughout the school and a priority in the curriculum.
- The LIC provides a range of easily accessible stock including subject specific reading materials relating to all curriculum areas.
- Teachers develop students' reading stamina by fostering the opportunity to read texts of suitable challenge independently.
- Teachers and students use questions effectively to develop independent reading comprehension. It should involve the explicit exploration and development of literal, inferential and evaluative questioning.
- Reading pens, reading rulers and coloured overlays (available from SEN dept.) should be encouraged for students who may benefit.
- Teachers should provide opportunities for extended written responses.
- Teachers should always insist on students elaborating on their ideas and interpretations.

5.3 Writing

All teachers have a responsibility to help students become confident and skilled writers who can use writing to process and organise ideas and to communicate effectively:

- Before setting their students to write, teachers should model the process of writing: the thinking, the planning, the drafting and the editing.
- Students are encouraged to write clearly in a variety of forms for a variety of audiences.
- Students can refer to models when writing.
- Word and phrase banks help students to develop precision.
- Scaffolding is used to support writing as appropriate.
- Marking of writing is supportive and encourages reflection and improvement.
- Teachers encourage students to see writing as a mutually enhancing activity along with reading, speaking and listening.
- Teachers design and set writing tasks with clear learning outcomes. These tasks are authentic and real or creative and imaginative. All writing tasks have a clear and identifiable purpose, audience and format.
- Teachers collect and provide quality examples of writing across a range of genres.

- Teachers are aware of basic handwriting strategies such as letter-size differentiation and the use of a range of pens.
- Teachers encourage the use of chrome books or laptops for students who may benefit.
- Students should be encouraged to be experimental with word choices.
- Students should have access to dictionaries and thesauruses.
- Students should be encouraged to use subject vocabulary with precision in writing (and oracy).

5.4 Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

Accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar is important for the convincing presentation of ideas in any subject.

- Correct spelling is taught and valued but not in a way that discourages students from being adventurous with vocabulary.
- All students are equipped with a range of strategies for remembering or inferring spellings.
- Students are encouraged to use dictionaries to check spellings.
- Overt use of cross subject communication mats.
- Marking addresses spelling, punctuation (including the correct use of capital letters) and grammar.

5.5 Marking for Communication

All teachers have a responsibility to use marking to secure and develop the literacy of students. There must be a consistent approach to the marking of spelling, punctuation and grammar and expectations should be high and should be discussed with students. Students are expected to respond to mistakes in spelling, punctuation and grammar and they should always be given the opportunity to rectify such mistakes. Reference to necessary improvements in this area must be made in written formative assessment: students could act on this feedback in a closing the gap activity or be given the chance to practise correct forms in a manner of their choice.

The following is a guide to best practice in marking for Literacy and is in the staff planner:

SP indicates a spelling error. This should be used to indicate no more than five errors in a piece of work and should focus on key or basic words. The error will be highlighted and corrected.

C indicates a capital letter omission or error. The error will be highlighted and corrected.

NAS indicates that a sentence isn't a complete sentence. The error will be highlighted and corrected.

P indicates a punctuation error. The error will be highlighted and corrected.

// paragraph needed/change of paragraph. Any errors will be highlighted and corrected.

^ indicates that something is missing (a word for instance).

~~~~~ indicates that a section doesn't make sense and needs re-phrasing.

A Literacy and Communication marking sheet should go into all exercise books and be referred to.

Suggestions on improving punctuation and the use of paragraphs will feature throughout students' work. Areas for improvement will be annotated.

If time is limited within lessons, improvements/changes through proof reading/peer assessment. Furthermore, teacher-led literacy marking could be done through formal assessments; peer and self-assessment could be used on notes.

5.6 Interventions

All teachers have a responsibility to identify intervention needs. Teachers, TAs and parents should discuss concerns with a student's ability with their English teacher, the Intervention Coordinator and with the SEND department so the most suitable intervention can be put in place.

Interventions include:

- Apples and Pears
- Dancing Bears
- Bedrock Vocabulary
- Responding and progressing in lesson time, based on feedback
- Tutor Time Reading Programme
- Functional Skills English