

# Cowbridge School



## Literacy Policy

**Formulated by:** Mrs R Williams, Assistant Headteacher

**Adopted by:** Main Governing Body

**Last Reviewed:** Autumn 2022

**Review:** Annually or subject to changes in statutory guidelines or legislation

**Next Review:** Spring 2024

Date of any amendments made to policy and brief points:

Date	Details	Approved by
Autumn 2022	Updated with reference to the Curriculum for Wales 2022, Additional Learning Needs and Blended Learning Replaced reference to 'Students' and 'Pupils' with 'Learners'	Main Governing Body 19.01.2023

## 1. Defining Literacy

'Pupils should be taught in all subjects to express themselves correctly and appropriately and to read accurately and with understanding.'

**QCA "Use of Language Across the Curriculum.**

1.1 At Cowbridge School, we accept the fundamental principle that literacy is the key to improving learning and raising standards; it enables learners to gain access to the subjects studied in school, to read for information and pleasure, and to communicate effectively. Poor levels of literacy impact negatively on what learners can do and how they see themselves. The teaching of literacy is not the responsibility of the English Department alone:

"Literacy is, or ought to be, a shared responsibility- it is too important to leave to English teachers."

**HMI John Hertrich, "Implementing effective literacy initiatives in Secondary School: Lessons from Research", Maureen Lewis and David Wray.**

1.2 All teachers are teachers of literacy. As such, the staff of Cowbridge School are committed to developing literacy skills in all of our learners. We recognise that literacy is one of the mandatory cross-curricular skills within Curriculum for Wales and that it is the "responsibility of all practitioners, across all curriculum areas, to develop and ensure progression" in this skill. Crucially, we believe that literate learners will ultimately emerge as confident and articulate communicators, fully prepared to enter the adult world, whether to continue their academic studies or to enter the world of work. The importance of developing our learners' literacy skills cannot be under-estimated, because:

- (i) language is the main medium we use for teaching, learning and developing thinking, so is at the heart of teaching and learning;
- (ii) learners need vocabulary, expression and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of subjects;
- (iii) reading helps us to learn from sources beyond our immediate experience;
- (iv) writing helps us to sustain and order thought;
- (v) language helps us to reflect, revise and evaluate the things we do, and reflect on the things others have said, written or done;
- (vi) responding to higher order questions encourages the development of thinking skills and enquiry;
- (vii) improving literacy and learning can have an impact on learners' self-esteem, on motivation and behaviour: it allows them to learn independently - it is empowering;
- (viii) good literacy skills are a key factor in raising standards across all subjects.

1.3 **A literate learner is one who:**

- (i) can read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding;
- (ii) can use skills in speaking and listening to explore, articulate and extend understanding of texts;

- (iii) is able to orchestrate a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual) to monitor reading and correct mistakes;
- (iv) can understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately;
- (v) has an interest in words, their usage and meanings;
- (vi) has an extensive vocabulary used appropriately for different purposes;
- (vii) knows, understands and is able to write in a range of genres, and is familiar with ways in which each genre is constructed;
- (viii) understands the conventions of different text types and is able to use their conventions confidently as readers and writers;
- (ix) plans, drafts, revises and edits own writing from notes to a finished form; understands the publishing process and is able to use a variety of means, including ICT, to produce texts for different audiences;
- (x) has an extended technical vocabulary with which to discuss and evaluate reading and writing;
- (xi) reads and writes with enjoyment and discrimination;
- (xii) through reading and writing, develops powers of imagination, critical awareness and thinking;
- (xiii) is able to research independently and make notes from a variety of sources, including the Internet;
- (xiv) uses appropriate reading strategies to extract particular information, e.g. highlighting, scanning;
- (xv) uses talk to question, hypothesise, speculate, evaluate, solve problems and develop thinking about complex issues and ideas;
- (xvi) is able to write cohesively and extensively in an increasingly sophisticated style, using varied punctuation, sentence structures, paragraphs and technical devices;
- (xvii) adapts writing to suit audience and purpose;
- (xviii) confidently uses subject specific vocabulary and correct spellings.

## **2. Policy Aims**

- (i) To adopt a whole-school approach to literacy across the curriculum in keeping with the principles and practices established by Welsh Government, the National Curriculum and the Curriculum for Wales Literacy Framework.
- (ii) To enable all learners to reach their potential in the key literacy skills of reading, writing and speaking and listening. Additional provision will be made for learners who speak a different language at school from the one they speak at home.
- (iii) To support the development of literacy skills throughout the curriculum.
- (iv) To raise staff awareness of key literacy strategies.
- (v) To encourage staff to take responsibility for the development of literacy in their subject areas through the inclusion of appropriate schemes of learning and lesson planning.
- (vi) To support the development of literacy through the deployment of a range of resources in the school, including blended learning.
- (vii) To identify specific roles and responsibilities within the school with regard to the development of literacy work.
- (viii) To establish procedures for monitoring literacy across the curriculum.

### **3. Development of Literacy at Whole-School Level - Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **3.1 The role of the Senior Leadership Team is to:**

- (i) participate in the strategic planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review of the whole school literacy strategy;
- (ii) specify expectations of all teachers;
- (iii) support the development and implementation of a whole-school literacy policy;
- (iv) provide INSET, resources and opportunities for staff to accommodate the National Literacy Framework within schemes of learning.

#### **3.2 The role of the Senior Leader in charge of Literacy is to:**

- (i) work with the Senior Leadership Team to determine a strategy for developing literacy across the curriculum and to ensure the effective development and implementation of the literacy policy;
- (ii) review the Curriculum for Wales Literacy Framework provision and identify opportunities to develop and apply literacy skills;
- (iii) audit existing examples of good practice in literacy across the curriculum;
- (iv) encourage teachers of English to provide assistance and advice to other departments so that a consistent approach exists across the School;
- (v) advise on how good standards of literacy help to improve standards across the curriculum;
- (vi) advise staff on how to introduce and consolidate the teaching of literacy skills;
- (vii) ensure consistency of approach across the School;
- (viii) identify areas of literacy with which teachers need most support when teaching, within the context of a particular subject, and implement measures to address issues;
- (ix) monitor, evaluate and review the impact of applying the literacy policy.

#### **3.3 The role of a Curriculum Leader is to:**

- (i) identify opportunities for developing literacy skills in schemes of learning;
- (ii) map progression in literacy skills across year groups;
- (iii) ensure coherence and consistency in the application of literacy skills linked to the Curriculum for Wales Literacy Framework, across the curriculum area and all associated teaching staff;
- (iv) work with curriculum staff to plan progressive, differentiated and challenging tasks that will allow learners to demonstrate understanding and develop and consolidate the full range of literacy skills;
- (v) monitor, evaluate and review the impact of approaches on standards of teaching and learning in the curriculum area.

#### **3.4 The role of a teacher is to:**

- (i) be familiar with the Curriculum for Wales Literacy Framework and progression through it;
- (ii) contribute to learners' development of language, since speaking, listening, writing and reading are, to varying degrees, integral to all lessons;

- (iii) understand the importance of literacy skills in relation to raising standards of work in their own curriculum areas;
- (iv) fully integrate relevant literacy skills into planning to provide challenging and stimulating learning experiences for learners;
- (v) identify opportunities for developing and applying literacy skills within schemes of learning and plan tasks that will allow learners to demonstrate understanding of, and consolidate, the range of literacy skills;
- (vi) mark learners' work for skills in literacy where appropriate, in line with the whole school marking policy;
- (vii) monitor, evaluate and review the impact of approaches on standards of learning in lessons.

#### **4. Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation will take place through the following mechanisms:

- (i) analysis of prior, predictive and attainment data to track progress made by individual learners, with reference to National Reading Test data and assessment data;
- (ii) line management discussions with curriculum leaders/assistant curriculum leaders;
- (iii) whole school self-review procedures; (iv) discussion with, and reports to, governors.

#### **5. Including All Learners**

##### **5.1 Differentiation**

Learners at Cowbridge School 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:

- (i) questioning;
- (ii) adjusting the demands of the task;
- (iii) the use of additional support;
- (iv) use of group structures;
- (v) resources that support and challenge;
- (vi) making objectives clear;
- (vii) intervention programmes;
- (viii) creating an atmosphere where learners evaluate their own and others' work.

##### **5.2 Literacy Progress**

Literacy intervention provision varies each academic year depending on timetabling and staffing constraints. Targeted intervention will be used to help learners to catch up with their peers as quickly and effectively as possible in order to maximise access to the secondary curriculum.

##### **5.3 Higher Attainers** We will seek to:

- (i) identify higher attaining learners;
- (ii) promote ways of structuring learning for able learners by using Curriculum for Wales National Literacy Framework objectives and appropriately differentiated tasks ("stage not age");

- (iii) develop a teaching repertoire which supports and challenges higher attaining learners.

#### **5.4 English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

Our learners learning EAL need to hear good examples of spoken English and also need to refer to their first language skills to aid new learning in all areas of the curriculum. The use of their first language enables them to draw on existing knowledge and to develop English language skills in context, for example, a group of learners could learn about paragraph organisation in their mother tongue.

#### **5.5 Additional Learning Needs**

We will teach our learners with additional learning needs appropriately, with due regard to their individual development plans (IDPs). We will support their learning and provide them with challenges matched to their needs, by using a range of teaching strategies such as guided group work, small group intervention, writing frames and oral activities. Classroom teachers will use differentiated classroom strategies and liaise with the Additional Learning Needs Department, as appropriate, to support in the delivery of additional learning provision (ALP).

### **6. National Literacy Framework**

6.1 The key aims of the National Literacy Framework are to:

- (i) help teachers of all curriculum areas to identify and provide opportunities for learners to apply literacy across the curriculum;
- (ii) describe the expectations for literacy for learners;
- (iii) help determine learner progress in literacy.

6.2 The five strands of the Literacy Framework are:

- (i) Translanguaging
- (ii) Listening
- (iii) Reading
- (iv) Speaking
- (v) Writing

<https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/cross-curricular-skills-frameworks>

### **7. Curriculum for Wales**

Literacy is one of the mandatory cross-curricular skills which underpin the four purposes of the Curriculum for Wales. In developing learners' literacy skills, the strands outlined in the framework can be applied and connected, where appropriate, across the curriculum, by using a range of real-life contexts to introduce and explore literacy concepts, as well as to consolidate them.

<https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales>

### **8. Literacy Across the Curriculum**

#### **8.1 Speaking and Listening**

- (i) Talk is our main means of communication in everyday life and is fundamental to the development of understanding.
- (ii) We want our learners to develop increasing confidence and competence in speaking and listening. We will, therefore, provide activities across the whole curriculum for learners to:
  - listen to and carry out instructions;
  - listen to others and respond to and build on their ideas and views constructively;
  - ask questions as well as answer them;
  - use language precisely and coherently.
- (iii) We have developed strategies to teach learners how to participate orally in groups and in the whole class, including:
  - using talk to develop and clarify ideas;
  - using talk to identify the main points to arise from a discussion;
  - listening for a specific purpose; □ discussion and evaluation.
- (iv) We strive to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills by:
  - encouraging learners to speak in full sentences, using standard English (not slang);
  - correcting grammatical errors (would have NOT would of; wrote NOT writ; brought NOT brung), fillers (er, um etc.) and unnecessary repetition (like, OK);
  - giving learners thinking time before asking them to provide a verbal response;
  - using fewer "What...?" questions – asking more "How...?" and "Why...?";
  - enforcing a 'no-hands-up' policy as often as possible;
  - encouraging "active listening" – giving learners a list of things that they need to specifically listen out for during the lesson;
  - expecting clarity e.g. hand away from the mouth; sitting up straight/standing when presenting to ensure voice projection;
  - modelling competent speech; □ praising speech specifically, not just knowledge and understanding.

## 8.2 Reading

- (i) We want our learners to enjoy reading; to be able to use their reading to help them learn; and, to develop increasing confidence in reading.
- (ii) We aim to give learners a level of literacy that will enable them to cope with the increasing demands of subjects in terms of specific skills, knowledge and understanding.
- (iii) We will teach learners strategies to help them to:
  - read fluently, accurately and with understanding;
  - locate and use information from a wide range of texts/sources including print, media and ICT, and to evaluate these sources for accuracy and reliability;

- apply techniques such as skimming, scanning and text-marking effectively in order to follow an argument, summarise, synthesise, compare, research, analyse and appraise texts;
  - become independent and critical readers who can make informed and appropriate choices;
  - read for pleasure.
- (iv) We strive to improve learners' reading skills by:
- providing reading material of a high quality in every curriculum area, which is up to date, relevant and balanced in its presentation of ethnicity, culture and gender and appropriate for the age and ability of the pupils;
  - providing selected learners with a suitable reading intervention programme;
  - promoting reading for pleasure by offering a borrowing service through the LRC;
  - running a yearly Book Fair to further stimulate learners' interest in reading;
  - providing a classroom environment which is conducive to good literacy practice;
  - running a book club where learners can read and discuss a variety of books;
    - providing parents with information about how to best support their child's reading and encouraging them to do so.

### 8.3 Writing

- (i) The importance of developing learners' writing skills cannot be under-estimated, as virtually all lessons include and depend on written communication.
- (ii) We want our learners to be able to:
- write ***extensively*** in a wide variety of forms, for different audiences and purposes;
  - plan, draft, discuss, reflect on and edit their writing,
  - develop ideas and communicate meaning to a reader using wide-ranging and technical vocabulary;
  - organise and structure their work appropriately, using sentences/paragraphs, which are grammatically correct, and an effective style;
  - present their writing clearly using accurate punctuation, correct spelling and legible handwriting;
- (iii) It is important that we provide for co-ordination across curriculum areas to recognise and reinforce learners' language skills, through:
- making connections between learners' reading and writing, so that learners have clear models for their writing using the text type templates;
  - using the modelling process and text type templates to make explicit to learners *how* to write;
  - being clear about audience and purpose;
  - providing opportunities for a range of writing including sustained/extensive writing.
- (iv) In every curriculum area, we strive to improve learners' writing skills by:



- providing good models of particular kinds of writing and, where learners are asked to write in a particular genre, e.g. a newspaper report, teachers will ensure that learners are familiar with the appropriate style and conventions;
- setting writing tasks that have clear and immediate purposes, are objective driven and which are appropriate for the age and ability of the learners concerned;
- teaching learners how to structure their writing using a variety of sentence structures, paragraphs and a wide range of punctuation, including higher order punctuation such as semi-colons, colons and brackets. Teachers will correct errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling, using the marking codes for literacy and learners will correct errors using the look-say-cover-writecheck model. Correct spellings will be written, by learners, three times.
- providing dictionaries and thesauruses and teaching learners how to use them;
- displaying key words in every classroom and teaching subject-specific vocabulary and spelling;
- encouraging high standards of presentation;
- celebrating learners' best writing;
- offering learners opportunities to participate in writing programmes, including extra-curricular writing activities, competitions, etc.