



# Literacy and Communication Policy

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## **Literacy and Communication Policy**

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# Literacy and Communication Policy

## 1. Introduction

The Northern Ireland Curriculum's aim is *"to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives."*

In Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College, we believe that raising standards in literacy is fundamental to improving learning, raising achievement and ultimately empowering young people to achieve their potential. Poor levels of literacy create barriers to learning, leading to underachievement and low self-esteem. Improved literacy skills enable pupils to:

- Access all subjects studied
- Read for information and pleasure
- Become critical, creative and effective communicators

As a whole staff, we are committed to supporting all our pupils in the acquisition and development of literacy. This policy outlines the strategy for the promotion and development of literacy in the school. Literacy will be promoted as a whole school priority.

## 2. Rationale

In 2011, the Department of Education published ***Count, Read: Succeed – A Strategy to Improve Outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy.***

- "Literacy and numeracy are at the very heart of the revised curriculum"
- "Developing literacy and numeracy therefore must be central elements of a school's delivery of the revised curriculum, and of the support and professional development for teachers in implementing the curriculum."
- "Schools should have a literacy and numeracy policy, linked to the School Development Plan and annual targets."

As a whole staff, we are committed to placing literacy at the heart of the revised curriculum, supporting professional development and updating this policy annually. Literacy is to feature prominently in whole school policies and every department policy and scheme of work.

### 3. Definition

Literacy is defined as the ability to read and use written information and to write appropriately and legibly, taking account of different purposes, contexts, conventions and audiences. It involves the development of:

- an integrated approach to the acquisition of talking, listening, reading and writing skills across the curriculum;
- knowledge that allows a speaker, writer and reader to use language appropriate to different social situations;
- formal and informal language across all areas of social interaction; and
- the ability to read, understand and use information in multiple formats and platforms, including traditional print and on-screen material.

The table below outlines how pupils should develop literacy skills in (these areas will be mapped across the curriculum to showing specific examples. All department have copies of these documents):

| READING                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | WRITING                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | SPEAKING AND LISTENING                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p>Reading</p> <p>Read a range of texts for information, ideas and enjoyment.</p> <p>Use a range of strategies to read with increasing independence.</p> <p>Find, select and use information from a range of sources.</p> <p>Understand and explore ideas, events and features in texts.</p> <p>Use evidence from texts to explain opinions.</p> |  <p>Writing</p> <p>Talk about, plan and edit work.</p> <p>Communicate information, meaning, feelings, imaginings and ideas in a clear and organised way.</p> <p>Develop, express and present ideas in a variety of forms and formats using traditional and digital resources for different audiences and purposes.</p> <p>Write with increased accuracy and proficiency.</p> |   <p>Speaking      Listening</p> <p>Listen and take part in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Presentations</li> <li>• Group discussions</li> <li>• Role Plays</li> </ul> <p>-Communicate information, ideas, opinions, feelings and imaginings using an expanding vocabulary.</p> <p>-Contribute comments, ask questions and respond to others' point of view.</p> <p>-Structure talk so that ideas can be understood by others.</p> <p>-Speak clearly and adapt ways of speaking to audience and situation.</p> <p>-Use non-verbal methods to express ideas and engage with the listener.</p> |

## 4. Guiding Principles

***The Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework document*** (ISEF) was produced by E.T.I. as a response to the changing educational landscape, new government strategies, technological advances, worldwide research and development in how children and young people learn. It denotes *leadership and management at all levels* and the *provision for learning and teaching* as the key areas in educational development.

The following two sections of this policy will outline our methodology for literacy across the curriculum in:

- **leadership and management**
- **provision for learning and teaching**

### 4.1. Leadership and Management

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

##### **All Staff**

All staff should:

- ensure that they are familiar with the specific literacy demands of their subject and ensure sufficient coverage of these skills in their lesson planning;
- use agreed strategies in order to teach writing, speaking, listening and reading skills as outlined in the Revised Curriculum;
- implement department and whole school policies on developing literacy;
- be able to identify a pupil's literacy strengths and weaknesses and know how to build upon these in order to promote pupil progress;
- celebrate literacy achievement;
- assist in the identification and referral to the HOD/Literacy Co-ordinator/SENCO of pupils who need extra support;
- report on a student's standard of literacy at the Parents' Afternoons, as appropriate;
- be familiar with the KS3 Communication Levels of Progression;



## **Heads of Department**

Heads of Department should:

- ensure that 'subject specific literacy' is clearly identified in schemes of work, and there is obvious progression through the key stages;
- liaise with the English department and the Literacy Coordinator for support with literacy;
- map communication tasks to ensure a range of opportunities;
- encourage models of good practice;
- use available assessment data to identify appropriate literacy strategies and identify those with literacy difficulties;
- use assessment data to identify those experiencing literacy difficulties and refer them for appropriate support.

## **The English Department**

The English Department should:

- lead the teaching of literacy skills by delivering specific literacy classes within their subject;
- monitor and encourage the reading habits of year 8-9 in weekly library classes, using the Accelerated Reader Programme;
- support whole school reading initiatives;
- share good practice with all staff regarding marking for improvement and levels of progression;
- Use performance data to track progress.

## **The Literacy Coordinator and team**

The Literacy Coordinator and team should:

- support departments in the implementation of the school's Literacy Policy;
- deliver INSET to all staff in order to raise literacy standards throughout the school;
- be available to support staff in matters concerning literacy and communication;
- map literacy provision across department schemes of work;
- evaluate progress through use of all performance data;
- devise a Literacy Action Plan, implement it and evaluate it annually;
- co-ordinate KS3 literacy initiatives;
- consult and provide advice (if required) to the SENCO regarding pupils with literacy difficulties relating to their special educational needs;
- liaise with the school Librarian and teacher Librarian regarding whole school initiatives;
- provide support through sixth form mentors.

## **The SENCO**

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator should:

- communicate with all subject staff about those pupils who have special educational needs and give advice on what Literacy strategies staff can use to help those pupils in their subject;
- monitor pupils with Literacy related special educational needs through IEPs and review meetings;
- provide Literacy intervention for students with special educational needs who have standardised scores in the below average range. (see SENCo Policy).



### **The Teacher Librarian/Librarian**

The teacher librarian/librarian should:

- support teaching staff and pupils in the delivery of the Accelerated Reader programme;
- support teaching staff in monitoring reading progress and targets in Accelerated Reader;
- promote and support the delivery of whole school reading initiatives;
- contribute to pupils' reading development, both fiction and non-fiction;

## **Pupils (Attitudes and Actions)**

### **Attitudes**

Pupils should:

- take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs and making improvement;
- be willing to ask for help with spelling and/or any other literacy needs;
- adopt a 'can do' attitude towards speaking and listening, especially individual presentations.
- make a conscious effort to use correct punctuation, paragraphs and language techniques to enhance writing.
- develop a willingness to read aloud in class when asked to by the subject teacher.

### **Actions**

- complete all class and homework to the best of their ability and learn any spellings that have been corrected across all subjects;
- record all homeworks in homework diary provided;
- read for 20 minutes every night and quiz on Accelerated Reader books in order to reach their agreed target;
- renew or return library book on or before the due date;
- seek help from the Librarian if there are any issues finding suitable books;
- read a range of texts for information, ideas and enjoyment;
- talk about, plan and edit work;
- ask for help in literacy and communication from parents/carers when required.

### **Parents/Carers**

Parents/carers should:

- work in partnership with the school in monitoring homework and ensuring that all work is completed to the highest standards;
- ensure their child reads for 20 minutes every night and quizzes on Accelerated Reader books in order to reach their agreed target;
- model good reading habits and encourage reading at home in a variety of situations to encourage development in their child's literacy.

## 4.2. Provision for Learning and Teaching

Below is a list of ***teaching strategies and active learning opportunities*** that can be employed across the curriculum to promote literacy and communication skills (consult with the Literacy Coordinator for further clarification and exemplification):

- Promote a positive ethos towards literacy within your classroom
- Provide opportunities for individual, paired, group and whole class activities
- Differentiate teaching materials using pupil data and individual education plans (IEPs)
- Create an environment of risk taking (pupils and staff) within literacy
- Role play/ Hot seating/ Group discussion / Interviews
- Mnemonics, split words, Look/Cover/Write/Check technique
- Mind mapping techniques/graphic organisers/spider diagrams/flow charts
- Celebrate success initiatives e.g. charts, postcards, stickers, prizes, certificates, reward trips
- Reciprocal teaching/ modelling of exemplar work/sharing good practice within departments and across the curriculum areas

Below is a list of ***intervention strategies*** that can be employed across the curriculum in order to improve Literacy skills:

- Track pupils' progress and identify areas for improvement/support
- Identify underachievers with HOD/ HOY/ SENCO and create support classes
- Parental contact: Progress Checks, Parent mail, phone call, letter, support material for home
- Teacher/ Pupil consultation
- Teacher/ Parent consultation
- KS4 Target setting
- Differentiated teaching materials
- Modelling of exemplar work
- Regular monitoring and evaluation of classwork and homework
- Exam revision classes
- Teacher/parent consultations
- Coordination with SEN team for referrals/support material



Below is a list of ***Resources and display ideas*** that can be employed across the curriculum to promote Literacy and communication skills:

- *Pocket Posters* (used in English lessons) for Year 8-10 can be used across the curriculum to support classwork and homework
- Literacy across the curriculum posters
- Stimulating, exemplary classroom and corridor displays
- Key words displayed in classrooms
- Visual flash cards
- Use of ICT and computer software e.g. Photostory, Comic Life
- Cross words/ word searches/ bingo resources



### 4.3. 2025-2026 Literacy Action Plan Priorities

The table below shows a list of *specific literacy priorities for the academic year ahead*:

| READING                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | WRITING                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | SPEAKING AND LISTENING                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p>Reading</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Accelerated Reader Programme for year 8-9.</li> <li>2. Reading Partnership Programme – sixth formers and year 8 pupils.</li> <li>3. Kilcooley Transition Project</li> <li>4. Special Literacy events throughout the year: Scholastic Book Fair; World Book Day; Open Evenings.</li> </ol> |  <p>Writing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use extended writing opportunities across the curriculum (see map) and mark using levels of progression.</li> <li>2. Analyse data from PIE tests (key stage 8-10) to identify any areas for development in writing (and/or reading) skills.</li> <li>3. Formalise the teaching of specific grammar and punctuation skills (in year 8) throughout the English department and share these regularly with all staff.</li> </ol> |  <p>Speaking</p>  <p>Listening</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop Speaking and Listening across the curriculum (see speaking and listening map) in each of the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Presentations</li> <li>• Group discussions</li> <li>• Role Plays</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>Continue to use assessment proforma for speaking and listening assessment.</p> |

## 5. Using assessment to inform practices.

The use of assessment and data will:

- allow us to inform whole school training and practices
- enable us to identify and set targets for the improvement of literacy

The following table indicates opportunities for assessment in literacy:

|                | <b>Term 1</b>                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>Term 2</b>                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Term 3</b>                                                                                                                                                             |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Year 8</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PIE 11T</li><li>• Common assessments in English (Learning Journals)</li><li>• Accelerated Reader Star Tests</li><li>• Winter examinations</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Common assessments in English (Learning Journals)</li><li>• Connected Unit – literacy across the curriculum</li><li>• Accelerated Reader Star Tests</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Common assessments in English (Learning Journals)</li><li>• Accelerated Reader Star Tests</li><li>• Summer examinations</li></ul> |
| <b>Year 9</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PIE 12</li><li>• Common assessments in English (Learning Journals)</li><li>• Accelerated Reader Star Tests</li><li>• Winter examinations</li></ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Common assessments in English (Learning Journals)</li><li>• Accelerated Reader Star Tests</li></ul>                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Common assessments in English (Learning Journals)</li><li>• Accelerated Reader Star Tests</li><li>• Summer examinations</li></ul> |
| <b>Year 10</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PIE 13</li><li>• Common assessments in English (Learning Journals)</li><li>• Winter examinations</li></ul>                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Common assessments in English (Learning Journals)</li></ul>                                                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Common assessments in English (Learning Journals)</li><li>• Summer examinations</li></ul>                                         |



## **Inclusion and accessibility statement**

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This policy applies to all pupils in Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College. We at Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College are committed to inclusion and supplying all our school publications in an accessible format.

Should any pupil parent or carer require support in interpreting or understanding this policy school will provide guidance in partnership with the Inclusion and Diversity Service.

If you require this document in an alternative format, such as large print or a coloured background, please contact us on [policies@bangoracademy.org.uk](mailto:policies@bangoracademy.org.uk)