

MAGDALEN COLLEGE SCHOOL

LITERACY POLICY

Non-Statutory Policy – Annual Review

GOVERNORS' EDUCATION & WELFARE COMMITTEE

Scope and Rationale

Disciplinary literacy is an approach to improving literacy across the curriculum. It recognises that literacy skills are both general and subject specific, emphasising the value of supporting teachers in every subject to teach students how to read, write and communicate effectively in their subjects. (EEF 2021)

The term literacy covers reading, writing, and communicating. Literacy is a fundamental skill in learning, in one's career and in life in general. Literacy is a strong predictor of academic success and life outcomes. Problems with literacy can be at the root of student disaffection with learning and a barrier to success.

Students need to use these skills across the school in order to access the curriculum; therefore *all staff share responsibility for literacy, all staff are teachers of literacy* whatever their subject, and must address together and as a priority the issues that literacy raises.

Literacy is at the very centre of our teaching - each subject has unique language, structures, and genres—students need explicit teaching to master them.

This policy follows the **EEF guidance on disciplinary literacy** from *Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools* (2021). The core principle is that **Disciplinary literacy** means teaching students how to read, write, and communicate effectively **within each subject**, recognising that literacy is both general and subject-specific, and that every teacher is responsible for literacy in their subject, not just English teachers. We follow their 7 recommendations:

- I. Support teachers to teach subject-specific reading, writing, and communication skills & provide training focused on subject-specific literacy rather than generic approaches.
- II. Provide targeted vocabulary instruction in every subject. Teach Tier 2 and Tier 3 words explicitly, using the origin of words, word-stems, prefixes, suffixes and roots (etymology and morphology) to help students understand and remember words.
- III. Develop students' ability to read complex academic texts by modelling reading strategies like prediction, questioning, and activating prior knowledge.
- IV. Break down complex writing tasks by teaching planning, drafting, and revising explicitly, using modelling and collaborative writing to support struggling students.
- V. Combine writing instruction with reading in every subject: Reading builds knowledge for writing; writing deepens understanding and teach conventions of good writing within each discipline.
- VI. Provide opportunities for structured talk; use discussion to develop thinking and language and encourage subject-specific vocabulary in oral work.
- VII. Target struggling readers with additional support

Aims and objectives

The School will work to:

1. Raise standards of literacy throughout the school
2. Enable students to access all subjects
3. Give students the skills needed to cope in the wider world
4. Involve all staff, students and the community in promoting literacy skills

Our objectives are:

- To closely monitor student literacy progress
- To provide enhancement programmes as needed

- To establish strategies towards literacy that are consistent across the school, including training for staff and the use of appropriate resources
- To encourage home-school and school-community literacy links, including the use of appropriate and accessible (jargon-free) language in our communications with parents and others
- To develop the use of the Library and the wider school as a literacy resource
- To foster a love of literacy through activities within and outside school

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The effectiveness of the Literacy Policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed both day to day and more strategically:

1. On-going monitoring:
 - Lesson observations
 - Sampling of students' work
 - Discussions between members of staff
 - Feedback from parents
 - Student progress in lessons
 - Student progress in interventions
2. Strategic monitoring and evaluation:
 - Schemes of Work are reviewed at the end of the period of study, or annually as appropriate
 - Analysis of student summative assessment data, termly
 - Review of The School and Departmental Development Plans, annually
 - Review of interventions

The responsibility of the Curriculum AHT is to:

- Monitor statutory guidelines related to reading, writing and literacy
- Work with the Leadership team to determine and implement an effective literacy strategy across the curriculum
- Ensure there is constructive liaison between subjects
- Ensure there is constructive liaison between the school and home
- Assist in the monitoring of the literacy strategy and propose amendments in the light of evaluation and curriculum changes
- Ensure the implementation of interventions
- Ensure that all teachers are aware of each student's reading ages
- Provide training for teachers where necessary

The responsibility of all teaching staff is to:

- Act as a role model for literacy in their behavior and work
- Develop literacy through their subject, including reading, writing, grammar, argument and comprehension, teaching awareness of areas such as structure, medium and audience, as appropriate
- Instil transferable skills, such as close reading, skimming and debate
- Ensure students with literacy needs are supported
- Promote students' appreciation of the links between speaking, listening, reading and writing, and the value of each, wherever possible
- Aid literacy through displays/placemats in each classroom and work area in whichever ways are appropriate
- Teach explicitly the technical and specialist vocabulary of their subjects and how to use and spell these words
- Teach the patterns of language vital to understanding and expression in different subjects (for example, language to express causality, chronology, logic, exploration, hypothesis, comparison, and how to ask questions and develop arguments)

- Provide and promote the usage of dictionaries and thesauruses
- Have a knowledge and understanding of students attending intervention
- Have consistently high expectations in terms of the presentation of work
- Have a knowledge and understanding of data relating to literacy

Magdalen college school whole school strategies:

READING

- During English lessons for KS3, all students have reading book chosen by them around a theme linked to the lesson content; scheduled reading lessons in the library with their English teacher; reflection on the books they have read.
- Tutor time reading programme – Year 7 students initially (later developed through K3) experience reading from their tutor *twice a week minimum* during tutor time. (3x sets of books are purchased, and are carouselled through the year group)
- Inspired by EPA, for every subject there is a list of both fiction and non-fiction books that are intended to engage and inspire students. Students are encouraged to read books related to their interests by the librarian, tutors and subject teachers. <https://4905753ff3cea231a868-376d75cd2890937de6f542499f88a819.ssl.cf3.rackcdn.com/bartholomew/uploads/document/Science-Extension-Reading-Journey.pdf?ts=1689167839?ts=1763327165>
- All staff to share outside classrooms and offices posters to show what they are currently reading (tbc)
- Reading age data is saved into students online class registers and seating plans to support teachers' targeted interventions.

WRITING

- Teachers model writing where possible, using 'I do – We do -You do' process explaining their thinking processes and editing their writing as they proceed.
- Teach key vocabulary explicitly (focusing on Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary requiring explicit teaching ie key subject terminology) and demystify the spelling, including the teaching of common roots of words (word stems such as 'omni' 'osteo' 'bio' 'uni' 'anti' etc)
- The 'Writing Curriculum journey' for each subject, from the starting point in year 7 to end point in year 11, identifying the 'reading and writing demands' in GCSE examinations, are outlined in LTPs. Exemplar models (WAGOLL) of exam answers are included, and a phased approach to developing students' proficiency through KS3 & 4 is outlined.
- Focus weeks for Writing are calendared annually, focusing on key writing skills such as the use of capital letters and sentence structure, the correct spelling of key subject terminology, the correct use of apostrophes, the use of topic sentences in paragraphs, etc.
- A proof-reading aide-memoire is provided to all teachers of KS3 to support non-specialists, and to support students in editing and reviewing.
- Whole school literacy codes used by all staff for providing feedback to students, such as 'Sp' for spelling; 'WW' for when the wrong word is used. Use of writing feedback codes is monitored through normal lesson visits and teacher feedback.