

Literacy and Oracy at Beacon Hill Community School

Literacy interventions in school acknowledge the importance of implementing effective literacy training, strategies, and interventions. Prioritising literacy across the curriculum is an important school initiative aimed at enhancing the well-being, social skills, life opportunities, and academic achievements of all students.

Literacy Vision:

- Implement a range of strategies across the Federation to promote a culture of reading for pleasure, as well as reading for understanding.
- Improve reading and writing skills for everyone in the school, not just the bottom 20% but any students who require intervention. This will ensure that all students enhance their opportunities to do well in their studies and succeed both in and outside of school.
- Promote Oracy in lessons, encouraging students to talk in a way that makes them feel confident and able to express themselves clearly and with confidence.
- Support students in developing their extended writing, incorporating Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary accurately and effectively.

Importance of literacy and why it is our priority:

- The COVID pandemic has widened the gap in achievement between those who read and those who don't.
- 1 in 11 children facing challenges in the UK don't own a reading book.
- People with poor literacy skills are more likely to be unemployed, have low incomes and poor health behaviours, which in turn can be linked to lower life expectancy. (National Literacy Trust research report- Literacy and life expectancy report)
- Approximately 1 million people struggle with 'very poor literacy skills'. Without school interventions, opportunities will be limited.
- Reading well boosts confidence, ensuring children have a better chance at a happy, successful life as lifelong learners.
- Students who read and write with fluency tend to have more self-confidence and therefore higher aspirations. They feel better about themselves and what they can achieve.
- Helping any students with lower than expected reading scores to become more fluent will improve their chances of finding good jobs.
- Effective verbal communication skills are desirable qualities for potential employers.
- Effective Oracy communication helps build confidence, emotional understanding, and social skills.
- Discussing work whilst including Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary promotes understanding, and builds confidence to embed this vocabulary into extended writing tasks.

Literacy and Oracy Initiatives and Impact:

We currently run the following interventions, using YARC assessments to pin point the component of reading that students need support with. Students are then supported with interventions at the correct level and programme to suit their needs. Most of our interventions are DFE approved and research driven showing high impact results in short time frames.

- **Reciprocal reading** accessed by all students during HT1 in tutor time initiative. All staff have training to implement this into regular departments practice.
- **(BH) Reading buddies** with local primary schools. Our year 10 students work with KS2 pupils to help to boost decoding, fluency and therefore inference and comprehension skills that allow students to access the whole curriculum.
- **Word of the week** (yrs. 7-10) delivers a root word to focus and explore each week. Students make links to predict future unknown words they come across as a result of learning.
- **International dyslexia learning (IDL)**- Spelling and comprehension intervention to support students become more confident and familiar with words and spellings. Delivered 4 x 20-minute sessions per week using an online system. Reviews and progress update each term.
- **Herts for Learning (HFL)**- a reading intervention focused on fluency and comprehension which supports pupils to make accelerated progress in reading comprehension whilst encouraging them to rediscover a love of reading. Targets those not doing any other interventions, without a dyslexia diagnosis and with a reading age of one year below their age but no more than 5 years. This is delivered over 8 weeks with two, 2.5-hour sessions a week
- **Fresh Start Phonics (Read, Write, Inc follow on)**- Fresh Start is a systematic synthetic phonics programme for struggling readers aged 9 – 13+. Pupils are taught at their challenge point, so they learn to read accurately and fluently in just 20-25 minutes a day. Fresh Start is for students who: Are not yet able to read age appropriate materials, have missed schooling or are late arrivals into school, are new to the UK education system, are learning English as an additional language.
- **Oracy sessions** are timetabled lessons within our English department. Planned sessions to promote reading and Oracy delivered by English trained teachers.

- **Guided reading** (external delivery- Hello Futures)- two x 45 minutes sessions a week. Small group of students for a 6-week block.
- **Literacy & TA codes**- the federation delivers feedback to students by using literacy codes where these are regular occurrences. These codes highlight spelling, punctuation and grammar mistakes. Teacher will then address these with students to ensure they are aware of how this SPAG is used.

Additional Literacy support

- Ms Firth (SENDCo) and the Teaching assistant team work closely with students and parents for those students on specialised speech and language targets, these may differ from the programmes listed above.

Classroom Reading strategies to work alongside the progress students make during interventions.

- **Echo and choral reading**- Echo reading is where the class or small group copy out loud what you have just read in small chunks. They need to use the same intonation which will aid understanding and help develop reading confidence. Choral reading is where the class read the text out loud together.
- **Preview and Predict**: Encourage students to preview text elements and make predictions before reading.
- **Questioning**: Teach students to ask questions before, during, and after reading for active engagement.
- **Visualising**: Foster mental imagery creation while reading to enhance comprehension.
- **Connections**: Help students relate the text to their experiences, other texts, or the world.
- **Summarising**: Guide students in summarizing main ideas and key details after reading.
- **Annotating**: Teach students to annotate by highlighting and jotting down notes for better understanding.
- **Reciprocal Teaching**: Have students take turns summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting.
- **Graphic Organisers**: Use visual tools like concept maps and story maps to organize information.
- **Close Reading**: Analyse specific passages closely, focusing on details, language, and meaning.
- **Read Alouds**: Model fluent reading and comprehension strategies through reading aloud.
- **Literature Circles**: Facilitate small group discussions on a common text for collaborative learning.
- **Fluency Practice**: Incorporate activities for improving reading fluency, like repeated readings.
- **Diverse Texts**: Provide a variety of texts, reflecting diverse perspectives and experiences.
- **Independent Reading**: Allocate time for students to choose and read books independently.

Key Oracy strategies for all staff to make use of:

- **Structured Discussions**: Encourage organised conversations with clear guidelines for turn-taking and active listening.
- **Talk Tactics** – (Introduced through Voice 21) – Through directed class discussion, students are encouraged to think strategically about their contributions to group talk - Instigate, Probe, Challenge, Clarify, Summarise and Build ideas and understanding.
- **Debates and Discussions**: Foster critical thinking and communication skills through effective and considered speaking and listening.
- **Think-Pair-Share**: Facilitate progressive idea development through individual reflection, partner discussions, and sharing with the class.
- **Role-Playing**: Enhance communication skills by engaging students in role-playing activities.
- **Questioning Techniques**: Promote open-ended questioning to stimulate meaningful conversations.
- **Vocabulary Development**: Emphasise the use of a rich vocabulary, including Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary to enhance oral expression.
- **Public Speaking Opportunities**: Gradually expose students to public speaking tasks like presentations and speeches.
- **Storytelling**: Improve narrative skills by encouraging students to share stories.
- **Feedback and Reflection**: Provide constructive feedback and encourage self-reflection on Oracy skills.
- **Inclusive Practices**: Ensure all students have equal opportunities to participate in Oracy activities.
- **Utilise Technology**: Incorporate technology tools for Oracy, such as video presentations and online discussions.
- **Real-World Connections**: Relate Oracy activities to real-world situations to highlight practical applications.

These strategies collectively support the development of students' oral communication skills, preparing them for success academically and in real-world scenarios.

If you require any more information about our Literacy interventions and strategies, please contact the school office for more information.