

# **Aylesbury UTC**

## **Literacy**

***October 2023***

Responsible Officer:	Assistant Principal
Date:	October 2023
Review date:	August 2024
Available at:	Website 'About Us' / Parent Portal
Authorised by:	Governing Board TBC

## 1. RATIONALE

### **Language and literacy**

Teachers should develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects.

### **Spoken language**

Pupils should be taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently using Standard English. They should learn to justify ideas with reasons; ask questions to check understanding; develop vocabulary and build knowledge; negotiate; evaluate and build on the ideas of others; and select the appropriate register for effective communication. They should be taught to give well-structured descriptions and explanations and develop their understanding through speculating, hypothesising and exploring ideas. This will enable them to clarify their thinking as well as organise their ideas for writing.

### **Reading and writing**

Teachers should develop pupils' reading and writing in all subjects to support their acquisition of knowledge. Pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose (both fiction and non-fiction) and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Schools should do everything to promote wider reading. They should provide library facilities and set ambitious expectations for reading at home. Pupils should develop the stamina and skills to write at length, with accurate spelling and punctuation. They should be taught the correct use of grammar. They should build on what they have been taught to expand the range of their writing and the variety of the grammar they use. The writing they do should include narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations: such writing supports them in rehearsing, understanding and consolidating what they have heard or read.

### **Vocabulary development**

Pupils' acquisition and command of vocabulary are key to their learning and progress across the whole curriculum. Teachers should therefore develop vocabulary actively, building systematically on pupils' current knowledge. They should increase pupils' store of words in general; simultaneously, they should also make links between known and new vocabulary and discuss the shades of meaning in similar words. In this way, pupils expand the vocabulary choices that are available to them when they write. In addition, it is vital for pupils' comprehension that they understand the meanings of words they meet in their reading across all subjects, and older pupils should be taught the meaning of instruction verbs that they may meet in examination questions. It is particularly important to induct pupils into the language which defines each subject in its own right, such as accurate mathematical and scientific language.

## 2. POLICY

At Aylesbury UTC we aim to ensure that all our students use language and communicate effectively in all forms by becoming:

- **confident and independent readers.**
- **effective and confident writers.**
- **articulate communicators and listeners in all situations**

**All teachers are teachers of reading, writing and communication.** As such, as a staff, we are committed to developing literacy skills in all our students, in the belief that it will support their learning and raise standards across the curriculum, because:

- to succeed all students, need to possess literacy skills which will enable them to access the curriculum in Key Stages 4 and 5.
- students need vocabulary, analytical skills, expression and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of subjects.
- language helps us to reflect, revise and evaluate ourselves and others.
- 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 students' self-esteem, on motivation and behaviour, allowing them to learn independently.
- literacy skills are becoming increasingly important when entering the workplace with employers placing more emphasis on key skills.
- the emphasis on functional skills indicates that literacy is becoming more valued at industry level.
- Improving literacy skills can have a direct positive impact on students' assessment data.

**All schemes of work should include specific literacy objectives (appropriate for the subject). These objectives should focus on reading, writing and oral communication when appropriate. Activities that utilise reading, writing and oral communication skills should be built into schemes of work to provide a variety of opportunities focused on literacy.**

## 3. IMPLEMENTATION AT WHOLE-SCHOOL LEVEL - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Subject Leaders lead and give a high profile to literacy

- All teachers are responsible for the development and implementation of Literacy across the whole school.
- All teachers are to embed literacy in all areas of teaching. This can be achieved through and during starter activities and lesson consolidations. All subject teachers are to always embed subject specific terminology. Guidance is available.
- **Parents** should encourage their children to read at home and write with accuracy. Parents should also contribute to the development of their child's literacy through reading and writing at home. Assisting with homework and liaising with teachers to better improve their child's skills.
- **Students** 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.
- **Governors** may meet with staff and students (e.g. during link visits and learning walks) and report progress and issues to the governing body. Linking with our TLA Governor to show commitment from a cross-college perspective.

#### **Across the school we will:**

- identify the strengths and weaknesses in a students' work from a literacy perspective.
- adapt the identified literacy cross-curricular priorities for each year as students' literacy skills improve.
- seek to identify progression in the main forms of reading, writing, speaking and listening undertaken in each subject area.
- plan to include the teaching of the specified literacy focus for the term in own subject area.
- review this literacy policy annually.

Literacy at the Aylesbury UTC is about encouraging all students to communicate effectively using Standard English and subject specific terms so that they can gain skills which will help in all areas.

## **4. DEFINING LITERACY**

Literacy involves the ability to read and write; however, it also involves recognising, reproducing and manipulating the conventions of a range of texts as well as developing speaking skills. There are also new forms of literacy that relate to the development of digital technology and the use of multimedia

which also require consideration. The Department for Education has suggested a range of ways in which literacy should be encouraged within the curriculum including the development of:

1. Speaking and Listening Skills. Speaking encourages students to organise and structure ideas, while active listening is key to picking out important information. These skills could be further enhanced by tasks which integrate speaking and listening skills with reading and writing tasks as this can help to reinforce both skill sets.
2. Reading skills. This should include being able to interpret a range of different text types as well as understanding how style and format can affect how different meanings are communicated.
3. Writing skills. In conjunction with grammar, punctuation and spelling, (SPaG) students should also learn about the craft and different styles of writing for different purposes. The idea of **'text type'** is central to this, whereby a **'text'** is a piece of writing and the **'type'** of text relates to its purpose or the reason why it is being written.

These skills should be reinforced both within specific areas as well as across the curriculum.

## 5. ADDITION FOR 2023 - THE RE-INTRODUCTION OF DEAR TIME

The Literacy lead will be introducing DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) time to the UTC for this academic year. Dear time is an initiative to strengthen all students and staff's reading skills. DEAR time will be introduced in 1 x 15-minute session during form time each week. All students and staff are expected to take part. This is part of our drive towards gaining a Literacy Kitemark as well as improving Literacy.

### Strategies: How to...

#### **All subjects must:**

- use displays in classrooms to highlight spellings of common words, subject specific key terms and exam literacy words.
- mark and assess students' work for literacy skills – spelling, punctuation and grammar – according to the college's marking policy.
- include literacy objectives in schemes of work and on lesson plans.
- devote a page of the subject handbook to ways in which literacy can be developed in the subject, including key words.
- Actively take part in DEAR time

#### **Most subjects/lessons should:**

- display key words for the lesson, using the whiteboard or display boards.
- provide a range of opportunities for students to develop punctuation, paragraphing and sentence construction.
- provide a range of opportunities for students to improve reading for purpose and writing for audience.
- provide a range of opportunities for students to develop high level thinking and discussion skills.
- share their good practice in developing literacy skills by saving examples of resources and activities onto staff files.

#### **Across the school we will:**

- within the SLT group, create a forum to share good practice and set whole school priorities.
- develop corridor and open space displays which focus on literacy skills.
- ensure thorough proof-reading of all assemblies and other staff-led presentations to ensure a high level of literacy to be good literacy role models for students.
- improve access to on-line and hard copy dictionaries and thesauruses by ensuring that all classrooms have copies, and that departments have a subject specific dictionary/glossary of key terms.
- ensure access to training for staff on areas of literacy as identified on an annual basis.