Literacy Policy

Review Cycle;	Annual
Responsible group:	Head teacher, Literacy Subject Leader, LGB
Implementation date:	September 2025
Next Review Date:	September 2026

Small steps to big dreams

Mark 4: 30-32

Vision

We aim to provide educational excellence inspired by the world around us. To grow curious, responsible and confident learners within a caring community, in partnership with our families, upholding our Christian Values.

Clearwater Literacy Policy

Vision- small steps to big dreams.

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Literacy culture/vision:

At Clearwater Academy, we recognise the central importance of Literacy as a subject. We strive to embed a life-long love of language and communication by learning about Literacy skills through the use of quality children's texts, books and planned discussions that inspire and excite young readers and writers. We believe it is our duty to provide provision which will inspire and enthuse our children to read and write for pleasure; children who love the world of books and are proud writers in all areas of the curriculum. We also recognise the equal importance of oracy and the impact it has on a child's school life and the teaching of life-long skills. At Clearwater Academy, we encourage our children to explore ideas and learning through talk; challenge each other's opinions and develop their own reasoned arguments as well as talking in full sentences with a clear and confident voice.

Aims:

- For children to be confident users of language, both oral and written.
- For children to develop a love for reading and read for pleasure.
- For children to be able to listen and respond to others and demonstrate respect when doing so.
- For children to enjoy writing, experience writing across the curriculum and be proud of their writing.

Statutory requirements:

The statutory requirements for primary literacy and English, both teaching and learning, are outlined in the DfE's 'National curriculum in England: English programmes of study' (2014), and in the Language and Literacy sections of the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (2014).

Key roles and responsibilities

The headteacher:

- *Is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Literacy Policy of the school.*
- *Has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Policy.*

The governing body:

- *Is responsible for overseeing and reviewing whole-school literacy curriculum delivery and should regularly receive updates on the progress of literacy provision within the school, ensuring high standards are upheld.*
- *Has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Literacy Policy and procedures of the school*

Teachers:

- *The literacy lead will oversee the implementation of literacy teaching and learning, as well as the delivery of cross-curricular literacy skills.*

- *All teachers will be responsible for ensuring a high-quality of teaching, allowing development and progression of pupils' literacy skills.*
- *Clearwater recognises the important role that computing and technology have to play in the development of literacy skills and teachers will implement these modern and interactive approaches to learning as and when appropriate.*

Clearwater non-negotiables:

- Across the school, teaching and planning to evidence 'I do, we do, you do'
- Across the school, teaching and planning to evidence 'Try it, Use It, Refine It'.
- Refer to ARE grids to inform structure for teaching key skills in literacy across the year.
- Daily handwriting across KS1, three sessions weekly at lower KS2, at least one directed session at upper KS2
- Cursive handwriting to be taught and modelled by all teaching staff. EYFS to introduce with cursive and reassess at the end of Autumn term 2 (see EYFS policy).
- 'Talk for writing' to be used in KS1 and KS2 where appropriate alongside the 'Try It, Use It, Refine It' approach
- Weekly spellings across KS1 and KS2. Children will have opportunities to use these words in context to embed them.
- Daily phonics to be taught across EYFS and KS1 using essential Letters and Sounds. On entry to KS2, children's phonics to be assessed and interventions put in place.
- Explicit teaching of reading skills across the school; including EYFS. (see timetable).
- Reading texts to link to key vocab within non-core subjects (see timetable).
- Active listening to be used four times per week.
- Explicit lessons of oracy and discussion skills.

Planning:

- Five sessions of literacy to be taught each week across the school.
- Literacy planning follows the 'I do, we do, you do' and 'Try it, Use It, Refine It' approach.
- Five reading lessons per week across KS1 and KS2. Three reading lessons per week in EYFS, starting after Christmas. Please see reading timetable document.

Reading:

Teachers will use a variety of strategies to ensure pupils are receptive and engaged with the fundamental skills and competencies of reading. There will be explicit teaching of reading throughout the school, where children have the opportunity to develop reading strategies and discuss texts in detail. Children will be read with individually during independent reading time; providing time for both assessment and one-to-one teaching.

- All staff to follow the '3 a day' agreement in KS1 and KS2 and '5 a day' in EYFS, reading at least three/five books each day with their class. This promotes love for books and reading as well as developing vocabulary.
- EYFS-lower KS2 staff to use 'thought bubble' resource for active listening in 4/5 reading lessons; modelling the thought process and reasoning behind comprehension.
- All pupils will have access to books from the school library. Please see school library timetable. Pupils should also be encouraged to join their local public libraries and become enthused by reading.
- Staff should provide opportunities for all pupils to show they are developing an understanding of words, sentences, grammar and information they are using within their reading lessons.
- All staff should highlight and teach specific vocabulary within focus texts. Where vocabulary links to non-core subjects, teachers will reference this in the subject's knowledge organiser.
- Children to be taught the fundamental skills of reading through modelling and exposure and to understand that reading goes beyond phonic knowledge and word reading.
- For pupils at EYFS, teaching will be focussed on establishing and developing phonic skills, vocabulary and a basic understanding of content meaning in a group environment (with help of teaching partners).
- Pupils at a key stage 1 stage will continue developing these comprehension skills through VIPERS (Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explanation, Retrieval and Sequence/Summarise) whilst taking on more complex words, grammar and texts. VIPERS will be explicitly taught to ensure a clear understanding. Pupils should be increasingly encouraged to read independently through DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) sessions and learning within the wider curriculum to help develop an enjoyment for reading.
- Pupils at KS2 will confidently use VIPERS skills and readily apply them when studying a text, moving on from practising the skills in isolation to being able to comprehend a text using a variety of skills simultaneously.
- All classes will have a focus text each term (see timetable) which some of their reading lessons will be based around (see book rationale).

Writing

At Clearwater, we are committed to providing pupils with the two core competencies of writing – transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (structuring and articulating ideas) – as set out in the National Curriculum (2014) guidelines, so they are able to communicate and structure their ideas in a correct and coherent manner.

- Across KS1 and KS2, staff will reinforce the fundamental literacy skills, through the mastery approach, with pupils whenever they are engaged in writing tasks, ensuring sufficient development. Staff will plan opportunities for children to apply these skills in a range of genres.

- Staff will encourage pupils to use a neat handwriting style and insist on a good presentation and care of written work. Pupils will be expected to develop fluent legible and eventually, speedy handwriting. Interventions to be organised for those struggling to grasp handwriting skills and those unable to formulate letters on the page.

- Staff will model and reinforce basic skills in writing, reminding pupils of the importance of, and the need to take care with, basic punctuation and spelling. Teachers to allow time for children to reflect upon their work and edit it. Lower KS1 will be introduced to the use of 'purple polish' when editing their writing and this will be used across upper KS1 and KS2, with increasing independence.

- At lower KS1, the early transcription emphasis is on basic spelling, reciting the alphabet, and on handwriting. Pupils will learn composition through a range of strategies to carefully formulate sentences alongside correct vocabulary, grammar and punctuation.

- At upper KS1, pupils are taught the finer details and specificities of spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting. They will also be given the opportunity across their schooling to write and in a variety of contexts for different purposes, as well as greater independence to develop an interest in writing.

- At lower KS2, pupils continue to widen knowledge and understanding of finer details and specificities of spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting. They will develop an interest in writing and be given plentiful opportunities to write in a variety of context for a range of purposes, with particular attention to writing techniques for affect: atmosphere, suspense, formality and register.

Presentation:

- Children to write in pencil from EYFS-KS1. During lower KS2, children will transition from pencil to pen when they are ready. By upper KS2, the majority will write in pen.

- Long date and WALT to be stuck in books, across EYFS and KS1. KS2 to write long date and WALT in books.

- Marking to be in line with policy (see marking policy).

Handwriting and Spelling:

- In KS1 spellings to be taught within handwriting and essential Letters and Sounds phonics. Upper KS1 to use 'No-nonsense spelling'. Lower KS2 to have 3 'No-nonsense spelling' lessons and 2 handwriting lessons. See whole school timetable.

- Cursive handwriting to be modelled by all staff.

- Spelling rules to be applied within literacy lessons.

Speaking and Listening

- At Clearwater we recognise the importance of speech in pupils' development across the whole curriculum - spoken language is the foundation for developing reading and writing skills and understanding. Teaching this aspect of literacy requires four strands of speaking and listening: direct speech, listening, group discussion and interaction, and drama/presentation.

- Staff will encourage the development of speaking and listening through activities within each unit of work. Talk partners/groups will be used daily to help develop speaking and listening skills as well as within P4C teaching.

- Children who require extra support in speaking and listening will have the necessary intervention with a teaching partner, using speech and language recommended activities.

- Oracy and discussion skills will be explicitly taught in line with our schools oracy outcomes for each year group. Oracy and discussion will be used daily in every classroom and across the curriculum. Year groups display age related 'discussion guidelines' and children are provided with sentence stems to promote quality speaking. Please see oracy outcome and whole school oracy progression.

1. Curriculum delivery

At Clearwater we promote a mastery in Literacy approach to teaching. We believe children should be taught the fundamental skills of literacy first and then be able to apply these within topic related genres. Through this approach, there are no pre-conceived ideas as to what a child's starting point is. Children are able to explore specific literacy skills in a range of contexts in order to deepen their knowledge and understanding of these.

We want our children to develop their abilities to read, write and communicate verbally in order to access both the curriculum and pupil's potential.

- **SEND requirements –** Quality provision for pupils with SEND is a central value of Clearwater, and the literacy policy reflects this. Where necessary Teaching partners are used to support children with specific needs. Teachers will be competent in identifying pupils' needs and will set work/activities matched to the needs of individuals – depending on ability that may involve altered tasks/curriculum within a different group.

- **Use of technology –** As an increasingly important and integral part of any curriculum, computers and technology will be used in a variety of ways to deliver engaging and interactive lessons and tasks relating to literacy. Furthermore, any technology available that may assist the development of key skills – spelling, grammar, punctuation, pronunciation, phonics and handwriting – will be utilised (particularly for pupils with specialist needs).

2. Assessment and evaluation

- Pupils will be amply prepared for both official and unofficial assessments to accurately gauge a fair representation of the level they are working at.

- Staff will ensure the progression and development of pupils through identifying individual and collective strengths and areas for improvement through formative and summative assessments.

- Upon progression through the school, pupils' assessment records and individual reports will be made available to prospective teachers to familiarise and set appropriate future targets.

Assessment; this takes many forms, some of which may be:

- Internal and external (Cluster/DGAT) moderation.
- Sonar data drops.
- Recognised standardised tests papers, age appropriate to KS1 and KS2.
- PM bench marking reading assessments- KS1 and KS2.
- Rising Stars Reading Comprehension Assessments in KS1 and lower KS2. NFER reading comprehension tests in upper KS2.
- Essential Letters and Sounds phonics assessments and review weeks (in preparation for PSC)
- Internal moderation once a term. Early moderation for Year 2.
- Use of ARE grids to assess writing across KS1 & KS2.
- Big Write - 6 times per academic year in KS1 and KS2, at least 3 per year in EYFS.
- Blinks; Pupil voice, book looks, learning walks.
- EYFS baseline and profile

3. Monitoring and review

- The literacy policy of Clearwater shall be reviewed annually to ensure all aspects of the policy meet the latest statutory regulations and that it is sufficiently up-to-date, to ensure the best literacy education to pupils. The points set out within the policy should also be realistic, achievable and workable so school staff are able to deliver it effectively in relation to other duties and requirements.