



# **Literacy Policy**

**Reviewed Date: July 2023**

**Next Review Date: July 2024**

*“It is not enough to simply teach children to read; we have to give them something worth reading. Something that will stretch their imaginations—something that will help them make sense of their own lives and encourage them to reach out toward people whose lives are quite different from their own.”*

—Katherine Patterson

## **Rationale**

Literacy is an essential life skill for maximising our students’ academic achievement, employability and life experiences. At Wilmington Academy, every teacher is a teacher of Literacy. As a school, we are committed to ensuring that our learners experience ‘Quality First Teaching’ across the curriculum and we recognise that the explicit teaching of literacy is integral to Quality First Teaching. Furthermore, we are dedicated to developing our students’ desire and ability to communicate with enjoyment, precision, and impact. As part of the LAT trust, we have over the past 2 years created an emphasis on Disciplinary Literacy which highlights the importance of every teacher communicating their subject through academic language, and that reading, writing, speaking and listening are at the heart of engaging successfully with every subject at the academy.

**Using the strategies outlined in this document, we work collectively to achieve the following Literacy objectives:**

- Every student can become an engaged, motivated and fluent reader.
- Every student can become a competent, accurate and passionate writer.
- Every student can become a competent and accurate speller.
- Every student can become an effective and confident communicator.
- All students can overcome barriers to literacy.

### **1. Every student can become an engaged, confident and fluent reader**

- Reading is the gateway to learning; it is the key to pupils’ future academic achievement and well-being and pupils who struggle to read words accurately quickly fall behind their peers. With this firmly entrenched in our minds, we have prioritised reading to allow pupils to access the full curriculum offered. Reading is strongly promoted across Wilmington Academy in a range of effective ways to ensure success: Form-Time Reading Programme (every student has access to a form reading novel), Accelerated Reader Programme - bespoke lessons, SPARX-READER (Y9) wall displays in classrooms and notice boards across the academy, staff-briefings, college and year-group assemblies, DEAR Time during English, Form time programmes, Post 16-reading mentors, Word of the Week (W.o.W), WANT (T.V.) announcements, intervention programmes including Fresh-start phonics, newsletters, parent bulletins and whole-Academy Literacy events. Annual events include our World Book Day Festivals (which we have won a Kent Literacy Award for five years running), cultural awareness days, Book Clubs and the annual Library rewards’ trips and many other cultural and academic celebrations throughout the year.
- Our LRC is a vibrant hub of activity which has been redesigned to encourage study, comfortable reading for pleasure and an IB approach towards reading. Our experienced and enthusiastic librarian supports our students with book selections and responds to requests for specific titles/authors/series. As our students continue to develop their deep love for ‘Reading for Pleasure’, over 17,500 books per year are now being loaned.
- All Year 7 and Year 8 students are enrolled onto the Accelerated Reader Programme, a computer-aided reading programme designed to improve both reading ability and enjoyment. This is delivered in a bespoke manner by the librarian to ensure consistency, quality and high engagement of all students. All students are STAR - tested for their reading ages and then provided with a suggested range (ZPD) of books suited to their

ability. Students select books, read, and then quiz their comprehension. Every KS3 student is given a bespoke modular target based on ability to ensure that they maximise the effectiveness of the programme. Teachers closely monitor progress and bespoke interventions are put in place to support the low ability readers. These are coordinated through the SEN department.

- Every student participates in the form reading programme which allows them to fully engage with a novel per term. Weekly lessons are created to support the motivation, mechanics and the understanding of all students through this bespoke form programme.
- Every student has a vocabulary notebook to develop their word hoard which supports their knowledge and understanding of tier 2 vocabulary. This in turn enhances their understanding of the various texts that are read in subjects across the curriculum as well as the form novels.

**The key strategies for this academic year will be:**

1. Enhance 'Disciplinary Literacy' across the curriculum.
2. To enhance the breadth of students' vocabulary.
3. To continue to develop students' ability to read age-appropriate texts fluently, support their confidence and their enjoyment of reading.
4. To continue to provide high-quality literacy interventions for struggling students

**Furthermore the following aspects of Literacy will be enhanced across the Academy:**

- Enhance the Word of the Week (W.o.W) in all lessons and at tutor time
- Teachers fully embed the explicit teaching of vocabulary into their lessons thus enabling students to become 'word-rich' and ensuring that disciplinary literacy is the focus across the academy
- Enhancing the teaching of academic vocabulary explicitly and clearly, with coherent planning throughout the curriculum communicated through the Literacy Locksmiths in each faculty
- To continue to promote high-quality academic talk in lessons to develop the oracy element of literacy at the academy
- To continue to foster 'word-consciousness' in our students through the use of 'vocabulary notebooks' in tutor time
- To fully embed teaching students independent word-learning strategies - use of etymology and morphology to embed tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary in students' learning
- Disciplinary Literacy is fully embedded through the use of 'word walls' effectively in lessons to demonstrate the use of key-words and new vocabulary in context

**2. Every student can become a competent and accurate writer**

The overarching theme for the year 2023-2024 is: ***Literacy Unlocked***.

Through the bespoke use of UDL at the academy, all students are able to present their written ideas in a variety of forms to demonstrate their understanding of topics and subjects.

All students, regardless of which subject they are studying in, are encouraged to complete the following steps when creating written work:

- Purpose, Audience, Form- students identify these aspects clearly
- Thought-shower and research - students generate ideas and research effectively before drafting (links to digital strategy of the academy)
- Layout - students see examples of the different text types and are guided through the structural features of the genre they are writing
- Reflect and Proofread - all assessment work is self, peer, or teacher assessed in conjunction with the marking policy guidelines (and redrafted where possible) before

- submission ( links to The Wilmington Way and the IB learner Traits)
- Students use subject specific terminology from their Knowledge Organisers to ensure they engage with and improve vocabulary across all subjects
- Students make reference to the '*Literacy- Keys to Success*' in their exercise books to support, enhance and develop their writing skills:

**Key W- Writing Rules; Paragraphs; Structure of work and Connective lists**

**Key R- Reading Rules; Purpose Audience and Format (PAF) and Better words for 'shows'**

**Key WT - Word Types: Verbs, Adverbs, Nouns, Pronouns, Adjectives, Prepositions and Connectives**

**Key S&L - Speaking and Listening**

**Key P- Punctuation: Basic, Intermediate and More Complex**

All staff and students are expected to mark for literacy by identifying the errors using the following codes to create consistency. These codes are displayed in classrooms for Assessment Feedback and Assessment (RoP) Folders for each student in each subject.

**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**

### **3. Every student can become a competent speller**

- Staff are an integral part of improving the spelling ability of students. By introducing Knowledge Organisers, staff make their expectations for vocabulary and its spelling very clear at the beginning of each module of learning. In lessons, staff focus on the spelling of keywords and subject terminology and their meanings for each unit of work. By referring back to the Knowledge Organiser, staff and students can reinforce the correct spelling of each key word through using these words in Learning Questions, Statements of Inquiry, Do Now/ Starters, Word of the Week programme, Quick Spelling Tests, Criteria for Assessment, form spelling tests etc
- By the end of each module students should be exposed to and have practised writing key words regularly. With the knowledge and practice of these words, students can develop confidence and proficiency in their writing
- Spelling tests are embedded within the Academy tutor programme for each module based on the Words of the Week (W.o.W) in each module. These are undertaken and assessed at form level in the yellow vocabulary notebooks

### **4. Every student can become an effective communicator**

- During key events at the academy, students are offered the exciting opportunity of becoming student ambassadors to host, lead and engage with guests and student visitors using their oracy skills to communicate the ethos of our academy to visitors for example: Open Evenings and mornings, Induction days and Showcase events
- At regular intervals across the year, our entire school participates in Action Days where students are encouraged to engage in full days related to personal development topics as well as IB related issues. In each of these sessions, students are led on various topics to explore in detail. Throughout these sessions, students are encouraged to express their thoughts, opinions and questions verbally with their peers.
- Students at Wilmington Academy, also participate in Interdisciplinary Days at various points in the school year to demonstrate their understanding when they bring together

concepts, methods, or forms of communication from two or more disciplines or established areas of expertise so that they can explain a phenomenon, solve a problem, create a product or raise a new question in ways that would have been unlikely through a single discipline. This is effectively demonstrated through the communication skills of the students. A key part of the Interdisciplinary days is an oral presentation by students

- At KS4 level, students conduct research on a range of current topics and present a structured talk to the entire class as part of their *Spoken Language Endorsement*. This involves a detailed writing process, the use of IT skills as well as practising their oracy skills to learn how to present to an audience.
- Talk matters: both in its own rights and because of its impact on other parts of learning at our academy. Assemblies provide an excellent opportunity for all students to develop their Literacy skills ; 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 and Inter-Disciplinary days also provide an excellent opportunity to develop oracy skills through meaningful discussion tasks on a range of important issues.
- Evenings showcasing students' work in various disciplines are opportunities for students to discuss with parents and the community at large the kind of work they do. Our theatre and Musical Performances often have student -led portions where students communicate the work and learning they do.
- The introduction of the School Library Prefects is key to developing skills at grassroots level. These prefects support reading through discussions with their peers about book selections, AR programme, quizzing, book reviews and a host of other activities to ensure that reading is at the forefront of everything in the LRC.

### **All students can overcome barriers to literacy**

We assess all year 7-11 students for reading ability each year to identify required interventions. We then organise the interventions, carefully tailored to the identified needs of individual students. Progress and impact is tracked and further support is then adapted as required. Interventions include:

- **Toe by Toe phonics** to our low ability readers
- **Entry Level intervention - Y9 students**
- **Sparx reader support - Y9 students**
- **Fresh Start Phonics** - taught in small groups to weakest literacy students in Year 7 on a daily basis
- **Nessy** (Dyslexia Action programme)
- **Dyslexia screening** by SEN
- **1:1 Reading and Literacy withdrawal sessions** in SEN and pastorally in college groups
- **Rosetta Stone and Fresh-start phonics** for EAL students
- **Specialist Teacher assessments** for Access Arrangements
- **Visual Stress Assessments**
- **Use of Laptops/Notebooks** as alternative means of recording and allowing students the ability to read over their own work (ReadWrite tools)
- Use of **Dyslexia Dictionaries** in every classroom

### **Lesson Observations**

- Lesson observations, learning walks, book looks and Reflection of Progress folders (RoPs) 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.

- A particular focus of Formal lesson observations is the Literacy Marking Policy for all subject areas which is Q/A by the Literacy team.

### **Continued Professional Development**

- Literacy training is a regular component of the whole-Academy CPD programme - for both teaching staff and teaching assistants.
- At the commencement of every module the strategy is presented and discussed with the entire staff to ensure consistency across the academy.
- National and Chartered College training courses for all members of staff throughout the year.
- External agents provide occasional training, but we aim primarily to identify and share best practice amongst our own staff.
- Literacy Showcase working with other schools in the Leigh Academy Trust (LAT) to develop and support literacy provision.

### **Parental Engagement with Literacy**

- Key literacy developments are highlighted to parents in each modular newsletter. Likewise, parents receive letters about major literacy initiatives and guidance to help them in supporting their child's literacy development.
- Literacy events are also held to invite parents into the Academy and provide them with strategies to support their child, or to celebrate literacy.
- Literacy presentations to every new Y7 parent in the parent evening meetings.

### **Literacy Quality Assurance**

This is conducted through the following ways:

- STAR testing of students in years 7 - 10 to track progress each term
- AR - Regular monitoring of data through the online reporting system. This data is regularly shared with AR teachers as well as English teachers to evaluate the impact of the digital platforms.
- Reading comprehension tasks each week in form time to evaluate the impact of the form time reading activities - Q/A by the Literacy team
- Regular meetings with the Literacy team and the SEND department
- Literacy Learning walks each term to analyse and evaluate the impact of creating 'word-rich' classrooms
- Tutor- Time drop-ins to evaluate the impact of the form reading programme
- Book and R.O.P. work scrutinies to quality assure the implementation of the 'Literacy-Keys to success' and 'Marking for Literacy'
- Lesson observations to ensure that Literacy strategies and practices are embedded in lessons
- Use of student voice to evaluate impact each term
- Evaluating impact of strategies by quality assuring assessments, tests, and mock exams in subject areas each term