



Literacy Policy

Philosophy

At Ashcroft High School we adhere to the following principles:

- Literacy supports learning. Students need vocabulary, expression and organizational control to cope with the cognitive demands of subjects
- Reading enables us to learn from sources beyond our immediate experience
- It is through language that we make and revise meaning
- Writing helps us to sustain and order thought
- Responding to higher order questions encourages the development of thinking
- Better literacy leads to improved self-esteem, motivation and behaviour. It allows students to learn independently. It is empowering.
- All teachers and adults who students come into contact with during the school day are teachers of literacy

Aims

At Ashcroft High School we are trying to achieve:

1. Improvements in students' use of spoken language, to:

- Express their ideas better and speak more clearly
- Develop a wider vocabulary
- Use and understand more formal, standard registers of speech
- Use spoken language to develop a deeper understanding of the ideas they are grappling with in their different subjects,
- Develop subject-specific terminology
- Share ideas with others, using teachers and peers to enhance their knowledge and understanding
- Develop skills in presenting arguments and points of view in a judged, balanced and appropriately assertive manner in both formal and less formal contexts

2. Improvements in students' listening skills, to:

- Enable them to focus more on what others are saying
- Listen carefully to others' points of view and learn from them, adapting their own views as appropriate
- Become better listeners generally, and more able to focus and concentrate on information that is being presented orally

3. Improvements in students' reading, to:

- Understand more readily the formal language of text books and other subject-related materials
- Develop a wider vocabulary
- Recognize and adopt different written forms through exposure to a wide range of different types of writing

3. Improvements in students' written language to:

- Use more accurate punctuation and grammar

- Write at greater length and with more confidence
- Adapt their written styles to suit a range of purposes and audiences
- Write persuasively
- Write at greater length and with increasing complexity

To achieve our aims we will:

- Pay careful attention to questioning. Use the **no-hands strategy** – teacher asks a question, allows thinking time, the students consult with a partner in order to formulate an answer, the teacher selects students to respond to the question creating the opportunity for discussion e.g. "What do you think?" "Do you agree with that answer?". The teacher uses wrong answers to develop understanding.
- Ensure that questions are appropriate, fit for purpose and are graded in difficulty – eg. using Bloom's Taxonomy ("Why does...?", "What if...?", "How would you...?", "Could you explain...?"). Opportunities are created for students to ask questions.
- Give students frequent opportunities to work in groups. Choose groups in order to give the most able leading responsibilities and provide support for the least able. Sometimes group according to ability, but give them different tasks (e.g. the least able have to list activities or provide concrete examples, while the most able may need to hypothesise, or create a set of rules or instructions, or provide a legislative or advisory framework in relation to a moral issue – poverty, euthanasia, animal research, stem cell research, spending money on hospitals or flood defences),
- Formalise group work. Ensure that key students have defined roles and give them cards with the person's role described:
 - Chair – has to decide who can talk. Starts the discussion but after that doesn't say too much. Main job is to encourage the quietest/ most shy person to contribute. Must thank people for their contributions and ask what others think. At end must summarise the main points.
 - Emissary or envoy – has to go to the next group at the end of the discussion to tell them what his/her group discussed – what were the main points of their arguments or their main conclusions.
 - Scribe – has to capture the main points in note form
 - Reporter – must feed back summary to the class

Give opportunities for role play eg provide cards which describe the personas to be adopted eg a mill owner in the 19th century, giving prompts about what the person is like, their main job or main responsibilities. Then provide a situation in which people with conflicting points of view have to answer a case e.g. the mill owner is going to close the mill and all the workers will be on the breadline. The mill owner addresses the class explaining why he has to close the mill. A mill worker responds saying what will happen to him and his family if this happens. Sometimes by adopting a different person, students can express ideas that they don't want to express as themselves. Citizenship cries out for role play.

 - Model high standards of literacy in their own teaching
 - Have displays in classrooms which include key terms on walls, technical equipment labelled, useful phrases to help students link and develop ideas in writing, National Curriculum levels in "*student speak*", grade descriptors/ information related to examination courses, exemplar pieces of work, literacy posters
 - Choose texts that are appropriate for their students' prior knowledge, purposes and potential
 - Expect and encourage students to read for themselves wherever possible
 - Use teaching approaches that give students ways of accessing demanding texts (DARTS)
 - Know and demonstrate a range of reading strategies
 - Provide a range of opportunities for active engagement with texts that help to motivate students as readers

- Know, understand and make explicit to students the main types of text used in their subject
- Ensure that students engage in reading in their tutor groups during the time allocated to this
- Ensure that students with EAL are supported in their language needs
- Apply the school marking policy to the letter when marking the extended task
- Make weekly use of the spelling sections in the Planner
- Provide writing frames or scaffolds to support extended writing and provide models of extended writing
- Teach students how to research in their subject (including use of the Internet)
- Give clear guidance for the written elements of extended pieces of coursework.
- Prepare students thoroughly for the reading/written requirements of examination papers
- Plan lessons which make good use of opportunities to develop students' literacy skills

Success Criteria

- Students' literacy levels will rise.
- The gap of literacy levels between girls and boys will reduce.
- Students are given more opportunities to improve their literacy levels.

Approved by Governing Body of Ashcroft High School:	June 2017
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Governors' Committee:	FGB
SLT staff responsible:	Mrs J Clarke
Statutory Policy: Yes / No	Yes