



LITERACY POLICY

RATIONALE

Literacy promotes and develops our skills as communicators, and correspondingly encompasses communication which can be interpersonal (signing, speaking and listening) or symbolic (reading and writing). Literacy skills enable learning across the curriculum, underpin student's progress and achievement, and support and enhance their participation in life outside school.

AIMS

Literacy at Spring Common Academy Trust offers all students opportunities to:

- develop their ability to respond, listen, understand and make a positive contribution;
- interact and communicate effectively with others in a range of social situations, helping them to form healthy and happy relationships with their peers, as well as the adults who support them;
- make choices, obtain information, question, and be actively involved in decision making to help them keep safe;
- develop creativity and imagination so that they can enjoy and achieve;
- have access to a wide range of literature to enrich and broaden their experience;
- enable them to develop economic well-being through access to information from the wider world;
- develop literacy life skills that they will need to be independent.

Teachers will provide learning opportunities that:

- match the needs of the student;
- enable the student to make suitable and appropriate progress;
- take into account the targets set for individual students in their Individual Education Plans;
- promote literacy skills through all areas of the curriculum.

TEACHING CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM CONDITIONS

Students with ASC commonly demonstrate the following characteristic learning and thinking styles:

- a relative strength in concrete thinking, for example, describing a physical object rather than a person's feelings;
- a preference for visually as opposed to orally presented materials, for example, watching a film rather than listening to a poem;
- a relatively slow speed of processing of orally presented materials leading to partial or incomplete understanding of a spoken instruction;
- a relative strength in rote memory, for example, often displaying stronger reading skills through whole word learning than through phonics;

- a relative strength in understanding visuospatial relationships, for example, puzzles;
- difficulties in abstract thinking, for example, inferring what a house in a tropical country might be like from knowledge of the climate;
- difficulties in social cognition, for example, understanding what another person might think in a given situation;
- difficulties in communication. Many people with ASC are reluctant writers, some ASC adults describe struggling to understand why they were expected to write down something they already knew;
- unusual patterns of attention, for example, total absorption in a favourite activity and fleeting attention to something that is not preferred.

Students with ASC are often helped by:

- visually scaffolding such as writing frames and story boards;
- sorting, matching and labelling tasks;
- explicit teaching of the motivations and emotional reactions of characters;
- clarity about the amount of writing expected;
- access to alternative methods of recording;
- visual stimuli to support creative writing.

INCLUSION

All work undertaken at Spring Common Academy Trust is designed to promote inclusion at all levels. In the spirit of inclusion statements in Curriculum 2000, the SEN Code of Practice January 2015, the LA Inclusion Statement, the Disability Act 2001 and the Race Relations Act 2000, the school seeks to provide effective opportunities for every student.

In all aspects of their work, staff will identify possible barriers to inclusion and put in strategies to overcome them.

CURRICULUM ORGANISATION

Literacy Lessons: In Key Stages 1 and 2, each student will have 5 timetabled literacy lessons each week. In key stages 3 and 4, each student will have 3 timetabled literacy lessons each week.

Phonics: Each class records a phonics rationale each academic year to state how much phonics is taught, if any. Where phonics is taught, the rationales set out how it is delivered

Those that cannot access phonics but are able to access print will be taught key words, signs and symbols that they will need for a more independent life into adulthood.

Reading: Across the school, teachers organise the delivery of reading in a variety of ways. This may be through short daily session or a whole lesson.

Individual reading is recorded in a reading log by teachers and TAs. Where teachers feel it is appropriate, reading books should be sent home at least once a week and parents and carers will also be encouraged to record in these logs.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role of the Literacy Manager

- to co-ordinate and lead literacy throughout the school;
- to monitor that students are making progress in literacy;
- to ensure that appropriate support to develop student's literacy skills is available;
- to support the development of the School Library as an effective resource for the enhancement of literacy skills;
- to support the provision of appropriate resources for staff and students;
- to support, and when appropriate, to provide appropriate training for teachers and teaching assistants;
- to monitor all aspects of Literacy teaching and assessment across the whole school;
- to review and support all aspects of short, medium and long term planning;
- to moderate the assessment of literacy teaching and learning with other special schools;
- to support parents in their understanding of the literacy curriculum and provide them with the knowledge to support their child at home.

Role of the Literacy HLTA

- to deliver additional literacy support to identified pupils
- to develop and update resource boxes
- to maintain and develop reading rooms in lower and upper school
- to update literacy documents
- to deal with ordering and distribution of resources
- to support the Literacy Manager in the administration of Literacy days for key stages and classes
- to provide appropriate support and training for Teaching Assistants on all aspects of Literacy.

Role of Trustees

The Literacy manager will present a report to Trustees when required, to advise of updates and/or events that have occurred in school.

CURRICULUM CONTENT

Speaking and Listening

At Spring Common Academy Trust speaking and listening encompasses all forms of communicative responses and intent. (For further details see Spring Common Communication policy).

Drama provides a rich and motivating stimulus to develop and extend a wide range of speaking and listening skills in exciting and real life situations. A range of drama activities are included within the curriculum and further opportunities are provided through extra-curricular clubs.

Outside organisations may be brought in to provide literacy-based days for classes and key stages. These usually involve the organisation and/or the students in the use of drama. Trips to the theatre may also be organised to support curriculum topics.

Phonics

Phonics teaching at Spring Common should offer all students the opportunity to:

- access a programme at their individual level;
- learn the 44 phonemes of the English language;
- be measurable and continuous throughout their time at the school;
- improve their reading and writing skills to enable them to make progress in all curriculum areas.

Not all students benefit from discrete phonics teaching, and develop skills in spelling, reading and writing through a different means. All students will be assessed by the class teacher who will employ strategies that best suit their learning needs.

Each year, phonics rationales will be completed by the class teacher, once they have established the needs of each individual child in the class. Phonics will be delivered in a range of ways: daily, discrete weekly sessions or embedded within reading and writing. See appendix A for a copy of the rationale form. Rationales are to be kept with the Literacy Manager for reference. They are also saved in Staff Share.

The 44 phonemes are taught in a structured way to assist pupils in becoming competent at segmenting and blending.

1. m,a,s,d,t – sounds taught, students then blend these sounds to make words- e.g. mad, sat, sad, mat.
2. Over coming weeks the rest of sounds taught are- i, n, p, g, o, c, k, u, b, f, e, l, h, sh, r, j, v, y, w, th, z, ch, qu, x, ng, nk. These sounds are also used to blend simple words when a small group of 5 letter sounds are secure. These sounds will be taught in the order that will best generate the most words to read and spell.

3. Once these initial sounds have been taught and are secure to help them read cvc and ccvc words in class reading books they will move on to learning the sounds- ay, ee, igh, ow, oo, oo, ar, or, air, ir, ou and oy. Again they will be able to read and spell these words within words containing these sounds
4. At this stage the students will be taught the letter names (if they don't know them already). The students will now be taught more ways of writing the same sound. Letter names will now be used for spelling because children will be learning alternative graphemes for the same sound.- ee(ea), oy(oi), a-e, i-e, o-e, u-e, aw, are, ur, er, ow, ai, oa, ew, ire, ear, ure. And finally tion, cious and tious.

Pupils from Year 2 to Year 11 (unless a class teacher in EYFS or Year 1 requests), has a Reading Assessment booklet which tests the child's phonological awareness of the sounds as well as assessing reading and spelling (both decodable and tricky words). These booklets form a picture of the pupil's ability and progress over time. For some children who are at the pre-reading or functional skills stage, there are alternative booklets which are made up of symbols. Results of word and comprehension reading tests can also be recorded.

Reading

Reading at Spring Common Academy Trust is interpreted as any activity that leads to the derivation of meaning from visual or tactile representations e.g. objects, pictures, or symbols, including the written word.

The strategies used to enable pupils progress in phonic knowledge, grammatical awareness, comprehension, contextual understanding and information gathering include:

- letter/word/symbol recognition;
- guided or group reading;
- use of multi sensory resources – sensory stories phonic games, speaking and listening games, puppets, flash cards, reading computer software, multi modal texts etc.;
- use of interactive resources such as Education City which can be used to apply learning
- PECS

Reading Scheme

Both Lower and Upper schools have an area where the reading scheme books are kept. The reading schemes are coloured coded based upon the reading recovery colours and National Curriculum book bands.

The main scheme in Lower School is Oxford Reading Tree, which is extensively supported by multi-sensory resources such as games, puppets and a wide range of reading and writing software linking to the characters in the scheme.

In the Upper School there are a range of reading schemes to suit the different key stages and abilities, including 'Trackers' by Oxford for non-fiction and 'Rapid' for fiction. There are also complementary schemes which are colour banded, including the Dockside reading scheme for KS4 and Post 16 pupils. Additionally, there are also a wide range of hi-lo reading books and some free readers.

Students are expected to read widely across their reading level to gain experience of fiction, poetry and non-fiction text-types.

Writing

At Spring Common Academy Trust 'writing' is interpreted as any activity that communicates and records student's experiences, information, thoughts and feelings. This can include:

- use of objects, pictures, photographs, video, audio tape recordings, symbols and text, own name, picture, working with an adult as scribe, computer typed work or a combination of these;
- narrative and personal writing, emergent or supported writing, writing scribed by the teacher or writing with symbols as appropriate;
- lists and instructions;
- recounts and reports;
- poetry and plays;
- writing with symbols;
- relevant ICT aids; including switches, concept keyboards and touch screen supported materials.

Additionally, activities which promote the development of gross and fine motor skills are used to support fluency in mark-making.

PLANNING

When developing literacy skills, staff will ensure that:

- planning or target setting for individuals or groups, provides pupils with suitable learning challenges;
- plans will always differentiate effectively to meet diverse needs;
- schemes of work, medium term plans and associated assessment procedures are designed to be flexible enough to meet the range of needs.

Long Term Planning

Long term plans are based on the Spring Common literacy schemes of work, which are differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils and shows the curriculum coverage for an academic year.

At Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 the school incorporates a range of basic English skills (functional skills) with a love and understanding of the English language through

a range of fiction, poetry and non fiction texts. These texts may be multi modal, sensory, visual or auditory.

At KS4 the school will be using OCR Entry Level accreditation in English for pupils working beyond P scales in reading, writing and spoken language.

Those working within a semi-formal curriculum will be able to complete a variety of Unit Awards, which are more specific to their needs.

The Post-16 curriculum makes use of the OCR Functional skills qualification for entry level students. Students with more complex needs access the Asdan Transition Challenge, which includes English skills. External accreditation is introduced and it provides an additional framework for curriculum delivery and gives students the opportunity to gain a range of certification and qualifications.

Medium Term Planning

Is produced for each term and gives details of teaching objectives and resources.

Short Term Planning

Is produced weekly. It provides specific learning objectives for each lesson and includes details of differentiation to meet the needs of all students in the class. It includes opportunities for all classroom staff to make assessments of student progress.

Cross-curricular activities to promote and extend language and literacy are actively sought and utilised.

ASSESSMENT

Where appropriate, students are assessed for a reading age, to give a baseline or an overview of their general reading level.

Keywords, phonics and comprehension should also be assessed regularly. This can be done through the reading assessment booklets on an ongoing basis.

Students are assessed in speaking and listening, writing and reading using P levels and National Curriculum levels as appropriate.

Assessments are moderated externally with other special schools.

Word decoding is assessed through the Salford sentence reading assessment in the Autumn term, and in the Summer term we assess reading comprehension using NGRT (New Group Reading Test).

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and Evaluation is done on regular basis by the Literacy Manager and Senior Management and is in line with the Whole School Monitoring Policy. All aspects of planning are evaluated and lessons are observed.

RESOURCES

There are a range of resources to support the teaching of literacy across the school, including a wide range of literacy software to support reading and writing.

Resource boxes are provided each term to support planning and delivery of lessons. The resource boxes contain a wide range of materials including big books, class sets of books, fiction texts, non-fiction texts, multi sensory resources and games. The boxes link to and support the long term plans.

Additionally, the school's library contains a range of books to support students' reading and research, as well as storing the resource boxes for each of the termly literacy topics.

MONITORING OF LITERACY POLICY

The accuracy of the literacy policy will be monitored by the Literacy Manager and Senior Management Team.

APPENDIX A

SPRING COMMON ACADEMY TRUST - PHONICS RATIONALE 2017-18

We recognise that the teaching of phonics should offer students the opportunity to learn and use the 44 phonemes to improve their reading and writing skills, enable them to make progress in all curriculum areas, and to give them the functional literacy skills for an autonomous life in adulthood.

We provide an inclusive educational environment, but we recognise that individuals require strategies that best suit their learning needs.

In each Key Stage students will be taught phonics through their timetabled literacy lessons. A variety of teaching resources are used including *Letters & Sounds* and *Read, Write Inc.* For some pupils, teaching will necessarily focus on key words, signs or symbols.

Each literacy group's approach to phonics teaching is recorded annually by the Literacy Manager. In general, phonics is taught in three key ways:

- **Daily:** specific and systematised phonics input is planned for as part of each literacy lesson.
- **Discretely:** dedicated phonics lessons are planned for weekly as part of the delivery of literacy.
- **Embedded:** functional phonics teaching is included to support pupils as they engage in reading writing.

If a particular class approaches phonics in a different way, such as a mixture of the above, this is noted as '**other**'.

Class/teacher(s):
<i>How is phonics taught to this group?</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> daily <input type="checkbox"/> discretely <input type="checkbox"/> embedded <input type="checkbox"/> other:
<i>Comments:</i>

November 2017

Policy agreed on: _____

Signed on behalf of the Trustees____

Committee: _____

Author: _____

Review date (optional): _____

Website Y/N