*2023 Tony Stephens, Education Support*

**Cross-curricular Literacy and Oracy**

Weaknesses in writing is one of the great barriers to learning, and as such the development of written literacy has to be a top priority for a school. It is not enough to leave it to the English department, and has to be developed across the curriculum and beyond. At the same time oracy skillsare too often neglected, but are crucial if students are ever going to develop the ability to fully express themselves with confidence and self- belief, both in their everyday lives and also when “selling themselves”, e.g, in interviews, meeting new people, giving presentations etc. People talk far more than they write, and yet oracy skill development is often seen as less important in schools.

**Provision**

It is important in developing literacy not to try to make it too complicated for both staff and students, but rather concentrate on the basics of grammar, spelling and different types of expression, and ensure that these are being observed and developed across the curriculum

Ultimately success will be achieved when the culture of the school has been changed to one where developing literacy, is seen by everyone as a key element of the ethos of the school

Patience is required as it may take several years to develop this culture, and the Literacy Coordinator will be wise to not to try to do too much at any one time but rather concentrate on initiatives that will be highly effective and make a difference because they are well planned, implemented and monitored.

Wherever possible, interventions need to be specific and personalised to student needs rather than general, “umbrella” interventions

**Possible actions to be taken over an academic year –a checklist**

**By the Literacy Coordinator**

* The **aims** are:
	+ To ensure that all teachers realise that they are teachers of literacy/oracy and this is a key element of their teaching. They should also understand that this will help them achieve higher levels of achievement within their subject
	+ To concentrate on what will be the most effective ways of developing students’ literacy/oracy skills in the shortest period of time
	+ To ensure that existing school systems are being utilised to develop student literacy/oracy, and in this way the whole burden of developing cross-curricular literacy/oracy is shared and does not just fall on the Literacy Coordinator, who may have limited time available to do the job, e.g:
		- Lesson Observations
			* It is made clear to teachers that how successful they are in developing literacy/oracy will be an important part of the assessment and feedback
			* This is reflected in the lesson observation form
			* Lesson observers receive guidance on how to assess how well literacy/oracy has been developed, e.g;
				+ Were all possible opportunities exploited to develop literacy and oracy during the lesson
				+ Was this reflected in the lesson plan/scheme of learning
				+ Was there attention to putting across key words, both generic and subject related
				+ Was there assistance to students in interpreting examination questions
				+ Were there specific activities to help students develop their oracy skills
		- Checks on student work during lesson observations and book/marking trawls
			* The school marking for literacy policy needs review after full consultation and then put across strongly to all staff, stressing that this is not an option during marking
			* All staff checking student work should be assessing the quality of literacy and this should not just be done by the literacy coordinator, and once again they need training in how to best do this, looking at;
				+ Is the marking for literacy policy being followed, (this should not be too complicated, but stick to the basics)
				+ Is work neatly presented with pride shown in the work
				+ Are the students being given opportunities for extended pieces of writing
				+ Are they using increasingly sophisticated vocabulary
				+ Are they showing the ability to write for different purposes and in different styles
				+ Are there AFL comments that relate to literacy and are the students responding to them
				+ Do the students have to use different types of reading skills as part of the schemes of learning
		- Checks on schemes of learning
			* Do the scheme of learning templates in use always contain a section on how literacy/oracy is being developed
			* SLT line managers should, within a set time period, have checked a selection of existing schemes of learning for different years within each subjects to assess and then feed back to the departments whether or not there is enough emphasis on developing literacy/oracy and enough imagination shown in how it is being done
			* As new schemes of learning are produced and checked by line managers before implementation, it is a priority that the quality of literacy/oracy development is one of the key checking criteria

All the above will give valuable information on which subject areas/staff are showing excellence in developing literacy/oracy and which are weak in this area. This then gives the necessary evidence for where focused CPD is necessary and also who will be available to help this process by demonstrating best practice

* Literacy champions
* Having literacy/oracy champions within each department, with whom the Literacy Coordinator meets regularly and who help develop literacy within their subject areas
* Having governors who have a special responsibility for literacy/oracy within the school

**Other priorities**

* It may well be necessary to provide CPD for staff to develop their own literacy skills; there is regrettably plenty of evidence that these are sadly lacking in some teachers, but they obviously won’t be able to help students unless that are fully skilled themselves
* Working with the KS3 Coordinator to ensure that there is a coordinated approach to developing literacy/oracy across the key stage curriculum with the use of literacy/oracy audits
* Having designated literacy/oracy weeks when all departments put a special focus on literacy activities within their lessons
* Working with the English department to ensure that they have a coherent and consistent approach to developing literacy/oracy within the English curriculum
* Working with the SEN department to ensure that all those students with very weak literacy are being provided with all possible, skilled support
* Providing bespoke CPD for staff at every possible opportunity. Ensuring that there is, in particular, an emphasis on developing the literacy/oracy skills of boys, disadvantaged students and higher ability students.
* Developing joint literacy initiatives with the primary schools, as part of the primary/secondary liaison programme for the school, and then building on these in to KS3
* Meetings with subject leaders to identify the major literacy issues they face and what specific support they would want. A particular need may be an emphasis on both key words and also helping students to interpret examination questions, but also trying to establish a common language across the curriculum
* Over the year, carrying out checks on the schemes of learning and resources of each subject area to check that they are both helping develop literacy/oracy and also that the resources are at an appropriate range of literacy levels as part of differentiated provision for students
* Liaising with PSHE/Careers staff, to discuss ways in which they can develop in particular a wide range of oracy skills for students
* Liaising with drama and performing arts, about how students perform and present themselves generally and also in relation to specific individuals
* Carry out learning walks to check on all aspects of literacy/oracy in lessons, which will provide extra evidence of where support is needed

**Reading**

It is not enough just to develop reading skills, but also comprehension; there is plenty of evidence of students who seem to be able to read but actually have very little understanding of what they are reading

* Check the reading ages in terms of skills and comprehension of all students on entry, and then again twice a year in Y7 and 8 for all students and at the end of Y9 and 10 with students shown to be weak in reading during KS3
* Ensure that there is weekly support provided in curriculum time for any student whose reading age is more than two years below his/her chronological age
* Coordination with the SEND department to check that;
	+ Intensive, skilled support is being given to the poorest readers, and their progress is being carefully monitored
	+ Good use is being made of the best ICT software
	+ The literacy Coordinator knows exactly who is and is not receiving reading support from the SEND team
* Ensure that Accelerated Reading is being used in the most effective way for other students who have weaknesses in reading skills or comprehension and which is coordinated with the overall school policy for developing reading skills
* A tutor period each week could be devoted to reading for all students, as long as this is carefully managed to avoid a situation where student only read for this twenty minutes and then never read again for the rest of the week
* It is important that subject areas are giving the students opportunities for efficient reading for different purposes as an integral part of their teaching, including the development of research skills, and this can also be checked through lesson observations and checks on schemes of learning

**Possible role of member of staff supporting the Literacy Coordinator**

This person, who is probably best to be one of the support staff, should be very much the literacy and reading champion, line managed by the Literacy Coordinator, concentrating on “pr” for literacy, with initiatives such as;

* Running cross curricular literacy days for students, with the usual time table suspended for the day
* Overseeing the use and development of Accelerated Reading, Lexia etc
* Establishing peer reading partnerships, using both older students and also members of the community
* Making the library the physical and very attractive symbol of the importance that the school attaches to developing literacy skills. Doing everything possible to make students want to use the library and borrow books and resources.
* Running competitions and events aimed at encouraging reading
* Having literacy displays and posters all around the school.
* Running literacy based events and activities and ensuring that there is praise and recognition for progress and success within literacy
* Organising literacy ambassadors and champions, with perhaps one in each tutor group
* Visits of authors, poets etc
* Being the champion for literacy via assemblies, newsletters, parents’ meetings
* Setting up systems or events whereby the school can offer advice to parents/carers on how they can help their children develop literacy skills
* Literacy newsletter
* Liaison with external agencies, e.g, National Literacy Trust

All the above is very valuable, but the first priority before this has to be to ensure that literacy/oracy is integrated in to classroom learning as described above

**Measuring Impact**

It is very hard to delineate how much the level of literacy in the school is down to the quality of the English department, and how much it is enhanced by the cross-curricular literacy initiatives, especially in terms of hard data, but this makes it all the more important to evaluate in detail the effectiveness of the latter.

It is important to work from a literacy baseline, which is largely that set by data from primary schools at the time of transfer and subsequent baseline testing including systems such as Lexia levels, QWC ladders

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Target 2024 | 1st tracking point | 2nd tracking point | 3rd tracking point | Achieved 2023 |
| **Percentage of students on target in English in Y7** |  |  |  |  |  |
| All  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Pupil premium |  |  |  |  |  |
| Boys  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Girls |  |  |  |  |  |
| HA |  |  |  |  |  |
| MA |  |  |  |  |  |
| LA |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Percentage of students on target in English in Y8** |  |  |  |  |  |
| All  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Pupil premium |  |  |  |  |  |
| Boys  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Girls |  |  |  |  |  |
| HA |  |  |  |  |  |
| MA |  |  |  |  |  |
| LA |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Percentage of students on target in English in Y9** |  |  |  |  |  |
| All  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Pupil premium |  |  |  |  |  |
| Boys  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Girls |  |  |  |  |  |
| HA |  |  |  |  |  |
| MA |  |  |  |  |  |
| LA |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Percentage of students on target in English in Y10** |  |  |  |  |  |
| All  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Pupil premium |  |  |  |  |  |
| Boys  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Girls |  |  |  |  |  |
| HA |  |  |  |  |  |
| MA |  |  |  |  |  |
| LA |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Percentage of students on target in English in Y11** |  |  |  |  |  |
| All  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Pupil premium |  |  |  |  |  |
| Boys  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Girls |  |  |  |  |  |
| HA |  |  |  |  |  |
| MA |  |  |  |  |  |
| LA |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Average grade achieved by students in English at the end of the Key Stage 4 in 2023** |  |
| All  |  |
| Pupil premium |  |
| Boys  |  |
| Girls |  |
| HA |  |
| MA |  |
| LA |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| **Average increase in reading ages from the start of Y7 to the end of Y7** |  |
| All  |  |
| Pupil premium |  |
| Boys  |  |
| Girls |  |
|  |  |
| **Average increase in reading ages from the start of Y8 to the end of Y8** |  |
| All  |  |
| Pupil premium |  |
| Boys  |  |
| Girls |  |
|  |  |
| **Average increase in spelling ages from the start of Y7 to the end of Y7** |  |
| All  |  |
| Pupil premium |  |
| Boys  |  |
| Girls |  |
|  |  |
| **Average increase in spelling ages from the start of Y8 to the end of Y8** |  |
| All  |  |
| Pupil premium |  |
| Boys  |  |
| Girls |  |
|  |  |
| **Average increase in reading comprehension from the start of Y7 to the end of Y7** |  |
| All  |  |
| Pupil premium |  |
| Boys  |  |
| Girls |  |
|  |  |
| **Average increase in reading comprehension from the start of Y8 to the end of Y8** |  |
| All  |  |
| Pupil premium |  |
| Boys  |  |
| Girls |  |

Evidence provided for impact cannot be entirely based around achievement data. There is also the need to capture the impact of actions by capturing pupils’ attitudes before and after an intervention or looking at patterns of behaviour and engagement as signs of improvement. These could provide short-term evidence of impact alongside the long-term goals to raise pupils’ achievement.

* Include the resources/ finances needed for each initiative so that SLT and governors can easily make a ‘value for money’ judgement.
* Ensure that for every initiative there are simple, clear and measurable success criteria.
* Include realistic, timely check-points so that if an intervention is not working it can be adapted without wasting a lot of time, effort and money.
* Consider ‘softer’ evidence to show the impact of actions through asking pupils about their attitudes to attendance, behaviour and learning before and after interventions

**Measures of Success directly relating to cross-curricular initiatives**

Dependent on the systems and events the school has in place this could include;

* + Reports on book trawls, looking at;
		- Quality of English in all aspects
		- Marking for literacy
	+ Summary from lesson observations records on how well literacy was developed in lessons
	+ Report on schemes of learning checks s regards how well they develop literacy
	+ Literacy based CPD feedback
	+ Feedback on joint literacy initiatives with primary schools
	+ Feedback from all literacy initiatives and events
	+ Records of library usage by students
	+ Student and parent feedback

If any of these can usefully be measured in data form then they can be added to the above section. If not, there should be written reports issued each half term by the Literacy Coordinator

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