

# **BISHOP'S HATFIELD GIRLS' SCHOOL**

## **LITERACY POLICY**

**Date of last review:** Summer Term 2016

**Date of next review:** Summer Term 2017

**School Based Policy**

# Literacy Policy

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

## *Department for Education*

*<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/a00199695/use-of-language>*

**All teachers are teachers of literacy.** As such, the staff at Bishop’s Hatfield Girls’ School are committed to developing literacy skills in all our pupils, in the belief that it will support their learning and raise standards across the curriculum, because:

- pupils need vocabulary, analytical skills, expression and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of all subjects
- language helps us to reflect on, revise and evaluate ours and others’ thoughts and opinions
- developing effective speaking and listening skills builds confidence
- responding to higher order questions encourages the development of thinking skills and enquiry
- reading helps us to learn from sources beyond our immediate experience
- writing helps us to sustain and order thought
- improving literacy and learning can have an impact on pupils’ self-esteem, on motivation and behaviour. It allows them to learn independently. It is empowering
- literacy skills are becoming increasingly important when entering the workplace; employers are placing more emphasis on such key skills
- the emphasis on functional skills indicates that literacy is becoming more valued at industry level.

All schemes of work should include specific literacy objectives (where appropriate for the subject). These objectives should focus on reading, writing and speaking and listening when appropriate. Activities that utilise reading, writing, speaking and listening skills should be built into schemes of work in order to provide a variety of opportunities focused on literacy. The key processes\* in particular will inform what is taught and what is learnt.

\*Further information regarding key processes can be found in the Appendix.

## Implementation at whole-school level

**'Standards are raised ONLY by changes which are put into direct effect by teachers and pupils in classrooms.'**

*'Inside the Black Box' Black and William, 1998.*

### Roles and Responsibilities

- **Senior Leaders:** lead and give a high profile to literacy
- **English Faculty:** provide pupils with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write, speak and listen effectively. In conjunction with senior leadership, the English Faculty will also agree the literacy focus for each academic year
- **Teachers across the curriculum:** provide a consistent approach to pupils' development of language, since speaking, listening, writing and reading are, to varying degrees, integral to all lessons
- **Literacy co-ordinator:** supports departments in the implementation of strategies and encourages departments to learn from each other's practice by sharing ideas, and initiates/guides school-wide literacy activities/interventions
- **Faculty Literacy Representative:** ensures that literacy remains a key faculty focus and works with their department to keep literacy a key focus in their schemes of work, and to ensure literacy issues are highly visible in faculty teaching rooms.
- **Parents:** should encourage their children to read at home and write with accuracy
- **Pupils:** understand what strategies are being used in lessons, take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs, make improvements using such strategies and commit to reading widely outside school
- **Governors:** an identified governor may meet with staff and pupils (eg at link visits) and report progress and issues to the governing body.

**Each academic year, a new literacy focus will be decided, key approaches and materials will be provided by the Literacy Coordinator, implemented by staff through the literacy working group and subsequently evaluated by staff and the Literacy working group.**

#### **Across the school we shall:**

- identify the strengths and weaknesses in students' work
- use schemes of work as a way of planning for, and assessing, literacy skills
- adapt the identified literacy cross-curricular priorities for each year as pupils' skills improve
- seek to identify progression in the main forms of reading, writing, speaking and listening undertaken in each department and strengthen teaching plans accordingly, depending on what the priority for the year is
- plan to include the teaching of the specified literacy focus for the year to support learning

in own subject area. All subjects have a responsibility to do this

- review this literacy policy annually
- assess and review the implementation of specific literacy foci annually.

### **Speaking and Listening**

We will teach pupils to use language precisely and coherently. They should be able to listen to others, and to respond and build on their ideas and views constructively.

We will develop strategies to teach pupils how to:

- participate orally in groups and in whole class activities, both formally and informally
- use talk to develop and clarify ideas
- identify the main points to arise from a discussion
- listen for a specific purpose
- discuss and evaluate.

### **Reading**

We aim to give pupils a level of literacy that will enable them to cope with the increasing demands of reading in all subjects in terms of specific skills, knowledge and understanding and also ways of responding to texts. This applies to the reading of a variety of texts including fiction and non-fiction (including the use of ICT).

We will teach pupils strategies to help them to:

- read with greater understanding
- locate and use information
- follow a process or argument
- summarise, synthesise, challenge and adapt what they learn from their reading.

### **Writing**

We aim to give pupils a level of literacy that will enable them to cope with the demands of writing in all subjects. We will teach them specific writing skills, develop their ability to write in different styles and also teach them to recognise the importance of audience. It is important that we provide for co-ordination across subjects to recognise and reinforce pupils' language skills, through:

- making connections between pupils' reading and writing, so that pupils have clear models for their writing
- using the modelling process to make explicit to pupils how to write independently, without

scaffolding

- being clear about audience and purpose
- providing opportunities for a range of writing including sustained writing
- using and referring to evidence to support and reinforce thinking
- enabling pupils to respond critically to texts through effective and clear writing approaches.

### **Subject Support**

The Literacy coordinator will provide help and support to all subjects in implementing the agreed school foci each year. This support could include:

- observation – literacy teaching
- meetings with subject leaders
- scrutiny of schemes of work
- assisting with ideas for developing resources when requested by the faculty
- providing ideas and activities
- encouraging departments to share good practice by exhibiting or exemplifying pupils' work.

### **Assessment**

Assessment for Learning involving aspects of literacy should be used frequently as it can inform lesson-planning and target-setting and helps teachers to maintain the pace of learning for pupils.

Written work must be marked at all times using the agreed school Literacy marking symbols. A list of the current marking symbols is in the pupil planners

## **Key Issues**

### **Including All Pupils**

Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School pupils are entitled to our highest expectations and support. Some will need additional support and others will need to be challenged.

#### **1. Differentiation across all levels of ability**

Strategies that we can use include:

- varied questioning techniques
- adjusting the demands of the task
- use of additional support

- use of group structures
- clear and accessible resources that meet the needs of all pupils
- making objectives clear
- finding new ways to engage pupils through making lessons relevant
- creating an atmosphere where pupils evaluate their own and others' work , set targets and develop their own skills as a result of this
- the use of pupil friendly national curriculum levels, or progress descriptors, and GCSE grades to inform pupils.

## **2. English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

Our pupils learning EAL need to hear good examples of spoken English and also to refer to their first language skills to aid new learning in all subjects of the curriculum. The use of their first language enables them to draw on existing subject knowledge and to develop English language skills in context. For example, a group of pupils can learn about paragraph organisation in their mother tongue.

As a school we will seek to:

- provide specific EAL support in small focus groups
- provide differentiated resources for EAL pupils in lessons as appropriate
- provide clear targets for EAL pupils to improve at their own pace
- allow the use of L1 (first language) in lessons where necessary and where it assists the pupil's learning
- provide speaking and listening opportunities where possible to foster the development of spoken English.

## **3. SEN**

We will teach our pupils with special educational needs appropriately, supporting their learning and providing them with challenges matched to their needs.

We will seek to:

- use a range of teaching strategies to develop reading, writing, speaking and listening skills
- provide differentiated resources tailored to pupil specific needs
- offer small support groups.

## **4. Gifted and Talented**

We will teach our gifted and talented pupils through differentiated literacy activities that extend

and challenge within each faculty's lessons.

We will seek to:

- use a range of teaching strategies to develop the reading, writing, speaking and listening skills of identified gifted and talented pupils in specific subjects
- provide differentiated resources that are designed to extend and challenge pupils in all areas of literacy
- focus on areas of language use to improve technical accuracy in writing.

### **The English Department**

In addition to all the whole-school aspects of this policy, the English teachers at Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School have a leading role in providing pupils with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write, speak and listen effectively. The English department is well-placed to offer good advice and expertise.

The role of the English department includes:

- a key role in identifying literacy priorities, targets and objectives and the particular contribution they can make
- making a contribution to the action plan
- providing evidence of good practice in teaching reading, writing, speaking and listening
- providing library lessons in Years 7, 8 and 9 with a focus on reading.

#### **Key Priorities Agreed for 2016/2017:**

**Reading with a focus on developing vocabulary through independent learning and also through subject specific terms in word of the week**

**Focus upon raising consistent accuracy levels through targeted and timely marking, using the approved marking symbols, to ensure that all pupils have clear targets on what needs to be improved and how to improve it**

**Priorities to be reviewed at the end of the Spring Term.**

**Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School is committed to raising standards of literacy in all its pupils, through a co-ordinated approach.**

**Every teacher has a role to play in this process.**

Susanna Watt  
Literacy Coordinator  
June 2016  
Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School

## **Appendix:**

### **Key Processes:**

Key Stage 3 programmes of study for each subject are made up of four main areas; Key concepts, Key processes, Range and content and Curriculum opportunities. It is the key processes that provide information about the essential skills that pupils should be taught in each subject. For example, the English key processes are *Speaking and Listening, Reading, Writing and Technical accuracy*.

When looking at how literacy fits into subject areas, the key processes will show what specific areas should be covered. The key processes are fairly general, but give a starting point to work from when setting literacy objectives.

### **Examples:**

Music Key Processes

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/secondary/b00199601/music/programme/processes>

Geography key processes:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/secondary/b00199536/geography/programme/processes>