



LITERACY

Rationale

At Cumberland School, we accept the fundamental principle that Literacy is the key to improving learning and raising standards; it enables pupils 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 pupils can do and how they see themselves. Crucially, we believe that literate pupils 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. All teachers are teachers of literacy. As such, the staff of Cumberland School share responsibility for the teaching of literacy across the curriculum and recognise their statutory responsibilities, as outlined in The National Curriculum

Language is the prime medium through which pupils learn and express themselves across the curriculum, and all teachers have a stake in effective literacy because:

- pupils 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 and order 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 enquiry;
- improving literacy and learning can have an impact on pupils' self-esteem, on motivation and behaviour. It allows them to learn independently. It is empowering and facilitates enjoyable learning.

Policy Aims

1. To adopt a whole-school approach to literacy across the curriculum in keeping with the principles and practices established in the National Strategy.
2. To enable all pupils to reach their potential in the key literacy skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening.
3. Additional provision will be made for pupils who speak a different language at school from the one they speak at home, as detailed.
4. To support the development of literacy skills throughout the curriculum and those who are under performing.
5. To raise staff awareness of key literacy strategies through working party discussions, INSET and the dissemination of good classroom practice.
6. To encourage staff to take responsibility for the development of literacy in their subject areas through the inclusion of appropriate schemes of work and lesson planning.
7. To support the development of literacy through the deployment of a range of resources in the school e.g. Library, ICT suites etc.
8. To identify specific roles and responsibilities within the school with regard to the development of literacy work.
9. To establish procedures for monitoring literacy across the curriculum.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Leadership Group:

- accept overall responsibility for the delivery of the school's Literacy Policy;
- provide opportunities for staff training about literacy issues to take place on Professional Training days or during other times;
- monitor departments' implementation of the Literacy Policy.

The Teacher in Charge should:

- ensure that 'subject specific literacy' is clearly identified in schemes of work, and that there is obvious progression through the key stages;
- seek to find opportunities to liaise with the English Department and the Literacy Co-ordinator to provide continuity;
- monitor the work of the department with regard to the inclusion of specific literacy strategies in lesson planning;
- encourage models of good practice e.g. modelling and close collaboration between colleagues in order to promote literacy developments;
- use available assessment data to identify pupils that need support.

Teachers across the curriculum: contribute to pupils' development of language, since speaking, listening, writing and reading are, to varying degrees, integral to all lessons; should ensure that they are familiar with the specific literacy demands of their subject and ensure sufficient coverage of these skills in their lesson planning

Literacy co-ordinator should:

- support departments in the implementation of the school's Literacy Policy;
- co-ordinate KS3 and KS4 literacy initiatives;
- liaise with the SENCO/ TIC EAL about pupils attaining below level 3 and about the Literacy provision to support this;
- help to monitor the impact of the Literacy Policy on standards of literacy, communicate with all subject staff about those pupils who have literacy difficulties and give advice on what staff can do to help these pupils in their subject;
- monitor pupils with literacy difficulties through IEPs and review meetings;
- be familiar with the KS3 English Framework objectives for years 7,8 and 9.

The SENCO

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator should:

- liaise with the Literacy Co-ordinator about pupils attaining below Level 3 and about the Literacy support available.

The Librarian

The school Librarian should:

- provide appropriate resources to support the curriculum;
- provide appropriate resources to support homework and other curriculum tasks;
- support staff in teaching pupils how to research independently from a range of sources;
- help promote reading for pleasure across the school;
- provide facilities and support to encourage independent reading and writing.

Parents: encourage their children to use the range of strategies they have learnt to improve their levels of literacy.

Pupils: take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs and making improvements

Governors: an identified governor could meet with staff and pupils and report progress and issues to the governing body and to parents in the governors' annual report.

STRATEGIES

Reading

1. Across the whole curriculum teachers will provide activities for pupils to:
 - read and follow written instructions;
 - read to explore and to develop understanding;
 - learn how to sift, select and take notes from the text;
 - learn how to access their textbook, including format and index;
 - learn how to select from written material, reformulate, question and challenge what they read in textbooks, encyclopedias and newspapers or from ICT sources;
 - learn how to use intermodal text.
2. Teachers will provide reading material of high quality, which is up to date, relevant and balanced in its presentation of ethnicity, culture and gender and appropriate for age and ability of the pupils.

Modules five and six in the folder 'Literacy Across the Curriculum' provide examples of strategies that can be used to help pupils cope with the increasing demands of subjects.

Writing

1. It is important that we provide for co-ordination across subjects to recognise and reinforce pupils' language skills, through:
 - making connections between pupils' reading and writing, so that pupils have clear models for their writing;
 - using the modelling process to make explicit to pupils *how* to write;
 - being clear about audience and purpose;
 - providing opportunities for a range of writing including sustained writing.
2. Teachers will set writing tasks that have clear and immediate purposes are objective driven and which are appropriate for the age and ability of the pupils concerned.
3. Teachers will teach pupils how to structure their writing using a variety of sentence structures, paragraphs and a wide range of punctuation, including higher order punctuation e.g. semi- colons, colons and brackets.
4. Where pupils are asked to write in a particular genre, e.g. a newspaper report, teachers will ensure that pupils are familiar with the appropriate style and conventions.
5. Teachers will correct errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling in line with the school's assessment policy.
6. We will aim to:
 - provide good models of particular kinds of writing;
 - provide Frameworks where appropriate;
 - provide dictionaries and teach pupils how to use them;
 - display Key Words in the classroom;
 - teach subject specific vocabulary and spelling;
 - encourage high standards of presentation;
 - ensure progression through support and intervention.

Speaking and Listening

We will teach pupils to use language precisely and coherently. Pupils should be able to listen to others, and to respond and build on their ideas and views constructively.

We will develop strategies to teach pupils 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.

Across the whole curriculum teachers will provide activities (both formally and informally) for pupils 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;
- develop problem solving skills.

Functional Skills are:

'The core elements of English, mathematics and ICT that provide the individual with the essential knowledge, skills and understanding that will enable them to operate confidently effectively and independently in life and at work'.

(QCDA, July 2011)

Monitoring and Evaluation

We will make use of available data to assess the standards of pupils' literacy. Senior Managers and the Literacy Co-ordinator will decide how to monitor progress in the school.

Possible approaches are:

- sampling work – both pupils' work and departmental schemes;
- observation – pupil pursuit and literacy teaching;
- meetings;
- pupil interviews;
- scrutiny of development plans;
- encouraging departments to share good practice by exhibiting or exemplifying pupils' work.

Including All Pupils

1. Differentiation

At Cumberland School pupils 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;
- use of group structures;
- resources;
- making objectives clear;
- creating an atmosphere where pupils evaluate their own others' work.

2. Literacy Programmes

Targeted intervention in Y7 will be used to help pupils to catch up with their peers as quickly and effectively as possible in order to maximise access to the secondary curriculum.

- Teachers across the curriculum will be kept informed about which pupils are participating in a literacy programme.
- Teachers will be familiar with the content of the particular programme in order that they can 'link the learning' into their subject area and to provide pupils with opportunities to practise their skills.
- Literacy leaders will also provide targeted support

3. The more able

We will seek to:

- identify able pupils;
- promote ways of structuring learning for able pupils by using Framework objectives;
- develop a teaching repertoire which supports and challenges able pupils.

4. English as an Additional Language

Our pupils learning EAL need to hear good examples of spoken English and also to refer to their first language skills to aid new learning in all subjects of the curriculum. The use of their first language enables them to draw on existing subject knowledge and to develop English language skills in context.

5. SEN

We will teach our pupils with special educational needs appropriately, supporting their learning and providing them with challenges matched to their needs, through using a range of teaching strategies such as guided group work, writing frames and oral activities.

6. Assessment

Available data from KS2 is used to inform planning and to assist us in responding to early pieces of work. This data is used to set numerical and curricular targets for each cohort.

The best assessment informs lesson-planning and target-setting and helps us to maintain the pace of learning for all pupils this is currently being reviewed with the revitalisation of AFL and the introduction of APP which is in its pilot stage.

For detailed guidance on marking, see our marking policy.

The English Department

In addition to all the whole-school aspects of this policy, the English teachers at Cumberland School have a leading role in providing pupils 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:

- a key role in identifying literacy priorities, targets and objectives and particular contribution they can make;
- making a contribution to the whole school development plan;
- using data to identify curricular targets;
- writing the department development plan to achieve these.