Caister Academy
Literacy Guidance Policy

Vision:

Our vision is that every student leaves the academy with the communication skills needed to succeed and thrive in every aspect of their future.

To achieve this:

- Literacy is a fundamental element of teaching across the academy and is essential for raising student attainment in all areas.
- Colleagues are supported through high quality CPD, SoLs, and staff support to improve the teaching of all forms of reading, oral, and written communication, and handwriting across the academy.
- Literacy is recognised as requiring different approaches across and within subjects. Students are supported to understand, adapt, and achieve within these across the academy.

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Section A: Reading

1.0   Intent

Students will be explicitly taught several reading strategies to allow them to develop the skills to independently monitor their own understanding of a given text or extract. Reading opportunities will be offered each lesson so that the number of words our pupils read each day can be significantly increased. When pupils lose the meaning of what they are reading they will then have the tools to select and use a reading strategy (such as re-reading or asking questions) to help them reconnect. These skills will be taught across the school whilst students are learning subject-specific content.

2.0   What will this look like in practice?
Pre-reading

Effective readers will use strategies to understand what they read before, during, and after reading.

Before reading:

- Use prior knowledge to think about the topic.
- Make predictions about the probable meaning of the text.
- Preview the text by skimming and scanning to get a sense of the overall meaning.

During reading:

- Check understanding by questioning.
- Explore unfamiliar vocabulary.
- Encourage students to recognise the ideas and information given in the text.

After reading:

- Reflect upon the ideas and information in the text.
- Connect what they have read to their own experience and knowledge.
- Clarify their understanding of the text.
- Extend their understanding in critical and creative ways.
- Plan for a written text by explicitly teaching note taking and revision techniques (using knowledge organisers for support).

3.0   Reading comprehension strategies

Pre-reading	
Set a purpose:	Why are you reading? What do you need to achieve? Silent or guided reading? Your purpose might be to locate specific information and ideas, or you might need to summarise and paraphrase the text.

Make predictions:	What topics, ideas and issues might the text cover? How might the author communicate? What ideas do the title or subheadings to generate?
Questions:	Decide on the questions you need to answer before you read.
Build on current knowledge:	Recap what you have already learnt about a topic: - Recall starters - Quizzes - Bullet point lists - Questioning
Vocabulary:	Highlight unfamiliar words and provide keyword lists and glossaries, in line with T&L planning requirements.
Skimming:	Quickly read title, subheadings, visuals, first line of each paragraph. Does the text contain the information you need?
Scanning:	Quickly look at the text to see if you can identify specific words, phrases, ideas, visuals, formats or subheadings.
During reading:	
Order:	Identify the author's meaning and purpose from the clues we are given. • Title/headings • Sub-headings • First paragraph • Last paragraph • First sentence of each paragraph • Whole text
Writer's intent:	Pay attention to what is being communicated – what is the author's opinion. What are the specific language choices? What effect do they have on us as readers? What are we explicitly told? What might we infer? What are the obvious and hidden themes?
Vocabulary:	• Discuss the meaning of unfamiliar words using the context of the sentence/text. • Model using a dictionary, thesaurus, and glossary.
Awareness:	Stay alert for answers to pre-existing questions and predictions. Model the thought process verbally.
Post reading:	
Evaluate:	Prepare for the written task by discussing your opinion in relation to the text, research, or task.
Map:	Mind-map a visual representation in response to the question or task.
Check predictions:	Were you correct?
Pre-existing questions:	Have you found all the answers you were looking for? If not, how might you now proceed?
Written task:	You should now be able to create a summary or plan for your written work.

4.0   Supporting for lower ability readers who are still learning phonics

The *Read, Write, Inc* phonics programme will run within the subject of English for those students who need immediate phonics intervention.

5.0   Reading for Meaning

In class reading has been shown to support progress in both struggling and proficient pupils. Therefore, all departments will regularly plan reading opportunities into lessons so that pupils are able to practice aloud in class; thus, allowing for immediate questioning, feedback and guidance and improved word recognition, fluency, and comprehension.

Regular teacher modelling will also support pupils to improve:
- Tone - model varied expression and volume to match the interpretation of the passage being read.
- Phrasing - draw attention to punctuation and its effect.
- Flow - stop when mistakes occur and allow take-up time for self-correction.
- Pace - model and encourage an even, conversational reading rhythm.
- Introduction of **'I say, we say …' strategy** to define new vocabulary and consider synonyms (alternative words) etc.

Regular, clearly signposted reading in all subjects will directly help all students to:
- Establish fundamental skills necessary for proficient reading.
- Identify weaknesses and strengthen specific skills.
- Improve attention to detail.
- Build fluency.
- Expand vocabulary knowledge.
- Develop reading comprehension skills.

Reading in class also offers an opportunity to model the joy and purpose of reading. Feedback from 'pupil trails' and 'pupil voice' surveys, have provided evidence that pupils 'feel safe' and 'supported' within a classroom reading environment and they have identified their own 'confidence' and 'happiness' improving in relation to reading. Pupils who have previously been unable to read aloud in class, have made significant progress from one or two sentences to whole paragraphs and pages.

Expectation:
- Each subject will be required to plan to provide subject specific reading for meaning opportunities within lessons, at least once per week. In all departments, this will be explored within existing text extracts, and not require excessive or extraneous texts.
- All students chosen to read will read at least one sentence and can be supported to build their confidence based on small successes.
- Teacher and pupils will be looking at copies of the same text so that immediate feedback can be provided.
- Other pupils will be *actively tracking* the text as they wait their turn to read.
- 'Knock-knock' reading is a good method for maintaining focus amongst pupils; as a pupil finishes their turn of reading, they knock on the table and nominate the next reader.

- Students will be required to read carefully - teach the student to focus and slow down, instead of rushing through with fast and careless reading.
- Stop and consider each mistake- decode together rather than immediately correcting.
- Careful reading will be taught until it is a habit.
  - Develop a signal that tells the student to 'look again'.
  - Correct all mistakes: words, tone, punctuation, flow, etc.

Guided Reading

In addition to Reading for Meaning in all lessons, students in KS3 will have guided reading sessions built into their form time schedule.
Form tutors should follow the same guidance as above when exploring texts, and are expected to display the relevant title slide for novels and other reading materials in order to aid student understanding.

6.0   Addressing gaps and misconceptions when reading
If the student is lacking a skill, then we must correct that gap or misconception.
Example strategies:
- Phonics support – ask the pupil to 'sound out' the word and address any misconceptions.
- Key word lists/glossaries – create and use for each module. These will support the summative test for each section.
- Pronunciation – model wherever necessary.
- Tracking – pupils will physically track the words (with finger, ruler or other pointer) when reading, until the student no longer makes tracking errors and improves their attention to detail.
- Vocabulary – if pupils do not understand the word, explain what the word means. Then have the student re-read the sentence so they hear the word in context.
- Comprehension - develop specific comprehension skills. This often involves questions and discussing the material as they read along. The depth of comprehension skills increases as the student becomes older and their skills advance. Initial comprehension is ensuring the student simply pays attention to what they are reading. The higher-level comprehension skills have the student thinking about deeper questions such as 'why did this happen' and inferring 'what do I think this means'.
- Repeated reading – having heard the text read by an adult the pupil reads again to a TA/role model. If the student hesitates over a word for more than three seconds, provide the word and have the pupil repeat.
- Echo reading – teacher models expert reading and has the pupil re-read with same intonation.
- Peer reading – direct pupils to work in pairs to take turns reading the same sentence. Reflect on 'who said it best and why?'.
- Peer tutoring – strong readers listen to other pupils read and offer correction and support.

7.0

Developing reading skills

- 3, 2, 1 – students must create their own questions for the text they are about to read.
    - Three essential points to consider, connect, remember.
    - Two key vocabulary items to know, use and remember.
    - One big idea to understand, explain and remember.
- Section summaries – after each section or chapter pupils summarise what they have read in one sentence and bullet point three points to remember.
- Six-word summaries/rhymes/acronyms – summarise what has been read in a neat format that can be easily remembered. For example:
    - Hamlet in six words - 'grieving tragic hero; inaction, death, catharsis'.
    - Geography analysis – T/E/A (trend, example, anomaly).
    - Spelling 'receive' – 'i before e, except after c'.
- High quality questioning –
    - What do you think about that …?
    - How do you know that …?
    - What is your evidence …?
    - What questions do you have about …?
    - How would you summarise your understanding of that …?
- Responses are given using clear discourse markers: first, second, furthermore, in contrast, in conclusion.

8.0

Display, Define, Decode
In order to develop key vocabulary skills, two or three pieces of Tier 2 or 3 vocabulary will be displayed, defined, and decoded, in a dedicated place- for example, a sectioned off piece of a whiteboard. This will be done each lesson.
All words should be displayed following the learning intent, but defining and decoding can take part in the appropriate part of the lesson.
Example 1:
   I. The teacher writes 'Baron' 'Feudal System' and 'knight' on the board, taking care to only capitalise proper nouns.
  II. Using questioning, students verbally recall the definition of 'Baron', and this is written on the board.
 III. Using Think, Pair, Share, students offer suggestions for 'knight' and misconceptions are addressed, before the definition is shared.
 IV. As 'Feudal System' is being explored as part of the first activity, the teacher waits to define.
  V. Following the activity, students offer definitions of 'Feudal System' to show understanding, and a definition is added to the board.
Example 2:
   I. The teacher writes 'passing', 'blocking', and 'tactics' on the board.
  II. They define tactics on the board.
 III. During the 'model' and 'apply' stages of the lesson, the teacher pauses activities to return to the words and define and decode meaning, using live examples.

Section B: Writing

1.0   Intent

All students will be taught explicit writing strategies that allow them to develop the skills to independently plan, draft, and edit examples of high-quality extended writing. Opportunities to write will be offered regularly, so that the consistency of writing, and pupil resilience, will be significantly improved across the academy. These skills will be taught whilst students are learning subject-specific content.

2.0   What will this look like in practice?

- Teaching staff will have excellent knowledge of the complexity of writing and be able to skilfully break down writing tasks, such as providing apt word, sentence, and whole-text level instruction in subject specific writing.
- All subject disciplines will consistently develop students' skill and motivation as writers.

- There will be targeted support for students who do not write fluently, and all staff will demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of how reading and writing overlap as complementary skills.
- Reading and writing will be combined in subject specific tasks, e.g. annotating model texts or using writing checklists.
- An excellent knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar will also be demonstrated in all teaching.

3.0   Glossary of terms for consistent use across the Academy

- Etymology - the study of the origin of words: from *etymon* 'true sense, original meaning' + *logia* 'study of'.
- Morphology - the study of the structure and parts of words: from *morpho* 'form, shape' + *logia* 'study of'.
- Phonology - the study of speech sounds and their meanings in a language: from *phono* 'sound, voice' + *logia* 'study of'.
- Transcription - the physical process of handwriting or typing, and spelling: from *trans* 'across, beyond; over' + *scribere* 'to write'.
- Composition - the way something is put together and arranged; in this context, a piece of written work: from *com* 'with, together' + *ponere* 'to place'.
- Homophones - words which are pronounced the same but have different meanings, spelling or both: from *homos* 'same' + *phono* 'sound'.
- Syntax - the arrangement of words and phrases in a sentence: from *syn* 'together' + *tassein* 'arrange'.
- Synonyms - words which have the same or nearly the same meaning, within a language: from *syn* 'together, same' + *onyma* 'name'.
- Antonyms - words which have the opposite or nearly the opposite meaning, within a language: from *anti* 'opposite, against' + *onyma* 'name'.
- Dialogue - using questions and answers as a method of examining something or finding a solution: from *dia* 'across, between' + *legein* 'speak'.

4.0   Understanding the challenges of writing – cognitive load

Writing is demanding, as it requires pupils to combine three processes:

1. Composition - cognitive thought processes that generate ideas and translate them into structured words and sentences on the page;
2. Executive function - motivation to plan, review and redraft;
3. Transcription - actual physical process of writing.

This is a complicated and challenging process, especially for low ability readers and pupils with related SEND issues. The process of writing places a heavy burden on working memory and pupils can easily become overloaded and

unable to function in a productive manner. To support pupils to become competent and confident writers, we must support cognitive load in all lessons.

5.0 Easing cognitive load

Students will be supported to write using a range of strategies, including:

- Writing frames – provided as a map to support learners in the construction of subject specific response styles. In geography it is common to use TEA – trend/example/anomaly to structure paragraphs.
- Keywords – glossaries and spellings, on a subject specific basis, will be provided and explicitly taught through knowledge organisers, quizzes, and homework.
- Vocabulary - understanding the subject-specific connotations of Tier 2 vocabulary used in writing questions:
  - For example, in English Literature, 'evaluate' questions often require students to justify their answers with reference to a personal response, whereas in P.E. 'evaluation' may require students to refer to the likely 'consequences', 'strengths' or 'weaknesses' of particular choices.
- Sentence starters - provide word, sentence, and whole-text level instruction, by focusing on the micro elements of writing. This will enable students to write extended, high quality responses:
  - For example, in history, sentence starters can encourage students to analyse sources more deeply (for example, 'While initially it might appear that...' or 'However, on closer inspection...').
- Checklists are provided to aid self/peer assessment and upgrades.

6.0 Modelling

When introducing any strategy, teachers will model how the strategy should be used, for example, by speaking aloud to explain what they are doing and why. Live models can be created on the board or using a visualiser before students employ the strategy themselves. All teachers will:

- Demonstrate how to respond to the question most effectively – highlighting key words and modelling the thought process for students to follow.
- Talk students through the required elements of a specific style of writing - building a piece of writing block-by-block.
- Demonstrate the thinking behind selecting a particular word and employing a complex sentence structure.
- Explain why you have joined sentence X and Y together, using connectives and punctuation.
- Ensure your class see the 'expert at work'.
- Follow this with students working in pairs, one writing while verbalising their own thought process while the other coaches, asking questions such as:
  - Could you select a synonym for this less-sophisticated verb?
  - How could you embed this quote?
  - Could you make this sentence complex?

After attempting to use the strategies, students should be given an opportunity to reflect on whether, and why, the approach was helpful in order to help them make links between the use of the strategy and success in the task.

7.0 Pre-set criteria

Another approach is to plan criteria that students must include when answering a question, to encourage sophistication and higher-level thinking:

For example: *Why does Priestley characterise Mr Birling as arrogant and foolish?*

Response must include:

- o The phrase *'Because Priestley advocates socialism, …'*
- o The technique of dramatic irony.
- o The quote 'portentous'.
- o The verbs 'ridicule' and 'compel'.
- o A colon to introduce Priestley's political stance.

***Because Priestley advocates socialism**, he **ridicules** the **'portentous'** Mr Birling as arrogant and foolish through **dramatic irony** which **compels** a 1945 audience to support his political message: social equality is essential if we are to have peace for future generations.*

This approach ensures students will think carefully about their sentence crafting including punctuation and vocabulary. Over time, assistance from the teacher is gradually removed so that students become increasingly independent. Strategies can also be grouped together into sequences to create longer writing cycles and opportunities for extended writing should offered regularly, in all subjects.

8.0   Motivating students to write

Student attitude and self-perception matter in all aspects of literacy but appear to have a particularly strong effect on writing, because of the difficulty of the task.

Strategies to approach this challenge include:

- Collaboration - students write together in pairs or writing teams and learn to provide structured feedback at each step of the writing process.
- SEND - recognising that students with difficulties with transcription (for example, related to dyslexia or dyspraxia) may not be able to demonstrate their true knowledge of a topic through written work, unless extra support is available through scaffolds or adult support.
- Technology - providing a computer can help improve the length and quality of writing from students identified as weaker writers, particularly when instruction in typing is also provided as an intervention.
- Using pre-writing activities that ensure students have secure background knowledge related to the topic they are writing about. For example, recapping key ideas before beginning a writing task will help students use them in writing more successfully.
- Competition - such as challenging students to beat their previous score in self or peer-assessed pieces of writing.
- Confidence - encouraging students to celebrate their success in writing as a key component of class work, displays and assemblies.
- Reading high quality texts in every subject, for example those that effectively illustrate the conventions of a particular type or style of writing, giving students an opportunity to observe the discipline-specific aspects of writing that relate to particular subjects.

- Creating opportunities to discuss how texts are structured by experts – encourage pupils to unpick the component parts.

9.0 Combining reading and writing

Effective ways of combining reading and writing might include:

- Writing before reading - by asking students to bullet point what they already know about a topic or generate questions they will later try to answer through reading.
- Using annotations to identify information or explore key features of texts, e.g. underlining information about the types of evidence being cited in a science textbook.
- Asking students to write short summaries of texts they read - write a one-sentence summary of a paragraph. This will help students think more carefully about the meaning of what is written and demonstrate their level of comprehension of the text.
- Creating checklists based on examples of good writing in each subject. For example, while reading a geography textbook, the teacher might ask students to highlight words related to cause and effect, such as *'Due to this...'* or *'A contributory factor was...'*. Students can subsequently use checklists and examples in their own answers.

10.0 Spelling, punctuation, and grammar

Fast and accurate spelling is a key component of writing fluency and will be actively taught, in all subjects, rather than simply tested.

Strategies for teaching spelling will include:

- Teaching groups of related spellings alongside a discussion of the morphology and etymology (see glossary provided at 3.0).
- Prioritising words that are linked to content and currently being studied, rather than from decontextualised word lists.
- Pre-teaching spellings of challenging words and anticipating common errors, for example, *'government'* in history or *'Shakespeare'* in English Literature, homophones such as *'there'* vs. *'their'* or joining errors, for example, *'alot'* instead of *'a lot'*.
- Helping students recognise familiar patterns of letters within words and sound out words based on their knowledge of phonics.
- Collaborative approaches, for example, grouping students and asking pairs to come up with memorable strategies for spelling challenging words.
- Teaching students to self-quiz using retrieval practice, for example, using flash cards.

11.0 Punctuation and grammar

Contextualised grammar instruction is well-suited to instruction across different subjects. For example, to support students to write with precision about competing arguments in History, teachers might find it helpful to explicitly explain to students the role of modal verbs like *'could, would, should'* and *'might'*, or the way in which adverbs can be used to create more fine-grained distinctions between judgements. For example, instead of saying "If Hitler had been killed at the Beer Hall Putsch, the war *would* have been prevented," as historians we would say: "*Arguably,* if Hitler had been killed at the Beer Hall Putsch, the war *might* have been prevented".

In addition, it is also useful to provide opportunities for sentence-combining activities, which involve asking students to create more sophisticated sentences by combining two or more basic sentences. For example, students might be given the basic sentences, *'Tudor clothing was uncomfortable'* and *'The Tudors dressed up for extravagant parties'* and asked to combine them, for example:

- *'Despite the fact that Tudor clothing was uncomfortable, the Tudors dressed up for extravagant parties.'*

13.0   Next steps

As writing improves, scaffolds will be removed, and focus will move onto the explicit teaching of higher-level skills. To know when to move on, it is imperative that we continue to 'Think/Plan/Do/Review' in relation to all planning.

Section C: Oracy: Speaking and Listening

1.0   Intent

Students will be taught how obtaining successful speaking and listening skills promotes the development of reasoning, conceptual understanding and reading comprehension. Many students do not get a rich enough experience of spoken language outside of school for this development to be assured. Students do not just need experience of speaking and listening in school, they need to be expressly taught the relevant functional skills: how to talk to construct arguments, jointly solve problems and comprehend texts.

2.0 Students learn most from speaking and listening when:

- The teacher develops a student's reflective awareness of how to speak and work together
- The teacher encourages them to express tentative ideas
- The teacher models good speaking and listening in whole class discussions
- The teacher scaffolds group work
- Group work involves tasks that really require students to 'think together'

3.0 Oracy Strategies

Before you can use the strategies below it is important students are given clear and explicit language expectations.

Teachers are expected to:

- Build in opportunities for students to discuss ideas within lessons (think, pair, share). Allow them to work with different students so that they are exposed to a range of ideas.
- Encourage students to respond in full sentences.
- Practise listening by asking students to comment on other student's ideas within lessons.
- Build in opportunities for students to verbalise their work before writing it down. For example, describing a picture verbally before being asked to write about it. This would also link with writing formally as many students cannot speak in a formal way and this affects their writing.
- Guide students on how to speak to each other. For example, students have been asked to discuss the theme of love within *Romeo and Juliet*. A lot of students do not know how to even begin this discussion so the teacher puts a list of verbal prompts up on the board like, 'I think the theme of love is shown when Juliet…' or 'Romeo feels…' Students read these aloud to start their discussion.
- When possible, give students a chance to challenge each other verbally, developing their reasoning.
- Students are taught basic rules and manners when it comes to discussions and listening to others. This is made clear by the teacher. A 'code of conduct' could be drawn up.

4.0 Additional Strategies

Listening triads

Students are in groups of three-a talker, a questioner and a recorder who reports back. Exemplar words, phrases, structure and spoken features they might listen for, are discussed before the activity.

Snowball

In pairs, students discuss or brainstorm ideas, then double up to eight, leading to a whole-class debate. This allows a form of 'oral rehearsal' in which students can test out their ideas to a smaller group of students before speaking in front of a larger group.

Spokesperson

Students discuss a topic. The idea is for the entire group to analyse an issue, to get a deeper understanding of it. Each spokesperson is asked in turn for a new point. If they do not have an immediate point to make, they have twenty seconds to consult their group.

<u>Observer/listener</u>

For speaking and listening activities it is recommended that one student takes this role. Their role would be to watch the group dynamic and listen to their language use. Feedback on each group's interaction and language use. Feedback on each group's interaction and language reinforces the sense of language used critically and effectively.