
Literacy across the curriculum policy

Literacy refers to the ability to communicate effectively in a variety of ways with a range of audiences. It unites the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Middlesbrough is an area where literacy levels are lower than national averages and where motivation to develop literacy skills is among the lowest in the country. Trinity Catholic College is committed to improving standards through a rigorous and consistent approach across all areas of the curriculum.

It is vital that students are allowed to become competent language users, in order to lead successful and productive adult lives. Competence and confidence with literacy skills promotes self-esteem and provides a sense of purpose which will undoubtedly impact positively upon levels of behaviour. Examinations demand high levels of literacy and it is those students who are literate who are more likely to achieve higher standards of attainment in examinations. The more independent styles of learning can only be accessed where literacy levels are high; these styles of learning promote confidence and also assist in examinations where independent sustained writing is required. It is a requirement of the revised Ofsted criteria that subject areas take responsibility for students' language development.

AIMS:

To assist in raising the profile of literacy within the school.

To help raise levels of literacy by encouraging all students to achieve their full potential in their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills in order to improve life chances beyond school.

- To develop an effective use of these skills appropriate to a variety of contexts and audiences.
- To value the languages and communication skills which students bring to school, and use these as a starting point for learning.
- To have high expectations of students' literacy skills.
- To provide structured support for individuals who are experiencing difficulties in any area of literacy.

To prepare pupils for new GCSE specifications which include spelling, grammar and punctuation assessment.

- To promote reading for pleasure and improve pupils reading levels through the accelerated reader programme.

In all subjects, teachers will aim to improve the literacy skills of pupils by:

(In reading)

- Identifying the most common types of reading 'behaviours' required by their subject
- Presenting reading tasks at a suitable level- differentiating wherever possible
- Drawing pupils' attention to structure, layout, form, print and other signposts
- Taking new pupils through any book they use regularly (e.g. text books) and showing them how to find their way around it

Showing pupils how to work on a text when they are expected to read alone (e.g. how to skim or scan, how to take notes, how to identify key points).

- Promoting reading (for pleasure and information) to pupils

(In writing)

- Offering students models for writing in a range of forms
- Providing appropriate activities for all levels and abilities
- Defining for pupils the appropriate style for pieces of writing
- Demonstrating for pupils the way to organise and express pieces of writing •

Providing annotated examples of writing in the subject, so that pupils understand what is required

- Displaying useful phrases to help pupils link and develop ideas in writing

Helping students to draft writing through the subject context

- Helping students with handwriting, spelling and presentational aspects of their writing
- Teaching students to spell identified subject vocabulary
- Providing constructive feedback on written work

(In speaking and listening)

- Appreciating talk as a valuable area of learning
- Appreciate the differences between Standard English and non-standard dialect forms
- Develop ideas through pair and group work, drama and role play
- To teach learning strategies which help pupils to learn subject spelling lists
- To prioritise the marking of high frequency and key subject words, highlighting rules where the error would relate to other words

To use key words, glossaries, word banks and other strategies to provide support for subject-specific vocabulary

• In all subject areas, the organisation of lessons will aim to improve the literacy skills of pupils by:

- Providing a range of materials to support the subject topic
- Providing texts at appropriate readability levels for all pupils (the layout, size and clarity of print, length of sentences and vocabulary appropriate to pupils)
- Providing materials which are up to date and attractive
- Designing activities that focus on identified subject vocabulary
- Worksheets are clear, in presentation and language, and tasks are appropriately/helpfully worded

Assessment

- All teachers should be working within the context of the school Assessment Policy, including the use of common marking symbols.
- When marking for literacy it is essential that staff correct subject specific terminology. Staff should use the symbols on the literacy marking posters displayed in all classrooms.
- All teachers have a responsibility to provide feedback on students' literacy skills.
- Students should be encouraged to recognise their existing skills and set targets to further develop their skills.

SPAG (Spelling Punctuation Accurate Key Words Grammar)

Spelling

Each subject's scheme of work must make it clear which specialist terminology needs to be learned, deployed and spelt accurately. Teaching and learning activities need to highlight spelling conventions and common misconceptions. As a foundation, all words need to be spelt accurately.

Punctuation

Punctuation includes any conventional features of writing other than spelling and general layout: the standard punctuation marks . , ; : ? ! - - () " " ' ' , and also word-spaces, capital letters, apostrophes, paragraph breaks and bullet points. Most subjects will usually only require students to show mastery of basic punctuation marks.

Accurate Key Words

- Each subject's scheme of work must make it clear which specialist terminology needs to be learned, deployed and spelt accurately.
- The key words should be used in the correct context that conveys meaning (using/alluding to a definition).
- Wherever possible students should be encouraged to use accurate key words rather than general descriptive prose or inaccurate or misused terminology.

Grammar

This is the structure, meaning and correct use of language.

When marking for grammar be aware of:

- Commonly confused words –
- Appropriate sentence structures using nouns and verbs
- Subject verb agreement –
- Use of the correct tense –
- Appropriate language use (e.g. formal for essays) –
- Avoiding over use of pronouns - the use of me/I, who/which/that, who/whom, who's/whose, have/of –

Several exam boards (WJEC, OCR, AQA) refer to performance in SPAG along these lines...

Performance	Descriptor
High	Students spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with consistent accuracy. There is effective control of the meaning. They use a wide range of accurate key words adeptly and with precision.
Intermediate	Students spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with considerable accuracy. There is a general control of the meaning. They use a good range of accurate key words
Threshold	Students spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with reasonable accuracy. Errors have not hindered meaning. They use a limited range of accurate key words
0	Students have not reached the threshold performance

Teachers should become familiar with the table and refer to it in lessons to ensure pupils are aware of the requirements.

Accelerated Reader

- An intensive Reading programme (Accelerated reader) is delivered to all students in KS3 the students read a book, take an online quiz, and get immediate feedback. Students respond to regular feedback and are motivated to make progress with their reading skills. A comprehensive set of reports reveals how much a student has been reading, at what level of complexity, and how well they have understood what they have read. Vocabulary growth and literacy skills are also measured, giving teachers insight into how well students have responded to reading schemes and class instruction.

- Teaching Assistants are allocated to support students with literacy difficulties not only in core subjects but across the curriculum.

- Members of staff are ensuring that literacy is highlighted in Schemes of Work and lesson planning where appropriate.

Students are given literacy resources to help them develop their literacy skills across the curriculum

Teachers highlight literacy aspects of the lessons with the literacy/numeracy logo (PLANET)