Literacy Policy

Wilmington Academy's Literacy Policy

Rationale
Literacy is an essential life skill for maximising our students' academic achievement, employability, and life experiences. At Wilmington Academy, every teacher is therefore a teacher of Literacy. We are committed to developing our students' desire and ability to communicate with enjoyment, precision, and impact. Using the strategies outlined in this document, we work collectively to achieve these Literacy objectives:

1. Every student can become an engaged and capable reader.
2. Every student can become a competent and accurate writer.
3. Every student can become a competent and accurate speller.
4. Every student can become an articulate speaker.
5. All students can overcome barriers to literacy.

Every Student can become an engaged and capable reader
Reading is regularly promoted across the Academy in various ways, including wall displays, briefings, assemblies, DEAR Time, reading mentors, intervention programmes, reading lessons, newsletters, and whole-Academy Literacy events. Annual events include our World Book Day Festivals, which we have won a Kent Literacy Award for three years running, and we are always exploring new opportunities.

Our LRC is a vibrant hub of activity that has been redesigned to encourage both study and comfortable reading for pleasure. An enthusiastic librarian supports our students with book selections and responds to requests for specific titles/authors/series. As our students continue to develop their interest in reading for pleasure, over 10000 books per year are now being loaned, as well as iPads, magazines, and newspapers.

All year 7 and most of Year 8 are enrolled on the Accelerated Reader Programme, a computer-aided reading programme designed to improve both reading ability and enjoyment. Students are tested for their reading age and then provided with a suggested range of books suited to their ability. Students select books, read, and then quiz their comprehension. To motivate students and stimulate healthy competition, students receive prizes based on the success of their quizzes. Teachers monitor progress and intervene as needed. There are also Reading Passports available for teachers to use with classes in Year 8, 9, and 10, which promotes novels from across genres, different cultures, and literary periods.

Every student can become a competent and accurate writer
All students, regardless of which subject they are studying in, are encouraged to complete the following steps when creating written work:
1. Genre, Audience, Purpose – students identify the audience, purpose and format clearly
2. Brainstorm and Research – students generate ideas and research effectively before drafting
3. Layout – students see examples of the text type and are guided through the structural features of the genre they are writing
4. Reflect and Proofread – all work is self, peer, or teacher assessed in conjunction with the marking policy guidelines and redrafted before submission

The SPAG Programme gives students in Year 7 and 8 the opportunity to have starters in over 80 concepts of grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, and spelling every week at the start of English

lessons. Proformas are also provided to staff so that all subjects can teach these concepts as well, in line with the 'Seeds of Success' timeline. These can be used with all year groups.

All faculties are responsible for including Literacy provision as an integral part of their curriculum. At the core of this process is the **'Seeds of Success'** programme, where a specific element of literacy is used in staff training, the teaching of lessons and the marking of student work.

Module 1	Capital Letters	Module 4	Connectives
Module 2	Full Sentences	Module 5	Apostrophes
Module 3	Spelling	Module 6	Homophones

All staff and students are expected to mark for literacy by identifying the errors using the following codes to create consistency. These codes are to be displayed in folders or on books.

SP = Spelling (correct and practice 3 times)   P = Punctuation
C = Capital letter   //= New paragraph
Gr = Grammatical error   / = New sentence
✓ = Good point   ✓✓ = Exceptional point   TN = Tense
? = Confusing sentence structure / idea   ^ = Word missing, please insert

Every student can become a competent speller
Staff are an integral part of improving the spelling ability of students. Staff have completed CPD in supporting spelling and use this when introducing new words in lessons, or correcting a student's spelling. They also promote the 'No Excuses Spelling List', which includes 10 focus words for their subject area. Posters of these are present in every classroom.

The 'Seeds of Success' programme also includes the Module 3 focus on spelling, and the SPAG Programme has structured lesson starters in spelling for all Year 7 and 8. There is also access to dictionaries in every classroom in the academy as well as being able to use dictionaries on online with their devices, and students are guided in how to use them independently.

Every student can become an articulate speaker
The academy is one of 13 pilot schools in its second year on the Voice 21 programme, which has been launched by School 21 in conjunction with the Education Endowment Fund. This has seen the academy appoint a Voice 21 Co-ordinator, and run regular CPD for staff on how to help students with opportunities to engage in meaningful talk with peers and teachers, through a range of in-class tasks including Harkness groups, discussions, presentations, and role-playing. Staff will be trained in a universal criteria for assessing oracy skills across all curriculum areas, as well as focusing on skills in four key strands: physical, social/emotional, cognitive, and linguistic. This year, every faculty will have at least one oracy based task completed in their faculty for each year group.

There will be six key elements of oracy covered this year:

Module 1	Proof of Listening	Module 4	Social - The power of tone and empathy
Module 2	Authentic Audience	Module 5	Cognitive - Think before you speak

Module 3	Linguistic - What is our most beautiful language?	Module 6	Physical - Voice and Body

Assemblies provide an excellent opportunity for all students to develop their Literacy skills, as every tutor group is expected to deliver at least one assembly each year. The majority of assemblies are student-led and offer the chance for all students to practise their speaking and listening skills before a large, supportive audience of peers. Students also have the ability to learn positive talk for learning through tutor time literacy activities. Action Days also provide an excellent opportunity to develop oracy skills through meaningful discussion tasks on a range of important issues.

All students can overcome barriers to literacy
We assess all year 7-12 students for reading and spelling ability each July-September to identify required interventions. We then organise the interventions, carefully tailored to the identified needs of individual students. The most crucial of these interventions is **Fresh Start Synthetic Phonics** for Year 7 students with the weakest Literacy skills. This is an intensive intervention taught in small groups for three hours each week during Modules 1 – 5. Progress and impact is tracked and further support is then adapted as required. Other interventions include:
· **Units of Sound** and **Nessy** (Dyslexia Action program) early sessions before school and during lunch
· **Handwriting Groups,** with handwriting mentors where possible
· **Rosetta Stone** for EAL students
· **Specialist Teacher assessments** for Access Arrangements
· **Visual Stress Assessments**
· **Use of Laptops/Notebooks** as alternative means of recording

Lesson Observations
Lesson observations, learning walks, and book looks assess the quality of Literacy provision in all faculty areas (in line with the Teaching and Learning Review and Performance Management Calendar). Areas of best practice and/or development are identified and then fed into the Academy's CPD programme.

Continued Professional Development
Literacy training is a regular component of the whole-Academy CPD programme - for both teaching staff and teaching assistants. External agents provide occasional training, but we aim primarily to identify and share best practice amongst our own staff. As all faculties have a designated Literacy Representative, there is also an opportunity for each faculty to develop key areas of their practice in line with the literacy policy.

Parental Engagement with Literacy
Key literacy developments are highlighted to parents in each modular newsletter. Likewise, parents receive letters about every major literacy initiative and guidance to help them in supporting their child's literacy development. A literacy event will be held at least one per term this year, to invite parents into the academy and provide them with strategies to support their child, or to celebrate literacy.