

Parkstone Grammar School



LITERACY POLICY

Date approved:	June 2020
Approved by:	Curriculum and Student Matters Committee
Date of next review:	June 2023
Type of policy	Non-Statutory



LITERACY

AIMS

Parkstone Grammar School is committed to raising the standards of literacy for all students. Students should develop their literacy skills effectively in all areas of the curriculum. The skills are essential in order to cope with the demands of education and future employment requirements. At Parkstone, we believe that literacy skills are fundamental in empowering students to reach their full potential.

WHAT AREAS ARE COVERED IN THIS POLICY?

This policy provides a rigorous whole-school approach to literacy which is implemented systematically across the curriculum, with all teachers regarding themselves as teachers of literacy, regardless of their subject specialism.

All teachers must know the literacy barriers for students in their groups and adapt their teaching accordingly.

Advice and ideas are provided in order to support best practice in the classroom.

By adhering to this policy, staff will be fulfilling the requirements of Teaching Standard 3c:

Demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject.

LINKED POLICIES

Teaching and Learning Policy
SEND Policy
Library Policy

SAFEGUARDING

Literacy materials can cover many sensitive and controversial issues. Staff delivering content in lessons or extracurricular clubs ensure that content is addressed appropriately.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The teaching of literacy provides opportunities that are matched to the needs of students. This could be support for students with SEND or English as an additional language, as well as providing appropriate challenge for students.

WHAT KEY ACTIONS IS THE SCHOOL TAKING TO ENFORCE THIS POLICY?

Literacy is constantly monitored across the curriculum by Senior Leaders.



WHAT MUST EVERYONE DO TO UPHOLD AND ENFORCE THE POLICY?

Governors

- Governors should agree and approve the Literacy Policy.
- Ensure they monitor the Literacy Policy in the areas they link to.

Headteacher / LG

- Formulate the draft Literacy Policy.
- Ensure that literacy developments are, when relevant, raised in meetings with the Governing Body.
- Be aware of the specific teaching of literacy across the curriculum.
- Focus on the teaching and assessment of literacy across the curriculum during 'work scrutiny' activities.

Staff

Literacy Co-ordinator - support departments in the implementation of strategies and encourage departments to learn from each other's practice by sharing ideas. Specifically, they will:

- Monitor and evaluate literacy across the curriculum. Keep up-to-date with current initiatives and recommended good practice (including liaison with SWAT literacy initiatives).
- Co-ordinate cross curricular literacy initiatives and literacy CPD/INSET.

Teachers across the curriculum - contribute to pupils' development of language, since speaking, listening, writing and reading are, to varying degrees, integral in all lessons: Specifically, they will:

- Ensure that they are familiar with the specific literacy demands of their subject
- Model and explain effective reading, writing and talking in their subject
- Include a literacy objective, when appropriate, in lessons and schemes of work
- Use the school/department agreed strategies in order to teach writing, speaking, listening and reading skills and when marking work
- Allow students easy access to key subject vocabulary through in-class display and written glossaries of key terms and definitions
- Be aware of appropriate literacy extension work for students and also difficulties that might be experienced with literacy skills
- Use homework to extend students' development of literacy skills
- Ensure they are familiar with Parkstone's Whole School Literacy Policy
- Use SEND information to ensure that resources and teaching and learning activities are differentiated accordingly

Heads of Department - support the promotion of literacy within a Department. Specifically, they will:

- Ensure that literacy becomes a regular focus for Department meetings and CPD
- Ensure that 'subject specific literacy' is clearly identified in schemes of work, and that there is obvious progression through the key stages
- Integrate the Whole School Literacy marking policy into the Department's marking policy
- Ensure that all texts used within the department are accessible to all students, as well as providing an appropriate level of challenge.
- Ensure that the Department's instruction of reading, writing, speaking and listening is in line with whole school's recommended pedagogy
- Ensure that all department members are aware of the literacy demands of their subject and that progress is reviewed annually



- Ensure new subject resources are ordered by the Librarian to maintain an up to date and relevant bank of additional reading for students.

Students

- Should look to develop their literacy through all their subjects in school.
- Students should act on feedback from staff to improve their literacy skills.

Parents

- Should promote good literacy habits at home.

HOW DO WE KNOW THIS POLICY IS WORKING AND IS BEING UPHELD?

The member of Leadership Group responsible for this policy along with the rest of Leadership Group will monitor and appraise the curriculum content to ensure that key elements are incorporated, and being delivered to students effectively.

WHO SHOULD PEOPLE CONTACT IF THEY HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT THIS POLICY OR A SUGGESTION FOR IMPROVEMENT?

Leadership Group Member Responsible for the Literacy Policy
Parkstone Grammar School
Sopers Lane
Poole BH17 7EP



PARKSTONE MARKING KEY

At Parkstone, teachers mark for Literacy by highlighting students' errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) – especially high frequency words or subject specific terminology. Although some departments use a range of symbols to annotate written work, all teachers at Parkstone are expected to use the following key, and should allow students time in lessons to reflect and learn from their mistakes:

Spelling errors – these should be circled/underlined, with **sp.** written in the margin.

Punctuation errors – these should be circled/underlined, with **p.** written in the margin.

Awkward expression - this should be underlined with **exp.** written in the margin.

Omissions – these can be indicated with ^

Missing paragraph divides – these should be indicated with //

Policy in Action: Lessons

To support students in the development of their reading skills, teachers at Parkstone:

- Display and use subject specific terminology.
- Ensure pupils identify and learn key terminology, either through a glossary or by highlighting new terms in their written work.
- Explain stem words and morphology to students e.g. 'bio' means life/living matter, and therefore a 'biography' is a life story written by another person; 'biology' is the science of life, and the 'biosphere' is the Earth's surface inhabited by living things.
- Explicitly state the reason why students are reading e.g. to summarise, to skim read, to compare.
- Use regular low stakes assessment, such as quizzes, to provide regular and continued exposure to key terminology.
- Ensure appropriate additional reading is signposted for students where appropriate.
- Ensure command terms in questions are clearly explained to students.
- Activate prior knowledge to help students process and understand new text.
- Try and anticipate and address any common misconceptions of the text.

To support students in the development of their writing skills, teachers at Parkstone:

- Encourage students to use a dictionary/thesaurus.
- Use models to exemplify what type of writing you expect, including the explanation of contextualised grammar.
- Give students Response Time, when returning work, to allow them to reflect on their errors, make corrections and learn from their mistakes. It is important that students provide evidence of their response to the teacher feedback.
- Mark for Literacy by highlighting students' errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) – especially high frequency words or subject specific terminology. This can be written on the work itself or onto a separate sheet. The Parkstone Marking Key should be used.
- In essays use model introductions, conclusions and paragraphs decoding for students the best way of developing structure in individual components of longer writing tasks.



- Signpost synonyms for students to improve the quality of their writing (sentence starters and connectives could be provided in a resource or in displays).
- Ensure students read back their answers to check for grammatical errors and spelling mistakes.

To support students in the development of their speaking and listening skills, teachers at Parkstone:

- Model subject specific language and reward it in students.
- Discourage non-standard or colloquial use of English where it is inappropriate.
- Encourage all students to participate through the use of appropriate methods such as mini whiteboards, targeted questioning or 'lolly sticks.'
- Encourage classroom debates and the positive behaviours associated with this activity – listening to others, respecting the opinions of others, not dominating the debate and articulating ideas clearly using accurate knowledge and justifications

Additional possible support:

Reading:

- Give students a reading list. This list could be accompanied by structured questions to focus their reading on summarising, skim-reading or comparing etc.
- Encourage students to say new words out loud, breaking them down into syllables: anth-ro-po-morph-is-m.
- Give students some quiet, reflective reading time in lessons.
- Vary the way texts are read in lessons i.e. silent reading, reading to students, reading in groups.

Writing:

- Encourage pupils to use PEARL to structure their paragraphs: Point, Evidence, Analyse, Respond and Link.
- Helping students monitor and review their writing, for example by providing a checklist of features included in high quality answers or using it as a self- or peer-assessment tool
- Provide students with a range of written outcomes to choose from e.g. leaflet or webpage or essay.
- Use graphic organisers or planning activities (e.g. mind maps or post-it notes) to develop students' essay skills.
- Use pre-writing activities that ensure students have secure background knowledge related to the topic before they begin any writing task.

Speaking and Listening

- Give 'thinking time' before requiring a response (POSE, PAUSE, POUNCE or THINK, PAIR, SHARE.)
- Support listening by providing – for example – note-taking frames when a teacher or student is talking, or when watching a film.
- Encourage students to question and seek clarification of information at regular points, especially if they are listening to a lot of complex information.



- If students are listening, and writing down notes ensure they are clear on the expectations of what they should be recording and ensure that this recording does not cause them to miss vital spoken information.
- Select open ended questions which are well suited to student discussion.

Policy in Action: Form Time in KS3 and KS4

Reading:

Reciprocal Reading: Reciprocal reading is a structured method of guided reading where students are gradually taught to take on group roles to explore and find meaning in texts. Reciprocal reading emphasises teamwork and supports independent comprehension skills.

DEAR (Drop Everything And Read): everyone in the class must read for at least 20 minutes.

Words, words, words: give students key words from a text before revealing the whole text. Students need to discuss the words and their connotations before making a prediction about the theme and subject of the text, based on the discussed connotations. Afterwards, reveal the text and see who was correct.

Scanning: remind students that it's possible to locate information in a text quickly by checking subtitles and topic sentences of paragraphs and looking for key words. Show a text on the whiteboard and, without giving students a chance to read it in full, call out quick fire questions based on information contained in the text. Alternatively, students to work in pairs to get the gist of the article before feeding back to the group.

Highlighting key points: put a short text up on the board and ask students to remember the key points. Students to share their points with a neighbour before discussing them as a class.

Unscramble the meaning: show a PowerPoint of scrambled words, asking students to unscramble them to work out words/phrases.

Sequencing: place five words on the board. Students must place them into an order or a 'correct' sequence. Students must then find the links between the words and justify their decisions.

Box of tricks: students to write, on pieces of paper or Post-its, questions that relate to learning, across the school that week (you could choose a specific subject if you like). Put all the questions in one place before selecting one and asking the class to re-affirm learning.

Text types: display some paragraphs from a range of text types (articles, diaries, adverts...) and ask tutees to discuss which text type they are from and how they can tell.

**Writing:**

Graphic organiser: this is usually a one-page form with blank areas for students to complete with ideas and information which are connected in some way. It could be an essay plan or a revision tool; or used to record things from a video clip or even a series of lessons.

Summing up succinctly: ask students to write down, in 17 words exactly, what they've learnt in a specific lesson this week.

Mind journeys: tell your students they're going on a journey in their minds. Decide in advance where you are taking them and, after a couple of sentences, pause and ask students to write down how they feel, what they see etc.

Punctuation and paragraphing: show students the PowerPoint slides with one or more types of mistakes. Ask students to correct the mistakes.

Spelling: students can go through a piece of work (from any subject) and pick out their spelling errors, completing the 'look, cover, write, check' exercise to learn how to spell them.

Free rice: pupils to log onto: <http://freerice.com/#/english-vocabulary/1435> For each spelling they get right, rice is donated through the World Food Programme.

Speaking and Listening:

Who am I? Students write the names of famous people on post-it notes and you choose one. Ask one student to come to the front of the room and sit with their back to the board. Write the name of a famous person, from the Post-it, on the board and the student needs to find out who they are just by asking questions that require a 'yes' or 'no' answer, given by the remainder of the form. Questions such as: am I alive? Am I an actor? Do I wear glasses etc.?

Odd one out: write three words on the board and ask students to decide which is the odd one out and why (this can be subject specific or category driven). Students can then come up with their own three words to test the remainder of the class.

Evaluation activity: label different parts of the room 'agree', 'disagree' and 'unsure' (this doesn't need to be done literally). Students have to decide which part of the room to stand in, in response to a subject-related statement. They then have to explain their decision. Later statements can be made up by the students themselves.

Don't be boring: choose a 'boring' word such as 'said', 'nice' or 'like' and explore alternative words. Students are then to try and use the alternative that day within their lessons.

Information exchange: students to work in pairs – student A and student B. Keywords and images are displayed on a PowerPoint presentation and student A must tell student B everything they know about that image in 20 seconds. When the slide moves on to the next one, they swap roles.



Music sets the mood: play a short piece of music (your choice – YouTube is a good source) and ask students to comment on its mood and words to describe it.

Just a minute: students are given a topic and must speak for one minute without hesitation, deviation etc.

Presentations: pupils can prepare a presentation to the form on a topic of their choice e.g. a hobby.

Images: project an image up on the interactive whiteboard, and begin a group discussion about the image; what's going on in the image? How does it make them feel? What might the people in the image be thinking and feeling? It could be a photograph of something that's been in the news, or an image from a book or magazine.

Matching pairs: display a list of ten words - groups have to come up with a word which has the opposite meaning. Don't necessarily accept the first word they hear, continually push students to think of an interesting alternative.

WHOLE SCHOOL INITIATIVES WHICH NOURISH LITERACY AT PARKSTONE

- Literacy interventions
- Year 7 Drama Club
- Year 8 Drama Club
- Creative Writing Club
- Debate Club
- KS3 and 4 reading club
- Extra-curricular clubs which help students develop a range of Literacy skills
- Extra-curricular PE clubs which allow students to develop their skills in team work and communication-
- Year 10 mock interviews
- Visiting authors brought in to lead workshops
- Theatre productions including the school play and Shakespeare Schools Festival.
- Public Speaking
- Poetry competitions-
- Celebration of 'World Book Day' including book-themed assemblies being led by English department prefects.
- Regular reading groups for all Key Stages (held in the school library.) This includes various groups shadowing the Carnegie Book Awards.
- Student led assemblies
- Tutor group activities focusing on literacy in different subjects
- Twitter account promoting books recommended by tutor groups on a rotation
- Staff book recommendations in the library
- Key subject vocabulary spelling and command terms in KS5 Planners
- Key subject spellings and commonly misspelled words in KS3 and 4 Planners.
- Recommended reading from students and staff in KS 3 and 4 Planners.
- Literacy Marking Key in all planners.