



SMITHDON HIGH SCHOOL

LITERACY POLICY

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March 2014**

Aim

Our aim is to raise the achievement of all pupils by seeking to develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.

We need to:

- Raise the profile of literacy within the school
- Raise standards of literacy
- Make literacy teaching an overt part of every curriculum area

All teachers are teachers of literacy. As such, the staff of Smithdon High School are committed to developing literacy skills in all pupils, in the belief that it will support their learning and raise standards across the curriculum 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.
- Pupils need vocabulary, expression and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of the subject.
- Improving literacy and learning can have an impact on pupils' self-esteem, motivation and behaviour. It allows them to learn independently and is empowering.

This responsibility links to National Teacher Standards:

“All teachers should demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy and the correct use of Standard English, whatever their specialist subject.”

Teachers' Standards (DfE v1.0 711) DfE 2011

Across the school we will:

- Refer to and use the Literacy Network at: <http://goo.gl/SPLbs>.
- Refer to the literacy focus in subject lessons.
- Use the literacy marking symbols (see appendix 1) when assessing pupils' written work.
- Encourage pupils to use the literacy marking symbols (see appendix 2) to improve their written skills in all subject areas.
- Seek to identify progression in the main forms of reading, writing, speaking and listening undertaken in each department and strengthen teaching plans accordingly.

Departmental Responsibilities

All departments are responsible for providing a literacy climate which promotes literacy in an accessible way, allowing pupils to develop confidence thereby realising their full potential.

Individual teachers will provide:

- Effective questioning
- Differentiation
- Reading opportunities
- Writing opportunities
- Talking opportunities
- Formative oral feedback
- Formative written feedback
- Use of group work
- Teacher discussion of language
- Vocabulary displayed
- Useful sentences displayed
- Models of writing available

Reading

All departments will:

- Give time and status to reading in curriculum planning.
- Review and monitor the reading demands placed upon the students in their subject area, ensuring that reading for understanding is explicitly taught.
- Review progress in reading demands and skills encountered from Year 7 to Year 13 in their subject areas.
- Ensure that resources are available to meet the reading skills of all students at appropriate levels.
- Encourage independent reading and research possibilities.
- Encourage the use of the school library.
- Encourage reading aloud and group reading activities.
- Use ICT to support the development of reading.

Speaking and Listening

All departments will:

- Review schemes of work and teaching plans to identify opportunities for structured approaches to student speaking and listening.
- Explicitly place value on oral work as well as written work, recognising that discussion of topics is usually a precursor to any written work.
- Review teaching content and styles to monitor, modify and provide a variety of student opportunities for speaking and listening.
- Ensure that students have a range of speaking and listening opportunities in a variety of formats, including individual, paired, group and whole class situations, involving formal and informal exploratory discussions, problem solving, formal presentations, etc.
- Teach and reinforce subject-specific use of vocabulary.
- Support the English Department in reinforcing the need for students to use Standard English and reduce the reliance on slang, colloquialisms and ungrammatical and dialect expressions.

Writing

All departments will:

- With effect from September 2013, use the literacy marking symbols when assessing pupils' written work.
- Make connections between pupils' reading and writing, so that pupils have clear models for their writing.
- Use the modelling process to make explicit to pupils **how** they should write.
- Be clear about audience and purpose.
- Provide opportunities for a range of writing, including sustained writing.
- Provide key words.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Smithdon High School pupils are entitled to our highest expectations and support. Some will need additional support and others will need to be challenged and extended.

We can evaluate pupil progress using the following approaches:

- Work sampling – both pupils' work and departmental schemes
- Observation – literacy teaching
- Meetings
- Pupil interviews
- Scrutiny of development plans
- Encouraging departments to share good practice.

Appendix 1 - Staff Version

In an attempt to raise literacy standards, the following mark scheme has been developed to assist non-English specialists. A spelling, punctuation or grammatical error will be text marked and an abbreviation will be placed in the margin to indicate which error it is.

Staff may choose to focus on one type of error in a piece of work or may focus on one section of text to mark.

Pupils should be encouraged to use the same system when proof reading their own work or when they peer assess another pupil's work.

| Text Mark | Abbreviation | Meaning |
|------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| o | Sp | Spelling error |
| o | P | Punctuation error |
| o | C | Check capital letters |
| o | Sm | Check speech marks |
| o | ? | Check question marks |
| // | NP | Paragraph needed |
| ~~~~ | Exp | Expression lacks clarity – rephrase |

After marking

You may then identify one aspect of literacy for the student to focus on for their next piece of written work and make this part of your target comment.

Appendix 2 - Pupil Version

Non-English specialist teachers will use the following symbols and abbreviations when marking your work. The spelling, punctuation or grammatical error will be marked and an abbreviation will be placed in the margin to indicate which error it is.

Note: Staff may not mark every mistake.

You should use the same system when proof reading your own work or when you peer assess another pupil's work.

| Text Mark | Abbreviation | Meaning |
|------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| o | Sp | Spelling error |
| o | P | Punctuation error |
| o | C | Check capital letters |
| o | Sm | Check speech marks |
| o | ? | Check question marks |
| // | NP | Paragraph needed |
| ~~~~ | Exp | Expression lacks clarity – rephrase |

What to do when your work is returned:

- You could include a literacy target in your evaluation of your work.
- You may decide to focus on one element which has been corrected for your next piece of writing.
- You may decide to focus on learning the spellings you are frequently getting wrong, or key spellings for a particular topic.