



LITERACY POLICY

2021/2022

AIM: (final result we are aiming to achieve)

At The English College we are proud to offer the students a rich environment where imagination and creativity can be fuelled. We believe that literacy and communication are key life skills. Through the English curriculum, we help students develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively through spoken and written language and equip them with the skills to become lifelong learners. As literacy is central to students' intellectual, emotional and social development it has an essential role across the curriculum and helps students' learning to be coherent and progressive.

We want children to enjoy language, to be successful in using it and to have the motivation to succeed. We will:

- Fulfill the requirements of the English National Curriculum
- Make English a high priority in our school
- Challenge all students to achieve the best that they can
- Facilitate independent learning and progress across the curriculum
- Plan work that is of a high quality, consistent in approach and specific to the needs of the children.
- Provide children with a wide experience of language and vocabulary in order to develop their confidence to use and explore language.
- Develop their cognitive skills, imagination and personal expression through a range of writing tasks, using clear, concise language with accurate punctuation and grammar, in a style appropriate for the purpose.

RATIONALE: (The reason for which this policy has been written)

What is literacy?

Reading/writing/speaking and listening: to be literate is to be able to read, comprehend and react to ideas in texts and language. It means being able to use language to communicate both in spoken and written forms. Literacy is an intrinsic life skill.

GUIDELINES: (The principles/instructions/steps of the policy)

Writing

Equipping students with the ability to write effectively, creatively and for a range of purposes is of high importance at The English College.

We want our students to be able to:

- Develop as confident writers who can write effectively for a variety of audiences and a range of purposes.
- Interest and engage a reader by the use of imaginative words and phrases.
- Enjoy the process of developing, organizing and communicating ideas to others.
- Use the texts they read as models for their own writing
- Write grammatically accurate sentences and texts.
- Apply features of fiction and non-fiction texts to their own writing.
- Apply spelling rules and strategies independently in their writing, e.g. knowledge of word endings, suffixes etc.
- Write in a fluent, legible, cursive style.
- Take pride in the presentation of their work.
- Be adventurous with language, and persist when spelling is difficult.
- Apply accurately the grammatical skills and conventions in different forms of writing.
- Write to a consistently high standard in all subjects.
- Develop resilience and stamina for writing longer pieces.

We will meet these aims by having long term plans for each year group that give an overview of genres and texts that will be taught to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum. Teachers will use these alongside the National Curriculum programmes of study, to develop lesson plans and units of work.

Key Stage One

Key Stage Two

Composition: planning, drafting, evaluating, editing and proofreading	Composition: planning, drafting, evaluating, editing and proofreading
Composition: applying vocabulary, grammar and punctuation	Composition: structuring and organising texts
Transcription: spelling and handwriting	Composition: applying vocabulary, grammar and punctuation
	Transcription: spelling and handwriting

Alongside this, we use the 'Talk 4 Writing' process to enable students to draw upon a bank of texts and language models to support their own writing. This process follows the following sequence:

- **Imitation** – learning model texts off by heart; developing a secure understanding of the text type, structure and language patterns; and identifying authorial choices.
- **Innovation** – using the model to produce their own pieces of writing with some scaffolding.
- **Invention** – creating new texts of a similar style following the same structure.

Throughout the stages of 'Talk 4 Writing', modelled, shared and guided writing are vital. This teaching approach occurs across the school from Foundation Stage to Year 6.

- **Modelled Writing** – where the teacher models and highlights the strategies used by successful writers.
- **Shared Writing** – a teacher-led, whole-class or group activity which draws students into the writing process.
- **Guided Writing** – where students use their new skills to complete the activity in pairs or a group, focusing on particular targets and analyzing their progress through teacher guidance.

It is expected that all text types will be applied across the curriculum. Where possible, links to class topics are made in English lessons through the texts and tasks chosen.

Writing in KS 3 to KS 5

"Teachers should develop pupils' ... writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching." DfE (2013)

- All teachers have a responsibility to help students become confident, skilled writers who can use writing to process and organise ideas and to communicate effectively

- Students are encouraged to write clearly in a variety of forms for a variety of audiences
- Students can refer to models when writing
- Word and phrase banks help students to develop precision
- Scaffolding is used to support writing as appropriate
- Marking of writing is supportive and encourages reflection and improvement
- Accurate spelling is important for the convincing presentation of ideas in any subject. All teachers have a responsibility to help students become confident, skilled spellers.
- Students are equipped with a range of strategies for remembering or inferring spellings
- Students are encouraged to use dictionaries to check spellings

Digital Literacy

Pupils are given regular opportunities to present their Writing using digital technology. All staff have been trained in using a variety of programmes to support all elements of writing such as presentation, storytelling and movie making.

Assessment

Following a recommendation from the expert group on National Curriculum Review, The UK government announced the end of the official use of levels for assessment.

After much research on the subject, The English College have created a progression of skills and an Assessment of Writing system as a way of ensuring consistency and continuity with regards to the assessment of writing throughout the school.

- Extended/Independent pieces of writing to be assessed against the school's scoring system for writing (FS-Y6).
- Ongoing formative assessment underpins planning and is an integral part of teaching and learning so that lessons and units cater for a student's individual needs and next steps.
- In all year groups, cold tasks are used prior to a unit of work to identify next steps and hot tasks are used at the end of each unit to identify progress and further targets.
- Assessment information is collated across a range of pieces of independent writing and used to make formative judgements against the National Curriculum objectives.
- Students' targets and next steps are communicated with them at the end of their piece of writing and discussed as appropriate. These are then monitored and reviewed over a unit of work.

Handwriting

It is paramount that children are rigorously taught the correct letter formation from the very beginning of their time in school. As soon as the children are ready, they will be taught to sit properly in order to have the correct posture for writing, hold a pencil in the correct tripod grip and develop a legible and joined handwriting style. Students in EYFS will be taught pre-cursive letters so that they are able to join when they are ready. By the end of Key

Stage 1, all children should be displaying an efficient, neat and legible handwriting style that is effective in recording their ideas.

It is expected that handwriting will be 'taught' rather than simply 'practised', through a variety of whole class, small group or individual sessions as appropriate. Handwriting sessions should take place 4 times a week. It may be appropriate to diminish this once the children have mastered the end of KS2 expectation.

All members of staff, class teachers and teaching assistants will model the school handwriting style through all professional activities (when writing on the board or in children's books).

Reading

Please see also The English College Reading policy

Instilling a love of reading is of utmost importance at The English College. We want our children to be able to:

- be confident and able readers.
- read from a range of books for interest, information and pleasure.
- be able to effortlessly decode known and unknown words, drawing on a range of strategies.
- demonstrate their comprehension of what they have read by talking and writing about it.
- develop as enthusiastic, independent and reflective readers who understand and respond to a variety of texts from all genre types.

This will be evidenced through:

- a comprehensive literature spine which ensures that students are exposed to a wide and varied reading diet.
- a commitment to ensuring book corners are inviting spaces to read and share books.
- a well-resourced library for all staff and students to access.
- providing opportunities for students to share books with peers and read for pleasure.

The teaching of reading is delivered through a wide range of strategies including:

- phonics (as outlined above)
- shared reading
- guided reading
- individual reading
- book talk across the curriculum

Guided reading

- Guided reading sessions will take place daily in all classes until Year 6.
- In Year 5 and 6 a mixture of whole class shared reading and guided reading tasks will take place.
- Guided reading carousels will offer opportunities for students to develop reading skills and reading for pleasure.
- The Shirley Clarke SPIQ (Summarise, Predict, Identify and Question) approach to guided reading will be used across the school to support the students in developing their skills in summarising, predicting, identifying and questioning.
- Students in Year 5/6 will be taught to run their own SPIQ guided reading sessions if appropriate.
- Sets of guided reading books will be used.
- All parents are asked to listen to their child read and write in the student's planners, along with school staff, to keep a record of progress and next steps.

Phonics

Phonics is the prime approach to teaching reading and spelling in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The Letters and Sounds publication is used to outline the principles and practices of phonics teaching, using a synthetic-phonics approach within 6 phases of word decoding.

- We aim for every child to be equipped with the necessary decoding skills to become fluent readers by the age of 7.
- The teaching of phonics is supplemented by other resources, such as Ruth Miskin's Read Write Inc.
- Opportunities are provided for children to apply their developing phonics skills in interesting and engaging reading and writing activities.
- Letters and Sounds enables children to see the relationship between reading and spelling from an early stage, such that the teaching of one reinforces understanding of the other. Decoding (reading) and encoding (spelling) are treated as reversible processes.

EYFS AND KEY STAGE 1 and 2

The students at The English College will receive a discreet 20 minute phonics lesson daily. Teachers are responsible for planning and TAs with teachers will lead their own phonics group. Within Years 2-6, an emphasis is placed on:

- Grapheme-phoneme correspondences in a clearly defined, incremental sequence.
- Applying the highly important skill of blending (synthesising) phonemes in the order in which they occur, all through the word to read it.
- Applying the skills of segmenting words into their constituent phonemes to spell.
- Blending and segmenting as reversible processes.

Careful consideration is placed in ensuring every Year 1 child is able to access the statutory phonics screening tests and assessing children's ability to decode words. All children undertake regular informal assessment tasks to ensure all children have an understanding of:

- Grapheme-phoneme correspondences.
- Oral blending.
- Oral segmentation.
- Non-word reading (pseudo words).

Year 2

Children who require additional support in Year 2 (having not passed the Year 1 phonics screening test of 40 words), are set into targeted learning groups during phonics sessions, to ensure their needs are being met. These children are assessed and progress is re-evaluated frequently to ensure they are on track to pass the phonics screening test in Year 2.

KEY STAGE 2

Phonics is still a priority in KS2 for children who are still not secure in the application of sounds in their reading (word-recognition and decoding) and writing. They are still supported in daily interventions. A particular emphasis is placed on being able to read and write words from each phase of phonics teaching. Half-termly assessments are carried out to inform restructuring of groups to enable rapid progress within each phonics phase.

KEY STAGE 3 - 5

"Teachers should develop pupils' reading ... in all subjects to support their acquisition of knowledge ... and be encouraged to read for pleasure." DfE (2013)

Functional literacy is not enough; reading ages must be aspirational and keeping pace with the demands of GCSE.

Non-verbal literacy: to be literate is to be able to read and communicate in a variety of different kinds of languages and texts – visual as well as verbal.

Literacy as participation: messages, ideas, feelings and identity are all mediated through language and texts of all kinds. To be literate is to be able to take control of these forms in order to participate as a member of society.

Speaking and Listening

"... talk is essential to children's thinking and learning ... and to their productive engagement in classroom life ... We now have additional evidence that high quality classroom talk raises standards in the core subjects as typically measured in national tests." Robin Alexander (2012)

- All teachers have a responsibility to help students become confident, skilled speakers and listeners: students routinely reflect on their use of talk and self or peer assess spoken work
- Effective verbal communication is modelled for students and its structures are taught explicitly
- Listening is framed in terms of skills which can be developed
- Questioning is one of the main ways in which teachers elicit language from students.
- Teachers have a responsibility for consolidating and developing students' vocabulary: students are encouraged to be experimental with word choices and have access to dictionaries and thesauruses
- Students are encouraged to use subject vocabulary with precision
- The meaning of words is reinforced visually the learning environment is infused with subject vocabulary
- Keywords and concepts are displayed in an appropriate way

MONITORING & REVIEWING

The English Curriculum Leader is responsible for the monitoring and review of the children's learning and progress in English throughout the school. This will be carried out by monitoring books and unaided writing, as well as carrying out lesson observations, planning reviews, talking to children and learning walks.

MARKING FOR LITERACY

- All teachers have a responsibility to use marking to secure and develop the literacy of students.
- There is a consistent approach to the marking of spelling, punctuation and grammar (a feedback policy is clearly displayed in each classroom)
- Pupils are expected to respond to mistakes in spelling, punctuation and grammar and they should always be given the opportunity to rectify such mistakes (dedicated improvement and reflection time)
- The clarity and impact of handwriting and presentation are important for communication in any subject and are also important for students' self-esteem: students are not allowed to feel disadvantaged by poor handwriting but are helped to feel that they can improve it

- Teachers are aware of basic handwriting strategies such as letter-size differentiation and the use of a range of pens

INCLUSION

Inclusion involves the identification and minimisation of barriers to learning and participation, and the maximising of resources to support learning and participation. We believe in giving all children strategies to be successful. This includes those children for whom English is an additional language, children with Pupil Profiles and children identified as working at Mastery level. The needs of such children are met by providing tasks that: Are visual, auditory and kinaesthetic and contextual, with a 'real life' purpose. In addition, the needs of gifted and talented children in Literacy are met by providing tasks that: Are common and involve different responses and outcomes; provide the opportunity for reading at a higher level; extend the scope, language and idiom of writing; allow for challenge linked to a common theme.

APPENDICES (Relevant links to other policies or documents)

- Reading Policy

POLICY REVIEW HISTORY:

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team, approved by the Principal

Historical Record				
Revision No.	Date	Brief Description of Change	Approved by	Next Review:
0	3/3/2021	New Policy	Principal	June 2022
1	1/7/2022	Update		