Literacy Policy

Status: Advisory

Member of Staff responsible: Principal

Associated Policies and documentation:

- **SEND, Teaching of English**

Implementation Date: September 2016

Review Date: September 2016

Next Review Date: September 2017

Signed by: Chair of Governors: _____   **Principal:** _____

Date: _____   **Date**: _____

Whole School Literacy Policy

Aim:

All teachers are teachers of literacy and it is UTC Sheffield's belief that developing literacy skills in all of our students will support their learning and raise standards across the curriculum. Literacy is an entitlement – to be literate is to engage with others freely.

'To be literate is to gain a voice and to participate meaningfully and assertively in decisions that affect one's life…Literacy enables people to read their own world and to write their own history…Literacy provides access to written knowledge – and knowledge is power. In a nutshell, literacy empowers.'
OFSTED: Improving literacy in secondary schools: a shared responsibility April 2013

- ✓ Students need vocabulary, expression and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of all subjects and specialisms.
- ✓ Improving literacy and learning can have a significant impact on students' self-esteem, motivation and behaviour. It allows them to learn independently.
- ✓ As a school with employer links, the development of language and literacy skills is even more essential to engage effectively with the world of work
- ✓ With many subject examinations including marks for SPaG, there is more demand than ever for literacy skills to enable students to **achieve** in exams to enable them to access full opportunities in education and in life.

Implementation at whole-school level:

Every member of UTC Sheffield has a role in the teaching and learning of literacy. The roles are outlined below:

- **Senior Leadership Team**: to lead and give a high profile to literacy, to develop long term planning and provide strong, active and sustained support in developing effective strategies and practices; to monitor, evaluate and review.

- **Curriculum Directors**: to monitor and share good practice in the teaching of literacy.

- **Literacy Leader & Curriculum Director of English**: develop strategies, provide whole school training. Support departments in the implementation of strategies and encourage departments to learn from each other's practice by sharing ideas. Provide relevant and stimulating activities for VMG tutors to complete with their form during VMG time.

- **English teachers**: provide students with knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write, speak and listen effectively. Model reading and writing strategies and a passion for both.

- **Teachers across the curriculum**: contribute to students' development of language, since speaking, listening, writing and reading are, to varying degrees, integral to all lessons. Share the high value placed on literacy and the understanding of effective strategies.

- **The Teaching and Learning Team**: Liaise with the literacy leader to help to provide whole school training, offer support, encouragement, ideas and practical activities to promote literacy.

- **Professional Learning Mentors**: contribute to students' reading development, both fiction and non-fiction. Support teaching staff and students with individual learning and reading enrichment opportunities.

- **The Inclusion Manager:** Identify and monitor students with language and literacy difficulties. Liaise with literacy leader and Curriculum Director of English. Track, profile, assess and review impact of interventions.

- **Learning Managers and VMG tutors**: identify any students who may have been missed through normal procedures. Identify students whose poor literacy may be linked to poor behaviour and underachievement. VMG tutors complete suggested activities, resources and information provided by the literacy leader. Encourage pleasure in reading and writing by

choosing books and activities which provide positive outcomes and engage students in dialogue about their own literacy

- **Students**: take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs and making improvements. Are ready to ask for advice and support, feel able to request books and periodicals of specialist interest and feel encouraged to take the steps needed to raise their literacy levels.

Across the school we will:

- ✓ Refer to and use the half-termly literacy focus resources as suggested by the literacy leader and team.
- ✓ Seek to identify progression in the main forms of reading, writing, speaking and listening undertaken in each department and strengthen teaching plans accordingly.
- ✓ Model our own interest in reading and writing of all kinds – in books, on blogs and web sites across digital devices, in written language and through presentations and speaking and listening.

Reading across the curriculum:

We aim to give students a level of literacy that will enable them to cope with the increasing demands of the curriculum and more widely of the 21st century world where literacy skills lead to success. This means within their 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 students 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 encourage enjoyment in reading and reading for the development of ideas and knowledge.

All Facilities will strive to:

- ✓ Review and monitor the reading demands placed upon the students in their subject area, ensuring that reading for understanding is explicitly taught and modelled.
- ✓ Ensure there are resources available to meet the reading skills of all students at appropriate levels.
- ✓ Encourage independent reading and research possibilities.
- ✓ Encourage the use of the school library area, reading boxes and Accelerated Reader.
- ✓ Integrate reading with writing, speaking and listening activities.
- ✓ Encourage reading aloud and group reading activities.
- ✓ Model reading aloud of texts and hand-outs
- ✓ Use ICT to support the development of reading.
- ✓ Use available data on students' reading levels in order to make informed choices about appropriate texts and to plan appropriate accommodations for students in order that they may successfully access texts.
- ✓ Involve students in discussions about their reading within subject area and their development
- ✓ Take opportunities to demonstrate pleasure in reading.
- ✓ Make opportunities both in lessons and in tutorial times for students and teachers to share their reading experiences.

- ✓ Provide planned opportunities across the curriculum for students to:

    - read and follow written instructions;

    - read and engage with narratives of events or activities;

    - follow up their interests and read texts of varying lengths;

    - question and challenge printed information and views;

    - read with understanding descriptions of processes, structures and mechanisms;

    - read and explore ideas and theories;

    - learn how to sift and select, and take notes from text and read to locate and relocate information;

    - Learn how to scan for overall meaning and scan for key points, words and phrases; apply a range of techniques such as skimming, scanning, and text-marking effectively in order to research and evaluate texts.

    - Use reading to research and investigate from printed words and moving images ICT texts.

Writing across the curriculum:

Students need to be able to write in a range of forms and for different purposes and audiences. We aim to provide students with appropriate and differentiated writing frames as well as supporting any spelling or punctuation problems to improve their work and confidence. It is important that we strive for co-ordination across subjects to recognise and reinforce students' language skills. Modelling of writing is also important.

All departments will strive to:

- ✓ Use examples of the types of writing (what a good one looks like - WAGOLLs) that they wish students to emulate.
- ✓ Be clear about audience and purpose: we should draw attention to the purpose and intended readers of each piece of writing. Whilst the audience for students' writing is often teacher and group, students should be encouraged to write for a range of intended readers. For peer example, writing to explain a scientific principle to a younger audience, writing guidance for peers on an aspect of the subject, writing to agencies to elicit information or to express a viewpoint.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for a range of writing including sustained writing where possible.
- ✓ Encourage the view of writing as a craft which can be practised and improved.
- ✓ Involve visiting writers to encourage the art and discipline of writing.
- ✓ Teach students to draft and redraft their work as a matter of course – writing needs to go through the processes and stages of development.
- ✓ Ensure that students complete all written work in sentences where applicable.
- ✓ Encourage students to check work for accuracy and to expect the highest standards of themselves.
- ✓ Clarify and explain any difficulties that a student/class may have with spelling, punctuation or grammar.
- ✓ Teach and reinforce subject-specific use of vocabulary and key words.
- ✓ Mark for literacy using the UTC literacy marking policy**.**

When responding to students' work we should:

- ✓ Make comments which are positive and supportive;
- ✓ Target specific areas for improvement (a selective and focused identification of errors);
- ✓ Give guidance on how to achieve the short-term targets set. For example, whilst "improve your spelling" is unhelpful and vague, the identification of a particular spelling error e.g. doubling of letters before adding-ing is specific and presents the student with a target which can be addressed;
- ✓ Create opportunities for students to reflect on the quality of their own work and for peer assessment.

We should pay close attention to writing as a learning tool as well as a product of the learning.

- ✓ We should help students to appreciate the differences between Standard English and non-standard forms of the language.

- ✓ We should help students to recognise the appropriate form for their written responses so that they know when to respond in note form and when more formal constructions are required.

- ✓ We should limit the use of pre-structured writing e.g. copying, sentence completion, and sentence rearrangement.

We should provide planned opportunities across the curriculum for students to:

- ✓ make notes from a variety of sources - printed word, moving images and ICT texts;
- ✓ use writing to plan organise and record;
- ✓ write logs and journals in order to clarify thoughts and develop new understanding;
- ✓ plan, draft, discuss and reflect on their writing;
- ✓ learn the conventions of different forms of writing in different subject areas e.g. by using writing frames and providing clear models for writing (see Appendix Three);
- ✓ write at appropriate length, sometimes briefly;
- ✓ write collaboratively with other students;
- ✓ Present some writing for display or publication.

We should:
- ✓ expect a high standard of presentation in most students' finished writing;
- ✓ provide good models of particular kinds of writing;
- ✓ provide dictionaries, glossaries and lists of appropriate subject vocabulary and encourage students to use them;
- ✓ help students to use a range of strategies to learn spellings, including:
  - look – say – cover – write – check;
  - making connections between words with the same visual spelling pattern;
  - Exploring families of words.

<u>Speaking and Listening across the curriculum:</u>

Students should be able to listen to others, and to respond and build on their ideas and views constructively. We will develop strategies to teach students 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.

All Facilities will strive to:

- ✓ Review schemes of work and teaching plans to identify opportunities for structured approaches to student speaking and listening.
- ✓ Explicitly place value on oral work as well as written work, recognising that discussions of topics are usually a precursor to any written work.
- ✓ Recognise where spoken outcomes of an activity can replace or have equal status to written outcomes.
- ✓ Review teaching content and styles to monitor, modify and provide a variety of student opportunities for speaking and listening.
- ✓ Ensure students have a range of speaking/listening opportunities in a variety of formats, including individual, paired, group and whole class situations involving formal and informal exploratory discussions, problem solving, debates, formal presentations, etc.
- ✓ Teach and reinforce subject-specific use of vocabulary.

We should give students regular opportunities to speak and listen in the following contexts:

- ✓ in pairs with a working partner;
- ✓ in small groups with opportunities to take on the roles of chair or scribe;
- ✓ with the teacher or another adult;
- ✓ in whole class discussions;
- ✓ presentations to a wider audience including employers and visitors.

In these contexts some of the following activities should take place:

- ✓ exploring and describing events, activities and problems, exploring and developing ideas with others;
- ✓ reporting back to a wider audience in order to consolidate ideas and understanding;
- ✓ asking questions as well as answering them;
- ✓ speculating, hypothesising and imagining;
- ✓ planning, organising and reviewing activities;
- ✓ investigating and solving problems collaboratively;
- ✓ evaluating experiences and reflecting on learning;
- ✓ Talking at length and adopting the 'expert' role.

Special Educational Needs

We will teach all of our students appropriately, including those with special educational needs, supporting their learning and providing them with challenges matched to their needs, through using a range of teaching strategies and accommodations such as mind mapping, writing frames and oral activities.

UTC Sheffield is committed to raising standards of literacy for all its students, through a co-ordinated approach. Every teacher has a role to play in this process.

Monitoring

This policy will be monitored through the following: Classroom/Tutor Period observations carried out by SLT, Literacy Co-ordinator and Curriculum Director.

Learning Walks undertaken by Senior Leaders.

Regular review of impact by SLT, Intervention Manager, Support Team, Curriculum Directors.

Student, Staff and Parent Annual Questionnaire.

Review by Student Focus Group through the UTC Student Council.