



SIR THOMAS RICH'S

Literacy Policy

This policy was drawn up in accordance with The Reading Framework (DfE, 2021), the amended Ofsted Inspection Framework and Improving Literacy in Schools (EEF, 2021).

Date reviewed:	April 2024
Date of next review:	April 2025
Status:	Good Practice
Responsibility:	The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will review this policy regularly. The Trustees' Curriculum and Evaluation Committee has responsibility for approving the policy and monitoring its implementation

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1 Introduction

The School recognises that literacy is key to learning across all subjects and is a strong predictor of outcomes in later life. The School aims to develop the skills and knowledge required by pupils to become fluent readers, accomplished writers and articulate speakers. A whole-school focus on Literacy develops the cultural references required by pupils to access a wide range of texts, the resilience needed to meet the demands of challenging texts and the vocabulary necessary to decode texts. This enables young people to communicate effectively and confidently. Disciplinary Literacy is both general and subject specific, however, a shared vision and commonality underpins practice across the School.

2 Reading

It is widely acknowledged that reading has a direct impact on cognitive, social and communicative development. Reading has been shown to improve health and wellbeing, as well as develop compassion and empathy for others. Reading contributes to pupils' development of self-discipline and a thirst for learning.

2.1 Fostering a Culture of Reading

The School promotes a love of reading and celebrates reading for both enjoyment and challenge.

In English lessons, pupils in Key Stage 3 and 4 are exposed to a broad range of challenging literary fiction and non-fiction texts, gaining experience of the Literary Canon through exposure to seminal texts from different time periods. English teachers are passionate subject experts teaching in a literature-rich environment.

The Learning Resource Centre (LRC) has a dedicated Manager who promotes books that are diverse and engaging, age-appropriate yet challenging. Year 7 classes visit the LRC on a half-termly basis, giving pupils an opportunity to borrow, return, discuss and recommend books. Pupils also have access to Wheeler's ePlatform, an inspiring digital library offering 1,000,000+ titles. Pupils are encouraged to borrow books from the LRC and Wheeler's ePlatform to meet the reading target for the Tommy's Award.

Pupils in Key Stage 3 participate in a range of World Book Day activities and competitions.

Author visits inspire pupils to read new titles and engage with the writing process.

The School celebrates the sharing of a love of reading and each month a member of the School community records a virtual Book of the Month recommendation for others to enjoy that is shared with pupils.

2.2 Reading for Comprehension

Pupils in Years 7 to 10 participate in Tutor Time Reading twice a week, where tutor-led reading of rich texts promotes a love of reading and a culture of scholarship. Pupils read a selection of both classic and contemporary fiction across a range of genres. Tutors are encouraged to follow the reciprocal reading model, which requires pupils to summarise, question, clarify and predict. Shared reading creates a classroom community, generating discussions that encourage listeners to construct meanings, connect ideas, use prior knowledge, and question unfamiliar vocabulary.

2.3 Reading for Fluency

During the Tutor Time Reading programme, pupils develop fluency by reading aloud to their peers and listening to their Tutor model fluent and expressive reading. Reading fluency approaches, such as paired practice, reading dialogue for specified characters and echo reading are encouraged.

2.4 Reading Across the Curriculum

Across the curriculum, pupils read fiction and non-fiction texts relating to each subject area, broadening their understanding of the World and exposing them to the Tier 2 and 3 vocabularies required to access the best that has been thought, said and written. In many departments, reading lists, subject libraries and magazines are available for students to use. Texts build on pupils' prior knowledge and vocabulary from previous reading and become increasingly complex over time.

Teachers across subject disciplines are offered bespoke training to ensure they are able to teach reading in their subjects and support pupils using effective strategies for reading instruction. Reading strategies include activating prior knowledge, prediction, questioning, clarifying and summarising.

3 Writing

Pupils write for a range of purposes and audiences. The School accepts that writing is challenging and that pupils in every subject will benefit from explicit instruction on how to improve, as writing with clarity and accuracy is the means through which the vast majority of subjects are assessed. In many subjects, teachers break down complex writing tasks, including essays and extended answers, to help pupils succeed across the curriculum.

Extra-curricular opportunities include the House Creative Writing competition, which is open to all year groups, and a range of national competitions such as Young Writers and the *Christopher Tower Poetry Competition*.

4 Vocabulary

The School aims to provide targeted vocabulary instruction in every subject and is committed to empowering pupils through developing their vocabulary acquisition, recognising the impact of this on quality of work, progress and the ability to communicate ideas and concepts.

For pupils to develop a deeper understanding of key areas of each subject discipline, teachers provide explicit vocabulary instruction, prioritising Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary. The School recognises that effective approaches to explicit vocabulary instruction, including those related to etymology and morphology, will help pupils remember new words and make connections between words.

Teachers consider which words and phrases to teach as part of curriculum planning. Many subjects have a published vocabulary list that allow pupils to speak and write as experts, which should be evident on the curriculum map. Vocabulary is regularly tested both in class and for homework.

5 Oracy

The School recognises that talk is a powerful tool for both learning and literacy. Talk can improve reading and writing outcomes, enhance communication skills and increase pupils' understanding across the curriculum.

Opportunities to develop pupils' oracy are evident in many subjects; pupils prepare their speech through presenting, debating and discussing, as well as through the oral rehearsal of written work.

Pupils also benefit from metacognitive talk, which focuses on the process of learning and will often be task and subject-specific. In a number of subjects, explicit instruction is given on how to debate effectively and form a cohesive argument. Teachers model what effective talk sounds like within their subjects, which includes using subject-specific language and vocabulary, explicitly introducing the ways of reasoning that matter within their discipline, and the ways in which experts use metacognitive talk. Pupils are given opportunities to practise using new vocabulary. Teachers prompt pupils to extend their answers with questions and by providing sentence starters.

Both co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for oracy are provided. Important links between Science and English, for example, are enhanced through FameLab, and PSHE informs the topic choices of Year 7 and 8 speeches in English. Extra-curricular opportunities include Junior and Senior Debate Club, in which pupils discuss challenging topics both ancient and modern, honing debate skills and taking part in competitions with other schools, and the yearly House Public Speaking competition, which is entered by pupils in all Key Stages and watched by pupils in Year 8. The English department facilitates the *Poetry by Heart* competition, in which all pupils in Year 7 prepare a reading of a poem, the best of whom go through to perform in the School final. In previous years, pupils from the School have qualified for both regional and national finals.

6 Appendices

6.1 Appendix 1 Links to Educational Research

[Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)

[The Reading Framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)