



**STAMFORD
PARK TRUST**

Longdendale High School Whole School Literacy Policy

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THIS POLICY APPLIES TO: All staff and students

OWNER/AUTHOR: Head of School/Assistant Head- Teaching & Learning Strategic Lead/Head of English

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**LEGAL FRAMEWORK/STATUTORY
GUIDANCE:**

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1. Rationale

Every teacher at Longdendale High School is a teacher of literacy. This is because in every subject, teaching and learning depends on successful reading, writing and speaking and listening.

Literacy always underpins the learning of all students in all subjects. It is the acknowledgement of this fact that serves as a starting point for everything thereafter. Language expands the realm of thought, emotion and most of all, experience. The success of raising standards in literacy depends on a whole school cross-curricular approach. Literacy is about social justice, not just reading and writing.

2. Introduction

At Longdendale High School, we firmly believe that literacy is an essential skill to enable students to read and write as experts in every subject across the curriculum. These skills are vital to make sense of the world around us. As such, the better we are at these skills the more successful we can expect to be in life. We recognise that improving literacy can have an impact on students' self-esteem, motivation, behaviour and attainment.

We believe that reading, and particularly reading for pleasure, has a direct impact on cognitive and social communicative development. It has been shown to improve health and wellbeing, as well as improving compassion and empathy for others. Our aim is to develop each student's potential to the point where they are reading at, or above, their chronological age. Baseline data will inform us of individual intervention needed.

Having good literacy means students can become more independent in their learning, which is empowering. We therefore want students to become increasingly confident, fluent, and effective in all elements of literacy, including reading, comprehending, writing, speaking, and listening, and above all in communicating across the curriculum.

Our approach to literacy is evidence based and informed by research, particularly the findings of the Education Endowment Foundation. They have seven recommendations for improving literacy in secondary schools, as shown below:

1. Prioritising disciplinary literacy across the curriculum.
2. Providing targeted vocabulary instruction.
3. Developing student's ability to read complex texts.
4. Breaking down complex writing tasks.
5. Combining writing instruction with reading in every subject.
6. Providing opportunities for structured talk.
7. Providing high quality literacy interventions.

Our priorities are:

1. Enhance Consistent and Effective Reading Instruction:

- Develop and implement uniform strategies for teaching reading across all grade levels.
- Integrate reading skills into various subjects to promote comprehensive literacy.

2. Cultivate a School-Wide Love of Literacy:

- Enrich the tutor time curriculum with engaging literacy activities.

- Foster a culture of reading through school-wide events, enrichment programs, and interactive engagement.

3. Implement Disciplinary Literacy Across the Curriculum:

- Establish clear approaches to incorporate literacy skills in all subject areas.
- Provide professional development for teachers to effectively integrate disciplinary literacy into their teaching practices.

3. Intention

At Longdendale High School, all students will be entitled to:

- **Engaging Literacy Opportunities:** Utilise literacy skills in relevant and motivating contexts.
- **Fostering a Love for Reading:** Develop a passion for reading through diverse and engaging activities.
- **Access to Age-Appropriate Writing:** Explore a variety of texts suited to their reading level.
- **Comprehensive Literacy Assessment:** Receive assessments that identify strengths, interests, and needs, providing constructive feedback for progress.
- **Early Literacy Intervention:** Benefit from timely support for additional literacy needs.
- **Quality First Teaching:** Experience adapted learning and teaching tailored to individual needs.
- **Support for EAL Students:** Access additional support for students where English is not their first language.
- **Technology-Enhanced Literacy:** Utilise technology to improve and enhance literacy development.

4. Implementation

4.1 Reading

Students can access a wide range of reading books through the Longdendale Library. All students have access to the library before school, at break and lunch and after school. As part of the English curriculum, all KS3 students have a library/reading lesson once per fortnight. In these sessions, students have dialogue with their English teacher around what they are reading and will be encouraged to explore different authors and genres.

Reading forms part of the tutor curriculum; in one morning session per week, students read a range of short texts, both fiction and non-fiction. In response, students then answer comprehension questions and complete an additional extended writing task in the booklets provided.

Years 7-10 tutor groups also read a book linked to the PSHE curriculum, an additional novel and a non-fiction book. Students have two 30-minute reading sessions per week with discussions which relate to key themes in the books.

Year 11 students receive targeted intervention from different curriculum areas and engage in reading activities relevant to these subjects.

Across school, to ensure that students read often, reading opportunities have been built into the curriculum.

Teachers use Walkthrus and the Longdendale Reading Strategy to maximise the efficacy of reading in the classroom. This involves preparing students to read the text by explaining the context in which it was written and why it is being read as part of the curriculum. In addition, teachers will anticipate any unfamiliar concepts or vocabulary and teach

around this, checking for understanding through questioning as the text is being read. In the reading of the text, teachers use FASE reading to model fluency and expression and call and response to develop understanding of key vocabulary.

PRE-READING INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLEX TEXTS
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CONNECT COMPLEX CONCEPTS AND KEYSTONE VOCABULARY



ACTIVATE PRIOR KNOWLEDGE AND RELATE



PROBE & QUESTION



PLAN FOR PAUSES

All staff receive training on the explicit teaching of vocabulary. We aim for our students to become word curious and make links between words across subject areas. Staff have also received training in retrieval practice when teaching vocabulary, and there is a focus upon revisiting words throughout the year.

All students have access to the Sparx Reader platform, which baselines comprehension and identifies novels for students to read that are appropriate for their age and reading ability. Rewards are available for students who earn the most points across a term in each English class and in each year group, with bigger prizes available for students at the end of the year.

4.2 Vocabulary

We are committed to empowering students by widening their vocabulary. We are ambitious and aspirational regarding vocabulary acquisition. We understand the impact that vocabulary has on quality of work, progress, and the ability to express ideas and concepts.

For students to be able to read, write and speak with accuracy, understanding and confidence they need to understand the meaning and use of many technical terms, some of which have different meanings in different disciplines. It is therefore essential to nurture and support the development of academic language using strategies such as these

- Teachers working together within subject areas to identify, select and embed their key Tier 2 and 3 words (which students are less likely to come across in everyday speech), in curriculum planning, teaching and assessment.
- Considering which words have the ‘highest leverage’.
- Explicitly sharing and modelling the use of Tier 2 and 3 specialist vocabulary with students via direct instruction, Topic Overviews, Masters of Knowledge resources and activities as appropriate for each department.

- Explicitly teaching spelling strategies, for example by using etymology (the study of the origin of words) and morphology (the study of the structure and parts of words).
- Exploring common word roots e.g., in science, 'photo' (light) then generating other words e.g. phototropic, photosynthesis, and exploring word building activities.
- Using graphic organisers to break down complex words visually e.g., the Frayer model.
- Employing regular low stakes retrieval quizzes providing multiple exposures to Tier 2/3 vocab so it will be part of student's long-term memory.

4.3 Writing

Writing is a complex process, and all teachers have a responsibility to help students become confident, skilled writers who can use writing to process, organise and communicate their knowledge, ideas, and opinions effectively. This can be supported by strategies including:

- Live modelling the thought processes and actions involved in drafting, writing, and re-writing various written forms and genres. Visualisers could support this.
- Live-marking pupils' work for Spelling Punctuation and Grammar and ensure pupils take responsibility for their mistakes whilst we explicitly teach misconceptions.
- Sharing models and student exemplars of high-quality work, as well as discussing how other examples could be improved.
- Supporting weaker writers where appropriate with scaffolding, sentence starters, paragraph and writing frames, key words, and teacher modelling.
- Using pre-writing activities like re-capping key ideas before beginning to write or providing sentence stems.
- Giving students opportunities to write clearly in a variety of forms and for different audiences, with clear shared expectations of outcomes.
- Breaking down complex writing tasks e.g., by providing students with writing frames and structure strips to assist them in structuring their work, allowing for the growth of independence over time.
- Maintaining high expectations of the presentation, spelling, and grammar in written work.

Students receive regular feedback on extended written work as part of the Mastery Application Tasks. As well as measuring students' success against a success criterion, teachers also support students in correcting and developing their literacy. On a lesson-by-lesson basis, teachers carry out active observation as students are working, giving students live feedback on their work as they are completing it as part of their independent practice. Again, this provides teachers with the opportunity to support students in writing with accuracy and in line with the disciplines of their subject.

As part of the tutor curriculum in the Autumn and Summer term, students are introduced to and reminded about succinct writing in a session once per week, completing activities that help them to develop academic writing in a variety of contexts. At the end of the term, students are given the opportunity to consolidate their learning through completing an extended writing task.

In each half term, students are invited to enter writing competitions, with prizes ranging from book tokens to trips to local libraries or attractions.

4.4 Oracy

Evidence suggests that high quality classroom discussions benefit all students, but especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Developing oracy is therefore an important part of narrowing attainment gaps which could otherwise affect the future success of students. Teachers will support the development of oracy skills through a variety of means including:

- Providing a range of opportunities for structured and accountable talk among students, for example to investigate, debate and discuss contentious questions, ideas, and opinions.
- Explicitly teaching and modelling conventions for talk and listening in the classroom. Model good practice and show them the difference between proper English and slang.
- Picking up on unnecessary fillers (um, err) and repetition (like, well).
- Using strategies to encourage students to listen to others for a purpose, respond to and build constructively on the ideas of others e.g., using specific roles for specific students and sentence stems, and oral stems for oral activities.
- Ensuring talk is exploratory (collaborative with a shared purpose), rather than just dispositional (characterised by frequent disagreements unsupported by reasoning).
- Actively planning the sequence of questions to be asked and discussed in a lesson or in sequences of lessons, but also encouraging students to frame their own questions.
- Ensuring questions are used to probe, extend, and challenge thinking: not allowing students to say to give “I don’t know” as an answer.
- Only accepting answers in full sentences (the way we pose the question).
- Picking up on grammatical errors (e.g., would have not would of).
- Upgrading student response by asking them to “say it better.”
- Pausing after asking questions, to encourage a more thoughtful response. Give appropriate thinking time (Your ‘wait time’ after asking a question).

4.5 Interventions

Targeted literacy interventions take place to support students. All Year 7-10 students are reading age tested at the start of every academic year using the GL Assessment NGRT. Students are assessed again at the end of the academic year. Students with lower NGRT (National Group Reading Test) and SATS literacy scores are enrolled in literacy interventions. The interventions usually target KS3 students but bespoke programmes are delivered to KS4 students as required.

As a result of the testing, some students will be identified as needing additional support to access the curriculum. These students will have targeted intervention that includes some of the following:

Ruth Miskin Fresh Start

Direct teaching underpins Fresh Start. Each session, students learn new letter-sounds and review previous sounds and words. They apply what they have been taught by reading words containing the sounds they know in lively, age-appropriate stories and non-fiction texts that are closely matched to their increasing phonic knowledge. By the end of the programme, they will be able to read these accurately and fluently. Students who have a challenge with phonological recognition will access this intervention.

Lexonik Leap and Advance

Lexonik Leap and Advance help to bridge the phonic gap for those students who struggle within that area of their reading. Once a week, students work in small groups with our Literacy HLTA and take part in Lexonik to improve spellings, phonics and confidence within the classroom.

Guided Reading

Students work 1-1 or in small groups and read a book or short texts together. The reading is lead by our Literacy HLTA and students are then prompted to discuss what they have read. The students also answer comprehension questions and form deeper understandings of the text they are discussing.

Students access interventions during the tutor reading slots on a Thursday and Friday each week; a limited cohort of our weakest readers also access intervention at other times in the curriculum. The progress of these cohorts is analysed on a half termly basis to ensure students do not miss curriculum time without due cause. Teaching staff are made aware of these students and the curriculum time they will miss to aid their planning and to ensure students are supported in catching up their missed learning as appropriate.

