

## PUPIL LITERACY AND COMMUNICATION POLICY

### 1. ETHOS:

- Literacy and Communication are essential and integral to the learning process in all subject areas, with diverse language and skills demanded by different disciplines.
- All teachers are teachers of communication. Consequently, all staff incorporate elements of Literacy and Communication in their teaching.
- The whole school encourages reading for pleasure and the enjoyment of confident, effective communication in written and spoken form. Standard English should be encouraged where appropriate for academic and formal purposes.
- The meaning of "Literacy and Communication" for the purposes of this policy is set out in Section 5 below.

### 2. AIMS OF THIS POLICY:

- To enable pupils to communicate effectively in written and spoken form and to reduce barriers to the comprehension of written and oral information.
- To ensure that Literacy & Communication skills enhance (and do not act as barrier to) achievement across the curriculum.
- To embed the development of Literacy and Communication skills across the school, in lessons, PSHE and form time.
- To ensure that teaching and learning is planned and delivered to help pupils to recognise that their Literacy and Communication skills are being used and improved.
- For teachers to create, maintain, use and share resources and techniques in order to facilitate the development of pupils' Literacy and Communication skills.
- To help teachers to be clear about the ways in which their work with pupils contributes to the development of pupils' Literacy and Communication skills and to identify cross-curricular opportunities and, where applicable, differences.
- To take account of the needs of all pupils in developing Literacy and Communication skills, including the more able, those from more disadvantaged backgrounds, those with special or additional educational needs, and pupils for whom English is an additional language.
- To recognise and, as appropriate, appraise teachers' and Form Tutors' development of Literacy and Communication skills in the appraisal process, taking into account the differing demands and focus of the relevant Key Stage or subject area.
- To allow for pupils' voices and experiences to be sought and, where appropriate, to inform the identification of pupils' Literacy and Communication needs.
- To equip pupils with the confidence and skills that will enable them to flourish in life beyond TWGGS and to provide teachers and Form Tutors with support and resources in order to help them meet the aims of this Policy.

### 3. SENIOR LEADERSHIP AND OFSTED EXPECTATIONS

- TWGGS regards Literacy and Communication as vital to pupil achievement, progress and enjoyment of their studies. Poor or under-developed communication skills result in frustration for pupils and adversely impact learning, progress and attainment across the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities. Assessment for learning in all subjects can also be significantly hampered if Literacy and Communication skills are under-developed.
- From a regulatory perspective, Literacy and Communication is integral to critical judgement areas of the OFSTED Framework. OFSTED guidance and publications stress the importance of fully integrating Literacy and Communication into teaching and learning and embedding it within all aspects of school life.
- Appendix 3 of this Policy contains some key extracts from OFSTED literature regarding Literacy and Communication, including the relevant judgement standard for "Outstanding" under the 2015 OFSTED Framework. These expectations and standards should be taken into account by staff in performing roles and responsibilities under this Policy.

### 4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**Teachers and Form Tutors:** Teachers across the curriculum contribute to the development of all pupils' Literacy and Communication skills in lessons and in form time.

- **Model:** The teacher's role is the central element in fostering positive attitudes towards Literacy and Communication, including by example in their own teaching and presentation of a lesson.

- **Classroom environment:** In providing a supportive and stimulating environment, teachers should enable pupils to develop Communication and Literacy skills appropriate to the Key Stage, subject and context of the lesson. In addition, teachers and form tutors should follow the “Learning Environment” guidelines in Section 9 of this policy.
- **Resources and activities:** By providing a variety of resources and opportunities and by incorporating a wide range of activities in their teaching, teachers should encourage the development of skills in speaking, listening, reading, writing and critical thinking.
- **Monitoring and assessing:** Where appropriate to the task or activity, Key Stage and subject, pupil monitoring should include observations and the recording or reporting of strengths and/or concerns about pupils’ Literacy and Communication skills.

**Curriculum Leaders:** Curriculum Leaders should lead the development of pupils’ subject-specific Communication and Literacy skills, in particular as part of their monitoring of teaching and learning, resourcing and assessment of the performance of their departments.

- **Schemes of work:** Curriculum Leaders must ensure that any subject-specific Literacy and Communication requirements or elements are clearly identified and/or addressed in Schemes of Work.
- **Resources:** Curriculum Leaders should consider the aims and expectations of this Policy in reviewing, initiating or creating new resources. Curriculum Leaders are encouraged to share resources with other departments in TWGGS in order to encourage good practice and consistency.
- **Literacy & Communication Mentors:** Curriculum Leaders may choose to identify Literacy and Communication Mentors in their department to liaise with other departments and the Literacy Co-ordinator, and to assist in the implementation or development of relevant strategies, activities or resources within their department.

**Directors of Achievement:** Directors of Achievement lead, develop and monitor the development of pupils’ Communication and Literacy skills through assemblies and form time activities and by responding to queries raised by Form Tutors, teachers or Curriculum Leaders regarding particular pupils’ Literacy and Communication skills.

**Literacy Co-ordinator:** “Literacy Co-ordinator” in this Policy refers to the person designated as Literacy Co-ordinator or, in all other cases, to the Curriculum Leader for English. They work with the Senior Leadership Team in leading, managing, developing and assessing Literacy & Communication skills and teaching throughout the school. In performing this role, they will, for example, research and make proposals regarding best practice across areas of the curriculum and PSHE and form time. They should lead, develop and enhance the classroom practice of teaching staff, including facilitating the sharing of resources. To the extent determined by the Senior Leadership Team and consistent with other applicable TWGGS Policies and practices, they will contribute, as required by the Senior Leadership Team, to the assessment of teaching of Literacy and Communication, resources, planning and help to formulate best practice relating to Literacy and Communication.

**Librarian:** The Librarian facilitates enjoyment and progression in reading through making the library a vibrant and welcoming learning environment for all pupils in school, in working with teachers to maintain the currency and relevance of the books in the library and in encouraging extra-curricular activities that help to enhance Literacy and Communication.

**Pupils:** Pupils are expected to take increasing responsibility for recognising their own Literacy and Communication needs and in accessing resources and opportunities available to them in order to make improvements. Pupils are encouraged to participate in activities or initiatives that are designed to obtain their views, suggestions or contributions in order to enhance Literacy and Communication in their learning and in wider school life.

**Governors:** Governors consider, review and, as appropriate, approve this policy and relevant updates and may consult with staff and the Senior Leadership Team regarding Literacy and Communication issues and progress in the school.

**Parents and guardians:** Parents and guardians are encouraged to support their children in the improvement of their levels of their Literacy and Communication skills in relation to school and homework and in a broader setting.

## 5. DEFINING “LITERACY AND COMMUNICATION”

“**Literacy and Communication**” refers to listening, speaking, reading, writing and critical thinking and, in a broader context, the development and integration of those skills. Appendix 2 sets out three key elements that comprise “Literacy and Communication”. These components are based on the definition of “literacy” in OFSTED’s School Inspection Handbook. Appendix 2 therefore identifies and amplifies some key aspects of teaching, learning and wider school life that constitute “Literacy and Communication” for the purposes of this policy. Appendix 4 contains an outline (a “map”) of the connections between the different components of Literacy and Communication in school life and is designed to indicate the interaction of those components in different areas of school life.

## 6. SCHEMES OF WORK AND PLANNING

**Schemes of Work:** Literacy and Communication must be taken into account in designing and writing schemes of work; in many cases, this entails clearly identifying key words, core skills, subject-specific language and other elements that comprise Literacy and Communication. Where appropriate, Schemes of Work (or individual lessons within them) should incorporate objectives or activities that are informed by or help to develop relevant Literacy and Communication skills.

**Lesson Activities:** Knowledge of pupils' literacy needs should be taken into account in teachers' and Form Tutors' planning of learning or activities in the classroom, as appropriate for the subject, year group and tasks or activities. Given its significance to pupil development and attainment, elements of Literacy & Communication may be taken into account in the lesson observation objectives or framework (see Section 11 below). Teachers and Form Tutors are encouraged to refer to resources within their department and for whole school use (such as the TWGGS Literacy Activities Handbook).

**Lesson plans:** Literacy and Communication should also form part of lesson activities or tasks when it is appropriate to the focus of the lesson, year group and subject. The following strategies are highly desirable:

- a) making clear the intended purposes of writing, speaking, listening or reading (e.g. extraction of information, interpretation or analysis);
- b) giving pupils the opportunity to practise skimming for overall meaning, scanning for key points, words or phrases, or close reading;
- c) pupils teaching or explaining to each other;
- d) giving pupils the opportunity to challenge, debate, articulate, explain, instruct, analyse, take a risk etc.; and
- e) making Literacy and Communication challenges, tasks and achievements explicit to pupils.

## 7. TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES

**Support and development of resources:** Teachers, Form Tutors, the Librarian, Curriculum Leaders and Directors of Achievement are all encouraged to share techniques, activities and resources and may seek appropriate levels of support from Curriculum Leaders, the Literacy Co-ordinator, Directors of Achievement and the Senior Leadership Team (as applicable) in the development of Literacy and Communication in their role.

**Whole School Resources:** Resources containing ideas, activities and tasks are available centrally to teachers in the Staff Shared Area "Literacy and Communication" folder and from the Literacy Co-ordinator. Form book boxes are available to different Key Stages to encourage pupils' private reading in form time.

## 8. MARKING AND ASSESSMENT AND PUPIL SUPPORT

**Marking and Assessment:** Assessment and marking for the purposes of Literacy and Communication are governed by the principles and requirements of the Assessment, and Marking and Feedback Policies. Consistent with those policies, the expectation is that errors (such as spelling or grammatical errors) should be highlighted and pupils should be encouraged to self-correct and/or review their work. This is particularly important where subject-specific key words or technical command words are in use. This principle is subject to teachers' appropriate and professional discretion in their teaching practice, such as limiting the quantity or type of corrections on pieces of work for particular purposes.

**Mark Schemes and Marking Strategies:** Where appropriate for a pupil's needs, literacy targets or feedback are valuable and important to pupil development and are therefore welcomed. The inclusion of marking strategies and/or mark schemes requirements by departments which inform, develop and encourage pupils' Literacy and Communication (for example, comprehension of command words, explanations of methodology and use of subject-specific language or key terms) is also encouraged, subject to the differing demands and requirements of subject areas and Key Stages.

**Identification of Literacy Support:** Teachers, Curriculum Leaders, Form Tutors and Directors of Achievement all help to identify and support any pupils for whom Literacy and Communication appears to be a barrier to achievement across the curriculum. The referral of any pupils with particular difficulties should be referred to (and co-ordinated by) the relevant Director of Achievement and Curriculum Leader for English. In addition, "Gifted and Talented" pupils and/or those with exceptional abilities should be challenged and provided with opportunities to flourish.

## 9. THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Resources and displays in pupils' classroom environment significantly boost the development of pupils' Literacy and Communication skills as well as their engagement. To the extent practicable based on the classroom layout or type, a selection or combination of the following approaches should be adopted in classrooms and form rooms:

- a) reading material relevant to the subject or form;
- b) displays or materials promoting subject-specific vocabulary (which pupils are encouraged to use regularly) and/or key definitions such as command words;
- c) where possible, access to high quality reading material;
- d) access to a range of texts or resources during lessons, including, where appropriate, dictionaries, glossaries and lists of appropriate vocabulary and/or command words; and
- e) resources and materials (such as dictionaries, mini-white boards, large rolls of paper, ICT resources etc.) to help support writing, listening, speaking, critical thinking or reading.

## 10. THE LIBRARY AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

**The Library:** The Library and the Librarian are critical and valuable to the development of pupils' Literacy and Communication skills. Form Tutors and teachers of all subjects should encourage pupils to undertake wider reading and to use the resources available in the Library. Form Tutors, to the extent appropriate to the Key Stage, should encourage pupils to learn how to use the Library effectively and to respect its resources. Form Tutors also play a vital role in encouraging the pupils to participate in Library-based competitions and teachers are encouraged to engage prefects in working with or motivating younger pupils and their peers in Library activities or competitions and to identify (with the help of teachers and the Librarian) books and other resources that would be beneficial to forms or to subject areas in different Key Stages.

**Extra-Curricular Activities:** Extra-curricular activities play a valuable role in developing Literacy and Communication skills and confidence. TWGGS recognises and values the contribution of teachers and other staff to these activities, since such activities are a fundamental part of TWGGS ethos to develop articulate, confident and knowledgeable communicators.

## 11. MONITORING

Subject to and consistent with the Appraisal Policy, teachers' and Form Tutors' contributions to the development of pupils' Literacy and Communication may be considered as supporting evidence in the Appraisal process. The following approaches could be taken into account in that appraisal:

- a) sampling work (including pupils' work and departmental Schemes of Work);
- b) observation of (i) pupil tracking, (ii) literacy teaching and learning or (ii) meetings as part of an appraisal;
- c) pupil interviews, working groups or questionnaires;
- d) scrutiny of development plans;
- e) the engagement of departments or Key Stage Form Tutors in sharing good practice or resources
- f) observing the exhibition or exemplification of pupils' work and/or availability of relevant resources in the classroom or on Fronter and the Student Shared Area; and
- g) peer observation.

## 12. MAINTENANCE AND REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

This Policy will be reviewed every three years.

### APPENDIX 1: MARKING ABBREVIATIONS

sp	spelling error
p	punctuation error
e	poor expression
gr	grammatical error
//	new paragraph
L	poor presentation/ layout/ no under-linings etc.
u/c or C	capital letter needed
l/c	lower case letter needed
λ	missing word(s)

## **APPENDIX 2: ELEMENTS OF LITERACY AND COMMUNICATION**

### **A. Reading**

- Across the whole curriculum (including PSHE and form time) teachers and Form Tutors will seek provide activities for pupils, which may incorporate the following elements, as appropriate to the subject, Key Stage or form:
  - a) read, comprehend and follow written instructions;
  - b) read independently as well as reading together;
  - c) read to explore meaning and to develop understanding;
  - d) learn how to use a range of reading strategies, including skimming, scanning and selecting;
  - e) learn how to use a range of contextual clues to establish meaning including indices, glossaries, illustrations, headings;
  - f) learn how to select from written material, reformulate, question and challenge what they read in books, encyclopaedias, and newspapers or in on-line sources;
  - g) provide recommended reading lists (fiction or non-fiction) (for example, on Fronter) and/or to encourage wider and extended reading by pupils in order to stretch, challenge and improve pupils' Literacy and Communication skills at every Key Stage; and
  - h) where appropriate, to develop higher order reading skills and critical thinking skills, including awareness of subjectivity or unreliability, tone, inconsistency and the articulation of alternative interpretations.
- Teachers will strive to provide reading material of high quality which is relevant and appropriate for age and ability of the pupils, seeking to challenge pupils, particularly those who are most able.

### **B. Writing**

- Many lessons include and depend on written communication. TWGGS aims to develop pupils' confidence and competence in writing so that they can write in a widening variety of forms for different purposes, including interpreting, evaluating, explaining, analysing and exploring. It is important that pupils learn to improve their written work in lessons, form time and PSHE, which may incorporate the following elements, as appropriate to the subject, Key Stage or form:
  - a) making connections between their reading and writing, so that pupils have clear models for their writing;
  - b) using techniques and activities that make it explicit to pupils how to write and how to develop their writing independently;
  - c) being clear about audience and purpose;
  - d) providing opportunities for sustained writing;
  - e) expecting pupils to present their written work legibly and in an orderly way, appropriate for the task, subject and context;
  - f) stressing the importance of accuracy in written work, including through the identification and correction of errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling in line with the school's Policies; it is preferable that teachers use a system/codes in their marking that are disclosed, consistent and easily understood by pupils (some recommended abbreviations are contained in Appendix 1).
  - g) enabling pupils to write cohesively in an increasingly sophisticated style, using varied punctuation, sentence structures and technical devices;
  - h) teaching subject-specific vocabulary and spelling, with Form Tutors and Directors of Achievement providing form time and PSHE opportunities to develop writing skills or spelling accuracy; and
  - i) designing displays and accessible resources (in the classroom and/or online or in the Student Shared Areas in the TWGGS network) to develop, reinforce and challenge pupils' use and understanding of key terms, language, command words in their written work.

### **C. Oracy**

- All subjects and extra-curricular activities have the potential to improve pupils' oracy skills. Confident, appropriate and fluent oral communication and the ability to comprehend aurally are critical to pupils' development and ability to flourish both at school and in life beyond TWGGS.
- Across the whole curriculum and in form time and PSHE, teachers should seek, as appropriate to the subject, Key Stage or form, to provide opportunities for pupils to:
  - a) listen to, comprehend and carry out instructions;
  - b) listen to others and respond appropriately;
  - c) explore and develop ideas with others, through their discussion ;
  - d) use oral work as a precursor to written work (or vice versa);
  - e) participate orally in pairs, groups and the whole class;
  - f) ask and respond to questions, articulate views, explain concepts, methodology, theories or tasks and to give clear instructions;
  - g) use a range of techniques and activities to explore a wide range of registers and contexts for spoken language;
  - h) use language precisely and coherently and use Standard English in appropriate contexts;
  - i) identify the main points to arise from a discussion; and
  - j) evaluate the effectiveness of spoken contributions in class and in other contexts.

## **APPENDIX 3: EXTRACTS FROM OFSTED PUBLICATIONS**

### **A. OFSTED'S "SCHOOL INSPECTION HANDBOOK" (AUGUST 2015)**

#### **Inspecting the impact of the teaching of literacy including reading**

156. Literacy includes the key skills of reading, writing and oral communication that enable pupils to access different areas of the curriculum.
157. Inspectors will consider the impact of the teaching of literacy and the outcomes across the range of the school's provision. They will consider the extent to which the school intervenes to provide support for improving pupils' literacy, especially those pupils at risk of underachieving.
158. Inspectors should decide which pupils they will listen to read, taking into account the school's progress information and published data on reading and other information such as lesson observations. Inspectors should hear children read from books that are appropriate to their age, including from previously unseen books. When listening to younger children read, inspectors may use the national phonics check material to help them make their judgements about the impact of phonics teaching. Wherever possible, inspectors should listen to children reading within a classroom or in an open area with which pupils are familiar.

#### **Grade descriptors for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

##### **Outstanding (1)**

- Teachers embed reading, writing and communication and, where appropriate, mathematics exceptionally well across the curriculum, equipping all pupils with the necessary skills to make progress. For younger children in particular, phonics teaching is highly effective in enabling them to tackle unfamiliar words.

### **B. OFSTED'S "IMPROVED LITERACY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY" (APRIL 2013)**

**Extracts from the Introduction:** At its most specific and practical, the term [Literacy] applies to a set of skills that have long been accepted as fundamental to education. The Department for Education is clear and emphatic – the curriculum should offer opportunities for pupils to:

- 'engage in specific activities that develop speaking and listening skills as well as activities that integrate speaking and listening with reading and writing'
- 'develop speaking and listening skills through work that makes cross-curricular links with other subjects'
- 'develop reading skills through work that makes cross-curricular links with other subjects'
- 'develop writing skills through work that makes cross-curricular links with other subjects'
- 'work in sustained and practical ways, with writers where possible, to learn about the art, craft and discipline of writing'
- 'redraft their own work in the light of feedback. This could include self-evaluation using success criteria, recording and reviewing performances, target-setting and formal and informal use of peer assessment. Redrafting should be purposeful, moving beyond proofreading for errors to the reshaping of whole texts or parts of texts.'<sup>1</sup>

'Literacy', however, is more than the mechanics of reading, writing, speaking and listening. [...] All pupils should be encouraged to:

- 'make extended, independent contributions that develop ideas in depth'
- 'make purposeful presentations that allow them to speak with authority on significant subjects'
- 'engage with texts that challenge preconceptions and develop understanding beyond the personal and immediate'
- 'experiment with language and explore different ways of discovering and shaping their own meanings'
- 'use writing as a means of reflecting on and exploring a range of views and perspectives on the world.'<sup>2</sup>

**Extracts from "Making the case for literacy":** The descriptors for an outstanding school now include the following criteria:

- Excellent practice ensures that all pupils have high levels of literacy appropriate to their age.
- Pupils read widely and often across all subjects.
- Pupils develop and apply a wide range of skills to great effect, in reading, writing and communication.
- The teaching of reading, writing and communication is highly effective and cohesively planned and implemented across the curriculum.
- Excellent policies ensure that pupils have high levels of literacy, or pupils are making excellent progress in literacy.

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<sup>1</sup> 'English: curriculum opportunities', Secondary National Curriculum until 2014, Department for Education; updated 26 April 2012; [www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/secondary/b00199101/english/ks4/programme/opportunities](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/secondary/b00199101/english/ks4/programme/opportunities).

<sup>2</sup> 'English: curriculum opportunities', Secondary National Curriculum until 2014, Department for Education, updated, 26 April 2012; [www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/secondary/b00199101/english/ks4/programme/opportunities](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/secondary/b00199101/english/ks4/programme/opportunities).

[Note the “outstanding” criterion noted below from the Ofsted Inspection Framework 2015]

## **C. OFSTED’S “REMOVING BARRIERS TO LITERACY” (JANUARY 2011) [Extracts most applicable to TWGGS]**

### **Key Findings**

- In the secondary schools where teachers in all subject departments had received training in teaching literacy and where staff had included an objective for literacy in all the lessons, senior managers noted an improvement in outcomes across all subjects, as well as in English. The high-performing colleges visited adopted similar strategies to improve outcomes.
- The successful providers visited understood the often multiple barriers facing children and learners from disadvantaged groups which prevented them from acquiring literacy skills. However, only very few had consistent success in overcoming these barriers for all groups of children and learners.
- The most successful schools, colleges and other providers of adult education and training visited made outstanding use of national test and assessment data to raise the expectations of staff and to set sufficiently challenging targets.
- The most effective providers visited reflected on and adapted their curriculum, including any intervention programmes, to meet changing needs. They taught literacy in contexts that were relevant and meaningful to their learners. The staff identified learners’ different starting points and needs accurately.
- In the secondary schools where teachers in all subject departments had received training in teaching literacy and where staff had included an objective for literacy in all the lessons, senior managers noted an improvement in outcomes across all subjects, as well as in English. The high-performing colleges visited adopted similar strategies to improve outcomes.
- The most effective providers visited had at least one senior member of staff with an excellent knowledge of literacy and its pedagogy. They understood the stages of language development and how and when to provide additional support.

### **Extracts from “The National Picture”:**

2. Previous reports by Ofsted have shown that there is a close association between poverty and low attainment.<sup>3</sup> However, this link is not inevitable. Ofsted’s reports on 20 outstanding primary schools and 12 outstanding secondary schools, six of which were visited as part of this survey, showed that these schools, working in very challenging circumstances, were consistent in improving outcomes for young people whose circumstances made them potentially vulnerable.

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<sup>3</sup> *White boys from low-income backgrounds: good practice in schools* (070220), Ofsted, 2009; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070220](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070220).

## APPENDIX 4: TWGGS MAP: LITERACY AND COMMUNICATION THROUGHOUT SCHOOL LIFE

