

SCALBY SCHOOL

LITERACY POLICY

HISTORY OF DOCUMENT

Issue No.	Author	Date Written	Approved by Governors	Comments
1	S. Beeby	September 2014	15.10.14	New Policy
2	P. Offord	November 2015	2.12.15	Re-approved with changes
3	P. Offord	November 2016	11.01.17	New Policy

Why is literacy a whole school matter at Scalby School?

Improving subject learning

Literacy across the curriculum is not about giving extra work to subjects, or about shifting responsibility for students' literacy away from specialist English teachers. It is about recognising the importance of language to all subjects at Scalby School, and it is about making subject teaching and learning more effective.

Language & learning

There is a very close relationship between learning and language. Across the Scalby curriculum, students learn by acquiring language, and they learn by using, experimenting with and developing language – through writing and, importantly, through talk.

Every subject is a language

Teaching and learning in all subjects at Scalby are mediated through language. To learn in any subject is to learn the language of that subject; to teach any subject is to teach the language of that subject. All teachers at Scalby are therefore teachers of language.

All teachers should “*demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher’s specialist subject*” (Ofsted, 2011, *Literacy Guidance to Inspectors*).

What is 'literacy'?

Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening: To be literate is to be able to read – to decode and interpret the messages and ideas in texts and in language, to be critical of or resist them, and to take pleasure from them too. It also means being able to use language to communicate – to persuade, explain, describe and so on. And it means being able to use and understand spoken as well as written forms.

Non-verbal Literacy: To be literate is to be able to read and communicate in a variety of different kinds of languages and texts – visual as well as verbal. For example, students encounter still and moving images in all subjects and need to be able to decode and respond to them, as well as to make their own.

Literacy as the ability to communicate: Young people are growing up into a world in which messages, ideas, feelings and identity are mediated through language and texts of all kinds. They need to be able to understand and to take control of these forms for themselves, in order to develop a strong sense of self-worth and participate as members of society, or as historians, or as mathematicians, or as musicians, or as scientists...

The core columns of Literacy at Scalby School

Reading:

Across the curriculum, students encounter and read texts.

Teachers and teaching assistants have a responsibility to help students to become confident, skilled readers of all kinds of texts - helping them to read actively and to be critical and reflective as readers

Subject leaders have a responsibility for ensuring that strategies for developing students' reading are discussed and reviewed, and are incorporated into the planning of lessons and units of work.

What we do at Scalby School:

- teachers use 'DARTs' ('directed activities for reading texts') such as cloze, sequencing, annotation and highlighting
- texts are heard as well as read, and students are encouraged to read aloud as well as silently
- teachers are careful about the level of difficulty of texts, so that students are challenged but not alienated by what they are reading

Subject learning can be supported and enhanced if:

- students are encouraged to use specific reading strategies, such as skimming, scanning, using indexes and search tools, and reading with specific questions in mind
- students get into the habit of being critical and analytical as readers, even when they are just reading for information
- students are provided with subject-specific reading lists to read in their own time
- students are encouraged to read texts in character or role

In a Science lesson, students might be given a piece of writing about how mined minerals are turned into household goods, through a series of industrial processes. By removing key words from the text, the teacher ensures that the students have to read it actively, reconstructing its meaning. Less able students might have access to the words in a list. Afterwards, students are asked about which words were harder to locate, and why.

In English, students might be encouraged to peel away layers of meaning in a text through starting sentences with dependent clauses such as, 'At first glance,... .However, upon closer study... .' They might also be encouraged to replace the connective 'and' with a semi-colon to add variety, where appropriate.

In a Geography lesson, students reading an article about globalisation might be encouraged to look for bias in the text - in the way that facts have been selected, emotive language has been used, or rhetorical questions have been posed by the writer.

In French, students might be taught reading strategies to help them understand the main points and specific details in a text and to enable them to deduce the meaning of unknown vocabulary. These strategies are displayed in classrooms and on support mats.

Writing:

Across the curriculum, students have to write and produce their own texts.

All teachers and teaching assistants have a responsibility to help students to become confident, skilled writers, who can use writing to process and organise ideas and to communicate effectively using a range of sentence types and grammatical structures.

All subject leaders have a responsibility for ensuring that strategies for developing the complexity of students' writing are discussed and reviewed, and are incorporated into the planning of lessons and units of work.

What we do at Scalby

- students use talk to rehearse their ideas before writing
- students are shown how adding complexity to sentences can help their writing to be more interesting and precise
- students routinely reflect on the purpose and audience for any piece of writing
- the process of writing in a particular form is modelled for the students
- students are given opportunities to spell key words correctly.
- students are provided support for their writing in the form of writing frames as well as sentence stems.

Subject learning can be supported and enhanced if:

- the teacher writes alongside students as part of the modelling process
- students are given a *range* of sentence stems, connectives and key terminology to help them to develop their expression as part of differentiated scaffolding
- teachers refer explicitly to the different 'stages' of writing and how they are important – planning and note-making, drafting, editing, redrafting, proofreading, and presenting or publishing.

In History, students might redraft a piece of empathetic writing. To help them, they are provided with constructive feedback and a 'redrafting toolkit', including general suggestions for improvement, prompts for checking content, technical accuracy and presentation and reminders about what will make the final draft a success. To give purpose to the redrafting, the final pieces are for a corridor display.

In DT, students might be taught different ways of using sentence organisation to evaluate the design of a product. They might vary their deployment of dependent and independent clauses to ensure variety and precision in their expression.

GCSE PE, students undertaking a piece of written coursework might have a supporting 'toolkit', including: a bank of specialist terms to use; an extract from a similar piece of work, annotated to show how it meets criteria; a suggested structure; and some sentence stems to help with expression. For less able students, a differentiated toolkit might also contain a writing frame, with a clear paragraph plan.

In Chemistry, students might be explicitly taught to 'think like a scientist' and therefore use the academic language of a Scientist. A teacher could model turning a sentence such as, 'The amount of the reactants is the same as the amount of the products.' Into 'The mass of the products equals the mass of the

Oracy:

Across the curriculum, students use talk to express and to explore ideas. Talking is also one of the most powerful ways in which students learn.

All teachers and teaching assistants have a responsibility to help students to become confident, skilled speakers and listeners.

All subject leaders have a responsibility for ensuring that strategies for developing students' speaking and listening are discussed and reviewed, and are incorporated into the planning of lessons and units of work.

What we do at Scalby:

- teacher's instructions and explanations model effective Standard English language use.
- skilful, probing questioning is used to raise the level and complexity of students' speech
- paired and group tasks are structured carefully and the skills for effective communication and collaboration are taught explicitly.

Subject learning is supported and enhanced if:

- students become used to framing their own questions
- students are encouraged to use formalised talk to developing their thinking prior to undertaking a written task
- students are required to plan and prepare for spoken tasks, just as they would for written work
- listening is framed in terms of skills which can be developed, rather than in terms of behaviour
- students have opportunities to talk in role

In a Food Technology lesson, students might use talk to practise using a range of different expressions that are necessary to achieve clarity in an end of unit written evaluation.

In a Science lesson, students might prepare for a group practical task by identifying and exploring the speaking and listening skills which they will need. At the end of the activity, each group might nominate one member to be rewarded as their most effective listener, or giver of instructions, or explainer, and so on.

In a Maths lesson, students might be required to talk through a procedure, or a concept or an equation, even if they can already express it in notation. Other students are invited to add further detail or to add more precision.

In an Art lesson, pairs of students might be giving a presentation to the rest of the class about an artist. The first pair are recorded with a webcam; interrupted after one minute, they have a chance to watch and to critique their own presentation skills. This then provides advice and targets for the rest of the class.

Sentences and how they are punctuated:

There is a close relationship between variety and complexity in sentence construction and variety and complexity in thinking. Helping students to construct and to control more of a variety of sentence types helps them to work at a higher level and to have more control over their understanding, as well as their expression.

All teachers and teaching assistants have a responsibility to help students to become confident, skilled composers of sentences, and to be able to punctuate them appropriately.

All subject leaders have a responsibility for ensuring that strategies for developing the complexity of students' writing are discussed and reviewed, and are incorporated into the planning of lessons and units of work.

What we do at Scalby:

- students are given a range of sentence stems, to help them to develop their expression
- students are reminded how to use simple punctuation appropriately
- students have access to punctuation, connective and help sheets

Subject learning is supported and enhanced if:

- students are taught how to vary the length of their sentences through the use of connectives as well as dependent and independent clauses
- students are reminded how to add variety through using different types of punctuation such as colons, brackets and semi-colons.
- Students are enabled to develop their own resources to support their learning in different subjects

In a Business Studies lesson, students might be encouraged to evaluate the effectiveness of a certain business approach through using dependent clauses to open sentences: E.g. 'Despite the fact that..., ...'; 'Even though ..., it is quite clear that...'; 'Given the fact that..., it seems unavoidable that...'

In English, students might be encouraged to peel away layers of meaning in a text through starting sentences with dependent clauses such as, 'At first glance,... .However, upon closer study... .' They might also be encouraged to consider where they might replace the connectives 'and'; 'but', and 'so' with a semi-colon to add variety.

In a History lesson, students might be taught how to incorporate extra detail and information into their sentences by using embedded clauses, demarcated by commas and by brackets.

In a Life lesson, students might be encouraged and supported to include a variety of connectives when constructing and presenting arguments for and against the existence of God. These could be in the form of flash-cards or connective 'table-mats'.

Roles and responsibilities, continued...

SLT and Literacy Coordinator will implement this policy by:

- Ensuring that Subject Leaders regularly evaluate the implementation and impact of the literacy policy.
- Carrying out drop-ins to evaluate the impact of the literacy policy.
- Fostering a culture of reading across the school.
- Facilitating a reading age tests throughout the year - the results of which are to be made available to the whole staff team to support effective planning and differentiation.
- Establishing a Literacy Working Group (LWG) which will meet at least once a half term will work to ensure the sharing of outstanding literacy practice and consistency across the school.
- Offering whole school training to staff to support the implementation of the Literacy Policy.

Subject Leaders will implement this policy by:

- Writing and keeping up to date a specific literacy focus as part of the Department Development Plan
- Monitoring and evaluating in the form of drop-ins, lesson observations and book trawls to assess the impact of the literacy policy in their areas.
- Appointing a Literacy Co-ordinator, who will attend meetings of the Literacy Working Group.
- Ensuring their subject area has compiled a list of key vocabulary and is present in classrooms.

Subject teachers and TAs will implement this policy by:

- Following the feedback and marking policy and marking ***at least*** two literacy errors per page along with encouraging greater usage of varied sentences and punctuation marks.
- Regularly promoting spelling as a focus through using dictionaries and ensuring that subject-specific terminology is taught explicitly.
- Ensuring that the reading age for each pupil is transferred to the seating plan and work record sheet and referred to during planning.
- Using the Learning Resource Centre, where appropriate, to promote reading and research strategies.
- Ensuring that all work is titled and dated, and that all titles and dates should be underlined using a ruler. The date is to be written in words using capital letters i.e. Tuesday 2nd September, 2014.

Students can implement this policy by:

- Reading a wide range of texts (both fiction and non-fiction).
- Using formal Standard English in their speech and writing as appropriate.
- Ensuring that they pay close attention to spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Taking pride in the presentation of their work.
- Writing the title and date of all work in full.

Parents can implement this policy by:

- Reading with their children and encouraging them to read more widely.
- Buying books as presents.
- Visiting libraries or reading events.
- Reading through their children's school and homework and discussing with their children feedback written by teachers.
- Making every effort to attend parents' evenings when requested.

Governors

It is the role of the governing body to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and its practice.

Glossary of key terms:

<u>Key term</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Example</u>
Adjective	Adjectives can <i>modify</i> nouns to make them more specific. They are often called <i>describing</i> words.	<i>The pupils did some really good work.</i> [adjective used before a noun, to modify it].
Adverb	Adverbs can <i>modify</i> verbs, nouns, other adverbs and whole clauses to make them more specific.	<i>Usha soon started snoring loudly.</i> [adverbs modifying the verbs 'started' and 'snoring'] <i>That match was really exciting!</i> [adverb modifying the adjective 'exciting'] <i>We don't get to play games very often.</i> [adverb modifying the other adverb, 'often'] <i>Fortunately, it didn't rain.</i> [adverb modifying the whole clause 'it didn't rain' by commenting on it]
Clause	A clause is a part of a sentence .	' <i>I love you.</i> ' is a sentence which has only one clause. ' <i>I love you and I will always love you.</i> ' is a sentence which has two clauses. The two clauses are ' <i>I love you</i> ' and ' <i>I will always love you.</i> ' These clauses are joined together by the word <i>and</i> (a conjunction). Clauses may be independent or dependent
Independent clause	A part of a sentence that makes sense on its own.	<i><u>It was raining</u> but <u>the sun was shining</u>.</i> [two independent clauses] <i>Even though it was raining, <u>the sun was coming out</u>.</i>

Dependent clause	A part of a sentence that would be awkward or incomplete if it were alone.	<i><u>Even though it was raining,</u> the sun was coming out.</i>
Embedded clause	A dependent clause <i>embedded</i> in-between a split, independent clause.	<i>The rain, <u>which was falling heavily,</u> was causing the river level to rise.</i> <i>The rain (<u>which was falling heavily</u>) was causing the river level to rise.</i> <i>The rain - <u>which was falling heavily</u> - was causing the river level to rise.</i>
Simple sentence	A sentence that contains one or independent clause'	<i>The rain was causing the river level to rise.</i>
Compound sentence	A sentence that contains two or more independent clauses.	<i>The rain was falling and the river level was rising.</i>
Complex sentence	A sentence that contains at least one dependent clause and one independent clause.	<i>Even though the rain was falling, the river level stayed the same.</i>
Connectives	Connectives join two separate ideas in two sentences or paragraphs. They usually come at the start of a sentence.	Examples of connectives: Therefore; However; Also; As well as; Moreover; Furthermore; Firstly; Secondly; Thirdly; Finally; Eventually; Then; Next; Later; Above all; In particular; Especially; Significantly; Indeed; Notably; Meanwhile; Afterwards; Likewise; Similarly; Alternatively; Otherwise; For example; In addition; Consequently; In conclusion; To summarise; As a result; Nevertheless; On the other hand; Despite this; On the contrary; As already stated.

		Example: <i>I like to read books. Furthermore, I enjoy writing.</i>
Conjunctive	Joins two ideas in the same sentence.	<p>Examples of conjunctions: and; but; so; if; when; after; as; since; before; although; unless; provided that; because; as; long; as; apart; from; while; or; until; whilst; whereas; even; if; whether; or; not; whenever; so; that; even; though.</p> <p>Example: <i>I play rugby because it helps me to keep fit</i></p>
Word family	The words in a word family are normally related to each other by a combination of grammar and meaning.	Science – scientist - scientific Electron – electric – electrical - electricity Physical – physio - physicality