



# **Whole School Literacy Policy**

(ratified by the Full Governing Body on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2016)

**Review Cycle: 2 years – Autumn Term**

**Review By: Leadership Team and Standards Sub-Committee**

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***'Literacy is not a luxury, it is a right and a responsibility.  
If our world is to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century we must harness the energy and  
creativity of all our citizens'.***

President Bill Clinton, International Literacy Day, September 8 1994.

## **1. Introduction**

**1.1** Literacy underpins the Academy's curriculum by developing students' abilities to speak, listen, read and write for a wide range of purposes; using language to learn through communicating, thinking, exploring and organising. By helping students to express themselves clearly both orally and through their writing, we can enhance and enrich teaching and learning across the curriculum.

**1.2** All departments, all teachers and all members of our learning community have an integral role to play in the development of literacy within our students at the Academy. This is strongly supported through the new Teachers' Standards (2012) whereby it is stated that all teachers are required to 'demonstrate an understanding of, and take responsibility for, promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English'.

## **2. Aims of the Policy:**

The aims of this policy document are to:

**2.1** Support students' learning in all subjects by helping all teachers and support staff to be clear about the ways in which their work with students contributes to the development of students' communication skills.

**2.2** Develop a shared understanding between all staff of the role of language in students' learning and how work in different subjects can contribute to, and benefit from, the development of the students' ability to communicate effectively.

**2.3** Recognise that language is central to the students' sense of identity, belonging and growth.

**2.4** Raise students' own expectations of achievement, thus raising standards within the Academy.

**2.5** Develop students' confidence and self-expression.

**2.6** Promote knowledge and understanding of the students' standards of achievement and assessment in speaking and listening, writing and reading, and the identification of any areas of strengths and weaknesses.

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities:**

**3.1 All teachers and in-class support staff across the curriculum:** Contribute to students' development of language owing to the fact that speaking and listening, reading and writing are, to varying degrees, integral in all lessons.

**3.2 Literacy Coordinator:** Supports departments in the embedding of strategies to support the growth of literacy development. Manages the implementation of new literacy initiatives alongside ensuring current literacy provision is maintained and effective in its aims.

**3.3 The English Department:** Provides pupils with initial knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write, speak and listen effectively. Acts as a support unit for those teachers who identify their own literacy needs and seeks to improve these in order to promote high levels of literacy to the students they teach effectively.

**3.4 LRC Manager:** Works in close contact with literacy coordinator to promote whole school literacy through managing literacy initiatives and certain resources.

**3.5 Pupils:** Take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs and making improvements. Designated literacy leaders to help peer learning and assist in tutor literacy activities.

**3.6 Tutors:** Responsible for implementing a weekly silent reading tutor slot in KS3. Delivering literacy exercises in conjunction with literacy leaders in years 9 & 10. Promote involvement in literacy initiative such as Scholastic quizzes and World Book Day promotions.

#### **4. Policy Guidelines**

##### **4.1 Speaking and listening**

**4.1a** In our teaching we should provide planned opportunities across the curriculum for students to engage in purposeful talk, both formally and informally and in a variety of different sized groups as well as individually.

**4.1b** We should provide students with the ability to describe events, activities and problems, develop ideas with others, ask questions as well as answer them, reflect on learning orally and talk at length through adopting the role of the expert.

**4.1c** In planning for talk, we should consider pace and timing so that purposeful talk is maintained.

**4.1d** Focus on new English specification to include Speaking and Listening filmed tasks. To assist with this, public speaking competitions arranged.

##### **4.2 Reading**

**4.2a** We should use available data on students' reading levels in order to make informed choices about appropriate texts and to plan appropriate support for pupils in order that they may successfully access texts. The teacher should ensure that the reading ages provided on class profiles from September of each new academic year are noted in their data file to assist with this.

**4.2b** Pupils should be given the opportunity to read and follow written instruction, read texts of varying lengths, question and challenge printed information and views, read and explore ideas and theories, learn how to sift and select to effectively take notes from text to aid students both in their day to day learning as well as in periods of intense revision and use reading to research and investigate from printed words, moving images and online texts.

**4.2c** Pupils to use Star Testing four times a year with diagnostic and screening reports used to inform planning to make all students demonstrate progress within literacy. Accelerated Reading programme for all year 7 and 8 students to improve reading skills, using dedicated quizzes every three weeks.

##### **4.3 Writing**

**4.3a** We should draw attention to the purpose and intended readers of each piece of writing. Whilst the audience for students' writing is often teacher and peer group, students should be encouraged to write for a wide range of intended readers.

**4.3b** We should pay close attention to writing as a learning tool as well as a product of the learning.

**4.3c** We should help students to appreciate the differences between standard English and non-standard forms of the language.

**4.3d** We should help students to recognise the appropriate form for their written responses so that they know when to respond in note form and when more formal constructions are required.

**4.3e** All teachers should expect a high standard of presentation in line with students' ability levels.

**4.3f** All teachers should provide dictionaries, glossaries or lists of appropriate subject specific vocabulary and encourage students to use them.

**4.4** All teachers or teaching assistants with their own teaching room should provide a classroom environment which is conducive to good literacy practice by clearly displaying all Academy literacy posters and ensure that Academy literacy documents (such as writing styles maps) are easily accessible to students.

**4.5** All teaching rooms should feature a Word Wall in line with guidance distributed by the Literacy Coordinator. Subject specific word walls to be prominent.

**4.6** Within tutor times in the Academy, tutors should demonstrate their belief in the importance of reading for both pleasure and understanding through the tutor reading time in KS3 and literacy programme in year 9 and 10. . All students should be encouraged to participate in this.

**4.7** In assemblies, to promote the high levels of Speaking and Listening that we wish to see, when speaking, students should stand and should demonstrate high levels of fluency. This will be achieved through appropriate preparation and rehearsal. Any supporting resources, such as PowerPoint presentations should be checked carefully to avoid any literacy errors. Staff should lead by example when delivering.

**4.8** All members of staff should display and commit to filling out a ‘Literacy Matters at Alcester Academy’ door laminate which shows all members of the Academy community what each other is reading and that reading is important to us all.

**4.9** Literacy provision will be monitored through a variety of methods such as

- Sampling work through book trawls in line with the whole school work scrutiny timetable.
- Open door visits within reviews – asking pupils about their literacy, listening to pupils read (where appropriate) and within the teaching of literacy, specifically within English.
- Audits and self-evaluations completed by subjects and followed up by literacy coordinator to check for content and effectiveness within teaching and learning.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chair of Governors  
Mr Mike Dean**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Headteacher  
Mr Paul Hyde**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Renaissance – Accelerated Reader Strategy

### Alcester Academy

#### Rationale

The academy believes that the Accelerated Reader programme can support the literacy development of young people. As such, time is dedicated to the effective implementation of Accelerated Reader within the curriculum.

#### Implementation

All Year 7 and 8 students belong to the Accelerated Reader Programme at Alcester Academy. Targeted students in other year groups may use this as an intervention also.

A STAR test measures the baseline reading age of children in the September of each academic year. The results of this initial test help the academy to guide students towards an appropriate reading range. Reading progress will be measured via three other STAR tests over the remainder of the year; January, March and July. These tests will take place in English lessons on-line. Parents will be informed of these tests in advance and the importance for students to take them very seriously. Research shows that the most successful students in terms of reading progress take a minimum of twenty minutes to complete these tests.

Between STAR tests, students will be encouraged to read books that are appropriate to their identified reading range. On average, a book should be completed every three weeks. Within 24 hours of completing a book, students should take their on-line 'quiz'. This quiz measures the students comprehension of their reading. Quizzes can take place within English lessons, before school, after school, lunchtime or break time in the LRC. Students can also access their quiz at home using the log-in details that they will have been given.

Students should aim for a 100% pass rate each time. 85% is considered the minimum required in order that progress can be evidenced. Teachers and other key staff will advise students on when they can progress on to more difficult books based upon their quiz results.

#### Encouraging Reading

Accelerated Reader relies on students to read each day for between 20-30 minutes as a minimum. As such, Alcester Academy dedicates the following time to reading specifically each week:

Year 7/8
2 x 20 minutes within English lessons
1 x tutor time
1 x home learning
Targeted sessions required for key students

The students' reading rate is monitored. Rewards are collected according to the number of words that students have read and these then contribute to the inter academy annual house competition. Reading leaders are published each half term.

Students in Year 7 will be guided within English lessons about when to change their books. There is an expectation that Year 8s will independently change books when required. This will be closely monitored.

**The role of the:**

Literacy Leader within the academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that the Accelerated Reader strategy is implemented across the academy</li> <li>• To monitor the progress of students on the Accelerated Reader Programme</li> <li>• To trigger home/school communication as required</li> </ul>
English teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that STAR tests are conducted according to the time-line published</li> <li>• Dedicated reading time is built in to appropriate lessons</li> <li>• Quizzes are encouraged</li> <li>• To guide students on appropriate text choices</li> <li>• Year 7s have dedicated book swapping opportunities within lessons</li> <li>• Year 8s are monitored according to reading progress</li> <li>• Students from other year groups are released for reading intervention (s)</li> </ul>
SLT/SENCo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To oversee the implementation of the Accelerated Reader strategy</li> <li>• To identify students with the Literacy Leader who require further intervention (s)</li> <li>• To facilitate the necessary training required</li> <li>• To ensure that appropriate TA support is provided</li> <li>• To monitor the progress of a key group of students</li> </ul>
Librarian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that the academy can offer a wide range of texts for students</li> <li>• To guide students on their appropriate text choices</li> <li>• To work with the Literacy Leader on providing key Accelerated Reader data</li> <li>• To help to facilitate STAR testing and quizzes for students</li> <li>• To provide key reward data for House competitions</li> </ul>
Additional teaching assistant support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To work with the SENCo/Literacy Leader on the identification of children requiring further intervention</li> <li>• To support 1:1 reading where required</li> <li>• To encourage reading</li> <li>• To support the monitoring of reading progress</li> </ul>