

# BLOOMFIELD COLLEGIATE SCHOOL

## Literacy and Communication Policy

Approved by the Board of Governors 22 February 2018



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## 1.1 Rationale

In Bloomfield Collegiate, we accept the fundamental principle that literacy is the key to improving learning and raising standards at all key stages; it enables pupils to gain access to the subjects studied in schools, to read for information and pleasure, and to become critical, creative and effective communicators.

Poor levels of literacy create barriers, lead to under achievement and loss of self esteem, therefore the purpose of this policy is to ensure a whole-school approach to the teaching of literacy led by the English Department with all other departments sharing responsibility for the teaching of literacy across the curriculum, recognising their statutory responsibilities and the cross-curricular nature of literacy skills.

Crucially, we believe that literate pupils will emerge ultimately as confident and articulate communicators, ready to enter the adult world of work or to continue their academic studies.

## 1.2 Definitions

The school's literacy policy is informed by the following:

- a. The Department of Education for Northern Ireland; the school improvement policy document, *Every School a Good School* published in April 2009 and,
- b. the D.E.N.I strategy document which gives specific guidelines as to how Literacy and Numeracy can be improved - *Count, Read: Succeed* and,
- c. The Northern Ireland Curriculum for Key Stage 3 descriptors for the cross-curricular Communication skills. It is statutory to report on Communication in Levels for Year 10. This is the responsibility of the English department.
- d. Accelerated Reader software is used with Year 8 in Library classes to assess, monitor and develop reading skills.
- e. Baseline testing which is carried out using CAT and PTE and PTM tests to measure several skills including literacy skills such as vocabulary and proof-reading.
- f. The Northern Ireland Education and Training Inspectorate Dyslexia Task Group (2002) endorses the Republic of Ireland definition,  
*"Dyslexia is manifested in a continuum of specific learning difficulties related to the acquisition of basic skills in reading, spelling, writing and/or number, such difficulties being unexpected in relation to an individual's other abilities."*

- g. Literacy is defined as the ability to read and use written information and to write appropriately and legibly, taking account of different purposes, contexts, conventions and audiences. It involves the development of:
- an integrated approach to the acquisition of talking, listening, reading and writing skills across the curriculum;
  - knowledge that allows a speaker, writer and reader to use language appropriate to different social situations;
  - formal and informal language across all areas of social interaction; and
  - the ability to read, understand and use information in multiple formats and platforms, including traditional print and on-screen material.
- h. **READING** – Pupils should be enabled to:
- Read a range of texts for information, ideas and enjoyment;
  - Use a range of strategies to read with increasing independence;
  - Find, select and use information from a range of sources;
  - Understand and explore ideas, events and features in texts;
  - Use evidence from texts to explain opinions.
- i. **WRITING** – Pupils should be enabled to:
- Talk about, plan and edit work;
  - Communicate information, meaning, feelings, imaginings and ideas in a clear and organised way;
  - Develop, express and present ideas in a variety of forms and formats, using traditional and digital resources, for different audiences and purposes;
  - Write with increasing accuracy and proficiency.
- j. **TALKING AND LISTENING** – Pupils should be enabled to:
- Listen to and take part in discussions, explanations, role-plays and presentations;
  - Contribute comments, ask questions and respond to others' points of view;
  - Communicate information, ideas, opinions, feelings and imaginings, using an expanding vocabulary;
  - Structure talk so that ideas can be understood by others;
  - Speak clearly and adapt ways of speaking to audience and situation;
  - Use non-verbal methods to express ideas and engage with the listener.

All documents and definitions are available to staff online and electronically on the school's intranet along with other resources and guidance material.

### **1.3 Aims and Objectives**

- Literacy is to feature prominently in the school's overall development plan, in whole school policies and in every department's policies and schemes of learning. Literacy will be promoted as a whole school priority.

## **Policy Objectives**

- To adopt a whole-school approach to literacy across the curriculum in keeping with the principles and practices established in the Northern Ireland Curriculum;
- To enable all pupils to reach their potential in the key literacy skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Additional provision will be made for pupils who speak a different language at school from the one they speak at home, as detailed in the Special Educational Needs Policy;
- To support the development of literacy skills throughout the curriculum identifying, providing for and supporting under-achievers and gifted and talented pupils;
- To raise staff awareness of key literacy strategies through working party discussions, INSET and the dissemination of good classroom practice;
- To encourage staff to take responsibility for the development of literacy in their subject areas through the inclusion of appropriate schemes of learning and lesson planning;
- To support the development of literacy through the deployment of a range of resources in the school e.g. Library, ICT suites, Accelerated Reader, Literacy Booklets for years 8, 9, 10 etc.;
- To identify specific roles and responsibilities within the school with regard to the development of literacy work;
- To establish procedures for monitoring literacy across the curriculum.

## **Literate pupils should:**

- read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding;
- use their skills in speaking and listening to explore, articulate and extend their understanding of texts;
- be able to orchestrate a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual) to monitor their reading and correct their own mistakes;
- 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 fiction and poetry genre, and be familiar with ways in which those genre 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 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 talk 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;
- be confident users of subject specific vocabulary and correct spellings.

## **1.4 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 balanced in its presentation of ethnicity, culture and gender and appropriate for age and ability of the pupils. Extension/Wider reading suggestions will be available to stretch Gifted and Talented pupils.
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. thought gathering.
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.

3. 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.
4. Teachers will correct errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling in line with the school's assessment policy.
6. 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.

### **Talking 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.

## **1.5 Roles and Responsibilities**

### **All staff:**

- should ensure that they are familiar with the specific literacy demands of their subject and ensure sufficient coverage of these skills in their lesson planning;
- should use the agreed strategies in order to teach Writing, Speaking, Listening and Reading skills as outlined in The Northern Ireland Curriculum;
- should be able to identify a pupil's literacy strengths and weaknesses and know how to build upon these in order to promote pupil progress;
- should report on a student's standard of literacy at the Parents' Evening, as appropriate;
- should be familiar with the KS3 Communication Levels of Progression.

### **Heads of Department**

The Head of Department 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;
- 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;
- use available assessment data to identify appropriate literacy strategies.

### **The English Department**

The English Department should:

- lead the teaching of literacy skills through literacy classes once a fortnight using dedicated literacy resources for each Year group in Key Stage 3;
- monitor and encourage the reading habits of Years 8-10 by liaising with the Librarian, taking fortnightly library classes, using Accelerated Reader with Year 8, organising Book Clubs, Reading Week, World Book Day events and a Book Fair;
- reporting to parents in writing on literacy and communication skills.

### **The Literacy Co-ordinator**

The Literacy Co-ordinator should:

- support departments in the implementation of the school's Literacy Policy;
- advise the School's and Leadership Team on literacy issues;
- co-ordinate KS3 literacy initiatives;
- liaise with the SENCO about pupils attaining below level 3;
- liaise with the school librarian on whole school literacy initiatives;
- help to monitor the impact of the Literacy Policy on standards.

### **Leadership Team**

The Leadership Team 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;
- support the Literacy Co-ordinator's literacy initiatives;
- monitor departments' implementation of the Literacy Policy;
- be role models in employing literacy strategies in their own teaching and monitor exam and assessment outcomes to ensure that no group is disadvantaged with respect to race or ethnicity.

### **The SENCO**

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator should:

- liaise with the Literacy Co-ordinator about pupils attaining below Level 3;
- communicate with all subject staff about those pupils who have literacy difficulties and give advice on what staff can do to help these pupils in their subject;
- monitor pupils with literacy difficulties through IEPs and review meetings;
- be familiar with the KS3 English Framework objectives of the Northern Ireland Curriculum;
- provide support through sixth form mentors.

### **The Teacher-Librarian**

The Teacher-Librarian 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.

### **Heads of Year/Form Teachers**

Heads of Year/ Form Teachers should:

- actively support the school librarian by encouraging pupils to make full use of facilities;
- place importance on the school library and ensure that it has a high profile within the junior school;
- find opportunities to praise pupils' achievements and show interest in their reading.

### **Dates of Policy Review**

<b>Nature of Review</b>	<b>Date Review Completed</b>	<b>Date Ratified by Board of Governors</b>
New Policy	June 2015	24 September 2015
Minor amendment	September 2016	29 September 2016
Minor amendments	December 2017	22 February 2017
Minor amendments	December 2017	22 February 2018

## APPENDIX 1: Literacy Audit

### Literacy Audit

**DEPARTMENT:**

Reading:	Tick box and give evidence as required: e.g. (In Schemes of Learning and brief details.)
Specialist vocabulary lists for my subject are available to pupils either electronically or as hard copies.	
We test pupils on their knowledge of this key vocabulary.	
Key terms are on display in the classroom- WORD WALL	
Pupils are guided/encouraged to read independently.	
A reading list of specialist books for my subject is readily available.	
There is an area in the library where pupils can access specialist or other relevant books to my subject. It is updated on a regular basis.	
Reading tasks are set which require additional pupil reading of text books. The texts are differentiated according to pupil ability levels.	
Reading tasks are provided which require pupils to skim and scan information on the internet.	
Reading tasks are provided which require pupils to interpret images and visual communication.	
The results of these reading tasks are shared with other pupils/displayed on wall.	
Use of the media is made to enhance the understanding of my subject.	
Pupils have opportunities to use evidence from texts to explain their opinions.	
Teachers are aware of pupils in their classes that may have SEN relating to their reading.	
There is knowledge of the procedure to follow should concerns related to reading difficulties arise.	
Teachers discuss their own reading with pupils-either subject-related or general	
There are/is a BOOK BOX in each classroom containing books, magazines, articles related to the subject	

<b>Writing:</b>		
Examples of writing are provided for pupils to assist in clarifying the format required.		
Writing frames are available to pupils when planning written work.		
Pupils are encouraged to plan and organise the order of the content before starting to write.		
Pupils are encouraged to write in paragraphs.		
Pupils are encouraged to self-edit writing.		
Pupils are encouraged to peer-edit writing.		
Dictionaries are readily available.		
Pupils are encouraged to use spell and grammar check when applicable.		
Teachers are aware of pupils in their classes that may have SEN relating to their writing.		
There is a knowledge of the procedure to follow should concerns related to writing difficulties arise.		
Opportunities to draft writing exist.		
Opportunities are given to create fair and final copies of writing.		
Pupils have opportunities to develop, express and present their ideas in a variety of forms and formats using traditional and digital resources, for different audiences and purposes.		
Pupils are encouraged to improve/use and spell correctly specialist vocabulary.		
It is part of departmental assessment policy to ensure pupils write with increasing accuracy and proficiency.		
The results of these writing tasks are shared with other pupils/displayed on wall.		

<b>Talking and Listening:</b>		
Pupils discuss/ explain what they are learning in a structured manner with opportunities existing to give feedback on their findings.		
Pupils present their work/findings to the class formally and/or informally.		
Pupils are given opportunities and instruction on how to give PowerPoint presentations.		
Roleplay/hotseating is used to enhance the understanding of themes/topics.		
Pupils are encouraged to use specialist vocabulary or expand their vocabulary.		
Pupils are encouraged to speak clearly, accurately and		

logically so that their views can be understood by others.		
Pupils have opportunities to demonstrate non-verbal methods to express ideas and engage with the listener.		
Pupils have opportunities to contribute comments, ask questions and respond to others' points of view to demonstrate that they are listening.		

<b>Early Intervention:</b>		
A mechanism exists which alerts Learning Support staff to the literacy difficulties of pupils.		

<b>Link Projects:</b>		
A literacy-linked project exists/is in a planning stage with another subject.		

<b>Whole school:</b>		
This department would like to lead the teaching of...?		
This department would like more information on...?		

# APPENDIX 2: Key Stage 3 Using Mathematics Levels of Progression and Descriptors

## Levels of Progression in **COMMUNICATION** across the curriculum: Key Stage 3

For First Use 2012/13

The colours used in this document provide a means by which progression in the Requirements may be tracked across the levels.

Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7
<p><b>In a range of contexts, with different audiences and taking account of a variety of purposes, pupils can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>listen attentively;</li> <li>develop a role;</li> <li>make relevant contributions to discussions;</li> <li>ask questions about others' points of view and respond appropriately;</li> <li>explain information, ideas and opinions clearly;</li> <li>use an appropriate vocabulary;</li> <li>plan an approach to talking;</li> <li>use language techniques and register to engage the listener;</li> <li>use non-verbal methods to engage the listener.</li> </ul>	<p><b>In a range of formal and informal contexts, with different audiences and for a variety of purposes, pupils can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>listen to and identify relevant information and ideas;</li> <li>make relevant contributions in different roles;</li> <li>discuss their own and others' ideas;</li> <li>ask questions to explore and develop ideas;</li> <li>justify ideas and opinions;</li> <li>communicate detailed information clearly, using precise vocabulary;</li> <li>structure their talk logically and coherently;</li> <li>use language techniques and register to maintain the interest of the listener;</li> <li>use non-verbal methods to maintain the interest of the listener.</li> </ul>	<p><b>In a range of formal and informal contexts, with different audiences and for a variety of purposes, pupils can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>listen to complex information and identify implicit meanings;</li> <li>move discussion forward in different roles;</li> <li>show understanding of others' ideas by making valid contributions;</li> <li>ask questions to challenge others' ideas, showing sensitivity;</li> <li>express and justify complex ideas and opinions;</li> <li>explain information and ideas clearly, using appropriate ways to support main points;</li> <li>organise the structure and content of talking to be concise;</li> <li>use language techniques and register to achieve effects;</li> <li>use non-verbal methods to achieve effects.</li> </ul>	<p><b>In a wide range of formal and informal contexts, including unfamiliar audiences, and for a variety of purposes, pupils can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discuss how complex information and ideas are communicated;</li> <li>make distinctive contributions in different roles;</li> <li>engage persuasively in decision-making using agreement and challenge;</li> <li>support their opinions and arguments with appropriate evidence from a range of sources;</li> <li>convey complex information by explaining it to others in an original way;</li> <li>exploit language techniques and register to present complex information and ideas effectively;</li> <li>use non-verbal methods to achieve effects.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Engaging with a range of texts* of varying lengths for a variety of purposes, pupils can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>show understanding by identifying and summarising information;</li> <li>paraphrase;</li> <li>read independently;</li> <li>locate relevant information and use it appropriately;</li> <li>recognise main features and understand how these are linked to form and purpose;</li> <li>understand explicit meanings and recognise some implicit meanings;</li> <li>explain opinions about what they read.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Engaging with a range of texts* of varying lengths for a variety of purposes, including texts* written for a wider audience, pupils can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>show understanding by identifying and summarising information, ideas and details;</li> <li>select and manage information from a range of sources;</li> <li>describe language, structure and presentation;</li> <li>understand some implicit meanings and attitudes;</li> <li>differentiate between fact and opinion;</li> <li>make reference to text* to support opinions and draw conclusions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Engaging with a range of complex texts*, including those written for a wider audience, pupils can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify how main points, details or ideas are organised and developed;</li> <li>read critically to compare information from a range of sources;</li> <li>evaluate and adapt information;</li> <li>explain the effects of language, structure and presentation;</li> <li>identify authors' intentions;</li> <li>detect points of view, lines of reasoning and bias;</li> <li>use appropriate and sufficient evidence to justify their ideas and opinions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Across a range of complex sources, including those produced for a wider audience, pupils can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discriminate between different sources, recognising the relevance, reliability and accuracy of the information;</li> <li>synthesise information from a range of sources;</li> <li>explain in detail the effects of language, structure and presentation;</li> <li>expand on opinions, informed by well-selected evidence.</li> </ul>
<p><b>In a range of forms, for different audiences and purposes, pupils can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>plan and make use of planning;</li> <li>check writing to make improvements in accuracy and meaning;</li> <li>express thoughts, feelings, ideas and opinions, giving reasons when appropriate;</li> <li>structure writing, including using paragraphs;</li> <li>express meaning clearly, using an appropriate vocabulary and level of detail;</li> <li>choose from and use a range of forms, as appropriate;</li> <li>vary word order and use linking words within sentences;</li> <li>use a range of punctuation accurately;</li> <li>use accurate grammar and spelling on most occasions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>In a range of forms, for different audiences and purposes, including in formal situations, pupils can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>redraft to improve accuracy and meaning;</li> <li>use precise vocabulary to convey thoughts, ideas, relevant information and to justify opinions;</li> <li>structure writing logically and coherently;</li> <li>match writing to purpose and audience;</li> <li>present information effectively, using a formal style where appropriate;</li> <li>create sentence structures which help to convey meaning;</li> <li>use a range of punctuation consistently and accurately;</li> <li>use accurate grammar and spelling.</li> </ul>	<p><b>In a range of forms, for different audiences and purposes, including in formal and unfamiliar situations, pupils can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>redraft writing for effect;</li> <li>communicate ideas, information and opinions in a sustained and developed way;</li> <li>make use of information and evidence to support ideas and opinions;</li> <li>organise and present writing for deliberate effect;</li> <li>use appropriate style and tone;</li> <li>create sentence structures which convey meaning clearly;</li> <li>use punctuation for effect.</li> </ul>	<p><b>In a range of forms, for different purposes and in different contexts, including for real audiences and in formal and unfamiliar situations, pupils can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>make discriminating choices about language in order to create impact;</li> <li>communicate complex ideas and opinions in a sustained and developed way;</li> <li>make effective use of information and evidence to support their ideas, analyses and conclusions;</li> <li>match style, tone and presentation to create an impact;</li> <li>create complex sentences for impact;</li> <li>use punctuation for effect.</li> </ul>

\* Texts refer to ideas that are organised to communicate and present a message in written, spoken, visual and symbolic forms.