

THE SYDNEY RUSSELL SCHOOL



Literacy Strategy



LITERACY STRATEGY

Aims

- To develop and improve students' ability and confidence in reading, writing, speaking and listening.
- To ensure that all students have the literacy skills necessary to be successful in public examinations.
- To embed the teaching of literacy across the whole school.
- To support teachers in other subject areas in the delivery of key literacy skills.

The school's Literacy Policy is based on the principle that it is the responsibility of every member of staff, teaching and non-teaching, to develop and maintain high standards of literacy across the school. All members of staff are expected to reinforce the importance of literacy by modelling good practice and ensuring that the development of literacy is built into the Programmes of Study.

Programmes of Study

All Programmes of Study should reflect the need to promote high standards of literacy which should be designed to up-hold school expectations. How and when elements of literacy are delivered will depend on the subject and the particular elements of the programme but the following features are compulsory:

- a) Students' work, in exercise books and folders, should be presented neatly; with the appropriate date and headings (see below).
- b) The spelling of subject specific vocabulary should be taught explicitly.
- c) Students should be taught a range of strategies to enable them to read text books and other materials. Students should also be taught how to access and present information effectively.
- d) Students should be encouraged to use the school library for research, to embed what has been taught and for revision.
- e) It should be made clear to students that downloaded material will not be accepted as their work.
- f) Every lesson should give students opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and their confidence in expressing ideas.
- g) When writing a Programme of Study, the Subject Leader should consider students' prior knowledge, so that the instruction of new, key vocabulary is designed to help students connect old knowledge with new.

Presentation of Work

a) Handwriting

All students have been taught how to do joined up writing at primary school. Teachers should encourage all written work to be done in neat, joined up writing; ideally using an official handwriting pen.

b) Handwriting Pens

Students are expected to do all their written work in black pen, though this will vary in the Primary where most pupils use pencil; progressing to a pen licence when they have mastered joined, cursive writing skills. Students are

encouraged to use an official handwriting pen: they are the red Berol, the yellow Staedtler or the silver or gold Verona. Gel pens and fountain pens are not acceptable. The reason for this is to prepare students for examinations. Handwriting pens are designed to glide across the paper so that students can write quickly but neatly. Other types of pen are designed to catch in the paper to slow the writer down. Students in Year Seven receive their first handwriting pens at the Year Six Recruitment Evening and are given another on their first day. When this runs out they, like the older students are expected to purchase a replacement.

c) **Layout of Work**

All written work should be set out as follows:

	Name	Title	Date
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Literacy Supportive Classrooms

All members of staff are expected to model good practice and this should be reflected in all areas of the practice.

a) **Classroom Displays**

All notices and materials used for display should be meticulously proof-read to ensure that there are no errors with grammar, spelling or punctuation. If students’ work is used as part of a display on classroom walls, it should be proof-read by an adult. Only work of the highest quality, in respect of content as well as presentation, should be used for classroom and corridor displays; its purpose is to provide students with examples of the standard of work to which they should aspire.

b) **Resources**

All resources, the Programmes of Study, Knowledge Organisers, materials used in lessons, PowerPoints and examination papers should model good practice and should be proof-read to ensure that there are no errors in grammar, spelling or punctuation. Staff should not rely on a computer spell-check facility, which often allows Americanisms which are incorrect in English.

c) **Literacy Supportive Materials**

Subject Leaders should assess, in discussion with the Literacy Co-ordinator or Head of English, if supplementary materials could develop students’ literacy skills and enhance their progress. Subject specific vocabulary could be displayed on the walls and spelling mats could be produced to help students remember the correct spelling of key

words for a particular piece of work. The Head of English or Literacy Co-ordinator can advise which dictionaries and thesauruses are the most suitable to order.

d) **Marking and Assessment**

All members of staff should model good practice. They should use neat, legible joined up writing when responding to students' work and ensure that their responses contain no errors of grammar, punctuation or spelling.

Teachers should be aware that SATs, G.C.S.E. and 'A' Level examinations in all subjects allocate some marks for grammar, spelling and punctuation. They should ensure that students are aware of this; identify technical errors in students' work with a coded target and give them strategies to improve.

e) **Reading**

All students should bring a reading book to school with them. Throughout the Primary phase, pupils have a range of strategies to help promote reading and receive certificates. There is a home school link book and reading is always a major part of their homework. All teachers throughout the Primary phase read to their class daily. In year Seven and Eight, students have regular reading and comprehension lessons where they visit the library and complete an Accelerated Reader quiz. Their progress is monitored and students receive certificates to mark their success. By Year Nine, we hope that this reading habit has been adopted as an independent skill. All teachers should promote reading and when in lessons, should use strategies (such as predicting, clarifying, summarising, questioning) to check comprehension. Teachers encourage students to become more independent in these strategies, taking on these roles themselves.