



The Wilnecote School

Title of Policy: The Wilnecote School – Literacy Strategy

Member of leadership team with lead responsibility for oversight and update of policy	Mrs. J Marsland
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Policy approval at Governing Body	July 2026
Policy review cycle	Biennial
Policy review date	July 2028

The Wilnecote School

Ensuring Excellence



***"Reading and Writing Float on a
Sea of Talk."***

Literacy Strategy

The Wilnecote School Literacy Strategy

INTRODUCTION:

Talk is at the centre of language development. It is the foundation for reading and writing and it is essential for thinking and communication. (Higgins et al 2017). Regardless of subject specialism, all teachers can develop students' language skills.

Teachers should develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum.

Literacy is key to learning across all subjects in secondary school and a strong predictor of outcomes in later life. (EEF: Literacy guidance report; 2021)

Literacy skills provide access to and a foundation for success in school and for future life. It is a moral imperative that the staff at The Wilnecote School strive to improve the literacy skills of all our students.

Every department and every teacher have a crucial role to play in supporting the development of students' literacy skills.

We are committed to raising standards of literacy by ensuring our curriculum:

- engages students in specific activities that develop oracy skills as well as activities that integrate speaking and listening with reading and writing
- develops reading, writing, speaking and listening skills through work that makes cross-curricular links with other subjects
- encourages students to work in sustained and practical ways, to learn about the art, craft and discipline of writing for specific purposes and audiences
- encourages students to redraft their own work in the light of feedback, moving beyond proofreading for errors to the reshaping of whole texts or parts of texts.¹

The National Curriculum demands that students are taught how 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.'²

¹ 'English: curriculum opportunities', Secondary National Curriculum until 2014, Department for Education; updated 26 April 2012;

² www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/secondary/b00199101/english/ks4/programme/opportunities.

Aims of this strategy:

The Wilnecote School is committed to raising standards of literacy across the curriculum and to close the gap between disadvantaged and other students. The December 2021 OFSTED monitoring visit stated "The school's approach to developing pupils' literacy, including improving reading, has been successfully embedded across the school."

This strategy aims to continue to support students to develop their literacy skills, especially the use of accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar in writing, across the curriculum.

The teaching of literacy including oracy

All teachers at The Wilnecote School are responsible for teaching literacy. It is inherent in the Teacher Standards that all teachers should:

'Demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject' (DfE, 2011)

Objectives:

To develop core literacy skills in all students regardless of background so that they :

- Are prepared for life beyond school and are effective and confident communicators.
- Recognise and embrace the power of oracy as a tool to practise and sound out their ideas . (Oracy based lessons allow formative assessment to take place and provide retrieval opportunities.)
- Access all areas of the curriculum
- Understand and access examination materials thus allowing them to achieve their educational potential across the curriculum.
- Receive personalised support
- Express themselves clearly and play an active part in society

Roles and Responsibilities:

Leadership Team: SLT Link – Jennie Marsland

Literacy Lead : Marg Whiffin

- To lead on literacy across the curriculum.
- Develop whole school strategy.
- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the strategy.
- Work with SLT and AB to create and develop resources for staff development and Tutor Time respectively.
- To monitor the effectiveness of the strategy across subjects
- To develop suitable resources and ensure CPD programme support developing both the literacy skills of staff and the delivery of high quality literacy support in the classroom.
- To share good practice within and between departments
- To provide opportunities for the development and implementation of the 'Literacy Tool Kit'.

Assistant Head Inclusion and SEND

- To use all available data and work with feeder schools to identify those students, who on entry, are below age-related expectations and to implement a catch up programme.
- To work with the Literacy Lead to develop literacy material for use in Tutor Time.
- To engage parents in the literacy strategy.
- Identify and monitor and support struggling readers and writers as soon as they join The Wilnecote School
- To lead on the delivery of high-quality structured interventions. , including phonics and handwriting
- To ensure all students can read fluently and therefore access the curriculum.
- To liaise with the English Faculty

English Department:

- To provide students the skills and knowledge and understanding required to read, write, listen and speak effectively.
- To use assessment data to identify curricular targets for individual students and cohorts as a whole; using this as a basis for future planning within the department and provide a literacy focus for other departments to work on.
- To support in the training of other staff in order for them to contribute towards raising literacy standards across the curriculum.
- To lead on the Freshstart programme
- To lead on reading interventions for Y7.
- To liaise with SEND

All teachers across the curriculum:

- To contribute to the development of student's literacy skills in their subject area.
- To follow the school's Literacy Marking Policy.
- To actively support the school's oracy programme by establishing ambitious and challenging norms for talk; creating regular opportunities for oracy ; students understand the expectations of oracy in the classroom; by supporting students to participate in and benefit from classroom talk and opportunities for oracy; by listen meaningfully to students, encouraging them to develop their ideas further;
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- To actively support the vocabulary building program in KS3 by identifying synonyms, antonyms and derivative words in their subjects. Promote the use of Tier 2 vocabulary. Through the use of Ninja vocabulary and the setting of semantic maps every half term.
- To actively develop and support students' disciplinary reading skills in their subject areas
- subject specific reading and extended writing opportunities.
- Promote students use of standard English in both written and spoken responses.
- To promote literacy including oracy through the planned LITT programme and PSHE programme.
- To ensure the use of a working wall to promote literacy.
- To create and support a culture of reading across the school, by engaging with students when they see them reading; by sharing with students what they are reading

Parents:

- To encourage their children to use the range of skills and strategies they have been taught in school.
- To encourage their child to read for pleasure and to gain knowledge.
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Students:

- To take responsibility for their own learning by recognising their own literacy needs and make the improvements suggested by their teachers.
- Students engage in dialogue by articulating, justifying and expanding their ideas; students share, develop and consolidate their understanding through talk.

Governors:

To hold the SLT to account for the effective implementation and monitoring of impact of the strategy.

Literacy across the Curriculum

This will require teachers to develop their understanding and delivery in four key areas. These areas are inter-connected and each rely on one another to create and allow for overall literacy.:

Oracy:

- Teachers create opportunities for students engage in dialogue by articulating, justifying and expanding their ideas; students share, develop and consolidate their understanding through talk.
- Teachers and students understand the importance of each of the elements in the oracy framework to enable effective student-led discussions to take place.
- Teachers establish ambitious and challenging norms for talk.
- Teachers ensure that opportunities for oracy are regular.
- Students show that they understand the expectations of oracy in the classroom.
- Teachers support students to participate in and benefit from classroom talk and opportunities for oracy.
- Teachers listen meaningfully to students, encouraging them to develop their ideas further.
- Teachers and students alike understand and apply discussion guidelines.
- Teachers and students use the talk tactics.
- Student progress in oracy is used to inform teacher planning.
- *Meaningful feedback is given on students' oracy*

Disciplinary Reading:

- Students are exposed to a wide range of high - quality subject specific reading materials which support their reading comprehension by extending both their knowledge and their skills.
- Teachers recognise that background knowledge and vocabulary are essential components of reading comprehension.
- Teachers ensure that they pre-read texts and pre-empt any difficulties understanding challenging/key vocabulary through a variety of pre-read student tasks.
- Teachers ensure that they pre-read texts to identify potential gaps in students' background knowledge (including cultural capital gaps).
- Teachers model reading by reading texts out loud. This allows students who struggle with decoding to focus on comprehension instead.
- Teachers provide a variety of pre-reading/whilst reading and post reading to allow for effective AfL to take place.
- Teachers are aware of the reading ages of the students in front of them.
- Encouraging students to go beyond simple comprehension to explore 'why' and 'how' issues.
- Teaching the skills of scanning and skimming of texts to extract key information and overall meaning.
- Teach students how to infer and deduce meaning, recognising the writer's intentions.
- Assessing students' reading comprehension and referring students who are struggling to recognise/decode words.
- "Teachers should view all their interactions with students as an opportunity for informal assessment. This can include asking students to summarise or retell what they have read."

(Shanahan et al. 2010)

Championing Reading:

Motivation and engagement among students are important for progress in literacy. By creating a culture which puts reading and book discussions at the heart of everyday , teachers can develop persistence and positive attitudes to learning.

“We must promote the love of reading for the sake of reading, rather than as a functional activity.” (Barton 2013)

- Modelling reading for pleasure during dedicated reading time.
- Promote and engage students in celebrating various calendared events , e.g. world book day; national poetry day and ensure that these are embedded in the school calendar each year.
- Engage with students who are reading either in class or around school
- Promote the wide range of reading materials that are available in school, including graphic novels; non-fiction texts; magazines
- Recognising the importance of reading whatever the reading material
- Allowing students to choose reading material that interests them.
- Encouraging students to share their reading experiences with other students, providing recommendations and reviews.
- Form tutors to model a love of reading through dedicated whole form reading time and the reading aloud of the chosen form book.
- Teachers to display on their doors, details of the book they are currently reading
- Promote the student book group
- Encourage all students to see themselves as readers
- To identify and support those students who come from book poor environments.
- To encourage social reading – recognising that reading does not have to be conducted in silence thus allowing the students to share and discuss what they are reading in real time. (Recognition that silent reading has an inconsistent effect of student outcomes and motivation - EEF 2019)
- Students and parents are informed about new book arrivals in the school library
- The school library is actively promoted
- To read aloud through paired and shared reading
- To encourage student participation in reading challenges.
- Promote good reading habits with parents

Writing:

“Writing is critical to success at school. Because it is how teachers evaluate pupil performance. It’s how pupils demonstrate their knowledge in exams.” (Sadler & Graham 2005). “Writing is a fundamental part of engaging in professional, social, community and civic activities.”(Graham et al 2012)

“Writing is not a linear process” (Graham et al 2012)

- Teachers support students in developing fluent and legible handwriting to mitigate the presentation effect. Neat handwriting makes a reader more likely to award a higher mark. (Graham, Harris & Herbert 2011). When students write automatically, they can focus their working memory on other aspects of writing like planning and composition.
- Teachers create transcription opportunities
- Teachers refer students who are clearly struggling to write legibly to SEND.
- Teachers support students in learning to spell key words, both parties recognising that this will allow for progress in both writing and reading. Students are explicitly taught rather than just tested.
- Teachers refer students to SEND who are clearly struggling with basic spelling.
- Encourage all students to see themselves as writers.
- Teachers recognise that a piece of writing is not a single event but is the end process

where students have had the opportunity to plan, draft, evaluate, revise and edit a piece of written work. Teachers must explicitly teach and allow time for these stages of writing to happen.

- Teachers provide scaffolds and models (WAGOLL) to show students explicitly how to write in an appropriate way for each subject, considering the audience, purpose, layout and level of formality required.
- Model the use of oral rehearsal to vocalise text.
- Ensure that through marking and feedback they strengthen and develop students' literacy skills, especially the use of accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Ensure that students **respond** to literacy marking when completing ACTs.
- Model 'What a good one looks like' in order How to use quotations selectively to support points and then link them to their own comments.

Vocabulary Building:

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds are likely to have a significant vocabulary gap than their better- off peers.

- Teachers have high expectations of the kind of language they expect students to use in lessons.
- Teachers are explicit in the vocabulary they want students to use and provide the necessary support to enable them to do so
- Teachers create a vocabulary rich environment
- Teachers carefully select high- frequency words and teach them explicitly, recognising that teaching them in isolation is likely to be less effective than teaching them in context.
- Provide multiple opportunities for students to hear and use new vocabulary in an appropriate context.
- Support students in mastering the vocabulary of academic success
- Ensure key words are displayed in their classrooms
- Ensure key words are sounded out
- Schemes of work identify specific vocabulary to be used each lesson
- Actively support the vocabulary building program in KS3 by identifying synonyms, antonyms and derivative words in their subjects.
- Use graphic organisers and dual coding to support vocabulary acquisition where appropriate.

The Learning Environment:

Classrooms and corridors should provide a rich source of vocabulary for students and should include the following:

- **Displays of key subject specific vocabulary** are consistent in all classrooms for a particular subject. These should be regularly explored with students to ensure they recognise and understand them. Staff should routinely explore the roots from which they are derived so that the meaning of similar words may be deduced. Staff should share strategies of how to remember how to spell key terms and details of whether they should be capitalized (e.g. Parliament in history lessons).
- **All subject areas should have a 'working wall' that displays student work.** This should clearly demonstrate expectations in terms of layout and presentation and be annotated to illustrate what high quality work looks like. Unit specific tier 2 and 3 words should be displayed.
- **Displays should be readable from a distance** and where possible have questions rather than statements as headings (e.g. *Why did Hitler rise to power?*)
- **Access to literacy mats** that are routinely used should be routinely referred to (see tool kit for exemplar display/ desktop work mat (see page 13).
- **Glossaries** should be routinely used in lessons.
- **The environment of all classrooms** should be conducive to good literacy practice.

Lesson Planning:

All schemes of work and lesson plans should:

- Reference the specific literacy skills and key vocabulary being used.
- Allow for effective oracy
- Consider the layout, structure, degree of formality & impersonality of any writing we ask students to undertake.
- Allow for planning, drafting, evaluating, revising and editing of written work to take place
- Allow for extended writing opportunities where appropriate.
- Include how we explicitly teach the required reading skill (e.g. skimming, scanning, analysis, speed reading, research techniques)

Monitoring and Evaluation of Student Progress in Literacy Skills:

All teachers are responsible for assessing student literacy within their classrooms.

Students' written and spoken work will be regularly marked in accordance with the whole school marking guidelines. This includes clear guidelines on a consistent approach to **marking for literacy**. Compliance with these guidelines will be monitored and evaluated using the following mechanisms:

- Sample work will be monitored by Heads of Department during regular work scrutinies.
- Student interviews with the Literacy Lead.
- Observations during learning walks and the Deep Dive processes.
- Academic Board meetings where sample work will be reviewed from across the curriculum.

- Monitoring and reviewing against literacy/oracy action plans

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Strategy:

This strategy will be regularly monitored and evaluated using the following mechanisms:

- Learning walks and lesson observations carried out by senior staff and other visiting colleagues such as the CAT Deep Dive Team.
- Sample work will be monitored by Senior Leaders.
- Data analysis using Go 4 School (KS3) Star reader and SIRA (KS4) to track student progress.
- Student interviews with AH for Professional Growth to assess student perceptions.
- Peer review at Academic Board of department innovation plans and samples of scheme of work.
- Deep Dives
- Governor visits.

Continuing Professional Development

For this strategy to be successful it is essential that we support staff in building confidence in their own literacy skills. In order to achieve this the school will:

- Offer the opportunity for staff to join a 'Literacy development group'/ oracy champion within school to share good practice and develop further ideas.
- Dedicate time on INSET days to assessing and developing staff literacy skills.
- Share good practice during twilight CPD sessions.
- Provide examples of good practice from departments within school and from other CAT schools.
- Facilitate visits to other schools to investigate good practice.
- Provide time to develop and enhance existing schemes of work to incorporate a literacy dimension.
- Provide training to colleagues new to the school

