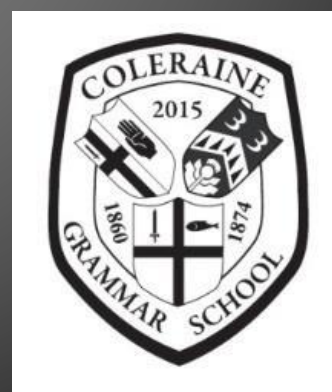


# Literacy Policy



Coleraine Grammar School

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# LITERACY POLICY

## CONTEXT

The school improvement policy document 'DENI 2023 "Every CHILD" Corporate Plan' has, at its heart, raising standards in every school. The curriculum and assessment arrangements are centred on literacy and numeracy.

TransformED NI Literacy Strategy focuses on improving literacy outcomes through innovative teaching, digital integration, and targeted support for learners at all stages.

- Literacy is the foundation of all education; without strong reading and writing skills, pupils cannot access advanced learning.
- Schools must prioritize developing literacy skills to ensure success in education, life, and work.
- By the end of primary education, pupils should have a strong literacy foundation; by the end of compulsory education, they should be competent in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
- Global literacy levels are declining, with significant gaps among disadvantaged groups.
- Literacy unlocks access to the curriculum and fosters a love of learning.
- Broad cultural knowledge across subjects is essential for strong literacy development.
- Research shows systematic teaching of knowledge and vocabulary helps close the reading gap.
- The previous literacy strategy is outdated; a revised approach is urgently needed.
- Strong evidence supports explicit, systematic phonics instruction as the most effective method for teaching reading.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Coleraine Grammar School believes that a pupil's literacy - that is their ability to talk, listen, write legibly and effectively for purpose and audience – is the key to educational progress, to social integration and to personal development. This policy document outlines strategies and approaches to support and develop each child so they are equipped with the necessary language, knowledge, understanding and skills.

### Definitions of Literacy

TransformED NI Literacy Strategy focuses on improving literacy outcomes through innovative teaching, digital integration, and targeted support for learners at all stages.

### **Policy Aims**

TransformED NI Literacy Strategy focuses on improving literacy outcomes through innovative teaching, digital integration, and targeted support for learners at all stages.

1. To enable all pupils to reach their potential in the key literacy skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening – learning support will be provided to SEN and Newcomer pupils as necessary.
2. To support the development of literacy skills throughout the curriculum.
3. To raise staff awareness of key literacy strategies through working party discussions, INSET training and the dissemination of good classroom practice.
4. To encourage staff to take responsibility for the development of literacy in their subject areas through the inclusion of appropriate schemes of work and lesson planning.
5. To support the development of literacy through the deployment of a range of resources in the school e.g. Library
6. To identify specific roles and responsibilities within the school with regard to the development of literacy work.
7. To establish procedures for monitoring and evaluating the raising of standards in literacy across the curriculum and within departments.

## **CHILD-CENTRED PROVISION**

As a school, we promote a culture of achievement and continuous improvement with clear expectations so that all pupils can, and will, achieve to the very best of their ability. We aim to 'develop the whole person' through a broad education pathway which includes a co-ordinated and effective cross-curricular emphasis on Literacy.

### **Literate Post Primary pupils should:**

- read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding;
- use their skills in speaking and listening to explore, articulate and extend their understanding;
- understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately;
- have an interest in words, their usage and meanings and an extensive vocabulary used appropriately for different purposes;
- know, understand and be able to write in a range of forms, and be familiar with ways in which those forms are constructed;
- understand the conventions of different non-fiction text types and be able to use these conventions confidently as readers and writers;
- plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing from notes to a finished form; understand the publishing process and be able to use a variety of means including ICT to produce texts for different audiences;
- have an extended technical vocabulary with which to discuss and evaluate their reading and writing;
- read and write with enjoyment and discrimination;
- through speaking, reading and writing develop their powers of imagination, critical awareness and thinking;
- be able to research independently and make notes from a variety of sources, including Internet;
- know how to use the library resourcefully and purposefully;
- use appropriate reading strategies to extract particular information, e.g. highlighting, scanning;
- use speech to question, hypothesize, speculate, evaluate, solve problems and develop thinking about complex issues and ideas;

- be able to write cohesively in an increasingly sophisticated style, using varied punctuation, sentence structures, paragraphs and technical devices;
- adapt their writing to suit audience and purpose.

## **STRATEGIES**

### **Reading**

1. 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 sift, 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, encyclopaedias, and newspapers or from ICT sources.

2. Teachers will provide reading material of high quality, which is up to date, relevant and engaging.

3. Opportunities should be created for teachers to refer to pupils' use of reading in assessments and reports for all curriculum areas.

### **Writing**

1. Across the curriculum teachers will provide activities for pupils to:

- use writing to plan and organise;
- plan, draft, discuss and reflect on their writing, using ICT, where appropriate;
- write for a range of purposes and audiences;
- make notes in a variety of formats, e.g. bullet points, diagrams.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. Teachers will correct errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling in line with the school's Guidance for Marking document (Appendix i).

6. Teachers 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.

### **Speaking and Listening**

Across the whole curriculum teachers will provide activities 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.

## **ASSESSMENT**

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

Overall Assessment of Pupils' Progress

The overall assessment of pupils' progress is measured through:

- Performance in three core assessments over the year;
- Performance in GL Assessments;
- On-going assessment of classwork and homework in all subject areas;
- Review of the IEPs by SENCO, Learning Support Teachers and Literacy Coordinator.

Standards of a pupil's competence in literacy are measured through the cross-curricular skill of literacy.

- By the end of Key Stage 3 (Year 8 through to 10) literacy will be assessed using tasks that occur naturally within the schemes of work across all subjects;
- Baseline testing of Year 8 pupils (GL Assessments);
- Analysis of GCSE and A-Level examination results.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The implementation of the Literacy Policy is the responsibility of the whole school.

### **Teachers**

All teaching staff should:

- be familiar with the specific literacy demands of their subject and ensure sufficient coverage of these skills in their lesson planning;
- aim to raise the level of attainment for all young people through high quality teaching for every child, early intervention and additional support for actual, or potential, underachievement;
- deliver the agreed initiatives and use identified strategies in order to teach speaking and listening, reading and writing skills;
- report on a pupil's standard of literacy at the Parents' Evening, as appropriate;
- liaise with the LITCO, SENCO and Learning Support Teacher to access guidance when required to support individual pupils;
- undertake robust tracking and monitoring of a pupil's progress through effective use of data - such as Cognitive Ability Test assessments, internal assessments or diagnostic testing carried out by the Learning Support Teacher;
- involve pupils in target setting and evaluation to improve standards;
- be responsible for meeting a pupil's needs when barriers to learning are impeding progress;
- implement procedures to ensure early intervention when barriers to learning are detected;
- provide a literacy based learning environment, modelling high expectations of literacy i.e. through the use of displays.

## **The SENCO**

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator should:

- meet with the Learning Support team to analyse data: internal assessments and GL tests and identify pupils in need of support;
- liaise with the Literacy Co-ordinator about pupils experiencing literacy difficulties;
- communicate with all subject staff about those pupils who have SEN literacy difficulties and give advice on what staff can do to help these pupils in their subject;
- monitor pupils with SEN literacy difficulties through implementation of IEPs and review meetings.

## **The Curriculum Leader**

The Curriculum Leader should:

- ensure that subject specific literacy is clearly identified in schemes of work, and that there is obvious progression through the key stages;
- seek to find opportunities to liaise with the English Department and the Literacy Co-ordinator to provide continuity of provision for teaching and learning;
- monitor the work of the department with regard to the inclusion of subject 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.

## **The Literacy Co-ordinator**

The Literacy Co-ordinator should:

- Regularly revise and update the school's Literacy Policy;
- Devise an annual Literacy Action Plan;
- Oversee the delivery of literacy programmes across all subjects and promote literacy across the school;
- Work with Curriculum Leaders to plan, monitor and resource literacy initiatives;
- Undertake rigorous monitoring and evaluation of literacy provision using the Inspection and Self Evaluation Framework;
- Ensure effective use of the school library and encourage literacy rich learning environments across departments and communal areas in school;
- Attend appropriate professional development courses;

- Deliver or organise on-going literacy training for staff, sharing best practice;
- Engage in CALP literacy initiatives to promote collegiality and share good practice;
- Organise literacy resources to support pupils with literacy difficulties;
- Work with the Special Education Needs Coordinator and Learning Support Team to provide support for pupils with literacy difficulties;
- Conduct baseline testing to identify or assess progress of pupils with literacy difficulties;
- Oversee the implementation of literacy support for pupils who have an identified difficulty;
- Maintain a Literacy Register for pupils who have been identified as requiring literacy support;
- Produce, implement, monitor and review Literacy Plans for pupils with literacy difficulties and meet with parents regarding this;
- Liaise with external agencies to gather advice and put in place support for pupils with literacy difficulties, including attending School Based Care Team meetings as required;
- Provide relevant literacy information for the SENCO's report to SMT and BOG.

### **Senior Management Team (SMT)**

The SMT should:

- accept overall responsibility for the delivery of the school's Literacy Policy;
- provide opportunities for staff training about literacy issues to take place on INSET days or during other times including the sharing of excellent practice;
- support the Literacy Co-ordinator's literacy initiatives;
- monitor departments' implementation of the Literacy Policy ensuring teachers are supported and, where necessary challenged, to raise standards in literacy.

### **Board of Governors**

The Board of Governors should:

- be familiar with the handbook published by the Department setting out the role and responsibilities of a Board of Governors (available on the DE website);
- Governors should ensure that they are undertaking the scrutiny and actions required of them and, as set out in the handbook, are ensuring that literacy is a key priority in the SDP with robust targets.

### **The Librarian**

The school Librarian(s) should:

- provide appropriate resources to support the curriculum;
- provide appropriate resources to support homework and other curriculum tasks;
- support staff in teaching pupils how to research independently from a range of sources;
- promote an environment which fosters a lifelong love of reading and literacy i.e. author visits, competitions and designated KS3 timetabled library time.

### **Parents/Carers**

Parents/Carers should:

- support the delivery of the school policy on literacy;
- have a positive attitude to fostering good relations between teachers, pupils and parents;
- attend Parents' Evenings, and Individual Education Plan review meetings as appropriate;
- encourage children's literacy development, by encouraging and enabling their children to use the facilities offered through the public library service.

### **Pupils**

Pupils should:

- take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs;
- make improvement through the setting and monitoring of their own individual targets on IEPs (Individual Education Plan);
- make use of literacy support, where offered and carry out all work/catch up on missed work in subjects and to attend all sessions of support.

## **Literacy through Learning Support**

We aim to ensure that all pupils reach their full potential according to their individual abilities. We identify which pupils are low achieving and under achieving, in order to take steps to improve their attainment. The range of strategies we have in place to support pupils with literacy needs include:

- Early identification for incoming Year 8s through the use of the “data capture form” which is issued to Year 7 parents and Primary Schools.
- Analysis of data gathered through the Coleraine Grammar School GL Assessment Tests, undertaken in Year 8.
- All subject teachers can also make a professional judgment as to which pupils will benefit from additional literacy support. The judgements will be based on class work and homework. When a teacher identifies a pupil who they feel would benefit from extra literacy support, they should complete a “Cause for Concern Sheet” and forward this, with supporting evidence, to the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator.
- All teachers are provided information of pupils receiving support so they can provide support within the classroom.

## **Literacy Support**

Pupils who have been identified as needing targeted literacy support will be given extra literacy help. Progress will be tracked to allow for adjustment of targets set at the beginning of the year. The range of support includes:

- Discrete one-to-one or group support sessions with a dedicated Literacy Support teacher;
- Use of a range of strategies in class, such as questioning, group work, individual task completion, extended activities and peer and self-evaluations which will be used to ensure that pupils are challenged;
- Participation in Accelerated Reader;
- Parent Learning Support Information Evening to provide communication on Literacy and Numeracy initiatives and practical advice on how parents can help their child;
- Classroom assistants will work closely with the SEN Co-Ordinator, Literacy Co-Ordinator and subject teachers to assist the pupil with focused and differentiated classwork, projects and homework.

## **Literacy Support for SEN Pupils**

### **Additional Educational Needs (AEN) Literacy Support**

AEN literacy support complements SEN provision by targeting pupils who do not meet SEN criteria but still require tailored interventions. This includes small group work, use of digital tools, and differentiated strategies to enhance reading, writing, and comprehension skills.

The Literacy Co-ordinator will work in conjunction with the SENCO to ensure:

- An early identification and assessment of a pupil's difficulties;
- A staged approach to provision as set out in the "Code of Practice" (1998) and "SENDO" (2005);
- Collaboration with stakeholders prior to the formulation of pupils' Individual Education Plan in order to identify Literacy targets;
- Settings of appropriate literacy targets to allow for pupils' progress and improvement in literacy.

### **Related Whole school Policies**

The Literacy Policy is set within the broader school context of the curriculum and as such should be implemented with the following policies:

- Learning and Teaching Policy;
- Numeracy Policy;
- SEN Policy.

**GUIDANCE FOR MARKING****Teacher Annotation**

To ensure good practice and to standardise marking across the school, it is recommended that teachers follow a common set of annotation symbols.

Below is a list of common annotations.

| Symbol  | Meaning                                      |
|---------|--|
| ✓       | A good point                                 |
| ✓✓      | A good point showing real insight            |
| x       | Inaccurate or poorly supported               |
| ^^^     | Detail missing; further explanation required |
| ≡       | Irrelevant material                          |
| —       | Underline key word or key point              |
| ?       | Confusing or incorrectly applied material    |
| //or NP | New paragraph required                       |
| sp      | Spelling error                               |
| gr      | Grammar error                                |
| C       | Capital letter                               |
| •       | Full Stop                                    |

It is important not to tick (✓ ) too often; especially if overall mark awarded does not reflect a high standard of work. It is recommended that underlining (—) is used to indicate a key point being made.

It is important that work is well marked and annotated, but it is not useful to a pupil to have every spelling mistake highlighted; especially weaker spellers. A sea of red or green pen is off putting and often detracts from key points being made. It is recommended that some key words are highlighted for spelling and then a comment is placed on the work to indicate the need for pupils to proof read and/or use a dictionary to aid spelling improvement.