



Literacy Policy

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1. Introduction

At Chatham Grammar we firmly believe that literacy is the key to academic success across the curriculum. Our literacy policy has been informed by research led by The Education Endowment Foundation's 'Improving Literacy in Secondary School'. Our approach has an emphasis on disciplinary literacy with an expectation that every teacher communicates their subject through academic language. At the heart of knowing and doing every subject are the skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The following highlight where each of these skills are developed across the curriculum. Subjects are best placed to select which strategies support their subject most effectively.

We prioritise disciplinary literacy across the curriculum through the following:

- Subject and topic specific key word lists
- Creation and use of glossaries
- Explicit identification of key words before completing written tasks
- Key words identified in lesson content
- Word banks for extended writing
- Focus on key words during peer and self-assessment
- Key words displayed in teaching rooms

We develop students' ability to read complex academic text by:

- Providing and modelling guided reading tasks for class, homework including flipped learning and case studies
- Using academic essays and articles
- Recalling prior knowledge to improve student comprehension
- Questioning and using 'prediction' to improve student comprehension
- Modelling and group work as support strategies

We support students' writing through the following:

- Sharing exemplar materials to encourage high level responses
- Explicit modelling of answer planning
- Explicit modelling of answer writing
- Targeted support for students who struggle to write fluently (subject level support)
- Time given to group planning/writing
- Time given to paired planning/writing

We provide opportunities for students' structured talk by:

- Reframing student responses
- Reiteration of key vocabulary
- Explicit teacher modelling
- Directed questioning
- Use of 'Think-Pair-Share' strategy
- Planning debates and group work to ensure students can use and understand disciplinary vocabulary
- Planned paired/group discussion before writing tasks
- Identifying opportunities for student presentations

These strategies are also supported through our Leadership programme in Key Stage 3.

Reading tests

At Chatham Grammar we use the New Group Reading Tests (NGRT) to test students' reading comprehension, specifically focusing on sentence comprehension (SC) and passage comprehension (PC).

Leadership

The Leadership Development Programme is a programme of study aimed at developing employability skills and leadership qualities. Lessons help students develop self-belief, resilience, improve confidence and develop communication and presentation skills, whilst reinforcing the development of transferable skills, such as critical thinking, research skills and enterprising skills. The Leadership Programme not only focuses on developing employability skills, but it also allows students to develop and progress in all areas of their academic life, including literacy. Students are encouraged to engage with and read a wide variety of sources and texts in preparation for debates and critical thinking activities. In addition to this, there is a strong emphasis on persuasive writing and writing for a specific audience, including writing and delivering speeches, writing business and sales pitches and debating. Furthermore, particular importance is placed on encouraging students to read aloud and improving spoken communication through group work and delivering presentations.

Fostering a culture of reading

The Library

The library has a dedicated Librarian who runs Library competitions and events, provides guidance around books students can borrow and is in the library throughout the day to assist students. The library is a central hub for the academy community and is a safe place for many students, and a working space that is regularly used by teachers and clubs.

Recent competitions and events consist of:

- Strictly Come Reading
- The Triwizard Tournament for World Book Day
- Puzzles and games in the library
- LGBTQ+ History Month
- Book Cover Design Competition, to revamp an old, classic book
- Student entries for Young Writers' writing competitions through the library with most selected for publication
- Student led fundraising for a new selection of their favourite genre supplemented with a sizeable donation from our Principal

The library also regularly orders books ranging from teen books for younger readers; young adult fiction, for the more confident; graphic novels and manga; adventure and horror; non-fiction; classics; GCSE and A-level study guides and recently released texts to build a collection which is engaging for students. The librarian regularly keeps updated on new releases to embellish our collection of stories and to reflect our diverse student population. In the last few years, the library has added hundreds of books featuring Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) characters and authors, and LGBTQ+ characters and authors, both of which the students regularly borrow.

The Librarian is also an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA), who runs individual sessions with students to help them with their anxieties, stress, friendship issues and general emotional literacy.

Drop Everything and Read (DEAR)

Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) is a form time activity to develop the reading, inference skills and general knowledge of students. The programme consists of individual reading time, along with guided reading by the Personal Tutor and group reading. The material read ranges from novels to short stories and non-fiction articles. The purpose behind these is to not only develop their vocabulary, comprehension, and inference skills, but their ability to empathise with those in different circumstances to their own, as well as building up their cultural capital by reading material they would not choose themselves.

Literacy beyond the classroom

The Academy offers a wide range of clubs to help support our students in becoming aspirational young people who thrive in a changing world. These clubs allow them to learn new skills and acquire new knowledge to support their personal development and confidence. The following are a few examples that enhance our literacy provision: History Book Group, Writing for Performance, Debate Club and Creative Writing.