

BISHOP'S HATFIELD GIRLS' SCHOOL

LITERACY POLICY

Date of last review:	Summer Term 2024
Date of next review:	Summer Term 2025
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. All teachers support pupils’ development of literacy, and will have thought carefully about supporting and providing scaffolds for literacy 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.

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, Heads of Faculty will also review and 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 visible around the faculty.
- **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

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 Faculty Representatives working group and subsequently evaluated by staff and the Literacy Faculty Representatives.

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 all subject areas. 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

Opportunities should be planned carefully, both in English lessons and across other subjects. We will encourage oracy teaching at all levels, helping 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. Teachers should introduce Standard English language and vocabulary common to the formal register used in classrooms and the workplace (as different to the register that pupils engage in with their peers).

We will develop strategies to teach pupils how to:

- participate orally in groups and in whole class activities, both formally and informally, tailoring talk to a specific purpose
- understand the physical requirements of presenting to an audience
- use talk to develop and clarify ideas, focusing carefully on vocabulary
- identify the main points to arise from a discussion
- consider the needs of different listeners
- 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
- use a wide range of reading skills in order to comprehend the material and to retrieve various types of information
- locate and use information and disseminate information for validity
- 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 coordination 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 to develop a range of writing skills from showing calculation steps to sustained essay 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 Literacy Faculty Representatives to discuss literacy ideas and initiatives
- scrutiny of schemes of work when requested by a faculty
- assisting with ideas for developing resources when requested by a faculty
- providing literacy focused ideas, initiatives 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, and a slip with the main marking symbols is glued into pupils' writing books (Appendix A). A copy of the school-wide

agreed marking symbols is given to all teaching and support staff to put in their planner.

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. Adaptation 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 and desired outcomes 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
- 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 (where numbers allow)
- 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. SEND

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 Year 7 with a research and information literacy focus
- providing library lessons in Year 8 with a focus on reading.

Key Priorities Agreed for 2024/2025:

1. To ensure that pupils have frequent opportunities to practise oracy across the curriculum. This will include both formal and informal presentations, singularly and in groups as well as subject specific discussions.
2. To ensure that all pupils are supported in their access to the curriculum through effective scaffolding and strategies for reading. In lessons, pupils will be exposed to ambitious vocabulary with an emphasis on subject specific root words.
3. Ensuring that pupils have frequent opportunities to prepare, plan for and complete extended writing. An awareness of AI literacy with its potential benefits and drawbacks for pupils and staff.

To continue with:

Across the school, a culture of wider reading and reading for pleasure will be promoted. All KS3 pupils will have regular form time reading to develop their reading skills and increase their confidence when reading to their peers.

KS4 and KS5 pupils will have access to the super-curriculum which encourages breadth and depth reading in all subject areas

A consistent approach within faculties to how all pupils acquire foundation and subject specific vocabulary. There should be additional consideration given to how low prior attainers, pupils with SEND, and EAL pupils who are unable to speak fluently upon arrival at Bishop's are supported to use and understand key subject specific vocabulary.

Ensuring that the importance of accuracy of spelling, grammar and punctuation is promoted to learners wherever possible. This will include targeted and timely marking using the approved marking symbols which will help to give pupils clear targets on what needs to be improved and how to improve it. There will also be some focus on the formality range of both spoken and written language and upon social expectations of when more formal language is required and when it is permissible to use more informal terms.

All key priorities link in with the Bishop's 360 vision.

Priorities to be reviewed at the end of the Summer Term 2025.

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

Every teacher has a role to play in this process.

The marking symbols are printed in the pupils' planners, and appear here:

Marking Symbols

For written work

Symbol	Meaning
SP	Spelling
^	Letter or letters of word or words missed out
~~~~	Grammar. This sentence is wrongly constructed and needs to be re-written. If you cannot see what is wrong, ask.
WO	The order of the words in this sentence is not quite right. Re-write it so it makes sense.
WW	The wrong word use, or at least an inappropriate word choice for the context of the writing.
V	Vocabulary choice. The word you have used doesn't fit the sentence or the word can be improved. Use a thesaurus.
T	Tense. The tense of the verb is incorrect. Change it to the correct tense.
C	Capital letter. Check whether this needs to be a capital letter or not.
P	Punctuation. Punctuation is missing or is used incorrectly in the sentence. Add/remove/correct the punctuation.
[PL] [AI]	Plagiarism - place square brackets around the section
T	Target
.	Missing full stop. Consider whether the following word should now start with a capital letter.
⊙	Missing question mark.
⊙,	Missing comma. Consider whether the following word should now start with a small letter and not a capital letter.
//	Begin a new paragraph here.
X	Facts are incorrect.
I	Separate this into two words, e.g. write 'a lot' not 'alot'
⌒	Bring these two parts of the word together, e.g. write 'although', not 'al though'
?	Illegible. 'I can't read this' or 'this is confusing'. Check your sense. Look back over your work and correct it.

### For Short Answer/ Numerical Work

✓	Correct
(✓)	Almost correct
X	Incorrect
ECF	Error carried forward