

Blackfen School for Girls



Literacy Policy

Head Teacher: Mr M Brown

Chair of Governors: Mr S Fitz-Gerald

| | Date | Name | Signature |
|---------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|
| Policy Date | May 2023 | | |
| Review Date | June 2024 | | |
| Review Period | Annually | | |
| Lead Person | Assistance Head Teacher Literacy Co-ordinator | Simon Neil Helene Norwood | |
| Prepared by | Assistant Head Teacher Literacy Co-ordinator | Simon Neil Helene Norwood | |
| Verified by | Head Teacher | Matthew Brown | |
| Approved by | Chair of Governors | Stuart Fitz-Gerald | |

Blackfen School for Girls

Statutory Statement

Blackfen School for Girls is committed to raising the standards of Literacy and understand that Literacy skills are fundamental to learning. Literacy is seen as integral to the school curriculum by developing students' abilities to speak, listen and communicate, read, question and express themselves confidently and coherently both orally and in writing. All departments and all members of staff understand they have a crucial role to play in supporting the development of students' literacy and that competent literacy skills enable students to read, understand and access examination materials, so that students are able to achieve their full academic potential across all subject areas. Enrichment opportunities such as whole school competitions, library lessons, and DICE opportunities ensure that all students can build these essential skills both within and outside the classroom.

The Department for Education (2012) Teachers' Standards state that all teachers must:

'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'.

Rationale

Literacy skills are seen as fundamental in supporting the process of teaching and learning, in particular to:

- enhance the ability of all students to synergistically use literacy skills effectively across all subjects
- encourage enthusiasm in all students for reading wide ranges of literature, communicating ideas confidently through different styles of writing and to be able to verbally express themselves coherently and articulately by providing opportunities to develop oracy through debate, presentations and classroom discussion
- develop the literacy skills necessary to fulfil the demands of further education, employment and adult life.

Outcomes

- to have a strategic vision to implement, maintain and improve standards in Literacy across the school
- to encourage a high profile of Literacy around the school and to highlight its significance
- to create an atmosphere of enthusiasm for reading and maintain a reading culture
- to ensure consistency of practice in using the Literacy marking code and the 4 'must' criteria for teaching reading effectively
- coordinate the development of cross curricular resources that will support subject and classroom teaching
- to analyse and review Literacy data to identify those students needing support and intervention
- to indicate areas for collaboration between subjects
- to assist the transfer of students' knowledge, skills and understanding between subjects.
- to provide enrichment opportunities for students to develop wider Literacy skills outside of the classroom
- to liaise with and support the aims of the school library
- to monitor and support form tutors with Drop Everything And Read during CT

Procedures

Consistency of Practice:

- departmental audits are carried out in order that all staff work together and take ownership of agreed strategies
- see *Appendix 1* which looks at the practice of all staff.

Areas of Collaboration:

- see *Appendix 2* which looks at areas for collaboration.

Skills:

- see *Appendix 3* which looks at the common approach to literacy skills across the curriculum.

Transfer of Skills:

- see *Appendix 4* which looks at style of delivery.

Key roles

DHT: to liaise with Literacy Coordinator to ensure smooth running of Literacy initiatives

Blackfen School for Girls

Literacy Coordinator: Facilitate and support form tutors during community time by sustaining the implementation of Drop Everything and Read. Undertake regular learning walks with other school leaders to assess effectiveness in raising standards. Analyse and review reading ages in KS3 to celebrate success and identify intervention needs and monitor the relative performance of vulnerable groups in Literacy. Provide support and training in guided reading strategies to TAs and Sixth Form Reading mentors. Promote awareness of Literacy skills throughout the school in order to improve standards, particularly through high quality displays, whole school competitions, staff CPD, assemblies and consulting with all stake holders. Ensure a close working relationship and involvement with school governors in Literacy events and policy. Promote the use of the whole school Literacy marking code, helping to support faculty leaders in the monitoring of students' work by regular book scrutiny to ensure quality, consistency and to identify areas for improvement.

Other Related Documents:

Improving Literacy in secondary schools: a shared responsibility- April 2013.

Raising standards in Literacy- March 2012.

Appendix I:

All teachers:

- be aware of the techniques used in other subjects to promote Literacy and provide assistance and advice to other faculty areas, so that a correct and consistent approach is used
- provide information to other staff on appropriate expectations of students and difficulties likely to be experienced in various age and ability groups
- work to ensure that Literacy Leaders have appropriate skills to be able to assist with the work in all areas of the curriculum.
- Be aware of student reading ages (where available) and quality first teaching strategies to support literacy skills
- Use the Whole School Strategies for teaching reading. There are four 'must' strategies:

1 - Vocabulary and knowledge building support reading comprehension development:

We must: *Link reading/key vocabulary to prior learning in the subject and across the curriculum.*

2 - Student capacity to read words accurately supports comprehension because it helps them to build an accurate base understanding of the text. Student capacity to read words with automaticity allows readers to devote more cognitive attention to comprehension.

We must: *Teach the meaning (and etymology, where possible) of key words and terms before setting in-class or independent reading.*

3 - Comprehension processes vary by *what* and *why* one is reading: Reading comprehension is affected by the text type and purpose of the reading task.

We must: *Explain the purpose of the reading task and what happens next with the knowledge that is gained.*

4 - Reading comprehension is not automatic even when fluency is strong.

We must: *Monitor the quality of student comprehension and correct misconceptions at an early stage.*

There are also 4 'Think about' strategies for future implementation:

5 - Teaching text structures and features fosters reading comprehension development:

Many features of written text are not found in oral language.

Think about: *Explaining the structure of the text during reading, e.g., Telling students to use the titles of sub-headings as signposts to understand the main ideas in this extract; explaining the order of information in the extract: why the writer has explained some ideas first or last; explaining why the conclusion is important.*

Blackfen School for Girls

6 - Comprehension strategy instruction improves reading comprehension:

Proficient readers engage in particular mental activities to support their understanding of what they are reading.

Think about: Providing students with cognitive/metacognitive strategies, i.e., explicit instruction in *how to think* before, during, and after reading; *how to monitor* their understanding; and *how to help themselves* when meaning breaks down.

7 - Supporting engagement with text fosters comprehension development.

Think about: Making students do *a lot of reading of short texts on a regular basis* to practise using subject-specific reading strategies.

8 – Interest and motivation make a big difference to comprehension development.

Think about: *Making students want to read it!*

Appendix 2:

Areas of Collaboration:

- Contribute to staff training sessions to be delivered to the staff throughout the year in line with the SIP.
- Coach TAs and Sixth Form mentors to assist in supporting selected students with Guided Reading strategies.
- Develop resources, activities, information and instructions for the use of Literacy Skills across all subjects, which are to be made available in both staff and student rooms in SharePoint.
- Ensure that Student Reading Ages are shared with all staff, where available.
- Drop Everything and Read to be run as one CT session per week and promoted and supported by the Literacy Coordinator.
- Literacy Coordinator to maintain the high profile of literacy outside the school, though contact with parents through the newsletter, parent surveys and literacy events.
- Literacy Coordinator to maintain the high profile of literacy within the school through noticeboards, staff meetings and liaison with Form Tutors and the School Governing Body.

Appendix 3

Skills

Speaking and listening

Speech is our main means of communication in everyday life and is fundamental to the development of understanding. Our aim is to develop increasing confidence and competence in speaking and listening so that all students are able to:

- clarify and express their ideas and explain their thinking
- adapt their speech to a widening range of circumstances including paired and group discussions and speaking to a larger audience
- use varied and specialised vocabulary
- speak for a range of purposes e.g. to narrate, to analyse, to explain, to reflect and evaluate
- listen with understanding and respond sensitively and appropriately.

In our teaching we should provide planned opportunities across the curriculum for students to engage in purposeful talk, both formally and informally. In planning for discussion, we should consider pace and timing so that purposeful talk is maintained. Whilst teacher exposition is essential we should take account of demands on concentration to ensure that students are required to listen for realistic lengths of time.

Staff will give students regular opportunities to speak and listen in the following contexts:

- in pairs with a working partner (think, pair, share)
- in small groups with opportunities to take on the roles of chair or scribe
- with the teacher or another adult
- in whole class discussions
- presentations to a wider audience.
- In these contexts, some of the following activities should take place:

Blackfen School for Girls

- exploring and describing events, activities and problems, exploring and developing ideas with others
- reporting back to a wider audience in order to consolidate ideas and understanding
- asking questions as well as answering them
- speculating, hypothesising and imagining
- planning, organising and reviewing activities
- investigating and solving problems collaboratively
- evaluating experiences and reflecting on learning
- speaking at length and adopting the 'expert' role.

Reading

Our shared vision is to develop students' reading ages so that they are able to develop a lifelong love of reading and to not only be able to access but enjoy different texts and ranges of literature both in school and independently at home. In particular, reading skills should be developed in order that students are able to read fluently, accurately and with understanding become independent and critical readers and make informed and appropriate choices select information from a wide range of texts and sources including print, media and ICT and to evaluate those sources

- apply techniques such as skimming, scanning, and text-marking effectively in order to research and appraise texts
- staff should use available data on students' reading levels in order to make informed choices about appropriate texts and to plan appropriate support for students in order that they may successfully access texts.
- Pre-teaching vocabulary and developing a student awareness of etymology and morphology
- Using PiXL Unlock and other resources aimed at developing reading strategies across all curriculum areas
- Using DART activities to check understanding and deal with any misconceptions.
- Use and promote the Wider Reading across the Curriculum Booklets

Planned opportunities across the curriculum should be provided for students to:

- read independently and engage with narratives of events or activities
- read and follow written instructions
- make inferences and support their opinions with specific references to the text
- follow up their interests and read texts of varying lengths
- question and challenge printed information and views
- read with an understanding of different purposes, audiences and contexts
- read and explore ideas and theories from different perspectives and draw their own conclusions
- learn how to sift and select, and take notes from text and read to locate and relocate information
- learn how to scan for overall meaning and scan for key points, words and phrases
- to be set wider reading as homework
- analyse and understand how language is structured through grammar, sentence and paragraph construction to support meaning and understanding
- use reading to research and investigate from printed words, moving images, ICT texts.

Writing

In many lessons and examinations, progress and attainment depends on written communication. Our goal is to ensure that all students develop increasing confidence and competence in writing so that they are able to:

- write in a widening variety of forms for different purposes e.g. to interpret, evaluate, explain, analyse and explore
- develop ideas and communicate meaning to a reader using wide-ranging and technical vocabulary and an effective style, organising and structuring sentences grammatically and whole texts coherently
- present their writing clearly, using accurate punctuation, correct spelling and legible handwriting.

Blackfen School for Girls

Planned opportunities across the curriculum should be provided for students to:

- write accurately, fluently, effectively and at length
- have opportunities to write for different audiences and purposes
- make notes from a variety of sources - printed word, moving images and ICT texts
- write logs and journals in order to clarify thoughts and develop new understanding
- plan, draft, discuss and reflect on their writing
- learn the conventions of different forms of writing in different subject areas e.g. by using writing frames and providing clear models for writing
- write collaboratively with other students
- present some writing for display or publication
- act on feedback, teacher and peer assessment in order to redraft and improve their writing.

Staff will:

- expect high standards of presentation in most of students' finished writing
- provide good models and exemplars of particular kinds of writing at different attainment levels
- provide dictionaries, glossaries and lists of appropriate subject vocabulary and encourage students to use them
- help students to use a range of strategies to learn spellings, including:
 - look – say – cover – write – check
 - making connections between words with the same visual spelling pattern.