



## Literacy Policy

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## **Rationale**

*“Acquiring literacy is an empowering process, enabling millions to enjoy access to knowledge and information which broadens horizons, increases opportunities and creates alternatives for building a better life.”*

Kofi Annan (seventh General of The United Nations)

At The Rowans, we accept the fundamental principle that Literacy is the key to improving learning and raising standards; it enables pupils to gain access to the subjects studied in school, to read for information for pleasure and to communicate effectively. Poor levels of literacy impact negatively on what pupils can do and how they see themselves. Crucially, we believe that literate pupils will ultimately emerge as confident and articulate communicators, fully prepared to enter the adult world, whether to continue their academic studies or to enter the world of work.

We believe that we should equip our pupils with the necessary transferable skills to be fully literate in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and, as such, literacy is prominent in the school’s improvement plan, its core values and ethos.

All teachers are teachers of literacy. As such, the staff of The Rowans share responsibility for the teaching of literacy across the curriculum. Language is the prime medium through which pupils learn and express themselves across the curriculum and all teachers have a stake in effective literacy because:

- reading helps us to learn from sources beyond our immediate experience;
- writing helps us to sustain and order thought;
- language helps us to reflect, revise and evaluate the things we do, and on the things others have said, written or done;
- responding to higher order questions encourages the development of thinking skills and enquiry;
- improving literacy and learning can have a positive impact on pupils’ self-esteem, on motivation and behaviour. It allows them to learn independently. It is empowering and facilitates enjoyable learning.

## **Policy Aims**

1. To adopt a whole-school approach to literacy across the curriculum to promote progress
2. To enable all pupils to reach their potential in the key literacy skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening.
3. Additional provision will be made for pupils with EAL by the interventions team as necessary.
4. To support the development of literacy skills throughout the curriculum and those who are under performing by targeted intervention.
5. To raise staff awareness of key literacy strategies by implementing the EEF ‘Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools’ recommendations and creating a dyslexia friendly climate for learning through, discussions, INSET and the dissemination of good classroom practice.

6. Vocabulary is taught explicitly in lessons, pupils are encouraged to read aloud in lessons and brief comprehension questions are given to ensure pupils' understanding.
7. To promote oracy by expecting answers in full sentences, scaffolding pupils' answers and encouraging pupils to think about their use of language.
8. To encourage staff to take responsibility for the development of literacy in their subject areas through inclusion on appropriate medium-term plans and daily lesson planning.
9. To support the development of literacy through the deployment of a range of resources in the school e.g. Library.
10. To identify specific roles and responsibilities within the school with regard to the development of literacy work.
11. To establish procedures for monitoring literacy across the curriculum which celebrate success and identify areas for improvement.
12. To develop a culture of reading across the school.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Leadership Group:

- Lead on literacy across the curriculum, ensuring it has a high profile
- provide opportunities for literacy training
- monitor subjects' implementation of the Literacy Policy
- ensure that 'subject specific literacy' is clearly identified in medium term plans and that there is obvious progression through the key stages
- monitor the work of subjects with regard to the inclusion of specific literacy strategies in lesson planning
- encourage models of good practice e.g. modelling and close collaboration between colleagues in order to promote literacy developments
- use available assessment data to identify pupils that need support

### **The role of the English department includes:**

In addition to all the whole-school aspects of this policy, the English teachers at The Rowans have a leading role in providing pupils with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write, speak and listen effectively as well as Improving handwriting and spelling, punctuation and grammar.

The English department is well-placed to offer good advice and expertise. It has a key role in:

- Identifying literacy priorities, targets and objectives and particular contributions they can make
- Using data to identify literacy targets

The role of the interventions team includes:

- Offering literacy specific interventions to boost reading age, to support with SPAG, and handwriting.
- Supporting the acquisition of phonics and phonetical learning, where needed.

### **Teachers across the curriculum will:**

- Adopt a consistent approach to teaching literacy skills in lessons
- Be familiar with and implement a range of strategies aimed at equipping students with the necessary literacy skills to succeed

- Adopt a standardised approach to the teaching and learning of Literacy skills, including phonics.
- Indicate in medium term plans where skills will be explicitly taught.

**Parents/carers will:** encourage their children to use the range of strategies they have learnt to improve their levels of literacy.

**Pupils will:** take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs and making improvements, with support where needed.

## **Strategies for Reading, Writing and Oracy**

### **Reading**

Across the whole curriculum teachers will provide activities for pupils to:

- read and follow written instructions;
- read to explore and to develop understanding;
- learn how to skim, select and take notes from the text;
- learn how to access their textbook, including format and index;
- learn how to select from written material, reformulate, question and challenge what they read in textbooks, encyclopedias and newspapers or from ICT sources

Teachers will provide reading material of high quality, which is up to date, relevant and balanced in its presentation of ethnicity, culture and gender and appropriate for age and ability of the pupils.

### **Writing**

It is important that we are consistent across subjects, to recognise and reinforce pupils' language skills, through:

- making connections between pupils' reading and writing, so that pupils have clear models for their writing;
- using the modelling process to make explicit to pupils how to write;
- being clear about audience and purpose;
- providing opportunities for a range of writing including sustained writing.

Teachers will set writing tasks that have clear and immediate purposes are objective driven and which are appropriate for the age and ability of the pupils concerned.

Teachers will teach pupils how to structure their writing using a variety of sentence structures, paragraphs and a wide range of punctuation, including higher order punctuation e.g. semi-colons, colons and brackets.

Where pupils are asked to write in a particular genre, e.g. a newspaper report, teachers will ensure that pupils are familiar with the appropriate style and conventions.

Teachers will correct errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling in line with the school's marking policy.

We will aim to:

- provide good models of particular kinds of writing;

- provide frameworks where appropriate;
- provide dictionaries and teach pupils how to use them;
- display Key Words in the classroom;
- teach subject specific vocabulary and spelling;
- encourage high standards of presentation;
- ensure progression through support and intervention.

### **Oracy**

We will teach pupils to use language precisely and coherently. Pupils should be able to listen to others and to respond and build on their ideas and views constructively.

We will develop strategies to teach pupils how to participate orally in groups and in the whole class, including: using talk to develop and clarify ideas; identifying the main points to arise from a discussion; listening for a specific purpose; discussion and evaluation.

Across the whole curriculum teachers will provide activities (both formally and informally) for pupils to:

- listen and carry out instructions;
- explore and develop ideas with others, through their talk;
- ask questions as well as answer them;
- work collaboratively with others;
- develop problem solving skills.

### **Phonics**

Where the teaching of phonics is needed, this will be delivered by the interventions team and reinforced by all staff.

The teaching of phonics objectives are:

- To learn to read and write all 44 graphemes in the English language.
- To teach children high frequency words that do not conform to regular phonic patterns.
- To teach children specific strategies to help them remember tricky words.
- To ensure that the teaching of phonics is lively, multi-sensory, interactive and investigative.
- To encourage children to apply their phonic skills in all curriculum areas.
- To ensure that children have opportunities to read texts and words that are within their phonic capabilities as early as possible, even though all words may not be entirely decodable by the children unaided.
- To help the children to apply the skill of blending phonemes in order to read words.
- To help the children to segment words into their constituent phonemes in order to spell words.
- To learn that blending and segmenting words are reversible processes.

Implementation: The Rowans AP Academy uses the 'Sounds-Write' programme as a base which provides a consistent and systematic approach to the teaching of phonics. We recognise that pupils may be disengaged with phonics programmes and so will create a bespoke programme focusing on functional literacy. Bespoke work will be carried out based on the pupils age, interests and knowledge, using a combination of Soundwrite, Dockside Reading scheme and functional reading skills.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

We will make use of available data to assess the standards of pupils' literacy. Possible approaches are:

- work scrutiny – both pupils' work and medium term plans across the curriculum
- observation – learning walks and literacy teaching
- meetings, mentoring and coaching
- pupil interviews and pupil voice questionnaires
- encouraging subjects to share good practice

### **Intervention**

There is a comprehensive package of baseline assessments for all pupils on entry to The Rowans. Progress is then tracked across the curriculum and regularly reviewed.

Targeted intervention will be used to help pupils to close the attainment gaps as quickly and effectively as possible in order to maximise access to the curriculum and optimise learning opportunities. Teachers across the curriculum will be kept informed about which pupils are accessing intervention through regular pupil progress meetings.

### **UN Convention on the Rights of the Pupil**

This policy takes into consideration the following Articles:

Article 3 - The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

Article 28 – All pupils and young people have a right to primary education, which should be free. Discipline in schools should respect pupils' human dignity. Young people should be encouraged to reach the highest level of education they are capable of;

Article 29 – Education should develop each pupil's personality to the full. It should encourage pupils to respect their parents, and their own and other cultures.