



Literacy Policy

Ranelagh School

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Rationale

At Ranelagh we value and acknowledge the importance of literacy and its impact on teaching and learning. Literacy infiltrates virtually all aspects of our lives and links with essential related areas such as numeracy, oracy and digital and social competences.

The latest EU report on literacy states:

Literacy is about people's ability to function in society as private individuals, active citizens, employees or parents... Literacy is about people's self-esteem, their interaction with others, their health and employability. Ultimately, literacy is about whether a society is fit for the future.

European Union Report, 2012

Literacy is more than just the separate skills of reading, writing and speaking and listening. It encompasses understanding and knowledge in all subjects and in the wider context of everyday life. Literacy is interacting with our surroundings in an informed, empathetic and confident manner.

Aims

Literacy education is a key priority at Ranelagh. All students and staff should be encouraged to:

- 1 Write with accuracy, clarity and cogency in a variety of styles and forms.
- 2 Read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts to acquire knowledge and for enjoyment.
- 3 Recognise and know how to use a variety of different types of written spoken and multimodal materials across all subjects.
- 4 Communicate effectively when presenting arguments or engaging in class discussions; be empathetic listeners and confident speakers.
- 5 Value the importance and relevance of high quality literacy in all contexts, in and out of the school environment.
- 6 Spell and use subject specific terminology accurately.

Curriculum

As a school we accept that the responsibility for the teaching and promotion of literacy skills is shared by all departments and all teachers. It is important that all students have a rich, broad and deep experience in which to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in regard to language and communication.

Teaching and learning

Departments and teachers should provide challenging opportunities for all students to:

- Understand, write and spell correctly those technical/specialist words which are most commonly used within their subject areas.
- Punctuate accurately and with variety, following grammatical conventions.
- Organise their writing in logical, coherent and appropriate forms.
- Use language precisely and cogently in speech, following the conventions of Standard English.
- Listen to others and build on their ideas/ views constructively and empathetically.
- Learn strategies to help them read with understanding and insight.
- Locate, retrieve and evaluate information from a wealth of sources.
- Follow a process or argument and be able to summarise succinctly.
- Synthesise ideas or information and adapt what they learn from their reading and listening.
- Value and apply referencing conventions in their own writing.

Spelling

All staff are responsible for the teaching of spelling. This includes the spelling of key words, subject terminology and Standard English. The teaching of spelling strategies is important, so students have the tools to develop an accurate vocabulary that underpins all their written work. This practice will suitably prepare students for the next stage in their learning, enabling them to participate effectively in the wider world and later in the global market. Accurate spelling should be afforded sufficient time in lessons which might include reference to glossaries, discussion on spelling strategies and spelling tests. The following practice should

help students develop their understanding of how the word is formed and remember how the word is spelt:

- Display and highlight new words on the board/IWB.
- Explain the etymology of words.
- Encourage looking at words within the word and any words that might be similar – it could be useful to refer to analogies to known words, roots of words, derivations, word families etc..
- Encourage students to sound out words phonemically and by syllables.
- Identify how students might be able to remember the spelling and ask students for their own strategies.
- Give students opportunities to correct and learn their spellings.
- Do spelling tests of key subject terminology.
- Teach students how to use dictionaries and spell-checking tools to develop their independent spelling skills.

Identifying students with spelling difficulties

Staff have a responsibility to identify students with particular difficulties and to support as appropriate. As part of this, data about students' spelling ability will be available via Assessment Manager (results from the Vernon spelling test are given annually in KS3). The English Department and the SENDCO / Literacy Coordinator will be able to offer support and help with interventions.

Extended writing

Staff have a responsibility to offer students regular opportunities to hone their writing skills and stamina through extended written tasks, in appropriate styles and forms, according to subject and exam requirements. Students should be encouraged to develop their ideas/arguments in detail using a wide variety of sentence structures, sequencing their points in a logical order and synthesizing information from a range of sources. Teachers should insist that students apply the rules of Standard English and observe the grammatical conventions in line with the new exam requirements. Teachers must also prepare students to decode exam keywords by modelling extended writing techniques and sharing exemplar responses. Students experiencing specific difficulties should be supported appropriately and referred to the SENDCO/ Literacy Coordinator, when necessary.

Oracy

Effective oral communication is an increasingly competitive and highly valued skill within the global market. Students should leave school being competent and confident speakers and listeners in preparation for adult life. Across all subjects and via extracurricular activities, students should be given regular opportunities to share and exchange ideas/opinions through individual presentations, paired or group activities and whole class discussions.

Teachers must model active listening skills and encourage students to be a respectful, empathetic and interested audience. Students should be encouraged to express themselves orally, raising and answering questions in every lesson. Students should be given extra thinking time and be supported through one-to-one discussions or no hands up policy as appropriate.

CPD

Regular training sessions and support to staff/departments should be offered in light of the latest research, new initiatives and in line with new exam requirements, especially in essay-based subjects. These sessions should be delivered by the Literacy Coordinator, senior staff or English staff as appropriate.

Monitoring the policy

The policy will be reviewed every three years in line with other school policies, or earlier if necessary to reflect changes at local/national level or other circumstances.