

# Literacy Across The Curriculum Policy

## July 2017

*“Moreover [children] should be so trained to take their part in social life that properly instructed in the necessary and opportune skills they can become actively involved in various community organizations, open to discourse with others and willing to do their best to promote the common good.”*

**GRAVISSIMUM EDUCATIONIS 1965**

*‘Pupils should be taught in all subjects to express themselves correctly and appropriately and to read accurately and with understanding.’*

***QCA Use of Language across the Curriculum***

### **A Definition of Literacy**

At St. Illtyd’s Catholic High School we believe that literacy involves enabling pupils:

- to read a wide range of material with confidence, accuracy and enjoyment
- to communicate effectively in speech and writing
- to listen with understanding

More specifically, a literate pupil will, at an appropriate level:

- understand and use standard spoken English confidently and correctly
- have an interest in words and word meanings and have a growing vocabulary
- read and write accurately, fluently and with understanding
- be interested in books and evaluate and justify preferences competently
- know and understand a range of fiction and poetry, including texts in English which reflect the linguistic and cultural heritage of Wales
- be familiar with some of the ways that narratives are structured through setting, character and plot

- recognise the format and conventions of non-fiction texts and be able to reproduce these in their own writing
- use a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic and contextual) to monitor and self-correct their own reading
- plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing
- use accurate punctuation, correct spelling and produce legible handwriting

### **Why is literacy so important?**

A central aim of teaching and learning is to develop students' ability to use language effectively, in order to think, explore, organise and communicate meaning. Improved literacy leads to improved student self-esteem, motivation and behaviour; it enables students to learn independently; and it is personally empowering.

More specifically, effective use of language – both written and spoken – is crucial to successful learning in all subject areas of the curriculum, each of which can contribute to developing literacy skills through its own distinctive opportunities and demands. It follows that all teachers are teachers of literacy. The development of students' literacy skills is essential to whole-school improvement; by improving the literacy skills of all students, standards across the curriculum will rise.

### **The staff at St Illtyd's Catholic High School are therefore committed to working together across the curriculum:**

- to promote students' personal confidence, resourcefulness and independence in communicating with others in speaking and listening, reading and writing;
- to raise students' literacy attainment- both productive and receptive - at every level of ability, and in all subject areas.

We recognise that what it means to be literate changes over time, and that the texts and technologies of the literate are now many and varied, involving spoken and written language, electronic and print media, still and moving images.

Students will be given opportunities to develop their literacy skills in all these areas.

## **Making Literacy Part of the Curriculum**

Staff at St. Illtyd's Catholic High School seek within subject areas to scrutinise the literacy demands that we are making on our pupils. Departments recognise that greater awareness of the basic skills required by individual subjects should lead to more targeted support for pupils routinely as part of everyday lesson delivery, thus supporting the individual learning needs of all pupils.

- Teaching staff consider the reading ages of pupils available to them on SIMS and use this information to plan appropriately differentiated activities.
- Texts and worksheets are reviewed to assess their approximate reading ages and suitability for specific groups and classes.
- A range of strategies are employed to support the literacy needs of pupils, including The Reading Behaviours which are displayed in every classroom.
- Teachers provide opportunities for more-able learners to benefit further from the application of stronger reading and writing skills in all subjects.
- Subject specific vocabulary and spellings are identified and displayed and pupils are encouraged to learn the meanings of these words and how to spell them.

### **Developing Literacy Skills**

#### **Speaking and Listening.**

**'Reading and writing float on a sea of talk.'**

**James Britton 'Language and Learning'**

#### **Teachers will help students:**

1. to understand that talk (and not just reading and writing) is a valuable means of learning in itself;
2. to value and respect the talk of others;
3. to be confident contributors in a wide range of oral activities, in individual, paired and group situations;

4. to understand that differences in task, purpose and audience require different levels of language formality.

### **Reading**

**'Reading is arguably the most crucial literacy skill for cross-curricular success in secondary schools.'** SSAT 'Literacy Across the curriculum.'

**Teachers will develop students' reading skills by:**

1. providing texts at appropriate reading levels for the range of student reading ability;
2. encouraging extended reading as well as reading in short bursts;
3. providing opportunities for students to access texts independently e.g. using the Internet, works of reference, library catalogues and indexes;
4. helping students to develop a range of active reading strategies – skimming, scanning, reading intensively – for a range of contexts and purposes;
5. helping students acquire a variety of comprehension skills – literal, inferential and evaluative – e.g. through DARTS activities ('Directed Activities Relating to Texts')
6. teaching students how to select/note/synthesise information from their reading;
7. drawing students' attention to the way texts are organised in different subject areas e.g. format, page layout, print, illustrations and diagrams, and other key textual features.

### **Writing**

**Writing has the power to refine and clarify inchoate thought: 'How do I know what I think until I see what I say?'**

**E.M. Forster**

**Teachers will aim to develop writing skills by:**

1. providing opportunities for students to write in a variety of styles, and for a variety of audiences and purposes;

2. providing students with models of different styles of writing, including through teacher modelling, and structured assistance (e.g. writing frames) in reproducing their linguistic features;
3. giving students further opportunities through peer and self assessment to recognise the successful use of specific stylistic features in a text;
4. drawing students' attention to the importance, and the techniques, of the drafting, editing and proof-reading process;
5. helping students with handwriting, spelling and presentational aspects of their writing;
6. teaching students to spell key subject vocabulary, and understand their meaning and usage.

## **Literacy Across The Curriculum:**

### **Responsibilities**

'Language is the prime medium through which students learn and express themselves across the curriculum, and so all teachers have a stake in effective literacy development.'  
SSAT 'Literacy Policy'

### **A WHOLE SCHOOL ISSUE**

Although the English department obviously has the major responsibility for the development of language and literacy, the effective use of language for learning is the concern of all teachers in all subject areas.

At St. Illtyds Catholic High School, each curriculum area is expected to give consideration to the specific literacy demands of its area.

### **Assistant Headteacher - Inclusion ( DJ)**

1. to monitor and evaluate whole-school provision as set out in the School Improvement Plan, departmental improvements plans and schemes of work through departmental annual literacy review, work scrutinies, lesson observations and pupil voice interviews;

2. to ensure that the school's system of data collection provides adequate evidence of students' literacy levels, and that staff understand how to interpret it;
3. to oversee the school's literacy marking policy.

### **Literacy Co-ordinator (AV)**

1. to analyse KS3 National Test Results in Reading and identify and set Year Group specific literacy targets for all subjects across the curriculum based on diagnostic of results;
2. to support literacy objectives for departments with specific LNF responsibility for particular 'strands' of the LNF by suggesting materials and strategies, and through coaching and peer observations;
3. to support literacy targets and objectives in all subjects across the curriculum by providing displays; suggesting materials and strategies; and through coaching and peer observations;
4. to take a lead in delivering INSET in Literacy Subject Leader Workshops including sharing best practice, marking and moderation of assessments, and reporting;
5. to identify students in need of literacy support, and work with the Literacy Intervention Teachers to ensure effective additional provision for these students;
6. To develop and coordinate the delivery of termly 'mock' National Reading Tests for KS3;
7. to raise the profile of reading across the school;
8. To assist with annual departmental literacy reviews and work scrutinies.
9. to keep colleagues up-to-date on KS3 literacy initiatives in English and how they can support literacy development in other subjects.

### **Literacy Intervention Teachers**

1. to work with the school's literacy co-ordinator to identify those students who require intensive literacy support;
2. to liaise with the parents of such students, keeping them informed of provision and progress;
3. to liaise with students' subject teachers to identify specific needs;
4. to develop appropriate schemes of work and tracking procedures;
5. to produce and disseminate at key assessment points an analysis of student progress in reading and/or writing;

6. to monitor and evaluate the success of the Programme.

### **Subject Leaders/Literacy Leaders**

1. to incorporate into their schemes of work the literacy objectives for their subject area from the KS3 NLNF;
2. to establish the reading requirements and the writing styles as appropriate that the students will need to be familiar with, in order to succeed;
3. to identify opportunities to meet literacy targets established from KS3 National Reading Test Results in their subject area/schemes of work;
4. to ensure that literacy objectives are recorded, and the literacy marking policy is used effectively in the department through regular pupil work scrutinies;
5. to analyse and monitor the levels of attainment/progress within their subject area at key tracking points, with a particular focus on boys' literacy in relation to that of girls';
6. to ensure that opportunities for learning through oracy (in addition to reading and writing) are identified;
7. to ensure that ICT is being used as a means of improving standards of literacy;
8. to oversee the setting-up and maintenance of literacy displays in departmental classrooms.

### **Subject Teachers**

1. to incorporate into lesson planning the literacy targets for their subject area from the KS3 LNF;
2. to be familiar with the literacy levels of students in their teaching groups, and match tasks and materials accordingly;
3. to work with the ALN Department and their subject Teaching Assistant(s) in developing materials and approaches for those students who require literacy support;
4. to ensure that MAT students with high levels of literacy are provided with appropriately challenging tasks and materials;

5. to record and make use of assessment data which provides information about student literacy, specifically: reading ages and KS3 National Test results in reading and writing;
6. to set short-term literacy targets, when appropriate (e.g. spelling of subject specific key words);
7. to ensure that subject specific key words (in context) are displayed on classroom walls and discussed as appropriate with learning objectives;
8. to implement the school's literacy marking policy.

### **Maintaining an Effective Intervention / Support Programme**

Research has consistently shown what experienced teachers already know, namely that children who have failed to 'crack' the basics of reading and writing by the end of their primary education will not suddenly catch up in the secondary classroom.

St. Illtyd's Catholic High School undertakes a variety of strategies to support pupils who experience difficulties with reading and writing. Focused support is then organised for those who struggle with literacy.

Other strategies supporting literacy include:

- Establishment of targets and evaluation of outcomes.
- Individual support with a specially trained teacher in Read Write Inc. and other appropriate literacy programmes.
- Focused reading groups of 3/4 pupils with similar reading ages.
- Paired Reading intervention
- Individual pupil reading, spelling and writing programmes.
- Lunchtime reading clubs.
- Whole school in-service training in literacy support.
- Parents Literacy Information evenings.