

Hexham Middle School

Literacy Across The Curriculum Policy

2018-19

“Pupils should be taught in all subjects to express themselves correctly and appropriately and to read accurately and with understanding.” QCA Use of Language across the Curriculum.

Hexham Middle School is committed to improving the pupils’ standards of literacy with a consistent approach across all curriculum areas. Literacy refers to a person’s ability to read, write and communicate effectively, in a range of ways to a range of audiences. Effective Literacy across the Curriculum will develop the pupils’ ability to:

- Write for a variety of audiences and purposes, collect information, organise ideas and write accurately in order to demonstrate what they know across subject areas.
- Access information and read with understanding and comprehension.
- Communicate effectively, across a range of contexts, developing their ability to negotiate, hypothesise, present information and clarify understanding.

In addition, this should have an impact on their motivation, self-esteem and ability to work independently. It is vital that pupils are allowed to become competent language users, in order to lead successful and productive adult lives.

It is essential that all subject areas take responsibility for pupils’ literacy development.

Aims:

- **To raise the profile of literacy across the school**
- **To have high expectations of pupils’ literacy skills**
- **To help raise levels of literacy by encouraging pupils to achieve their full potential in their reading, writing and communication skills**
- **To develop a culture of reading across the school**
- **To ensure a consistent, whole-school approach to teaching, learning and assessment of spelling, punctuation and grammar**
- **To ensure the school’s LITAC policy (including the non-negotiables) are in use in every subject. See Appendix 1.**
- **To provide structured support to pupils experiencing difficulties in any areas of literacy.**

How the school will promote Literacy across the Curriculum:

General:

- Value the opinions and ideas of all pupils
- Involve pupils in the progress of their literacy through meaningful marking and regular feedback
- Inform pupils of the purpose behind any reading, writing or communication task they’re asked to complete
- Make texts in all subjects accessible to all pupils
- Introduce pupils explicitly to subject specific terminology through the use of ‘Buzzwords’
- Where appropriate, offer pupils frameworks to support extended writing tasks.
- Offer the use English Leaders in English lessons, as well as anywhere else where reading or writing is being taught.

Communication:

- Provide opportunity for paired and group discussion
- Make explicit the expectations of such discussions
- Make explicit the value of talk as an essential part of learning
- Set occasional speaking and listening tasks for homework, where appropriate
- Provide opportunities for use of varying degrees of formality in spoken and written work.

Reading:

- Encourage pupils to read for information and understanding, as well as eliciting pupils' existing knowledge about a topic beforehand
- Provide a range of strategies for pupils to gain meaning from a text, eg: annotation, re-ordering paragraphs, skimming and scanning
- Provide opportunities for extended reading as well as quick tasks such as skimming and scanning for information
- Encourage pupils to think critically about texts which are studied across the curriculum
- Provide a wide range of reading material relevant to the subject area which is varied, relevant and up-to-date
- Display subject-specific vocabulary in classrooms
- Value reading as an enjoyable activity.

Writing:

- Provide models of particular types of writing and presentation, where appropriate
- Where possible, offer real audiences and purposes for writing
- Actively teach the style of writing necessary for the different subject areas
- Model and demonstrate the writing process for pupils
- Focus on content, vocabulary and technical skills
- Offer opportunities for extended writing through planning, drafting and revisiting work
- Offer opportunities for written work in a range of genre and for a range of purposes and audiences
- Encourage the learning of correct spelling through the use of 'Buzzwords' and half-termly vocabulary tests
- Use the school's agreed correcting method in conjunction with the TLF marking policy and LITAC non-negotiables to provide feedback on pupils' work. See appendix 2.
- Encourage the highest standards of handwriting and presentation at all times.
- In year five, support the pupils to achieve their pen licences by signing these where appropriate. See appendix 3.

Spelling:

- Identify and teach subject specific 'Buzzwords' up to a maximum of three per lesson and record these in exercise books
- Use 'S' comment in the marking policy to comment on spelling errors in written work
- Limit the number of spelling corrections to five per piece of work
- Allow pupils time to copy out and correct mistakes
- Encourage pupils to record correct spellings in spelling books
- Provide lists of subject-specific Buzzwords on displays in classrooms
- Test pupils once per half term on a maximum of 10 subject specific Buzzwords
- Highlight spelling strategies for unfamiliar words. See appendix 4.

Monitoring:

- Middle and Senior Leaders will including monitoring of LITAC as part of their regular monitoring of lessons and pupils' work.
- The Head of English will lead LITAC, ensuring effective development of whole school policy and practice. She will ensure LITAC has a high profile across school, as well as monitoring the delivery of Literacy across the Curriculum and the impact of this. She will facilitate and lead CPD as necessary.

Appendix 1 - LITAC marking policy

The 7 'non-negotiables' at HMS

- All work uses the **correct writing implement** and **rulers** are used when needed.
- Capital letters are to be used to begin all sentences and for all **proper nouns**.
- Handwriting to be neat, legible and joined wherever possible.
- Work should be in **full sentences** and in maths you should explain your reasoning/show your working.
- **There** is a word for pointing at things (the boy is over **there**). If you want to show something belongs, it's **theirs**.
- **Wear** is for clothing, **where** refers to a place and **were** is a verb in the past tense (we **were** on a roll!) **We're** is a contraction of **we are**.
- Apostrophes only have two jobs - they show that a letter is missing or they show **possession** (Hannah's bag is blue). They don't make plurals.

Avoid the need for your teacher to use 'NN' in the margin!

Appendix 2 – Marking policy

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Coding:

Your teacher will mark your work in purple and they will use the following symbols to show you where the correction needs to be made:

S - Spelling correction needed (*a maximum of 5 spelling corrections per piece of work*)

P - Punctuation error

G - Grammatical error

^ - omitted word

NN - Non Negotiable error

Spellings are looked up in a dictionary then corrected and specialist vocabulary should be recorded in the form of 'Buzzwords' next to the title or objective for your work.

Appendix 3 – Pen Licence (Year 5)

- The aim of the 'pen licence' is to improve and increase standards in presentation and handwriting across year five.
- At the beginning of the autumn term, each Year 5 pupil is given a 'learner' licence and is to start by writing in pencil in every subject. On their licence there are 8 boxes. Once they have proven that they have met the criteria (see below) for handwriting in a piece of written work, their teacher should initial one box (or stamp it/put a sticker in it). Once all the boxes have been filled, the pupil should then show it to their English teacher who can then present them with their 'provisional' licence.
- Again this process is repeated but this time pupils need only get 4 boxes signed. Once these boxes have been signed, pupils should then show their licence to their English teacher to be considered for a full licence. Literacy teachers should pass any names to the Head of Year who can then arrange for their pen licence to be presented with a certificate in the KS2 assembly. This means that pupils can now use pen in every subject.
- For those pupils who have difficulties with handwriting and presentation e.g. dyspraxia, exceptions should be made by each teacher (within reason).
- Once given a pen, pupils are expected to maintain a good standard of presentation. If pupils' handwriting slips they can be given a 'speeding ticket' either for driving too slow (i.e. being too lazy with their writing) or driving too fast (rushing and making silly mistakes). If pupils do either of these, the teacher should sign a box on their pen licence. If a pupil receives 3 signatures on their licence, their pen licence is removed and they go back down to provisional.

Criteria:

- All letters are correctly formed
- All short letters are the same size.
- All ascenders and descenders are the right height/length.
- All ascenders and descenders are vertical not sloping.
- All letters are joined correctly and learning is neat.
- Capital letters are bigger than lower case letters.
- Spaces between letters are the right size (not too squashed or stretched).
- Spaces between words are the right size (not too small or big).
- Date and title are underlined with a ruler and in the right place.

Setting Clear Expectations for Presentation of Written Work:

This can be achieved by:

- developing a classroom ethos of encouraging children to take pride in their work
- shared expectations of consistency of quality
- praising and sharing well-presented work
- displaying well-presented work to ensure shared expectation
- giving verbal and written reminders at the beginning and end of a piece of work
- where appropriate, giving time for pupils to check, re-read and edit their work
- teaching organisational skills
- modelling high standards of handwriting and presentation by all adults
- children having clear targets for handwriting and presentation

Appendix 4 – Spelling strategies

The following spelling strategies are guidance taken from the National Curriculum for English:

- Emphasise the relationship between sounds and letters, even when the relationships are unusual.
For example: **high**, **fly**, **cries** and **I** all contain the same 'I' sound but the letters used to create this sound are different.
- Learn root words to support spelling of more complex words
For example: the root word 'counter' is used in 'counteract,' 'counterpart' and 'counterargument' and helps establish the meaning. Counter means 'opposite' or 'against.'
- Spot common spelling patterns through prefixes and suffixes
For example: beautiful, hopeful and grateful all share the suffix '-ful' whereas antibacterial, antidote, anti-clockwise and antichrist all share the same prefix 'Anti-'
- Discuss the history of words and the relationship between them
For example: aqua comes from the Latin, meaning water. Words such as aquamarine and Aquarius derive from the Latin use of the word.
- Understand the difference between common homophones (words that sound the same but that are spelled differently)
For example: pair/pear, there/their/they're, paw/pore/pour/poor etc.
- Point out words that follow patterns such as 'i before e except after c' but be careful to point out exceptions to the rule, such as 'caffeine'
- Highlight words with silent letters such as 'autumn' 'thumb' and 'scissors'.