



Literacy Policy 2023-2024



1 Sponsor

Literacy Lead and AVP Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

2 Reviewed

February 2024

3 Revision Date

July 2024

Intent

“Literacy is the ability to read, write, speak and listen in a way that lets us communicate effectively and make sense of the world.¹” Literacy skills provide the foundations for students learning at school and beyond. National statistics show that levels of literacy can be linked to a variety of socio-economic factors such as life expectancy and employment. At Charlton, our vision ‘is to nurture happy, healthy young people who have the knowledge, academic achievement, and strength of character to lead safe and successful lives in modern Britain; preparing them for their next steps in education or employment with a thirst for lifelong learning’ and literacy is at the heart of our strategy to achieve this.

At Charlton, we are committed to improving the literacy skills of all students, consequently our policy and actions are based around 6 key areas:

1. Disciplinary literacy
2. Reading for fluency and comprehension
3. Reading for pleasure
4. Vocabulary development
5. Creative and academic writing, and writing in subject disciplines
6. Oracy

Implementation – Our 6 key focuses

1. Disciplinary literacy

Disciplinary literacy refers to reading, writing, and spoken language skills across the curriculum. “It recognises that literacy skills are both general and subject specific,

¹ ‘What is literacy’ <https://literacytrust.org.uk/information/what-is-literacy/>

emphasising the value of supporting teachers in every subject to teach students how to read, write and communicate effectively in their subjects²". To support this, we offer:

- CPD facilitates explicit vocabulary teaching and reading comprehension strategy
- Staff are given the opportunity to ask for support and guidance from the Literacy Leads
- Students are given the opportunity to develop their oracy skills across the curriculum through discussion and debate.

2. Reading for fluency and comprehension

Reading fluency and comprehension refers to the ability students have to understand the information that they read. Reading fluency refers to the accuracy and speed of reading. The EEF (2021) highlights the importance of reading fluency and the connection between fluency and comprehension. Shanahan (2019) highlights that teaching reading fluency helps students to develop and consolidate decoding skills³. To support this, we ensure that:

- 20 minute daily session across the school
- CPD on the value of reading delivered by a fluent adult
- The use of data to assess reading age is used appropriately to inform interventions within class and additional specific support. NGRT tests, scaled scores and other forms of assessment are gathered and used to monitor reading progress
- Use of the library once a fortnight during KS3 English lessons and independently during break and lunchtimes.

3. Reading for pleasure

The DfE uses the National Literacy Trust definition of reading for pleasure as "reading that we do of our own free will, anticipating the satisfaction that we will get from the act of reading. It also refers to reading that having begun at someone else's request we continue because we are interested in it" (Clark and Rumbold, National Literacy Trust, 2006)⁴. Reading for pleasure has been proven by a growing number of studies to have an impact on a student's educational and personal outcome. To support this, we ensure that:

- 20 minute daily session with independent reading with students choosing their own books to read
- CPD is provided to staff to clarify the importance of reading and to explore opportunities within different subject areas
- Library sessions are regularly used in English lessons to allow students to change their own reading book and give time to independently read
- Library stock regularly updated to appeal to our diverse student body

² 'Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools' EEF, 2018

³ <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/eef-blog-shining-a-spotlight-on-reading-fluency#:~:text=So%2C%20why%20is%20fluency%20important,from%20word%20recognition%20to%20comprehension.>

⁴

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/284286/reading_for_pleasure.pdf

- KS4 reading mentors are used to role model the importance of reading to younger students.

4. Vocabulary

“Pupils’ acquisition and command of vocabulary are key to their learning and progress across the whole curriculum. Teachers should therefore develop vocabulary actively, building systematically on pupils’ current knowledge⁵”. To support this, we offer:

- CPD – Tier 2-3 understanding via topic specific glossaries and incidental teaching opportunities. Also to explore a range of strategies to facilitate explicit teaching of vocabulary, including etymology and morphology
- Bedrock once per fortnight in KS3 English classes and twice per fortnight as homework
- Literacy intervention which focuses on vocabulary development provided to students with specific need
- Vocabulary lists and knowledge organisers are available for students where appropriate
- Frayer models are used to help students understand further details about key words
- Student exposure to new terms – weekly briefing with key words relating to British Values and their meaning
- ‘Word of the Week’ is published in the school newsletter and discussed in tutor time.

5. Wider writing and writing in subject disciplines

Developing student writing is essential for improvement in student outcomes. Applying wider writing to different contexts and different disciplines helps students gain a wider understanding of writing skills. To support this, we ensure that:

- Students are given models and scaffolds to help support them in their written responses
- Opportunity for subject development – literacy leads to offer support through observation of lessons and provide suggested reading and/or strategies to support for example reciprocal and echo reading
- Students are taught the ‘thought process’ behind model written answers. Students are encouraged to use techniques such as ‘what, how, why’ and ‘PEE’ across the curriculum to develop their analytical and evaluative written responses
- Challenging texts are used to inform and inspire students’ own choices in analytical, transactional, and creative writing.

6. Oracy

Developing students that can think critically and express their knowledge and understanding is important to whole school development. Oracy refers to the ability to verbally interact, using vocabulary to express understanding. The EEF findings

⁵ <https://literacytrust.org.uk/resources/vocabulary-building/>

show that developments and strategies to improve oracy can have a high impact on student outcomes⁶. To support this, we offer:

- Students are given opportunity to develop their oracy skills across the curriculum through discussion, debate and questioning
- The use of questioning to develop students' spoken vocabulary
- Personal Development curriculum supports the development of oracy skills and assessing the importance of shared language

Interventions

Wave 1 Intervention – Quality for all

Reading age data is available on Teaching Companion and recorded on seating plans. All staff have participated in CPD on vocabulary development using Quigley's 'three tiers' approach: explicit teaching of Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary consolidated with retrieval activities; incidental learning via the reading session and spontaneous teachable moments and word-consciousness, building awareness of morphological connections between inter-disciplinary language. Resources to support the explicit teaching of vocabulary are provided to all staff.

Lesson observations with a literacy focus are used to identify effective practice and where additional support is needed. CPD is provided to demonstrate a range of strategies which subject specialists can apply to their subject areas.

All students have timetabled Bedrock vocabulary lessons and are expected to complete two additional sessions for homework. Bedrock is an adaptive programme and enables us to identify those students whose vocabulary knowledge is likely to prove a barrier to reading comprehension.

The English Department, cross-curricular Reading Champions and ECTs have received training on the use of Reciprocal Reading as a comprehension strategy. This approach makes explicit the implicit skills used by capable readers in making meaning from text.

Wave 2 Intervention – Targeted support

NGRT data allows students with a Standardised Age Score (SAS) below their chronological age to be considered for additional literacy support according to their need. Students with a SAS below 85 are selected for Lexonik Leap, a **phonics-based** intervention. Those above 85 but below their chronological age are withdrawn from some lessons for Lexonik Advance to improve their understanding and **acquisition of vocabulary**, which focuses on **decoding** and **word recognition**. Guided Reading is also provided to students who require support with **inference and comprehension**. **Fluency** screening is currently taking place, using the University of Oregon's DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) and Maze assessments. Those for whom fluency is a barrier to comprehension will have in-class opportunities to develop this important bridging skill in English, with impact measured using Tim Rasinski's fluency rubric: expression and volume, phrasing, smoothness, and pace.

Wave 3 Intervention – Individualised programme of support

⁶ <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit/oral-language-interventions#:~:text=1.,and%20connects%20with%20the%20curriculum.>

Regular testing to monitor the impact of intervention enables students to receive support for their individual need. Students who have been identified as requiring receive a 1-1 personalised programme of support are offered Direct Instruction.

Exploration of SEND needs are conducted through outside agency support and investigation including LSAT and Education Psychologist referrals.