



Inspiring Learners for their future

LITERACY AND LANGUAGE POLICY

UPDATED MARCH 2011

Consultation History

Governors/staff/parents/students	Date
Executive (Leadership Group)	
Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff	
Curriculum Committee	
Full Governing Body	
Next Review of Policy	

The Ridgeway School and Sixth Form College

Literacy and Language Policy

‘Students should be taught in all subjects to express themselves correctly and appropriately and to read accurately and with understanding.’

QCA Use of Language Across the Curriculum

All teachers are teachers of literacy. As such, staff at The Ridgeway School and Sixth Form College are committed to developing literacy skills in all of our students, in the belief that it will support their learning and raise standards across the curriculum, because:

- students need vocabulary, expression and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of subjects;
- reading helps us to learn from sources beyond our immediate experience;
- writing helps us to sustain and order thought;
- language helps us to reflect, revise and evaluate the things we do, and on the things others have said, written or done;
- responding to higher order questions encourages the development of thinking skills and enquiry;
- improving literacy and learning can have an impact on students’ self-esteem, on motivation and behaviour. It allows them to learn independently. It is empowering.

Implementation at whole-school level

Language is the prime medium through which students learn and express themselves across the curriculum, and all teachers have a stake in effective literacy.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Senior Managers:** lead and give a high profile to literacy;
- **English Faculty:** provide students with knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write and speak and listen effectively;
- **Teachers across the curriculum:** contribute to students' development of language, since speaking, listening, writing and reading are, to varying degrees, integral to all lessons;
- **Literacy co-ordinator:** supports faculties in the implementation of strategies and encourages faculties to learn from each other's practice by sharing ideas.
- **Parents:** encourage their children to use the range of strategies they have learnt to improve their levels of literacy;
- **Students:** take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs and making improvements;
- **Governors:** an identified governor meets with staff and students and report progress and issues to the governing body and to parents in the governors' annual report.

Across the school we:

1. Integrate the use of non-fiction writing frames across all relevant subject areas including publication on FROG so that they are accessible to parents and students.
2. Identify the strengths and weaknesses in students' work from across the school.
3. Implement cross-curricular literacy priorities termly.
4. Seek to identify progression in the main forms of reading, writing, speaking and listening undertaken in each faculty and strengthen teaching plans accordingly.
5. Raise the profile of literacy within the community through the annual Readathon, entry into local and national writing and public speaking competitions and mock trials, Reading Champions program, and involvement in the local Literacy Festival,
6. Review this literacy policy annually.

Speaking and Listening

We teach students to use language precisely and coherently. They should be able to listen to others, and to respond and build on their ideas and views constructively.

We teach students how to participate orally in groups and in the whole class, including: using talk to develop and clarify ideas; identifying the main points to arise from a discussion; listening for a specific purpose; discussion and evaluation.

Reading

We aim to give students a level of literacy that will enable them to cope with the increasing demands of subjects in terms of specific skills, knowledge and understanding. This applies particularly in the area of reading (including from the screen), as texts become more demanding.

We build on and share existing good practice. We will teach students strategies to help them to: read with greater understanding; locate and use information; follow a process or argument; summarise; synthesise and adapt what they learn from their reading.

We continue to develop the use of the library as a reading and learning resource through the development of the Enquiring Minds project, a centre for homework and to co-ordinate community literacy projects.

Writing

It is important that we provide for co-ordination across subjects to recognise and reinforce students' language skills, through:

- Making connections between students' reading and writing, so that students have clear models for their writing;
- Using the modelling process to make explicit to students how to write;
- Being clear about audience and purpose;
- Providing opportunities for a range of writing including sustained writing.

Training

Staff training needs are met through material in the *Literacy Across the Curriculum* folder which will contain useful strategies such as the management of group talk and listening, through opt-in development sessions and with further whole school training as required.

Monitoring and Evaluation

We make use of available data to assess the standards of students' literacy. Senior managers, the Head of English and the literacy co-ordinator, will decide how to monitor progress in the school.

Approaches are:

- sampling work – both students' work and faculty schemes;
- observation – student pursuit and literacy teaching;
- meetings;
- student interviews;
- scrutiny of development plans;
- encouraging faculties to share good practice by exhibiting or exemplifying students' work.

Including All Students

Students of The Ridgeway School and Sixth Form College are entitled to our highest expectations and support. Some will need additional support and others will need to be challenged and extended. Strategies that we use include:

- questioning;
- adjusting the demands of the task;
- the use of additional support;
- use of group structures;
- resources;
- making objectives clear;
- creating an atmosphere where students evaluate their own others' work.

In addition the school will offer the following:

SEN

In Years 7 and 8, small Nurture Groups have been established to assist the transition of low attaining and vulnerable students into the school. In 2010/11, these Nurture groups, of about 12 students each, are taught by a special needs teacher for English, Geography, History, PHSE and RE (Year 7) and English, PHSE and RE (Year 8). The objective here is to deliver an adapted and highly differentiated curriculum with an emphasis on language and literacy skills.

The Learning Support (SEN) Faculty provides specialist literacy teaching on a withdrawal basis for some students who have significant literacy difficulties, particularly those who are severely dyslexic

Teachers across the curriculum are kept informed about which students are participating in these programmes and are encouraged to liaise with and support the teacher of these students.

Intervention

Intervention will also be used to assist students that are failing to make appropriate progress. This is will include:

Offering 121 tutoring in years 8 and 9,

A program of intervention at KS4 including generic, for borderline C/D students with weak literacy, and specific English Exam intervention

English as an Additional Language

Our students learning EAL need to hear good examples of spoken English and also to refer to their first language skills to aid new learning in all subjects of the curriculum. The use of their first language enables them to draw on existing subject knowledge and to develop English language skills in context. For example, a group of students can learn about paragraph organisation in their mother tongue. The EAL folder, on the G drive, provides examples of strategies that can be used to help students cope with acquiring English as an additional language.

The English Faculty

In addition to all the whole-school aspects of this policy, the English teachers at The Ridgeway School and Sixth Form College have a leading role in providing students with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write, speak and listen effectively.

The English Faculty is well-placed to offer good advice and expertise.

The role of the English faculty includes:

- contributing to the whole school audit;
- a key role in identifying literacy priorities, targets and objectives and particular contribution they can make;
- making a contribution to the action plan;
- using data to identify curricular targets;
- writing the faculty action plan to achieve these.

The Ridgeway School and Sixth Form College is committed to raising standards of literacy in all its students, through a co-ordinated approach.

Fiona Williams
Literacy Co-ordinator
January 2011

Proposed Priorities for 2010/11

Writing non-fiction (2010/11 priority)*

Each faculty will:

- *Use the non-fiction framework to teach students how to write in ways that are special to that faculty's subject needs and align, wherever possible, the teaching of subject-specific text types to follow the broad introduction by the English faculty, so that students see how types of writing are applied and adapted in different subjects.*

The text types are:

- *information;*
- *recount;*
- *explanation;*
- *instruction;*
- *persuasion;*
- *discursive writing;*
- *analysis;*
- *evaluation;*

Sentence Structure (2010/11 priority)*

Each faculty will:

- *display sentence structure and punctuation prompts as published on a fortnightly basis;*
- *teach published prompts as appropriate for their subject areas;*
- *concentrate on the marking of specific sentence structures, correcting as required and rewarding the use of targeted sentence structure and punctuation in students work.*

**These will be updated annually*