



Reading, Oracy and Writing Strategy Updated July 2023

Our CM Literacy is currently creating a streamlined Literacy strategy to incorporate this strategy from last year along with the reading and ROW strategies. We aim to publish the Literacy strategy in the second half of the spring term, 2025.

1. Introduction and outcomes

AHS is committed to raising the standards of reading, oracy and writing and understands that these skills are fundamental to learning. Reading, oracy and writing are seen as integral to the School curriculum by developing students' abilities to speak, listen and communicate, read, question and express themselves confidently and coherently both orally and in writing. All departments and all members of staff understand they have a crucial role to play in supporting the development of students' reading, oracy and writing and that competent reading, oracy and writing skills enable students to read, understand and access examination materials, so that students are able to achieve their full academic potential across all subject areas.

Enrichment opportunities such as whole school competitions, student ambassadors, library and other literacy events ensure that all students can build these essential skills both within and outside the classroom.

The Department for Education (2012) Teachers' Standards state that all teachers must: *'demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of Literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject'*.

The DfE Reading Framework (2023) states *'Reading is fundamental to education. Proficiency in reading, writing and spoken language is vital for pupils' success'*.

Rationale

Reading, oracy and writing skills are seen as fundamental in supporting the process of teaching and learning, in particular to:

- enhance the ability of all students to synergistically use reading, oracy and writing skills effectively across all subjects
- encourage enthusiasm in all students for reading wide ranges of fiction and non-fiction texts, communicating ideas confidently through different styles of writing and to be able to verbally express themselves coherently and articulately by providing opportunities
- develop oracy so students can effectively obtain information from verbal communication, speak to communicate and convey information
- develop the reading, oracy and writing skills necessary to fulfil the demands of further education, employment and adult life.



School Context:

- As a selective school, our students have strong writing skills ([see 2020/21 National Writing Assessment data](#))
- Our IDSR shows that our students enter the School with ‘above national’ prior attainment in both reading and writing
- As the spoken word is the dominant language mode used by both teachers and pupils, [evidence shows](#) that the spoken word is an essential pedagogical tool in developing pupil learning and cognitive development - if we get this right, the rest will follow more easily/effectively
- OFSTED 2012 target: “encourage all students to speak clearly, audibly and confidently when they answer questions, contribute to discussions or make presentations”

Considering the points above, we will start with a focus on oracy and reading. We will then appoint a Writing Coordinator in the next academic year to review our provision and areas for development.

Outcomes:

- Students and teachers place reading, oracy and writing as central tools that can transform academic and personal achievements
- to encourage a high profile of reading, oracy and writing around the school and to highlight its significance to ensure consistency of practice
- to coordinate the development and collaboration of cross curricular resources that will support subject and classroom teaching
- To work alongside the SEND team in identifying students that may require further support and intervention
- to analyse and review reading, oracy and writing data
- to provide enrichment opportunities for students to develop wider reading, oracy and writing skills outside of the classroom
- to liaise with and support the aims of the school library
- to foster a genuine love of reading in all students

2. Procedures

Consistency of Practice: departmental audits are carried out in order that all staff work together and take ownership of agreed strategies and standards.

All teachers should:

- be aware of the Reading, Oracy & Writing Strategy and their role within it
- promote reading, oracy and writing within their classroom incorporating, as appropriate, whole school strategies and techniques as laid out by the ROW team
- be provided with CPD so they have appropriate skills to be able to assist with the work in all areas of the curriculum.



3. Skills

Speaking and Listening

Speech is our main means of communication in everyday life and is fundamental to the development of understanding. Our aim is to develop increasing confidence and competence in speaking and listening so that all students are able to:

- clarify and express their ideas and explain their thinking
- adapt their speech to a widening range of circumstances including paired and group discussions and speaking to a larger audience
- use varied and specialised vocabulary
- speak for a range of purposes e.g. to narrate, to analyse, to explain, to reflect and evaluate
- listen with understanding and respond sensitively and appropriately.

In our teaching we should provide planned opportunities across the curriculum for students to engage in purposeful talk, both formally and informally. In planning for discussion, we should consider pace and timing so that purposeful talk is maintained. Teachers should actively take into account differing demands of concentration required for sustained listening and adapt when required.

Staff will give students regular opportunities to speak and listen in the following contexts:

- in pairs
- in small groups
- with the teacher or another adult in whole class discussions
- presentations to a wider audience.

In these contexts, some of the following activities should take place:

- exploring and describing events
- activities and problems
- exploring and developing ideas with others
- reporting back to a wider audience in order to consolidate ideas and understanding
- asking questions as well as answering them
- speculating, hypothesising and imagining
- planning, organising and reviewing activities
- investigating and solving problems collaboratively
- evaluating experiences and reflecting on learning
- speaking at length and adopting the 'expert' role.

The transfer of skills is something that many students find difficult. It is essential to start from the basis that students realise it is the same skill that is being used; sometimes approaches in subjects differ so much that those basic connections are not made.

In order to facilitate the transfer of skills between lessons, an Oracy Skills diagrammatic should be created, shared and promoted throughout the School. These skills should also be promoted through teacher talk in the classroom.



Reading

Our shared vision is to develop students' reading ages so that they are able to develop a lifelong love of reading and to not only be able to access but enjoy different texts and ranges of literature both in school and independently at home, above and beyond that expected for their age range. In particular, reading skills should be developed in order that students are able to:

- read fluently, accurately and with understanding, beyond that expected for their age range, but inclusive for those with additional needs
- become independent and critical readers
- make informed and appropriate choices from a wide range of texts and sources including print, media and ICT and to evaluate those sources
- apply techniques such as skimming, scanning, and text-marking effectively in order to research and appraise texts.

In our teaching we should provide planned opportunities across the curriculum for students to:

- read independently
- question and challenge printed information and views
- read and explore ideas and theories from different perspectives and draw their own conclusions
- learn how to sift and select, and take notes from text and read to locate and relocate information
- learn how to scan for overall meaning and scan for key points, words and phrases
- use reading to research and investigate from printed words, moving images, ICT texts
- read for a sustained length of time
- read academically challenging texts or those that stretch reading ability.

Evidence suggests that, when school age readers engage with non-digital single texts, there are benefits such as concentration, comprehension under time pressure and deeper understanding (compared to when they read digital single texts). Teachers and Heads of Department should consider this when planning reading opportunities within their curriculum.

Writing - For Consideration

In many lessons and examinations, progress and attainment depends on written communication. Our goal is to ensure that all students develop increasing confidence and competence in writing so that they are able to:

- write in a widening variety of forms for different purposes e.g. to interpret, evaluate, explain, analyse and explore
- develop ideas and communicate meaning to a reader using wide-ranging (tier 2) and technical (tier 3) vocabulary and an effective style, organising and structuring sentences grammatically and whole texts coherently
- present their writing clearly, using accurate punctuation, correct spelling and legible handwriting.



Planned opportunities across the curriculum should be provided for students to:

- write accurately, fluently, effectively and at length
- make notes from a variety of sources - printed word, moving images and ICT texts
- plan, draft, discuss and reflect on their writing
- learn the conventions of different forms of writing in different subject areas e.g. by using writing frames and providing clear models for writing
- write collaboratively with other students
- present some writing for display or publication
- act on feedback, teacher and peer assessment in order to improve their writing.

Staff will:

- expect high standards of presentation in most of students' writing
- provide good models and exemplars of particular kinds of writing at different attainment levels
- provide dictionaries, glossaries and lists of appropriate subject-appropriate vocabulary and encourage students to use them
- help students to use a range of strategies to learn spellings, including: - look - say - cover - write - check - making connections between words with the same visual spelling pattern.
- ensure that students are frequently provided with opportunities to write for sustained length of time, both handwritten and typed.

4. Key roles

T&L Lead, with the support of the CM for English, to liaise with the Reading and Oracy (and Writing) Coordinators to ensure the smooth planning and implementation of the ROW Strategy.

Reading, Oracy and Writing Coordinators:

- Develop resources, activities, information and instructions for the use of reading, oracy and writing skills across the School
- Promote awareness of reading, oracy and writing skills throughout the School in order to improve standards, particularly through high quality displays, whole school competitions and activities, staff CPD, assemblies and student working parties
- Undertake regular learning walks to assess effectiveness in raising standards
- Work alongside the SEND department to analyse and review data to identify intervention needs and monitor the relative performance of PP, SEND, EAL and wider disadvantaged students in reading, oracy and writing
- Ensure that students are assisting reading, oracy, writing as part of subject ambassador roles
- Support the Assistant Head Personal Development by planning and producing activities for the Personal Development Programme for use by Form Tutors
- Maintain the high profile of literacy outside the school, through contact with parents through the newsletter and outward facing events
- Maintain the high profile of literacy within the school through noticeboards, staff meetings and liaison with Form Tutors and the School Governing Body



- Review whether there is a need for a whole school reading, oracy and writing marking code to support HODs and the ROW team in the monitoring of students' work to ensure quality, consistency and to identify areas for improvement.

5. Monitoring for Impact

This policy will be supported by qualitative monitoring by the Reading, Oracy and Writing Coordinators, who will feed into the Assistant Head in charge of T&L. Such monitoring may include:

- Learning walks
- Student voice (e.g. through focus groups)
- Year 9 Progress Tests (reading and writing)
- Reading programme engagement data

The T&L Assistant Head will report progress to the governing board.

6. Other Related Documents:

- [Improving Literacy in secondary schools: a shared responsibility- April 2013.](#)
- [The reading framework: teaching the foundations of literacy - 2021](#)