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“The glory of God is  
a human being fully alive!”

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# St. Joseph’s Catholic High school

## Literacy Policy

**Date of Review:** September 2020

**Date of next review:** September 2021

# **Literacy Policy Document**

## **1) Objective:**

*"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"*

(Teaching Standards, Part 1, point 3, 2012)

At St. Joseph's, we accept the fundamental principle that Literacy is the key to improving learning and raising standards; it enables students to gain access to the subjects studied in schools, to read for information and pleasure, and to communicate effectively. Poor levels of literacy impact negatively on what students can do and how they see themselves. Reflecting the ethos of the Teaching Standards, we believe that all teachers are teachers of literacy; at St Joseph's, all teachers share responsibility for the teaching of literacy across the curriculum and recognise their statutory responsibilities, as outlined in The Teachers' Standards 2012. Crucially, we believe that literate students will ultimately emerge as confident and articulate communicators, fully prepared to enter the adult world, whether to continue their academic studies or to enter the world of work.

## **2) Literate secondary students should:**

- A. read, write and communicate with confidence, fluency and understanding
- B. use vocabulary, expression and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of all subjects
- C. be able to implement a range of reading strategies for different purposes, across different genres
- D. be able to write in an ordered and thoughtful way in order to express their thoughts and arguments clearly
- E. use language to reflect, revise and evaluate their own practice and the practice of others
- F. be able to respond to higher order questioning
- G. be able to learn independently using a range of sources

## **3) Policy Aims**

- A. To establish a whole school ethos where literacy is seen as a priority
- B. To define shared literacy goals across the curriculum
- C. To ensure that every student who is underachieving in terms of reading is making progress towards reading at their chronological age
- D. To support the progress of students in all aspects of literacy
- E. To promote tier 2 vocabulary in and amongst the school community and encourage our students to use high frequency, academic words more regularly in their everyday communication
- F. To support the pedagogical improvement of all staff in the delivery of literacy
- G. To promote a consistent approach to the teaching of literacy in all subjects
- H. To promote a learning environment that actively promotes good literacy
- I. To lead to a literacy action plan that reviews the standards of literacy across the school and the continuing progression of all students

## **4) Roles and Responsibilities of the Literacy Co-ordinator (Mrs Darrie):**

- A. accept overall responsibility for the delivery of the school's Literacy Policy
- B. ensure that students are given access to intervention where necessary to ensure the progression of all students
- C. provide opportunities for staff training about literacy issues to take place on INSET days or during other times
- D. monitor departments' implementation of the Literacy Policy
- E. monitor exam and assessment outcomes to ensure that no group is disadvantaged with respect to race, ethnicity or gender

- F. ensure a relevant literacy link governor is appointed annually and is kept informed of literacy development
- G. facilitate yearly reading tests and put in place purposeful and effective intervention strategies to support those students whose reading age is below that of their chronological age

**5) All staff should:**

- A. ensure that they are familiar with the specific literacy demands of their subject and ensure sufficient coverage of these skills in their lesson planning
- B. make a commitment to the monitoring and assessment of literacy in their marking and feedback
- C. ensure special attention is given to the reading progression of vulnerable Year 7 students
- D. be able to identify a pupil's literacy strengths and weaknesses and know how to build upon these in order to promote pupil progress
- E. report on a student's standard of literacy at Parents' Evenings, as appropriate
- F. promote tier 2 vocabulary through the vocabulary tutor time activity and the 'Word of the Week'
- G. demonstrate awareness of those students who are underachieving in terms of their reading age

**6) Heads of Department should:**

- A. ensure that literacy opportunities are clearly identified in schemes of work, and the DEDP and that there is obvious opportunity for progression through the key stages
- B. use available assessment data to identify vulnerable students and monitor intervention literacy strategies
- C. monitor the work of the department with regard to the inclusion of subject specific literacy strategies in lesson planning
- D. encourage models of good practice e.g. modelling and close collaboration between colleagues in order to promote literacy developments
- E. liaise with the SENCO/ Literacy co-ordinator about students attaining below level 4b

**7) The SENCO (Ms Cooper) should:**

- A. liaise with the School's Literacy Co-ordinator about students attaining below Level 4b and early intervention strategies
- B. communicate with all subject staff about those students who have literacy difficulties and give advice on what staff can do to help these students in their subject
- C. monitor students with literacy difficulties through school-based plans and review meetings
- D. support in the facilitating of the NGRT Reading tests and the identification and intervention of students whose reading age is significantly below that of their chronological age

**8) STRATEGIES**

**A) Reading**

- Across the whole curriculum teachers will ensure that:
  - all students entering Year 7 on a reading level below 4b have access to rapid intervention to make progress
  - opportunities for reading aloud are available in their subject
  - key skills such as scanning, skimming and synthesising are taught
  - all students have the opportunity to make progress in reading within their subject and plan specific opportunities for this
  - whole school support, in terms, of developing the students breadth of vocabulary
  - the language of texts used in lessons must be accessible to all abilities using them
  - encourage different ways of reading, e.g.: continuous, close, skimming and scanning
  - encourage support of activities designed to promote reading, e.g. Book Fairs
  - display Key Words, book reviews, lists of popular books and details/pictures of the authors
    - subject reading lists

B) **Writing**

- *Across the whole curriculum teachers will ensure that:*
- the conventions of language are taught and assessed
- students are given the opportunity to plan, draft, discuss and reflect on their writing both by hand and through use of ICT
- students are taught to write for a range of purposes and audiences
- standard English is highly valued through their own practice and in students' work
- assessment of literacy is formative offering opportunities for progression
- the classroom environment highlights the importance of good literacy

C) **Communication**

- *Across the whole curriculum teachers will ensure that:*
- students are given opportunities to explore and develop ideas with others through their talk
- students are given opportunities to ask questions as well as answer them
- students are given opportunities to work collaboratively with others
- students are given opportunities to present material effectively for a variety of audiences and purposes
- the skills required for the above are explicitly modelled and taught regardless of curriculum area
- students should be urged to repeat or rephrase poorly constructed sentences whenever possible
- the classroom teacher provides the most important role model, in terms of vocabulary, speech and the use of gesture
- practice in speaking to groups of different sizes, ages, gender - builds confidence and is an increasingly important skill for the student's development
- preparation of short presentations encourages logical thought in the speaker and good listening by the audience