



# HALL GREEN SCHOOL

## LITERACY POLICY

<b>Adopted:</b>	6 November 2024
<b>Next Review:</b>	November 2027
<b>Governing Committee:</b>	Pastoral and Curriculum
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Deputy Headteacher/Teaching and Learning

## **Policy and Practice**

Literacy is integral to the success of all learners at Hall Green School. Literacy learning and teaching are put into context and the procedures to be followed by each subject area are outlined.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the English Curriculum policy and the SEND information report.

## **Context and Rationale**

The Ofsted School Survey report into literacy in 2013 quotes an EU report about the importance of literacy to all learners.

‘Literacy is about people’s ability to function in society as private individuals, active citizens, employees or parents. Literacy is about people’s self-esteem, their interaction with others, their health and employability. Ultimately, literacy is about whether a society is fit for the future.’

The Ofsted report provides a definition of literacy skills based on the National Curriculum:

‘Literacy’ [...] is more than the mechanics of reading, writing, speaking and listening. The National Curriculum demands that connections be made between each strand and across subjects, which calls for thought and understanding, for recall, selection and analysis of ideas and information, and for coherent, considered and convincing communication in speech and in writing. All pupils should be encouraged to:

- ‘make extended, independent contributions that develop ideas in depth’;
- ‘make purposeful presentations that allow them to speak with authority on significant subjects’;
- ‘engage with texts that challenge preconceptions and develop understanding beyond the personal and immediate’;
- ‘experiment with language and explore different ways of discovering and shaping their own meanings’;
- ‘use writing as a means of reflecting on and exploring a range of views and perspectives on the world’.

Approximately 35% of pupils at Hall Green School are registered as EAL pupils. While the majority of pupils have sufficient language skills to enable them to function perfectly well on a social level, often pupils have difficulties with the more formal and transactional forms of English that are required for academic success.

Typically, Hall Green pupils demonstrate a narrower vocabulary than pupils in other schools, particularly for the formal types of language. This also impacts on reading for understanding, as pupils become proficient in decoding texts but are unfamiliar with the vocabulary. They also sometimes show non-standard grammatical forms in their own speech and writing, possibly from interference from another language spoken at home, or limited experience of formal standard English.

In addition to this, the school has an increasing number of “Recently arrived pupils” or “RAPs” who have recently arrived from overseas and are in the process of acquiring English.

The aim of this policy is to show how we at Hall Green support pupils to acquire the literacy skills they need to succeed both within school and when they leave.

To achieve this, we recognise that:

- All modes of language contribute to the development of literacy: speaking, listening, reading and writing;
- The teaching of literacy is the responsibility of all staff in the school. The National Teaching Standards make this clear: teachers should ‘demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever their specialist subject;
- Some learners will need additional support;
- A common approach to the teaching of literacy helps pupils transfer skills learned in one area of the curriculum to another.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to:

- Set high standards for literacy across the school;
- Ensure that the school follows a clear, effective and co-ordinated cross-curricular strategy for the development of literacy for all pupils;
- Ensure that all staff adopt a consistent approach to the teaching of literacy;
- Ensure that staff are supported in their teaching of literacy through appropriate training, guidance and support materials;
- Ensure pupils are aware of and increasingly make use of a common set of literacy skills;
- Encourage pupils to reflect on their use of literacy skills and make efforts to improve;
- Ensure that parents understand the importance of literacy for their child’s progress in school, are aware of the ways that the school is supporting pupils and are aware of ways that they can support their children themselves;
- Ensure that the quality of literacy in the school is monitored regularly;
- Set out a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of this policy.

## **Strategic Overview**

This literacy policy outlines the strategic approach adopted by the school to support the development of literacy in the school.

Broadly, there are five different aspects of the policy:

- SEND department provision
- Reading intervention for non-SEND pupils through Lexonik and through the “Reader-Leaders programme”

- English Department curriculum and provision;
- Reading in form and the wider reading programme (including Book Buzz);
- Disciplinary literacy

For the majority of pupils, their literacy needs are met through the English curriculum, extended reading in form and disciplinary literacy provision.

Pupils identified as having additional needs follow one of the interventions managed by the SEND department, or reading intervention through Lexonik, in addition to the universal provision provided by the English department, extended reading in form and disciplinary literacy.

## **Oracy**

Whilst the current literacy strategy focuses on the development of reading and vocabulary, the crucial role of oracy in building literacy is also recognised. Oracy is currently being developed in the English department and the intention is to add this strand to the whole school literacy in the near future.

## **Assessment**

On entry to HGS in Year 7, pupils take the NGRT (New group reading test) provided by GL Assessments (online) to provide a standard age score (SAS) for reading. These are used in conjunction with KS2 data and information from parents and teachers to identify pupil need and appropriate pathways and support. Normally, this will involve liaison with the junior school, as the Head of Year 7 visits all junior feeder schools and collects information about pupils. Whole school reading tests are managed by the exams secretary and administered through the computing department. Pupils take the NGRT to provide an SAS in September of Year 7, September of Year 8 and July of Year 9.

(For EAL learners who are recently arrived in the country (RAPs), refer to the EAL section of the SEND information report for appropriate provision. For pupils who are predominantly SEND learners, refer to the SEND policy for their provision.)

## **Provision**

Provision for pupils with different literacy needs varies according to their need. Typically, the range of provision is as follows:

- Pupils who have a weakness in literacy on arrival in Years 7 and 8 (typically scoring below 70 in standardised reading scores) are usually placed in the S class and follow the Fresh Start programme run by the SEND department;
- Targeted pupils, as identified by The Senior Leader: Inclusion and SENDCO (based on reading score and observation) are placed on a range of interventions, as follows:
  - Precision teaching-Literacy and Numeracy
  - Memory Magic
  - Pre and post tutoring

- Cued spelling
- IDL- Literacy and Numeracy
- Wordwasp
- Nessy Fingers- Touch typing program
- Language for Behaviour and Emotions (LFBE)
- Language for Thinking (LFT)
- Talk for Work (TFW)
- Lexonik Leap- phonics
- Talkabout for Teenagers
- Friends for Life
- Freshstart- phonic reading
- Cracking Comprehension
- SaLT
- Power of 2- Numeracy intervention
- Rapid readers
  - Further, more individualised tests, are carried out by the SENDCO or senior TA. Sometimes further tests are completed by professionals from Pupil and School Support Services (PSSS).
  - A target group of 'Red Readers' is identified by the data manager and shared with all staff from all subjects, using Class Charts. Red readers are defined as those whose standardised reading score is below 90.

This information is input into SIMS and is available to all staff through SIMS or through the Class Charts seating plan software. In addition, new Year 7 pupils are asked to complete a 'best' piece of work on induction day, which is used by the Head of English and the Senior Leader: Inclusion and SENDCO to select pupils who may need additional support with writing.

Pupils who join the school during the year spend some time in the support base undergoing similar range of tests to identify their needs.

In addition, all teachers are encouraged to report concerns about potential undiagnosed weaknesses in reading and writing that may impact on wider pupil progress to the Senior Leader: as soon as possible. This is vital in making sure the Senior Leader: Inclusion and SENDCO can gather evidence to demonstrate need should a child require additional support taking exams in KS4.

### **Wider reading action plan**

All pupils in Years 7 and 8 have a reading log. This is a suggestion of six novels that they should read over the course of the year. These books have been selected by English staff to provide a varied level of challenge and to encourage a love of reading. Pupils are rewarded for completing all six.

All pupils in Year 7 and Year 8 receive a free book through the Book Buzz programme, along with structured homework tasks relating to it. The school also works, when opportunity arises, with external groups, such as The Yardley Trust, Turner and Townsend and the National Literacy Trust, who provide extra reading material and activities.

## Reading in form programme

This takes two forms

1. Once per fortnight, pupils take part in a 40 minute extended form period where they read a novel together. The aims of this are to:
  - (a) Give pupils an enjoyment of reading
  - (b) Give pupils ideas for selecting books to read themselves
  - (c) Broaden pupils' vocabulary.

All pupils in the same year group read the same novel. For the majority of the time, the teacher reads aloud, while the pupils follow, in order to model good reading and allow the story to flow, so that pupils become engaged. Every so often, a pupil is asked to read a short section, to ensure that all are following.

Books are chosen which are part of a series so that if pupils enjoy the book they can choose to read themselves the next in the series.

Slides showing the harder vocabulary are displayed while the text is being read.

2. Once per week, but over a two week cycle, pupils read an article from a topical magazine "The Day". The aims of this are to:
  - (a) Build tier 2 vocabulary
  - (b) Give exposure to non-fiction for those pupils who prefer this to fiction.

It is recognised that the acquisition of tier two vocabulary is essential for pupils at Hall Green. The reading programme therefore follows a two-week cycle. In the first week, pupils are taught key tier two vocabulary from the article, using the SEEC (Select, Explain, Explore, Consolidate) model. In the second week, pupils read and discuss together the article, revisiting the vocabulary that was taught the previous week. Pupils have a vocabulary book where this tier two vocabulary is noted and pupils are encouraged to revisit frequently the vocabulary they have learned.

Reading intervention: this is carried out primarily using the Lexonik programme, which aims to build reading comprehension and reading fluency. Pupils work with a teacher in groups of 4 for 1 hour per week over the course of 6 weeks. In addition, they take an SAS test at the start and end of the course. Where possible, the intervention lessons are continued at a lower frequency beyond the six week period, as our evaluation of the first year of the programme has shown that gains in reading are more likely to be sustained if it is continued over a longer period.

Currently, we have a teacher who is assigned to the programme for 5 hours per week. 20 pupils can be on the programme at a time and we aim to have five cohorts per year, meaning that 100 pupils can benefit from the programme each year. Currently, the programme targets pupils in years 8 and 9, although we hope to be able to add year 7 pupils to this in time.

Reader leaders programme: In this programme, a number of year 10 pupils are trained to sit with and listen to younger pupils, normally from year 8, reading. It is an alternative to Lexonik which is targeted at pupils who are weak readers, but who it is also felt would benefit from the mentoring of an older pupil.

## **The Management of Literacy – Roles and Responsibilities**

### Senior Leader with responsibility for literacy

A member of the Senior Leadership Team has overall responsibility for co-ordinating whole school literacy and ensures that Literacy is included in the SDP as part of the school cycle of development and review.

The whole school approach to literacy is co-ordinated by the Senior Lead working in conjunction with the Head of English and the Senior leader: Inclusion and SENDCO.

The senior leader oversees communication with parents about the literacy policy and how parents can support their child in literacy.

### Heads of Department

All teachers at the school are teachers of literacy. This means that Heads of Department have a responsibility for teaching the disciplinary literacy required for their subject, requiring them to be familiar with the whole school approach to literacy and how it impacts on their subject. The curriculum policy for each subject details how the disciplinary literacy needs of that subject are addressed.

All subject teachers have a responsibility to monitor the performance of pupils in their subject and report any concerns they may have about a pupil as a result of literacy barriers to the Senior Leader: Inclusion and SENDCO via the SEND referral form in staffcommon.

### English Department

The English Department plays a crucial role in developing pupils' literacy skills. The Head of Department for English ensures that relevant skills for literacy are taught to pupils at appropriate points in the curriculum, to support the speaking and listening, reading and writing literacy skills tasks that all departments make use of.

The Head of Department, supported by the teacher with responsibility for KS3 in the department helps co-ordinate whole school approaches to the teaching of literacy to ensure consistency of approach.

Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring all pupils are taught the literacy skills for reading, writing and speaking and listening that will enable them to access the full curriculum;
- Ensuring teachers in the department monitor the performance of pupils in reading, writing and intervene when they fall behind expected progress;

- Ensuring that any concerns about the progress of pupils in reading, writing and speaking and listening are shared with the Senior leader: Inclusion and SENDCO on a termly basis;
- Ensuring the KS3 curriculum follows on from the KS2 curriculum in junior schools.

The English Department supports the provision of literacy by maintaining the library as a welcoming and well-resourced site to allow pupils of all ranges of reading ability, every breaktime and some lunchtimes, including the weakest readers, to access fiction and a limited range of non-fiction.

Other duties carried out by the English Department include:

- Running the student librarians programme;
- Reading and writing competitions (led by pupil ambassadors);
- Leading the form time reading programme
- Guiding pupils in the choice of more challenging texts.
- Developing pupils' oracy skills. This includes GCSE presentations and at least one assessment per year at KS3 which is oral or drama-based.

#### Senior leader: Inclusion and SENDCO

The Senior leader: SEND and Inclusion takes responsibility for promoting the reading and writing of pupils identified through the assessment process described above.

Responsibilities include:

- Managing the reading assessment process for KS3 pupils;
- Ensuring that all pupils go through the testing and screening process, particularly those absent when the tests were carried out or new to the school;
- Carrying out further diagnostic testing (DRA, WRAT, BPVS and DASH) when appropriate, for example, where professionals believe pupils may be using coping strategies to mask weaknesses in literacy;
- Communicating with the rest of the staff about pupils' literacy abilities;
- Directing of all literacy-focused interventions delivered by the Senior TA and all other TAs.

#### Head of Year 7

Liaises with junior schools and parents to ensure the school is provided with sufficient information about pupils' achievements in literacy.

#### Form Tutor

The Form tutor plays a key role in the development of literacy of his/her tutees. The Form Tutor should be alert to any difficulties the tutees have with literacy and report their concerns to the Senior Leader: Inclusion and SENDCO as soon as possible.

He/she should play a key role in encouraging and promoting wider reading. This is done in particular by running the fortnightly extended reading session and the weekly work on tier 2 vocabulary and reading articles from The Day.



## Subject Teacher

The teaching of literacy is the responsibility of all staff. As a consequence, the subject teacher should:

- be alert to any difficulties his/her pupils have with literacy, and report their concerns to the Senior Leader: Inclusion and SENDCO as soon as possible;
- know the levels of literacy and standardised reading scores of pupils in the class (which are displayed in Class Charts);
- make use of standardised reading scores and seating plans to make sure weaker readers benefit from sitting next to stronger readers;
- use whole school literacy teaching strategies advocated by the teaching and learning group;
- adapt teaching and learning activities to promote literacy in their subject (as documented in the subject curriculum policy);
- develop tier 3 vocabulary appropriate to their subject and highlight key tier 2 vocabulary as it comes up.

## Support Base Manager

Carries out the initial reading age assessments of pupils who join the school midway through the year, and liaises with the Senior Leader: Inclusion and SENDCO to ensure appropriate testing takes place.

## Core Expectations

The aim of the core expectations is to provide a consistent approach to teaching key skills of literacy to pupils. This encourages the reinforcement of key literacy skills for pupils and encourages pupils to transfer literacy skills from one area of the curriculum to another.

### *Presentation of Work*

Common policy on the presentation of work

- Underline title and date;
- Write neatly;
- Use black ink.

### *Speaking and Listening*

Precise Formal Polite – full sentences and Standard English.  
Use the concept of the academic register continuum.

## Marking

The following literacy marking symbols are used within the English department:

<b>Marking symbol</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<b>Sp.</b>	<b>Spelling error</b>
<b>p.</b>	<b>punctuation error</b>
<b>//</b>	<b>New paragraph</b>
<b>©</b>	<b>Capital letter</b>

To be developed . . .

- Toolkit of Literacy Strategies;
- Appointment of a librarian when funds allow
- Further activities to promote oracy.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

Departments need to show that they are applying the literacy policy. Evidence could be:

- How the department addresses literacy needs within their subject within the department curriculum policy;
- How the department intends to develop literacy in their subject within department development plan;
- Literacy teaching specified in schemes of work;
- Reference to literacy teaching in departmental minutes;
- Reference to literacy teaching in lesson observation;
- Evidence of literacy teaching from departmental book trawls.

Whole school: The impact of the policy will be evaluated by the senior team based on assessment data, book trawls and lesson observations, as well as year on year changes in standardised reading scores.