Literacy Policy

The Eastwood Academy

Believe, Succeed, Together

Date Reviewed	June 2022
Date Ratified by the Trust	July 2022

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1.0 Definition

Literacy is the *'ability to speak, listen, read and write at a sufficiently competent level to communicate thoughts, ideas, feelings and opinions clearly, meaningfully, effectively and appropriately for both purpose and audience'.*

2.0 Policy Aims

2.1 Curriculum Intent

In respect to literacy, the Academy's curriculum intent states the following:

'To provide opportunities for all pupils to develop a high level of literacy and numeracy required for success in adult life'.

2.2 CREATE Curriculum

Enhancing transferable literacy skills across the curriculum is a key part of the CREATE curriculum.

CREATE Element	Description
Challenge	Stretch and extend learning to foster a deeper understanding beyond the content of the National Curriculum and GCSE specifications.
Regulate	Plan, monitor and evaluate specific aspects of learning to foster greater responsibility and independence – DRAFT.
Enhance	**Consolidate and develop transferable literacy and numeracy skills.**
Assess	Undertake regular in-class assessment to monitor strengths and highlight specific areas for improvement.
Target	Consolidate identified strengths and develop and overcome areas for improvement.
Enrich	Enhance physical and emotional wellbeing; develop social, spiritual, moral and cultural capital; and provide opportunities and experiences to successfully transition to the next stage from secondary education.

2.3 EEF Literacy Guide

In achieving the Academy's aim, a range of literacy strategies derived from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) Literacy Guide have been adopted. A summary is provided in **Appendix 1.**

3.0 Overarching Strategies

3.1 Prioritise Disciplinary Literacy Across the Curriculum

Disciplinary literacy is an approach which recognises that literacy skills are both generic and subject specific but emphasises that it is the responsibility of every teacher to support pupils to read, write and communicate effectively in their subjects.

3.2 Provide Targeted Vocabulary Instruction in Every Subject

Targeted vocabulary instruction is an approach designed to explicitly teach Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary through techniques such as:

- Exploring common word roots.
- Undertaking 'word-building' activities.
- Encouraging independent word-learning strategies.
- Using graphic organisers.
- Undertaking regular low-stakes assessment.
- Consistently signposting synonyms.
- Combining vocabulary development with spelling instruction.

3.3 Develop Pupils' Ability to Read Complex Academic Texts

Pupils' ability to read complex academic texts can be developed through a range of reading strategies such as:

- Activating prior knowledge.
- Predicting.
- Questioning.
- Clarifying.
- Summarising.

Strategies can then be introduced through modelling and group work, before support is gradually removed to promote independence.

3.4 Break Down Complex Writing Tasks

Teachers can help pupils break down writing tasks by:

- Providing word-level, sentence-level and whole text level instruction.
- Ensuring that pupils understand the subject specific connotations of Tier 2 vocabulary used in writing questions.
- Explicitly teaching pupils planning strategies.
- Helping pupils monitor and review their writing e.g. by providing a checklist of features included in high quality answers or using it as a self or peer-assessment tool.
- Motivating pupils through collaboration, competition and self-talk.

3.5 Combine Writing Instruction with Reading in Every Subject

Effective ways of combining reading and writing include:

- Writing before reading e.g. by asking pupils to list what they currently know about a topic or generate questions they will later try to answer through reading.
- Using annotations to identify information or explore key features of texts e.g. underlining information about the types of evidence being cited in a science textbook.
- Asking pupils to write short summaries of texts they read.
- Creating checklists based on examples of good writing in each subject.
- Anticipating common misconceptions or errors and highlighting how writers avoid them in high quality texts.
- Teaching spelling, grammar and punctuation explicitly.

3.6 Provide Opportunities for Structured Talk

Effective ways of promoting high quality talk include:

- Teachers modelling what effective talk sounds like in their subjects.
- Deliberately sequencing talk activities alongside reading and writing tasks to give pupils opportunities to practise using new vocabulary, develop ideas before writing, or discuss ways to overcome common challenges.
- Using sentence starters and prompts to help pupils to structure and extend their responses.
- Selecting questions that are open-ended, well-suited to discussion and allow opportunity for authentic pupil response rather than direct replication of teaching.
- Using 'wait time' to develop pupils' responses, by leaving a pause after they have first given an answer, which gives them a chance to reframe, extend, or justify their reasoning.
- Giving precise feedback relating to different elements of accountability (knowledge, reasoning and community).

3.7 Provide High Quality Literacy Interventions for Struggling Pupils

High quality teaching across the curriculum reduces the need for extra literacy support, however, it is likely that some pupils will require additional support in the form of high quality, structured, targeted intervention, characterised by:

- Assessments to identify appropriate pupils, guide areas for focus, and track pupil progress - New Group Reading Test (NGRT)
- A systematic, synthetic phonics catch-up programme delivered by experienced/specialist teachers or tutors.
- Tiered literacy support linked to normal lessons.

Appendix 1

1 — Prioritise 'disciplinary literacy' across the curriculum

- Literacy is key to learning across all subjects in secondary school and a strong predictor of outcomes in later life.

- Disciplinary literacy is an approach to improving literacy across the curriculum that emphasises the importance of subject specific support.

- All teachers should be supported to understand how to teach students to read, write and communicate effectively in their subjects.

- School leaders can help teachers by ensuring training related to literacy prioritises subject specificity over general approaches.

2 — Provide targeted vocabulary instruction in every subject

- Teachers in every subject should provide explicit vocabulary instruction to help students access and use academic language.

- Effective approaches, including those related to etymology and morphology, will help students remember new words and make connections between words.

- Teachers should prioritise teaching Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary, which students are unlikely to encounter in everyday speech.

- Teachers and subject leaders should consider which words and phrases to teach as part of curriculum planning.

3 — Develop students' ability to read complex academic texts

- Training focused on teaching reading is likely to help secondary school teachers teach their subject more effectively.

- To comprehend complex texts, students need to actively engage with what they are reading and use their existing subject knowledge.

- Reading strategies, such as activating prior knowledge, prediction and questioning can improve students' comprehension.

- Strategies can be introduced through modelling and group work, before support is gradually removed to promote independence.

4 — Break down complex writing tasks

- Writing is challenging and students in every subject will benefit from explicit instruction in how to improve.

- Teachers can break writing down into planning, monitoring and evaluation, and can support students by modelling each step.

- Targeted support should be provided to students who struggle to write fluently, as this may affect writing quality.

- Teachers can use a variety of approaches, including collaborative and paired writing, to motivate students to write.

5 — Combine writing instruction with reading in every subject

- Combining reading activities and writing instruction is likely to improve students' skills in both, compared to a less balanced approach.

- Reading helps students gain knowledge, which leads to better writing, whilst writing can deepen students' understanding of ideas.

- Students should be taught to recognise features, aims and conventions of good writing within each subject.

- Teaching spelling, grammar and punctuation explicitly can improve students' writing, particularly when focused on meaning.

6 — Provide opportunities for structured talk

- Talk matters: both in its own right and because of its impact on other aspects of learning.

- High quality talk is typically well-structured and guided by teachers.

- Accountable talk is a useful framework to ensure talk is high quality, and emphasises how talk can be subject specific.

- Teachers can support students by modelling high quality talk, for example including key vocabulary and metacognitive reflection.

7 — Provide high quality literacy interventions for struggling students

- Schools should expect and proactively plan to support students with the weakest levels of literacy, particularly in Year 7.

- Developing a model of tiered support, which increases in intensity in line with need is a promising approach.

- Assessment should be used to match students to appropriate types of intervention, and to monitor the impact of interventions.

- Creating a co-ordinated system of support is a significant challenge requiring both specialist input and whole school leadership.

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