Whole School Literacy Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Oral and written language is at the heart of all learning – it is the prime medium through which pupils process information and express themselves across the curriculum. It is also central to life in the wider school community. Therefore, development of good literacy skills and effective use of language are critical in ensuring successful learning occurs in all subjects. Given that the development of pupils' literacy skills results in enhancing their learning across the curriculum, everyone has a genuine stake in the cultivation of effective literacy skills as a tool for learning throughout the school. Fostering and celebrating outstanding literacy is central to all we do.

1.2 Literacy permeates all aspects of school life and is a crucial part of the commitment to raising standards at Abbot's Hill School. A whole school approach to developing literacy helps to support the aims of the school by:
- Ensuring pupils are able to access the curriculum
- Ensuring that pupils make progress from their first day
- Ensuring pupils are confident, independent learners
- Putting in place the foundations for life-long learning

2. Purpose

- To improve the literacy skills of all pupils and thus enable them to access the curriculum in a more effective, engaging and active manner.
- To raise standards in order to personalise learning for all pupils at Abbot's Hill
- To raise staff awareness of literacy as a tool for high quality teaching and learning
- To establish and maintain high, consistent expectations across the curriculum
- To develop pupils' communication skills; ensuring pupils are effective speakers and listeners, confident writers and can deploy a range of reading strategies
- To prepare pupils for life in an increasingly communications led society by ensuring that independent literacy skills are taught, built and applied
- To support pupils with weak literacy skills through specific intervention strategies
- To develop pupils' confidence and raise their self-esteem.

3. Leadership of Literacy

3.1 All staff have the responsibility for supporting literacy development at Abbot's Hill School. Strategic leadership and monitoring is undertaken by the Senior Management teams. It is also supported by the Teaching and Learning Forum and the Whole School Literacy Working Group.

3.2 Pupils experience staff as role models in the use of language; therefore pupils should receive encouragement in the correct use of English.

4.   Literacy and English

4.1   Teachers of English have a leading role in and a major responsibility for providing pupils with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need in order to read, write, speak and listen effectively.

5.   Literacy across the Curriculum

5.1   The challenge for all other subject areas is to understand the literacy levels of individual pupils and provide appropriate opportunities to develop, apply and master these skills. All subjects make a specific contribution to developing pupils' language through the use of subject specific vocabulary, the use of styles of writing that are appropriate to that subject and the need for pupils to access subject specific materials.

5.2   In developing literacy across the curriculum at Abbot's Hill we enable our pupils to:
- Foster a love of written and spoken language
- Communicate precisely and effectively in both speech and writing
- Become active and able readers who are engaged, enthused and motivated
- Use grammatically correct sentences
- Spell and punctuate accurately in order to communicate effectively in written English

6.   Guidelines

6.1   To ensure a whole school approach to the development of specific literacy skills, the following guidelines are fundamental:

7.   Reading

7.1   To improve reading, Abbot's Hill ensures that:
- Pupils experience active reading strategies that support their learning, e.g. text marking
- Pupils experience different ways of reading and reading for different purposes
- Opportunities are given to access reading materials, which are appropriate in both purpose and challenge
- Pupils experience quality, tailored support when needed and become active, independent readers
- Recommended reading lists are available for each year group to support their reading development. Copies of First News and magazines are available to encourage reading for pleasure. There are opportunities for pupils to recommend books to their peers.
- There are themed days to celebrate reading.

8.   Writing

8.1   To improve writing, Abbot's Hill ensures that:
- Pupils write in subject specific ways, including the use of key subject vocabulary
- Pupils experience different ways of writing for different purposes and audiences
- Exemplar materials to support their writing development are available
- Pupils experience quality, tailored support when needed and become active, independent writers

9. Speaking/Listening

9.1 To improve speaking and listening, Abbot's Hill ensures that:
- The task and purpose for listening is clear beforehand
- Reflection is built in to all learning opportunities
- Probing questions are asked
- Purposeful pair work/group work enhances learning
- Pupils and adults are expected to listen, respect and acknowledge the views of others and respond appropriately
- Subject specific vocabulary is used
- Challenge, discussion and debate are embraced as appropriate

10. Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

10.1 To further improve communication skills, Abbot's Hill ensures that:
- Keywords are highlighted, explicitly referred to and planned into learning
- All staff are aware of the importance and application of spelling, punctuation and grammar rules
- All staff have access to appropriate professional development and report guidelines
- Pupils are supported in developing their knowledge, understanding and application of high standards of spelling, punctuation and grammar

11. Marking for Literacy

11.1 Please note that this should be read in conjunction with the school's Marking Policy and Assessment and Reporting Policy.

11.2 The expectation is that identified key pieces of work within a scheme of work are marked for literacy and:
- That agreed literacy codes will be used effectively and appropriately to highlight literacy errors.
- Areas for improvement are highlighted and 'next steps' or 'Green for Growth' ideas are given
- Misspelling of some subject specific keywords will always be addressed
- Pupils will recognise the need to use accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar and understand the importance of responding to corrected work

12. Monitoring

12.1 This policy is quality assured through:
- Work analysis
- Pupil dialogue
- Lesson observations and learning walks
- Line management and appraisal meetings
- External assessment

Signed
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Mrs Kathryn Gorman
Head

Appendix 1

Ideas and examples from teachers at Abbot's Hill School January 2017:

Art:
- Year 6 Arts Award- research into museums and artists
- Key words for equipment and materials used throughout the Prep School

Computing:
- Displays in the computing room using key words

Drama:
- Make better use of interactive displays pointing to keywords during teaching

English:
- Reciprocal reading roles introduced with key terms.
- Clubs introduced to help with vocabulary through reading – Book Shout, Book Talk and Newspaper club.

Foundation Stage:
- Enhance all provision areas to include writing resources/ encourage writing during child-initiated activities

Geography:
- Topic keywords shared and discussed

History:
- Displays and word mats used with key words

Maths:
- Word displays in classrooms, keywords on the board for the week

MFL:
- Displays with key words

PE:
- Key terminology introduced throughout the Prep School

RS:
- Learning Ladders – include keywords.
- Calendar of festival names and events displayed in each year group

Science:
- Training given on literacy skills in science, including developing keywords
- Keywords stuck in books
- Word banks

Senior School

Art:
- Key words for equipment and materials used throughout the Prep School
- Focus on KS3 writing frames and developing additional keyword banks for the front and backs of their books
- Adjust schemes of work so that pupils in Year 7 produce a minimum of one detailed artist analysis every term using key artistic terms
- Update key terms and annotations sheet section in storage units
- Make better use of interactive displays pointing to keywords during teaching

Computing:
- Senior School - word of the week outside classroom and a unit based word board by year group

Dance:
- Keywords from GCSE glossary on display
- Keywords on the board for each lesson
- Word of the day/week
- Create dance pictures with keywords/phrases

Drama:
- Make better use of interactive displays pointing to keywords during teaching
- All KS3 pupils by 2020 will have a working journal within drama, to analyse and evaluate their performances using key terminology.

English:
- Senior School - Keywords for a new topic to be given at the beginning. Leave space for pupils to add their own words

Geography:
- Create word displays to rotate around classrooms, with definitions
- New geographical terms written clearly on board when introduced to aid learning of spelling

History:
- Add keywords to each PowerPoint to link with the enquiry question and three stars.
- Use in spelling and 10Q quizzes

Maths:
- Create word displays to rotate around classrooms
- Word of the week on Maths Department notice board

Media:
- Give glossaries and a 'spelling book' for pupils to add in more key words and their definitions

MFL:
- When introducing new vocabulary, words / phrases will be displayed on the top left hand side of the whiteboard

PE:
- Key terminology for all sports in the curriculum on our boards (glossaries)
- Large wall mural art work made up of all the key term painted in the changing rooms and sports hall walls

RS:
- Display for essential words in the RS classroom some for spelling purposes some for definition purposes

Science:
- Keyword spellings list
- Command words for exams displayed in classrooms