Technical School at Broadstairs College
Literacy Policy

Mission Statement

The Technical School is committed to raising the standards of literacy of all of its students, so that they develop the ability to use literacy skills effectively in all areas of the curriculum and the skills necessary to cope confidently with the demands of further education, employment and adult life.

The definition of literacy

Literacy involves "using printed and written information, speaking and listening, to function in society in order to achieve one's goals and to develop one's knowledge and potential." It includes ICT and electronic communications in its various forms.

Listening

Students should be taught to listen to others and to respond and build on ideas constructively.

Speaking

Students should be taught to use language precisely and cogently.

Reading

Students should be encouraged to recognise the pleasure in reading. They should be taught strategies to help them read with understanding; to locate and use information; to follow a process or argument; to summarise and to synthesise information; to adapt what they learn from their reading.

Writing

Students should be taught the importance of correct spelling and punctuation and the need to follow grammatical conventions. They should also be taught to organise their writing into logical and coherent forms. They should be taught the conventions of different types of writing and how to use them to communicate effectively.

The benefits of improved literacy

Better literacy leads to improved self-esteem, motivation and behaviour. It allows students to learn independently. Their communication skills will develop. It is empowering.
Literacy supports learning, improved vocabulary, reading skills, expression and organisation will help students deal with the demands of courses.
Reading enables students to learn from sources beyond their immediate experience.
Through speaking and listening, students make and revise meaning.
Writing helps students to sustain and order thought.

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Responding to higher order questions encourages the development of thinking skills and enquiry.

Role of Staff

- Staff should have a common understanding of what literacy means in (a) the School (b) in relation to their course.
- Staff in their subject/programme areas have a tangible understanding of the benefits of improving the teaching of literacy for their subject/programme area.
- All staff will help students to apply literacy skills in a variety of situations relevant to their courses.
- Each subject/programme area should monitor their student's literacy levels. There should be evidence that this information is used to refine teaching strategies and raise standards over time in writing. (E.g. annotating students' written work, using Assessment for Learning etc.)

Assessment procedures to gather information on students' literacy skills and measure progress

The school uses the following sources of information to provide baseline information on students' literacy skills on entry to The Technical School in Year 10:
- CATs 4 baselines assessment for Literacy skills (verbal and non-verbal feedback)
- Key Stage 2 Result in English where available
- End of Year 9 Level in English where supplied
- Reading Age derived using a standardised test

This baseline information is shared with colleagues through distribution of relevant data.

Resources

Generic resources have been purchased to allow colleagues to teach literacy effectively:
- Data projectors/interactive whiteboards are provided for every classroom
- Spellcheckers for all students
- White-boards in class rooms
- Glossaries and Key Words List are used within individual courses

Staff are encouraged to use:
- Writing frames
- Display boards in classroom for key words
- Class sets of small white boards.

Within the School itself, there is an ICT room and a bank of laptops available to staff and students for use in lesson time. Students also have access to ICT at lunch time and after school.

Literacy Across the Curriculum

Literacy skills which should be embodied within all courses:

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Teaching Reading
· Research and study skills
· Reading for meaning
· Studying texts
· Understanding the intentions of a text

Some possible approaches
· Directed Activities for Reading Texts (DARTs)
· Comprehension techniques
· Understanding text types and their particular conventions
· Reading for a specific purpose

Teaching Writing
· Handwriting
· Spelling
· Vocabulary
· Sentence construction and punctuation
· Paragraphing
· Planning, drafting and presenting

Students should be taught to write in the following ways

· To imagine, explore and entertain
· To inform, explain and discuss
· To persuade, argue and advise
· To analyse, review and comment

Some possible approaches
Style
· Guided writing
· Shared writing
· Scaffolding/writing frames
· Constructing rules/explanations
· Modelling writing styles

Spelling
· Whole school marking policy
· Spellings of key words

Vocabulary
· Key word lists/ displays
· Vocabulary games
· Mental mapping

Grammar
· Sentence starters
· Editing

A sequence for teaching writing

1. Establish clear aims	2. Provide examples
3. Explore the features of a text	4. Define the conventions
5. Demonstrate how it is written	6. Compose together
7. Scaffold the first attempts	8. Independent writing
9. Draw out key learning	10. Review

Teaching Speaking and Listening

What constitutes Speaking and Listening?
- Explaining, describing and narrating
- Exploring, analysing and imagining
- Discussing, arguing and persuading
- Listening to carry out instructions
- Listening for information, to select and recall

Some possible approaches

- Presentations
- Instructing others
- Debates, improvisation and drama
- Hot-seating
- Communication games
- Adapting talk to age and audience
- Evaluating talk
- Articulating problems
- Recording and recalling information from media
- Identifying different methods of presentation
- Role play
- Group problem solving

Listening

- Select from, reformulate, question and challenge what students hear using groups or pairs
- Listening tests focusing on information transfer
- Carry out instructions given by other students

Monitoring and evaluation of literacy

Monitoring will be undertaken to include:
- The marking of Literacy
- The provision of a course environment that promotes literacy
- Opportunities given to students within lessons to apply their literacy skills in a variety of situations relevant to their courses.

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