

Parkstone Grammar School



LITERACY POLICY

Date approved:	May 2025
Approved by:	Curriculum and Student Matters Committee
Date of next review:	May 2026
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-ordinators - 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
- 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:

Feedback at Parkstone



- 1 Use the **literacy marking key**
- 2 Plan for **Response Time** – students must always engage with what has been marked
- 3 Remember the **3 Ms** when giving feedback:
 - Meaningful** Does it help students make progress?
 - Manageable** Can this be replicated for every student in a manageable amount of time?
 - Motivating** Does it encourage students to engage with the feedback and want to improve?

Literacy Marking Key	
Symbol	Meaning
sp.	You have made a spelling error.
p.	You have made an error in punctuation .
exp.	Your expression is awkward or not suited to the piece of work you have written.
^	You have omitted (missed out) a word or letter.
//	You have not divided your paragraph appropriately.

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.
- Use scaffolding to help students develop their written answers.
- 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.
- Encourage students to use a structured paragraph style relevant to the subject and Key Stage e.g. PEEL or PEARL.
- 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 oracy 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:

- 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
- 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.

Oracy

- 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.



• **Parkstone Oracy, Literacy & Reading Overview**

	English Curriculum	Wider Promotion
Whole School	<p>Visits to performances of set texts as they occur (this is also the case for the Drama curriculum).</p> <p>Literacy interventions – students working 1 to1 or in small groups.</p>	<p><i>Whole School Oracy Initiative – including ‘Every Student Every Week’ initiative.</i></p> <p><i>Oracy Achievement Points.</i></p> <p><i>Literacy marking code in all planners.</i></p> <p><i>All departments have a section in the Department Handbooks on how they promote literacy in their department.</i></p> <p><i>The Homework Policy encourages topic enrichment reading across all 3 key stages.</i></p> <p><i>Debate for the Week – students debate a topical issue each week in 1 tutor time a week.</i></p> <p><i>Author of the Week promoted on social media and around school.</i></p> <p><i>EDI articles available to read in the Dining Room.</i></p> <p><i>All tutor groups in KS3 & 4 are in charge of presenting a year group assembly. There is also a wider variety of Student led assemblies from Heads of House, Senior Prefects etc.</i></p> <p><i>World Book Day programme of activities</i></p> <p><i>Creative Writing Club – open to all years.</i></p> <p><i>KS3 & KS4 Book Club (shadowing the Carnegie Book Awards).</i></p> <p><i>Poetry by Heart Competition</i></p> <p><i>Drama Club</i></p> <p><i>Debate Club runs jointly with Poole Grammar and a Law Society.</i></p> <p><i>Year 9-13 Literature Society.</i></p> <p><i>‘PFSA Book Swaps’ and book wish list sent to parents for the Library.</i></p> <p><i>Staff promotion of reading ‘What am I reading?’.</i></p>



		<p><i>Students interview panels are used for all Senior Leadership positions, as well as other key positions within the school.</i></p> <p><i>Student Leadership training is completed bi-annually, and a wide range of student leadership roles are available throughout the school.</i></p> <p><i>Key Stage Committee Meetings & Student Cabinet Meetings are conducted Half Termly.</i></p> <p><i>Options presentations Yr.10 to Yr.8 and Yr.13 to Yr.11.</i></p> <p><i>The school provides an annual budget for the library, which includes subject allocations, in order to ensure the library is well stocked with contemporary publications.</i></p> <p><i>An annual production in collaboration with Poole Grammar (as well as additional productions that may be student led).</i></p> <p><i>Students study 2 hours of Drama a fortnight at KS3, as well as having an Option for GCSE Drama and A Level Theatre Studies.</i></p> <p><i>School Poet Laureate (student).</i></p>
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<p>KS3</p>	<p>Emphasis placed on developing oracy skills with increased use of presentations to encourage confidence and oral literacy. Fortnightly reading lessons in our extensively stocked library with an extremely knowledgeable Librarian. Students given year appropriate reading challenge to encourage wider and more challenging texts. Monitored by reading lesson teacher throughout the year. At least two reviews produced each term (written and oral).</p> <p>Year 7 students have specific fortnightly vocabulary homework and with testing of spelling and use.</p> <p>Focus on basic literacy skills.</p> <p>Wider reading lists in planners so that parents also have access and are able to encourage wider reading at home.</p> <p>Poetry Slam competition in Year 8 to encourage and develop oracy skills.</p> <p>Year 8 fortnightly entomology homework.</p> <p>Year 9 public speaking competition to encourage and develop formal oracy skills.</p> <p>Reading challenge for year 9.</p>	<p><i>Key subject spellings and commonly misspelled words in Planners.</i></p> <p><i>Silent reading in Year 7 as part of the tutor programme.</i></p> <p><i>Termly literacy newsletter to parents with recommended reading.</i></p> <p><i>Readathon for Year 7.</i></p>
<p>KS4</p>	<p>Wider reading lists in planners for easy access and parental support.</p> <p>Challenging texts incorporated into the curriculum.</p> <p>GCSE spoken language presentations in year 10. Students are encouraged to present on sophisticated and challenging topics using a range of rhetorical devices for effect.</p> <p>Trip to Poetry Live.</p> <p>Differentiated letters home with extra reading material for critical theory or contextual background.</p>	<p><i>Year 10 Mock Interviews.</i></p> <p><i>Students supported with constructing professional emails/phone calls to secure work experience placements.</i></p> <p><i>Key subject spellings and commonly misspelled words in Planners.</i></p> <p><i>Year 10 'Speak Out' Challenge</i></p>



<p>KS5</p>	<p>Supplementary reading in the back of key stage guides.</p>	<p><i>Unforgettable & Amazing Reads list – encouraging reading for pleasure at Sixth Form.</i></p> <p><i>Sixth Form Book Exchange in the Sixth Form Hub.</i></p> <p><i>Oxbridge workshops for further reading (run by the English Department).</i></p> <p><i>Oxbridge Enhancement sessions - academic discussion skills.</i></p> <p><i>Key subject vocabulary spelling and command terms in KS5 Planners.</i></p> <p><i>A transition reading list is provided by all A Level subjects to encourage wider subject and academic reading.</i></p> <p><i>Practice Interviews for early applicants.</i></p> <p><i>Students supported with constructing professional emails/phone calls to secure work experience placements.</i></p> <p><i>Hosting a Senior Citizens Christmas Party.</i></p> <p><i>Extended Project Qualification offered to all students.</i></p> <p><i>Senior Prefects run our school tours from prospective staff and students.</i></p> <p><i>Booker List group for Enrichment.</i></p>
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