



Literacy Policy

February 2016

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Mission Statement

The Becket is a Catholic school. Our mission is to work in partnership with parents and carers to provide an outstanding Catholic education for all our young people. This means:

- *Inspiring and motivating young people to achieve their full potential academically, spiritually, socially and in a full range of extra-curricular activities*
- *Helping young people to grow in the love and knowledge of Jesus Christ*
- *Developing in young people a deep knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith*
- *Practising Gospel values, such as forgiveness and helping those in need, within our school community and in society as a whole.*

'Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.'

Psalm 119:105

'Literacy unlocks the door to learning throughout life, is essential to development and health, and opens the way for democratic participation and active citizenship.'

Kofi Annan

1 Introduction

All teachers are teachers of literacy. As such, the staff of the Becket school is committed to developing literacy skills in all of our pupils, in the belief that it will support their learning and raise standards across the curriculum. Literacy should be an integral part of pupils' learning. Therefore, as appropriate to the focus of the lesson, pupils should understand, and be taught explicitly, how their attainment in school and their potential to be able to adapt to a fast changing world is directly related to their reading, writing and speaking and listening skills. The pupils need:

- vocabulary, expression and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of all subjects
- reading opportunities to learn from sources beyond immediate experience;
- writing that helps to sustain and order thought;
- language that helps to reflect, revise and evaluate the things they do, the things others have said, written or done;
- to be enabled to respond to higher order questions encouraging the development of thinking skills and enquiry;
- improving and empowering literacy and learning that can impact on self-esteem, motivation and behaviour, allowing them to learn independently.

2 Implementation at whole-school level

All teachers have a vital role to play in enabling all pupils to develop and extend their literacy skills

a) Roles and Responsibilities:

- **Senior Managers:** lead and give a high profile to literacy;
- **English Department:** provide pupils with knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write and speak and listen effectively;
- **Teachers across the curriculum:** contribute to pupils' development of language, since speaking, listening, writing and reading are, to varying degrees, integral to all lessons;
- **Literacy co-ordinator:** supports departments in the implementation of strategies and encourages departments to learn from each other's practice by sharing ideas. A key strategy group for this process are the literacy reps who meet termly with the Literacy coordinator to share good practice and to learn how to adapt new strategies.
- **Parents:** encourage their children to use the range of strategies they have learnt to improve their levels of literacy.
- **Pupils:** take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs and making improvements;
- **Governors:** an identified governor should meet with staff and pupils and report progress and issues to the governing body and to parents in the governors' annual report.

b) Across the school we shall:

- Identify the strengths and weaknesses in students' work from across the school.
- Identify literacy objectives for specific key stages and use ISE days, staff meetings, Friday Literacy sessions and PSHCE lessons as learning opportunities to embed and strengthen students' literacy.
- Adapt the identified literacy cross-curricular priorities for each year.
- Seek to identify progression in the main forms of reading, writing, speaking and listening undertaken in each department and strengthen teaching plans accordingly.
- Plan to include the teaching of objectives to support learning in own subject area.
- Review this literacy policy annually.

3

(a) Speaking and Listening

We will teach pupils to use language precisely and coherently. They should be able to listen to others, and to respond and build on their ideas and views constructively.

We will develop strategies to teach pupils how to participate orally in groups and in the whole class, including: using talk to develop and clarify ideas; identifying the main points to arise from a discussion; listening for a specific purpose; discussion and evaluation.

Staff training needs will be met through INSET (In Service Educational Training) days and staff meetings with further resources being stored on the t-drive in the 'Literacy Across the Curriculum' folder, which contains useful strategies such as the management of group talk and listening.

(b) Reading

We aim to give pupils a level of literacy that will enable them to cope with the increasing demands of subjects in terms of specific skills, knowledge and understanding. This applies particularly in the area of reading (including from the screen), as texts become more demanding.

We will build on and share existing good practice. We will teach pupils strategies to help them to: read with greater understanding; locate and use information; follow a process or argument; summarise; synthesise and adapt what they learn from their reading. We will foster and encourage the enjoyment of reading and its role in developing critical thinking and empathy. As a school, we will look for ways to use common language when using reading as a learning tool. The terms and skills of skimming, scanning and reading for meaning will become terminology used by all teachers.

The Learning Resource Centre (LRC) will continue to be an excellent resource for embedding the enjoyment of reading across the curriculum. The use of accelerated reader as a tool to promote reading and monitor the progression of reading skills will continue to be used for all Year 7 pupils; and for new entrants to the school so as to ensure accurate setting and monitoring of progression. This is especially pertinent for EAL pupils. Events such as National Literacy Day, World Book Day and Book Week will be used to raise further the profile of reading for enjoyment. Friday tutor time will continue to have a Literacy focus.

(c) Writing

It is important that we provide for co-ordination across subjects to recognise and reinforce pupils' language skills, through:

- Making connections between pupils' reading and writing, so that pupils have clear models for their writing;
- Using the modelling process to make explicit to pupils *how* to write;
- Being clear about audience and purpose;
- Providing opportunities for a range of writing including sustained writing.
- Using connective mats for pupils to structure their writing and vocabulary pyramids as needed.

4 Writing non-fiction

Each department will:

- teach pupils how to write in ways that are specific to that department's subject needs;
- liaise with the English department to help decide when the generic **text types** are best introduced in Year 7.

- align, wherever possible, the teaching of subject-specific text types to follow the broad introduction by the English department, so that pupils see how types of writing are applied and adapted in different subjects.

5 Spelling:

Each department will:

- identify and display key vocabulary;
- revise key vocabulary;
- teach agreed learning strategies which will help pupils to learn subject spelling lists;
- concentrate on the marking of high-frequency and key subject words taking into account the differing abilities of pupils.
- test or revise high frequency words regularly;
- set personal spelling targets.

6 Monitoring and Evaluation

We will make use of available data to assess the standards of pupils' literacy. SLT link, the Head of English and the Literacy co-ordinator, will decide how to monitor progress in the school.

Possible approaches are:

- sampling work – both pupils' work and departmental schemes;
- observation – pupil pursuit and literacy teaching;
- meetings;
- student voice
- review of development plans;
- encouraging departments to share good practice by exhibiting or exemplifying pupils' work.

7 Including All Pupils

(a) Literacy Progress Units

- Targeted intervention in Year 7 will be used to help pupils to catch up with their peers as quickly and effectively as possible in order to maximise access to the secondary curriculum.
- Teachers across the curriculum will be kept informed about which pupils are participating in LPUs
- Teachers will be familiar with the content of particular LPUs in order that they can 'link the learning' into their subject area and to provide pupils with opportunities to practise their skills.
- Links which are already established between the Leader of the Learning Resource Centre and specific departments will be strengthened and extended such that the valuable work delivered through the Progress Units will have a further impact across the school.

(b) The more able

We will seek to:

- identify able pupils;
- promote ways of structuring learning for able pupils by using extension tasks and recommending additional and relevant reading
- continue to develop teaching and learning which supports and challenges able pupils.

(c) English as an Additional Language

Our pupils who are EAL speakers need to hear good examples of spoken English and also to refer to their first language skills to aid new learning in all subjects of the curriculum. Thus, they should be encouraged to have access to a dictionary in their mother tongue and to create subject specific

glossaries to which they refer. The use of their first language enables them to draw on existing subject knowledge and to develop English language skills in context.

EAL pupils should be set according to their ability and this should be adapted once their ability in subjects has been assessed. Pupils do not need to be seated next to a pupil who speaks their language although this can be an initial strategy when the pupil first arrives. Staff will receive training on strategies to support EAL pupils from the Literacy coordinator and relevant outside agencies.

(d) SEND pupils

We will teach our pupils with special educational needs appropriately, supporting their learning and providing them with challenges matched to their needs, through using a range of teaching strategies such as guided group work, writing frames and spoken activities. There will be liaison with the SENDCO as to specific literacy strategies to support dyslexic pupils such that these approaches will be used by all teachers.

8 Assessment

For detailed guidance on marking, see our Marking Policy. It is important to note that the school, and particularly the Literacy coordinator, recognise the need to have specific literacy targets given by teachers across the curriculum. Currently, these are in the school's marking policy and the Literacy Co-ordinator should assume responsibility for assessing the effectiveness of this.

9 The English Department

In addition to all the whole-school aspects of this policy, the English teachers at the Becket School have a leading role in providing pupils with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write, speak and listen effectively. The English department is well-placed to offer good advice and expertise. It is the responsibility of the Literacy Co-ordinator to work within and between departments in order to improve literacy across the curriculum.

10 Key Priorities Agreed for 2015-2016:

- The use of the specific reading strategies of skimming, scanning, reading for meaning and reading for enjoyment.
- The modelling of writing by all teachers.
- The use of connective mats and vocabulary pyramids by all teachers
- The extending and embedding of strategies for teaching EAL pupils across the curriculum.
- Review of school priorities will take place: annually.

The Becket School is committed to raising standards of literacy

in all its pupils, through a co-ordinated approach.

Every teacher has a role to play in this process.

Cathy O'Boyle
Literacy Co-ordinator

Implemented on: 2nd Feb 2016

Reviewed on:

Approved by Full Governing Body: 2nd Feb 2016

Next review date: