






Rawmarsh Community School A Sports College

# WHOLE SCHOOL LITERACY POLICY

2021/22

**RAWMARSH COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

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## **Whole School Policy for Literacy**

### **1. Our Aims**

At Rawmarsh Community School, we aim to send all of our students into an ever changing world 'able and qualified' to play their full part in it. In order to do this, we aim to:

- Remove literacy as one of common barriers to learning.
- Ensure all students are equipped to '*read to learn*' so they *know more and remember more*.
- Develop a language rich environment across the school.

### **2. Approaches to Whole School Literacy**

The EEF's report 'Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools' by Alex Quigley and Robbie Coleman provides guidance for schools on whole school approaches to reading and vocabulary. The reading strategies that they advocate in Section 3 of this research paper to develop students as 'strategic readers' helped us to shape our 'Reciprocal Reading Model' in school. These approaches include:

- Activating prior knowledge
- Prediction
- Questioning
- Clarifying
- Summary

We also believe that, as the expert in the room, it should be the teacher who therefore models what 'expert' reading sounds like. This modelling is crucial to demonstrate to students how to read aloud with fluency and clarity, and how to pronounce complex subject specific vocabulary.

Section 2 of the same EEF document, advises that schools 'provide targeted vocabulary instruction in every subject.' To achieve this, they recommend adopting a tiered approach to explicitly teaching vocabulary followed up with regular assessment through low stakes quizzing. The following strategies, from the guidance, we have adopted into the development of our own 'Vocabulary Toolkit:'

- Explicit teaching of Tier 2 and Tier 3 words
- Exploring common word roots (etymology and morphology)
- Using graphic organisers and concept maps (e.g. Frayer Model)
- Undertaking regular low stakes assessment
- Consistently signposting synonyms

Ultimately, we want to provide students with 'rich oral and written language environments' in which they are exposed to a blend of implicit learning through discussion and direct teaching using our reciprocal reading model and explicit vocabulary instruction.

### **3. Layers of Provision**

It goes without saying that literacy must be embedded into all curriculum areas. However, to support this further, we offer a layered and graduated approach to support students with literacy as a barrier to learning:

- i. **Quality First Teaching:** Through a diet of reciprocal reading and explicit vocabulary instruction, all of our students will be supported to ensure that they can 'read to learn' and, as a consequence, know more and remember more. Teaching staff will know the weak readers within their class and cater for their needs, directing TA support where appropriate.
- ii. **Curriculum Intervention:** To support students who are working below age-related expectations in English, we offer a timetabled Literacy Intervention lesson. For those students who require 'catch up' to develop the essential literacy skills that underpin the whole curriculum, one of their two timetabled MFL lessons is dedicated to Literacy, allowing us to maintain a broad and balanced curriculum. Because literacy skills are transferrable across the whole curriculum, the content studied in Literacy lessons is thematic and incorporates topics from across the curriculum. Lessons reinforce our whole school approaches to reciprocal reading, explicit vocabulary instruction and the modelling of high quality talk.
- iii. **Small Group Intervention:** As part of this provision, students receive specialist small group support, delivered by staff from Curriculum Support. This includes the modelling of reading text aloud, opportunities to practice reading aloud and vocabulary acquisition. Reading material is selected to provide students with real life contexts and opportunities to develop wider knowledge.

#### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

Every teacher plays a shared role in breaking down the four common barriers to learning (literacy, numeracy, vocabulary and oracy) in order to fulfil the aims of our school and, more broadly, the trust. All teachers have a collective responsibility to deliver aspects of these core skills. Below is a breakdown of our expectations of staff across school to help ensure that we achieve our aims for students.

##### i) **The role of TAs and Support Staff**

To support students and help remove barriers, support staff will:

- Reinforce our approaches to reciprocal reading and vocabulary when working one to one or with small groups.
- Support in the checking and signposting of errors in clarity and accuracy in written work.
- Model high quality talk.

##### ii) **The role of Teaching Staff**

To remove barriers to learning, and develop a language rich environment within their classroom, teachers will:

- Provide opportunities to read high quality, challenging, subject-specific texts during lessons.
- Apply the principles of our reciprocal reading model when reading a piece of text so students can 'read to learn' effectively.
- Embed strategies from our vocabulary toolkit to explicitly teach and assess Tier 3 vocabulary
- Identify weak readers and plan accordingly to meet their needs.
- Model high quality talk

### **iii) The role of Faculty Leaders**

To remove barriers to learning, and develop a language rich environment within their subject area(s), Faculty Leaders will:

- Curate high quality and challenging reading material for use in their subject area.
- Identify Tier 3 words to be explicitly taught, tested and re-tested in each scheme of work.
- Ensure that regular opportunities for reading are built into schemes of work and that strategies from the reciprocal reading model and vocabulary toolkit are used in practice.
- Ensure that every classroom and corridor within the faculty is equipped to be a *language rich* environment, which actively promotes subject specific reading and vocabulary.
- Outline approaches to removing literacy as a barrier to learning within subject curriculum intent documentation, including disciplinary literacy where appropriate.
- Reinforce to staff, students and parents why literacy is important in their subject area(s) – including where it may be explicitly assessed.
- Evaluate provision of whole school literacy within subject area(s) during routine faculty quality assurance.
- Liaise with the member of SLT with responsibility for whole school literacy and utilise support / expertise where necessary.

### **iv) The role of school leaders with specific responsibility for literacy.**

To remove barriers to learning, and develop a language rich environment across the school, senior leaders will:

- Review the latest academic research and collaborate to inform practice
- Deliver research-led CPD for all staff to ensure a consistent approach.
- Ensure literacy maintains a high profile within the school.
- Quality assure the teaching of literacy across the school.
- Identify good practice to be shared across the school / trust.
- Offer bespoke CPD to individual faculty areas, as required.
- Share data with staff to raise awareness of which students require support with reading.