



Isca Academy

Literacy Policy

Date of publication: May 2018

Review date: May 2019

Isca Academy is committed to raising the standards of literacy of all of its students, so that they develop the ability to use literacy skills effectively in all areas of the curriculum and the skills necessary to cope confidently with the demands of further education, employment and adult life.

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1. What is literacy?

The definition of literacy is constantly changing. It is now widely recognised that literacy is not just the ‘functional’ learning of reading and writing, but a range of complex and dynamic processes that help learners access information and apply their knowledge and skills.

Although we aim to develop approaches that recognise the ‘multi-literacies’ such as digital literacy, technological literacy, visual literacy, cultural and multicultural literacy – for the purposes of this document ‘literacy’ refers to the skills needed in order for students to move confidently from **functional** to **critical and active learners**..

2. Whole school literacy statement

At Isca Academy we believe that literacy is crucial to improving learning and therefore the progress of all students across the curriculum, including those with additional needs and in receipt of Pupil Premium.

We firmly believe that it is the responsibility of all staff to explicitly teach the skills that will enable all students to develop as literate learners, narrowing the gap between learners who have grown up in a literacy rich environment with those who have not.

We are committed to developing a range of active approaches to literacy learning that will help students move towards being critical and independent learners, able to perform to their best in all areas of the curriculum, no matter what their background.

Literacy, and the teaching of literacy skills, is key to improving learning and raising standards across the curriculum at Isca Academy. Improved literacy skills will help students to achieve.

This policy aims to enable all staff to be aware of:

- the national context within which the teaching of literacy operates
- the school’s commitment to literacy teaching
- strategies that can improve student literacy skills
- key roles and responsibilities in the delivery of literacy teaching
- current and future provision for the development of literacy skills at Isca Academy.

Literacy Across the Curriculum

The belief that literacy is best taught and learnt across the curriculum is central to our commitment to literacy learning.

Whilst the English Department has a key role in the delivery of literacy learning, all other departments play an equally crucial role in this delivery. For example, it may be appropriate and effective for a food technology teacher to teach the writing of instructions, or for a science teacher to develop a reader’s ability to retrieve specific information.

In the past, teachers may have seen their roles in these activities as secondary or supportive to those in the English department. However, it is hoped that we have moved towards a culture where these activities are planned and delivered across the curriculum as a central part of effective literacy teaching and learning.

Auditing Current Literacy Provision

Isca Academy regularly audits the literacy progress of students and the delivery of literacy teaching across the curriculum through our quality assurance processes. We believe that all students should be supported, so that poor literacy does not impede their progress. Auditing of literacy teaching and development takes place as part of the school's usual self-evaluation and quality assurance procedures.

Planning for future literacy provision

Regular review and development must take place at a whole school, departmental and classroom level to ensure that literacy teaching and learning are at the centre of our curriculum.

The following three sections aim to provide a brief outline of current practice. Some basic principles are outlined in section 2 'What we can do to help literacy development'. Key roles and responsibilities are outlined in section 3.

2. What can we do to help literacy development?

These lists are a starting point – and are certainly **not** exhaustive. Subject areas will have adapted and developed ideas to better suit their curriculum.

READING

Teachers will:

- Ensure reading always has a purpose, as students become more effective readers when this purpose is made explicit.
- Break reading tasks down into manageable chunks as and when appropriate.
- Encourage the use of the 3 part structure when approaching a specific reading task :
 - Pre-Reading (prediction activities)
 - Reading (Interaction with texts)
 - After Reading (Applying knowledge of reading)

- Use a range of active reading tasks (DART activities) to access texts
- Explicitly teach students how to read for information
- Create an ‘environment for reading’ in classrooms and departmental areas – displays, good quality texts, and easy access to information are important
- Model the process of reading when you teach – Interactive Whiteboards are used to complement texts that students are reading
- Encourage reading in pairs or in groups, as well as encouraging students to read independently.

WRITING

Teachers will:

- Make explicit that writing is ‘done’ for specific purposes. When beginning writing, make the purpose and audience for writing clear.
- Value writing – writing should not be seen by students as a chore. It is not good practice to set writing as a punishment.
- Celebrate and display examples of good quality writing in a range of forms – from simple to complex.
- Model writing when teaching. What is the purpose? What are the conventions? Try it, edit it and publish it on the board with students.
- Value and celebrate independent writing in the classroom.
- Display subject specific vocabulary and writing forms/ conventions
- Use writing frames and literacy mats to support and scaffold extended writing to ensure all students can make progress.

SPEAKING and LISTENING

Teachers will:

- Ensure discussion is central to literacy learning – structured talk is a vital part of the process of learning about language.
- Establish clear and fair rules and criteria for successful whole class and group talk – these may be subject specific
- Value the contributions of all students
- Actively vary groupings and methods for discussion and feedback
- Explicitly teach and model effective presentation/ discussion skills – by teacher or student demonstration.

SPELLING

Teachers will:

- Display subject specific words/ key words
- Teach a range of spelling strategies for curriculum specific key words
- Provide access to dictionaries in classrooms and encourage their use
- Ensure the marking of spelling is sensitively managed using the Academy’s Marking and Feedback Policy – it is not appropriate to highlight all mistakes. Students must be encouraged to recognise specific areas of development in their spelling and be supported in tackling these.

Literacy forms a vital component of our Teaching and Learning Policy, as we believe that it is one of the elements of good teaching that help students to make most progress and is essential for narrowing the achievement gap for identified groups of students.

3. Roles and whole school priorities

Subject Leaders

Subject Leaders are responsible for ensuring that schemes of work include relevant literacy strategies and that literacy learning takes place within their subject area to support students' progress.

Subject Leaders should take the lead in ensuring that, in consultation with the ALT lead for literacy, teaching strategies/resources used to develop Literacy are appropriate and effective. They should also ensure that our literacy strategies are being appropriately deployed to narrow the achievement gap for identified groups of students.

Subject Leaders should regularly evaluate the implementation of the Literacy policy in their department through the SEF process.

Inclusive Practice

The Inclusion Team play a key role in the provision of literacy support for a range of students. All Teaching Assistants are familiar with the literacy policy and can support the literacy learning of students they support in subjects across the curriculum. The team will assess students' reading and spelling ages on an annual basis and identify students in need of extra literacy support. These students will then receive personalised interventions from the Inclusion Team, including SoundsWrite, ARROW and reading comprehension support. The impact of interventions is tracked by re-testing and assessing the improvement in reading/spelling ages. These interventions are in addition to the literacy teaching all students receive as Wave 1 support in the classroom.

Subject teachers

All teachers are responsible for teaching literacy skills in line with departmental schemes of work and the whole school literacy policy. Teachers have identified in their seating plans and in their personalised lesson plans which students have additional needs or those considered disadvantaged and they should plan specific interventions, including literacy interventions, for those students.

Assessment / Marking

Our marking and feedback policy outlines the importance of marking for literacy. This is closely monitored by Middle Leaders and the Academy Leadership Team in our quality assurance/SEF procedures. All staff should ensure they demonstrate high expectations of literacy when they mark.

4. Appendices

1. Glossary

- **Non-Fiction text Types** - Different types of non fiction writing like :
Instructions, Recount, Explanation, Information, Persuasion, Discursive writing, Analysis, evaluation.
- **Conventions** -The 'ingredients' of texts that make them perform their function. Students are taught the conventions of effective text types in a range of subjects.
- **Active Reading** - strategies that help students deconstruct reading texts and 'read' them for specific purposes.
- **DARTs** (Directed Activities Related To Texts) - Activities like sequencing, text marking etc that involve students in interacting with text.
- **Reading For Information** - Specific information retrieval tasks like skimming and scanning