



WALES HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMY TRUST

LITERACY POLICY

REVISION DATE	APPROVED BY	DATE OF APPROVAL
May 2020	Governing Body	7 July 2020
January 2023	Governing Body	7 February 2023
January 2026	Governing Body	10 February 2026

To be reviewed every three years

All policies are available on the school website

Wales High School- Literacy Policy

Aims:

The aims of this policy and the actions contained within it are to foreground the importance of Literacy within the curriculum and to support those students who are still developing the knowledge and skills required to access the curriculum and the wider world around them. This policy remains a working document and will be regularly updated to reflect both the challenges we face and the developments we make on our journey to embed Literacy in all its forms, at the heart of school life at Wales High School.

What is Literacy?

Literacy is the vehicle through which students access the classroom, the curriculum and the world beyond the school gates. A literate student has the ability to fluently read, write, speak and listen in a way that allows them to communicate effectively with others. Literacy also encompasses the cultural knowledge and references that students need in order to read widely and make sense of what they read. It involves the resilience to meet the demands of challenging texts in exams and beyond, alongside having an extensive vocabulary with which they can express themselves. In short, Literacy is the umbrella term for a vast array of skills, knowledge and experiences which give students the opportunity to interpret the world around them and to lead happy, successful lives in the future.

Rationale:

Wales High School's Literacy policy has been informed by recent research led by The Education Endowment's 'Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools.' It is also influenced by the work of prominent organisations such as The National Literacy Trust; Lexonik; Herts for Learning and leading researchers including Alex Quigley, Tom Sherrington, Christopher Such and Mary Myatt.

Whilst the skills of writing and oracy are clearly key components within any holistic literacy policy, the foremost focus for our priorities following the Covid 19 pandemic is on the skill of reading. This is because without the ability to read fluently and for meaning, proficiency in the other skills is negatively impacted.

The three key literacy priorities are:

1. Support for struggling readers:

Struggling readers are identified by triangulating enhanced literacy data from KS2 Feeder schools, NGRT and CAT4 data in a Reading ISM (Intervention Strategy Meeting) during the initial weeks of the academic year.

Students who fall below the threshold of 85 as a standardised age score on NGRT (the bottom 20%) will be individually evaluated by trained staff before receiving further bespoke intervention and / or further screening based on their individual needs and data. This could be linked to phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension or other factors such as vision issues or motivation to read. Reading Profile documents, containing current data, intervention programmes and classroom strategies for teachers to use will be shared with staff. The impact of the intervention will be measured by the NGRT termly and reviewed in a follow-up discussions in Vulnerable Learner Meetings. (See diagram below.)

The programmes we offer to support struggling readers include 1-1 reading with Rapid Plus; Lexonik Leap (Phonics); Abigail Steel Phonics for KS3 students; Lexia Core 5 and Power Up; Lexonik Advance (Vocabulary); HfL Fluency Project, Sixth Form Reading Partners and Reciprocal Reading programmes. Intervention programmes usually last between 6 and 10 weeks.



2. Disciplinary literacy:

Explicit Vocabulary Instruction- 'Building Word Power.'

It is integral to the success of the school's approach to Literacy that staff understand what it means to be literate **in the discipline they teach**. Students need to be able to express their knowledge of that subject in a manner appropriate to the discipline.

All departments in school are expected to explicitly teach the key vocabulary that is integral to students' understanding of the topic/ subject that is being taught. The morphology of key vocabulary is broken down and made explicit to students through Frayer diagrams. Staff are supported in this through the use of the cloud- based programme 'Lexonik Vocabulary.' The benefit of this approach is that it allows students to make connections with other words in their vocabulary with similar prefixes, stems and suffixes.

Definition (inc Morphology)	WORD POWER	Facts/ Details
<p><i>/pro/ forward, in front, before; for, supporting.</i> <i>/agenda/ root</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Biased or misleading information, usually used to support a political group or opinion. Media texts intended to persuade an audience against a particular idea 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propaganda was used during the First World War as a way of recruiting soldiers and boosting the public's morale in the war effort. It can take many forms- posters, letters, speeches, broadcasts etc
Propaganda		
		<p><u>Non-examples</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adverts for a product Persuasive speech about abolishing school uniform

Ready, Read, Succeed.

Ready, Read, Succeed (RRS) is our whole-school approach to disciplinary reading, designed to build students' confidence, fluency and comprehension across all subjects. RRS provides a consistent, shared routine so that reading expectations look and sound the same in every classroom, supporting all learners — particularly those who find reading challenging — to access complex academic texts.

- During the **Ready** phase, staff prepare students for reading by clarifying the purpose, activating prior knowledge, adapting text where appropriate, and explicitly pre-teaching key vocabulary and concepts
- In the **Read** phase, teachers guide purposeful, structured reading through strategies such as modelled reading, planned pauses, questioning, and fluency practice, while students actively track the text and listen attentively
- The **Succeed** phase focuses on checking understanding and enabling students to apply new knowledge through discussion, retrieval, and meaningful follow-up tasks that consolidate learning.

RRS is not a one-off activity but a routine element of high-quality teaching, used whenever comprehension of challenging text is essential for learning.

3. Promoting reading and creating a broad and ambitious reading curriculum:

It is widely accepted that students who read regularly achieve more than those who don't. To this end, we want to encourage students to read for pleasure and progress at every possible opportunity. This is achieved in part by some of the following initiatives:

- Fortnightly Library lessons for Y7-8.
- Investment in academic publications such as Politics Review, Modern History Review and English Review.
- Y7 Tutor Group Reading Programme.
- Whole School Reading Weeks.
- Participation in initiatives such as 'Bookbuzz' and 'World Book Day.'
- Bitesize Reading Boards in student social areas across KS3- KS5.
- Significant investment in new books , including graphic novels, decodable reading books in the library.
- Reading spaces created around school, including the Sixth Form Common Room, Learning Support foyer and the Staff Room.
- Staff CPD about reading strategies and fluency.
- Reading for pleasure reading lists on the Literacy area of the school website.
- Participation in the National Champions Reading Quiz.
- Visiting authors and virtual author talks.
- Book Club.

Reading in class.

Whilst most students begin secondary school with the general skills and knowledge needed to read accurately, fluently and with comprehension, some do not. Given the complexity of academic reading, students need to be able to deploy a range of reading strategies which can be modelled and practised in the classroom to develop students as strategic readers.

When reading from a whole class text, staff should read the text aloud, **modelling fluent reading** to enable comprehension. Students should be encouraged to **follow the text physically** using their finger, a reading ruler or similar. Encourage **repeated reading** of new vocabulary to build accuracy and automaticity. **Echo reading (echoing the pace and expression of the teacher)** and **choral reading (the whole class reading together at the same time)** are helpful strategies here.

Before being asked to read aloud, students should be offered opportunities to prepare by **completing pre-reading or vocabulary tasks**, or **re-reading the text in pairs**. Dysfluent students should not be asked to read without preparing first, as this may negatively affect the student's self esteem and hinder the comprehension of other students in the class.

Where appropriate, reciprocal reading strategies (Predict, Clarify, Question and Summarise) can be used for pre and post reading tasks as they are particularly useful in aiding students' comprehension.

GROW (Guided Reading, Oracy and Words).

To support our students' reading skills, all of our Year 7 and Year 8 students will have two RISE sessions, dedicated to reading as part of our GROW programme. The purpose of the lessons is to give students time to read, enjoy and discuss complex texts in a structured way. The texts will be read aloud by teachers to model expert fluency, with lots of opportunities for students to re-read the text in different ways to develop their own reading skills.

The texts we have chosen are modern, engaging, age-appropriate novels which provide lots of opportunities for students to explore themes and ideas linked to the PSHE curriculum. The texts will be accompanied by bespoke, professionally printed booklets which are designed by teachers at Wales High School to guide students thoughtfully through the texts.

