

PENRYN COLLEGE

Literacy Policy

Approved by: Student and Curriculum Committee January 2016

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To be literate is to gain a voice and to participate meaningfully and assertively in decisions that affect one's life. To be literate is to gain self-confidence. To be literate is to become self-assertive. Literacy enables people to read their own world and to write their own history. Literacy provides access to written knowledge – and knowledge is power. In a nutshell, literacy empowers.¹

Literacy at Penryn College

Our 10 principles

Literacy is at the heart of learning in Penryn College.

We consider our pupils' literacy in all we do

Literacy is an integral element of all good teaching. It is a constant item on the agenda when we discuss effective teaching and learning. The issue for all our teachers is 'How can I use literacy effectively to improve achievement in my subject?' We aim that teachers not only ask that question but have the skills and commitment needed to demonstrate through their planning, teaching and assessment of pupils' work that they know the answer and can put it into practice.

Our focus on literacy is here to stay

Literacy is an essential part of our school improvement plan and it is an element of the action plans for each subject. There is a Governors' Literacy Sub-Committee and literacy is a performance management target for teachers.

Our leadership team actively promotes and supports literacy

Our leadership team cares about and celebrates achievements in literacy, ensuring that it remains a constant topic of discussion. They have individualised literacy performance targets like the teachers. They make literacy a focus of their wider school evaluation work.

Our subject teachers understand how literacy supports learning and progress in their subject.

The link between literacy and more effective learning in every subject area is established clearly and explicitly. The starting point for all teachers is: 'What literacy skills do students in my subject need and what approaches to language learning will help me to be an effective teacher of my subject?'

The English Department supports individual teachers and departments

Our English teachers are specialists in the use of language and in an understanding of grammar. Specialists from the English Department support the development of effective literacy strategies, providing training and opportunities for cross-curricular planning and teaching. The school's Literacy Coordinator is an English specialist. We dedicate time, resources and skilled staff to supporting literacy

We make literacy a focus of tutor time and expect students to read for pleasure for a minimum of 15 minutes twice weekly. Our tutors encourage our students to be active, independent readers.

We support our struggling readers by offering a phonics intervention programme delivered by specialist teaching assistants. Our out of school hours, Study Support and holiday programmes offer literacy catch up support to targeted students. We provide opportunities for our students

to become Literacy Leaders. We create curriculum experiences to extend the literacy of our most able students. We share our best practice to make sure we all support literacy.

We have defined good practice in our school document 'Support for Literacy' (Appendix 1). In particular, we look for opportunities for extended writing and incorporate these in our schemes of work. We have established departmental agreements about the teaching of writing in each subject that we know will have a positive impact on students' work. We encourage teachers to devise practical and engaging subject specific activities that develop students' reading, writing, speaking and listening. We aim to collectively know about the good practice going on in our school and to recognise how this might be translated into equally effective literacy-boosting activities in our own subject areas.

We make full use of the library and our library team

In our school the library team has an important role in developing reading. They have specialist knowledge that benefits and supports our literacy work. The library contributes to pupils' progress. The team run imaginative programmes to encourage and celebrate reading, and they inspire a love of reading in many of our pupils. They monitor student reading choices and inform tutors and teachers. The library team advise tutors on how to engage reluctant readers and challenge our most able and enthusiastic readers.

We have systematic and effective monitoring and evaluation of our literacy support for pupils

We know that improvements in literacy are not always easy to identify and that a number of different support strategies can have an impact on a pupil over time. We have a range of measures to evaluate this complex process: reading age tests, teacher assessment, lesson observation; pupil voice evidence, library and Accelerated Reader data. We work closely with our primary partners to ensure we have as precise a picture as possible of what our Year 7 pupils' next literacy steps must be.

We engage parents in a literacy partnership

We ensure parents understand how we support and develop the literacy of all our pupils. We offer information and explanation events; tutors comment specifically on progress in literacy and reports identify levels of progress in reading and writing.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students will:

- Know their current reading ages and reading and writing levels, and know what they need to do to improve these.
- Know how to and practise transferring their reading and writing skills in every subject.
- Know where to find good reading material and commit time to reading for pleasure.
- Always bring reading material to school.
- Understand how to use Dedicated Improvement Time (DIT) to proof read and/or re-draft their work.

Teachers will:

- Use the whole school Marking for Literacy Code.
- Provide students with Dedicated Improvement Time.
- Select relevant key words for lessons and define them.
- When planning lessons apply strategies identified in the 'Support for Literacy' document to develop the literacy skills of their students
- Liaise with TA to identify the most successful literacy strategies that enable students to make progress with their reading and writing.
- Identify appropriate Literacy CPD opportunities to enable them to support the development of students' literacy skills effectively.
- Use student Learning Plans to prepare differentiated and personalised lessons for students that need additional help with Literacy.
- Create opportunities for extended writing.

HODs will:

- Monitor schemes of work to ensure there are explicit opportunities for developing literacy skills.
- Regularly evaluate the impact of the teaching of literacy skills on student progress in their subject area.
- Audit department strengths and areas for development against the 'Support for Literacy' document.
- Create a Literacy Action Plan and plan appropriate training for their teams with the Literacy Coordinator.
- Monitor their team to ensure they are using Learning Plans to help plan differentiated and personalised lessons for students who need additional help with Literacy.

TAs will:

- Know the reading and writing level, and reading age of their students they support and which of them have reading intervention.
- Know and identify the appropriate strategies from the 'Support for Literacy' document that best meet the needs of the student(s) they are supporting.
- Develop a positive reading culture by showing enthusiasm and praise for effort and success.
- Identify appropriate Literacy CPD opportunities to enable them to support the development of students' literacy skills effectively.
- Know which students have Learning Plans and use them to help students progress with Literacy
- Regularly mark for Literacy.
- Liaise with classroom teacher to identify the most successful literacy strategies that enable students to make progress with their reading and writing.

Tutors:

- Know the reading and writing level, and reading age of their tutees and which of them have reading intervention.
- Reward a student's commitment to reading and writing on Achievement Manager.
- Create opportunities in Tutor Period for pupils to talk about books that they are reading and their reading levels.
- Encourage pupils to use the school library and review the library borrowing records of their tutor group. Ensure the books that their tutees are reading are at a challenging level.
- Direct pupils and parents to the pages in the school organiser which support the learning of key spellings and vocabulary.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to undertake skimming, scanning and close reading activities during independent study time.
- Develop a positive reading and writing culture by showing enthusiasm and praise for effort and success.
- Share and discuss online reading resources with their group.
- Preserve and build up the starter book box as a tutor group resource.
- Model reading and writing as a life skill by sharing their reading and writing activity with their group.
- Plan regular book/reading promotion activities in tutor time.
- Encourage individuals to record evidence of their reading habit/practice/commitment.
- Seek support for reluctant and/or struggling readers or students that find extended writing challenging.

The HOH/Y will:

- Lead their tutors to monitor progress of Reading and Writing levels across their tutor groups, in particular, those students who have Learning Plans
- Track the progress of all students in their House/Year using on-going data analysis, in particular, the Pupil Profile
- To communicate with the English Intervention Co-ordinator to ensure that, if appropriate, additional intervention strategies are employed to address the literacy needs of pupils in their House/Year
- Ensure opportunities to develop literacy skills are routinely embedded in tutor period and are of a high quality.

The Governing Body

- Ensure that there is no differential application of the policy and procedures on grounds of ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion or disability.
- Review whole school and Department Literacy data at two annual Literacy subcommittee Governors meetings; this includes:
 - review of all data (NC Levels and Reading Age);
 - review progress of students against Level 5b benchmark;
 - review the impact of CPD upon students' learning in the classroom;
 - review lesson observation and work review data to evaluate the impact of the school's Literacy Policy and approaches.

Parents and carers will:

- Be informed of literacy workshops that will support their understanding of how to enable their child to improve their Reading and Writing.
- Encourage reading for pleasure by: being a reader, creating a reading routine, giving books as gifts and talking about books.
- Support literacy at home by using the following strategies to ensure their child successfully completes writing tasks:
 - Talk through tasks: ask their daughter/son to tell them what they have to do. This will help them recap the learning experience and allow them to rehearse what they want to write.
 - Create Dedicated Improvement Time (DIT) by asking key questions: what do you think your teacher will like and what do you think they will ask you to improve?
 - Read it to me: Reading aloud any extended written work helps a writer spot missing detail and errors. If a child uses IT to produce homework, it is essential they print and then proof-read.

Monitoring

This Policy will be monitored through the following:

- Classroom/Tutor Period observations carried out by Heads of Department, Heads of House/Year, Senior Leaders and The Literacy Coordinator.
- Learning Walks undertaken by Senior Leaders.
- Weekly review of Achievement Manager Reports by Tutors, Heads of House/Year, Heads of Department, Senior Leaders, Mentors, Library Staff and the Literacy Coordinator.
- Half Termly analysis of the Foundations for Learning.
- Review of Reading and Writing NC Levels as part of each Assessment Point data review.
- Reading Age tests 2 x per year.
- Half Termly review of Library borrowing data through Eclipse.
- Staff and Parent Annual Questionnaire.
- Half Termly review by Student Focus Group.