Villa Real School

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Literacy/English Policy 2022

Responsibility: Louise Burns Updated: May 2022

Adopted by the Governing Body

Chair of Governors

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INTRODUCTION

At Villa Real, Literacy is taught up to end of Key Stage 2 and then English in Key Stage 3, and in the 14-19 Provision. This policy should be read alongside the Communication Policy, Reading Policy, Writing Policy and Literacy across the Curriculum Policy.

All classes follow the school scheme of work which uses the National Curriculum (NC) as a benchmark, in a bespoke and individualised way. Planning extends beyond the NC to meet the needs of our pupils/students. The Literacy/English curriculum at Villa Real is ambitious, sequenced and mapped from EYFS to Key Stage 5. This curriculum is entwined with each Key Stage goal across the school.

In Key Stage 1 and 2, pupils work towards pre-key stage standards and NC SATS. In Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 students work towards AQA Entry level English. All classes have a set text which are chosen to encourage a love of reading for pleasure, to be challenging and age-appropriate. These texts are chosen to appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage. These texts reflect our multi-cultural and diverse society and promote cultural capital.

The Literacy/English curriculum is progressive and sequenced, building upon prior knowledge with new skills, whilst ensuring pupils/students revisit and recall prior skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils/students are required to learn more and remember more.

Literacy/English are both subjects in their own right, and the medium for teaching across the whole curriculum. Emphasis is placed on the development of communication throughout the entire school day.

At Villa Real we believe that communication is **the** key life skill. Through the Literacy/English curriculum, we will help pupils and students develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively through spoken, written language, Makaton, Picture Exchange Communication System, PODD and augmented communication devices. This will equip them with the skills to become lifelong learners. We want pupils and students to enjoy communication with peers and indeed everyone involved in their lives.

The need to express ourselves is a human right. We feel that all students have the desire to mark make/write and should have daily opportunities to do so. Through a number of differentiated resources, students will improve the mechanics of their writing, develop functional writing skills and allowed to write as an expression of their own identity and personality.

We aim to develop pupils/students love of books, through widespread reading for enjoyment or/and being read to. Villa Real welcomes regular visiting authors and story tellers to enhance our Reading curriculum, and inspire a love of books. We are determined that every child will learn to read. Pupils/students will be taught to learn to read, and then to read to learn. Reading, including the teaching of systematic, synthetic phonics, is taught in every class and from EYFS. In circumstances of severe medical conditions, differentiated lessons focus on a sensory love of books. The sequence of reading books is a cumulative scheme and closely matched to ability and progress.

DEFINITION

Literacy is at the heart of all pupils and students' cross-curricular learning. Literacy enables pupils and students both to communicate with others effectively for a variety of purposes and to examine their own and others' experiences, feelings and ideas, giving these order and meaning. Literacy is central to pupils and students' intellectual, emotional and social development as it has an essential role across the curriculum and helps pupils' learning.

The aim of this policy is to recognise that all staff are facilitators of literacy through their subject. By applying a consistent Literacy Policy throughout Villa Real School, we aim to raise literacy and communication attainment at every level of ability, and in all subject areas. In order to maximise the potential of every pupil/student, they must have the opportunity to become effective readers, writers and communicators.

SCOPE

This policy applies equally, to all students and pupils in the School, with full consideration being given to each individual's specific needs in relation to the learning of Literacy/English. All pupils/students will have a specific Literacy/English target included on their REAL Progress Targets and EHCP.

As part of that process, advice and guidance is sought when appropriate from other professionals working in the School in a peripatetic capacity including Speech and Language Therapists, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Educational Psychologists and teachers of the multi-sensory impaired.

RATIONALE

This school recognises that the teaching of Literacy/English to an appropriately high level is crucial to every child's verbal development, socially, morally, cognitively, emotionally and spiritually.

AIMS

The overarching aim for Literacy/English is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils/students with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. We work with the pupils/students and their families in the development of each individual as a communication and language user, enhancing their everyday lives and enabling them to become active participants within their community. This will be achieved through helping pupils and students to:

- Relate to others in meaningful, sensitive and fulfilling ways
- Make and communicate choices and decisions (self-advocacy)
- Communicate with a range of audiences in a variety of contexts
- Build confidence, self-esteem and perseverance
- Develop independence
- Use functional literacy in a range of settings

This may include a multisensory curriculum and different communication methods to enhance their experience of, and ability to respond to, learning situations, their physical environment and other people.

REQUIREMENTS/EXPECTATIONS

Each area of the Literacy/English curriculum is taught throughout the school within levels dictated by the needs and abilities of individual pupils and students, and with regard to the age appropriateness of content and/or style.

Staff are expected to deliver Literacy/English lessons daily as well as embedding Literacy standards across the curriculum. Phonics lessons are taught daily. All class teachers have had extensive training in our systematic synthetic phonics programme, and use assessment and coaching to ensure that children are provided with the small, repeated steps necessary to ensure success.

Lessons will take the form of whole class teaching, some small groups, working on a 1:1 basis and independent work. Where appropriate, class managers will liaise with other professionals in developing effective and appropriate teaching/learning situations and monitoring individual progress. Mark-making or writing must be completed every day as well as being read to or reading independently.

It is important that all staff model correct and appropriate language throughout the day.

ENTITLEMENT

All pupils and students at Villa Real are entitled to a Literacy/English curriculum, which offers opportunities for the development of skills, knowledge and understanding that extends communication and prepares for life.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Communication is crucial in allowing our pupils and students to access all areas of the curriculum, as well as helping them to develop social skills and to operate effectively within their own community and the wider World. Many of our pupils find communication and social situations difficult. We therefore strive to find alternative and augmentative means of communication to support them. This may include:

- The use of PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System)
- TEACCH systems (Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication handicapped Children)
- Eye gaze communication aids
- Communication computers
- A variety of switches
- Communication books
- TASSELS (Tactile Signing for Sensory Learners)
- Makaton
- Colourful semantics
- SALT programmes
- PODD (PRAGMATIC Organisational Dynamic Display)

As well as these means of communication, all pupils also benefit from:

- Simplistic and consistent language tailored to each pupil's key word level of understanding
- Allowing pupils/students sufficient time to process what is being said to them and to plan and deliver a response
- Using visual back up to spoken language written in Communicate in Print
- Turn taking strategies
- Opportunities to talk about a range of topics

READING

Due to the nature of our pupil/students' diverse reading abilities, there is a broad range of reading strategies implemented across school. The whole school scheme is based upon Scarbrough's Reading Rope. All our pupils/students have access to a range of written sources, including fiction, non-fiction, poems and verses. Every class completes Read, Write Inc./BLAST/Villa Real Sounds daily. Programs are adapted to meet the

individual learning needs of our pupils. Pupils and students who are at pre-phonic stage are able to access phonics through the exploration of sound during music sessions and sensory activities as well as BLAST activities. If phonics is not appropriate for individual learner's other activities are used such as onset rime. Please see the Reading Policy for more details.

All pupils/students have access to their own reading book. The books our children practise reading from, at school and at home, closely match the phonics knowledge they have been taught. Books are also accessed daily by pupils in the form of shared reading with an adult and guided or independent choice. All children will also be read to daily. This will include fiction, non-fiction books, poems and rhymes etc. All pupils/students will have a phonics book and a book of their choice sent home each week and classes will be encouraged to share fiction and non-fiction texts.

WRITING

All pupils/students have an entitlement to write or mark make beyond mechanical practice. We believe that all pupils/students have the right to express themselves through writing and mark making and should have daily opportunities to do so. Through a number of differentiated resources, pupils/students will improve the mechanics of their writing and mark making, develop functional writing skills and be allowed to write and mark make as an expression of their own identity and personality. Pupils/students will move from transcription to composition.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, the pupils take part in a group 'Squiggle and Wiggle' session every week. During this group session, the pupils are encouraged to improve their fine motor skills through carrying out a range of movements in a variety of ways before transferring the movement to paper using writing utensils. Writing and fine motor skills are also transferred to other whole class, small group, 1:1 and independent activities daily. Pupils/students in Key Stage 2 onwards further develop these skills by carrying out activities such as over writing, copy writing and using writing frames in a variety of contexts and curriculum subjects. Letter formation is a key part of the Read Write Inc. phonics programme.

Although some of our pupils/students struggle with physically writing letters, words or sentences most are able to build up sentences using PECS, Colourful semantics and/or using computers or laptops to type with varying degrees of support. Where appropriate pupils/students will also have access to voice activated technology, Clicker 7 and Drag on programmes.

ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING

Individual progress in measured against the REAL curriculum. Staff assess and monitor progress on a daily basis, acting quickly to pick up those falling behind. Class managers use ongoing classroom based assessment as well as assessment using BSquared twice a year, to develop effective and appropriate teaching and learning strategies. An intervention action plan is drawn up with the classroom teacher, which highlight these pupils/students needing more support to progress within the different strands of the Literacy/English curriculum. Data is also used to identify pupils/students whom are More Able in Literacy/English using information from BSquared. These pupils/students will access extra activities designed to stretch and challenge them. Each pupil/student will have a literacy objective as part of their EHCP and will be monitored against it throughout all lessons.

Diagnostic testing such as WRAT4 literacy test, Phonological Awareness Toolkit, and Vernon Spelling tests are utilised to support interventions where appropriate.

SPECIALIST ASD PROVISION

A large number of our pupils and students have Autism.
Some of the difficulties that pupils with Autism may experience are:

- Good word recognition/poor comprehension
- Understanding of syntax and semantics limited or delayed
- Difficulty in integrating information
- Difficulty in referencing (attention/pronouns)
- Poor access of prior knowledge
- Phonetic decoding issues
- Joint attention
- Central Coherence
- Reading fluency
- Prosody (patterns of rhythm and sound used in poetry and patterns of stress and intonation in a language)
- Verbal to visualisation
- Fact vs fiction
- Schema formation
- Interest and motivation

Practitioners in school are aware of these challenges and support pupils with Autism to overcome these problems by using a range of approaches:

- Shared and paired reading where the text can be discussed
- Relating ideas in a story or text to their own experience
- Comprehension monitoring

- Graphic and semantic organisers- maps, storyboards etc.
- Question/answering with immediate feedback
- Question generation
- Understanding story structure
- Summarising plot/texts

CONCLUSION

Literacy and English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. We believe that a high-quality education in Literacy and English will teach pupils/students to speak, write and read fluently, where appropriate. We have developed a staff team who have expertise in phonics and reading, SALT and communication which is at the core of all we do at Villa Real School.