

Literacy Policy

Intent

At Stockport Academy, we want our students to be excellent communicators. It is essential that students are taught the skills of effective reading, writing and oracy in order for them to achieve their full potential as well as to support them as they communicate with, and make sense of, the world around them.

Literacy is fundamental for success in school and later life. Students who cannot read, write and communicate effectively are highly unlikely to access the challenging academic curriculum in secondary school and are more likely to have poor educational outcomes across all subjects.¹

The term 'literacy', therefore, may be better understood as the skills required for communication. These are skills that are used in every subject and extra-curricular activity at the Academy and as such it is the responsibility of all teachers at Stockport Academy to model and teach these skills effectively.

Implementation

We will support all students in their skills of communication by:

- Instructing students in how to communicate well in their specific subjects;
- Expecting oral contributions in class to have the expected formality of an academic environment;
- Explicitly teaching vocabulary in lessons;
- Modelling what effective talk sounds like in their subject;
- Making sure that challenging, academic texts are available and familiar to students;
- Developing students to become strategic readers by teaching reading strategies specific to their subjects;
- Teaching, along with the English department, explicit writing skills that will be built on throughout the school;
- Expecting high-quality presentation in written work;
- Recognising and referring students who require additional support to make expected progress; and
- Supporting teachers with ongoing CPD opportunities with regards to literacy in their subjects, particularly with the ongoing focus on vocabulary instruction.

¹ Ricketts, J., Sperring, R and Nation, K. (2014). Educational attainment in poor comprehenders. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 5. P. 445

Reading

At Stockport Academy, we believe that a love of reading is of immense benefit to our students, both academically and personally. Reading is a way for our students to explore the world. We want them to question the minds of great (and not so great) individuals and understand the experiences and bias, the insights and perspectives of the people who have come before us. We believe that we have a moral imperative to open this opportunity up for all our students and will ensure that students can decode texts, understand them and enjoy them.

In order to do this, we continue to focus on reading in classrooms and in form time, the latter providing a springboard for students to explore the world of books independently. We will continue to communicate with parents, using some of our digital platforms to share booklists and reading events and opportunities. Sparx Reader is also used to encourage careful reading at home for all key stage 3 students.

Students who are reading significantly below their reading age will be offered short term, small group interventions appropriate to their reading need. These interventions will aim to support students to access the curriculum in all lessons.

Writing

While reading provides a way for our students to explore the world, writing provides a way for them to become a part of the narrative. Writing allows individuals to share their own perspectives and influence others. We want all our students to have this ability and motivation and will encourage them to confidently write, expressing themselves in the best way they can. Academically, extended writing is vital to success in most disciplines and, similarly to reading ability, we want to build on these skills to allow all our students to feel confident as they approach examinations and coursework.

Writing skills are explicitly taught in English lessons and there is a whole school focus on independent practice and the accuracy of written responses.

Oracy

While there is no doubt that we need to teach our children to read and write, we often assume that speaking is a skill that doesn't require teaching and is one that is just 'picked up'. Evidence, however, indicates that oracy plays a key role in improving educational outcomes and must be taught as a set of essential skills for life. When our students are able to use talk skilfully, it allows them to take ownership of their own learning. They can unlock and deepen their understanding, think critically and have greater agency in the classroom.

In order to do this, we have raised awareness around oracy through professional development of staff as well as student-facing events, such as assemblies. We expect that all subjects include meaningful presentational talk within their curriculum and that staff are able to facilitate exploratory talk in lessons.

Impact

The Lead Practitioner for Literacy is responsible for the implementation of the literacy approach.

SLT and the literacy lead practitioner will look for evidence of the teaching of literacy skills when conducting lesson observations.

Evidence for the success of this approach will be evident in the following ways:

- Improved reading ages across Key Stage 3;
- Improved mid-year and end of year exam results;
- Improved communication will be demonstrated within work scrutiny; and
- A reading culture will be evident around the school.

Agreed by Stockport Academy LGB October 2025

Review: October 2027