

TIBSHELF COMMUNITY SCHOOL LITERACY POLICY

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(Tibshelf Policy)





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"Language is the prime medium through which pupils learn and express themselves across the curriculum and all teachers have a stake in effective literacy"

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all members of staff are able to make an effective contribution to the development of pupils' language skills throughout the school.

Mission Statement

At Tibshelf School, we are fully committed to raising academic standards through the effective teaching of literacy across the entire curriculum. Building on the foundations laid at Key Stage 2, we are developing a consistent and cohesive programme that equips all our students with the essential skills they need, not just during their school years, but throughout their lives.

Literacy is a cornerstone of learning—it underpins how students access, interpret, and engage with all forms of written text. High levels of literacy lead to academic success and open doors to future opportunities, both in education and in adulthood. Our aim is to enhance literacy in order to elevate performance and attainment across all subjects, with a particular focus on developing disciplinary literacy throughout the school.

At Tibshelf School, we recognise that:

- Students require strong vocabulary, expression, and organisational skills to navigate the cognitive demands of different subjects.
- Reading broadens students' horizons, allowing them to learn from experiences beyond their own.
- Writing fosters the ability to organise thoughts and communicate effectively.
- Language empowers students to reflect, revise, and evaluate their work as well as the ideas and work of others.
- Engaging with higher-order questions promotes the development of critical thinking and inquiry.
- Enhancing literacy positively impacts students' self-esteem, motivation, and behaviour.
- Improved literacy enables students to become independent learners, giving them the tools to succeed autonomously.
- Developing spoken literacy builds confidence, particularly in formal contexts.

By prioritising literacy, we empower our students to succeed academically, socially, and in their future careers.





Definition of Literacy

Literacy, in its simplest form, is defined as the ability to read and write. However, in an educational context, it must also encompass speaking and listening. Therefore, we are dedicated to enhancing communication skills in all forms, focusing on students as both recipients and creators of language.

By providing well-structured lessons and a diverse range of accessible reading, writing, and oral experiences, we aim to improve students' abilities to read, write, speak, listen, and comprehend effectively. It is essential that every student is given the opportunity to expand their use of language, including Standard English, in a variety of contexts.

This approach will not only improve access to all areas of the curriculum but will also enhance academic performance and play a vital role in boosting students' self-esteem.

Responsibility for Literacy

Promoting literacy is the shared responsibility of everyone in the school community, and it begins with setting high expectations for both written and spoken communication. Every member of staff plays a critical role in fostering students' academic and formal language skills, whether by modelling Standard English in daily interactions or by teaching subject-specific academic language during lessons.


Students come to school with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and levels of competence. It is essential that teachers build on each student's individual strengths to further develop their abilities. This personalized approach should be reflected in the schemes of work within each subject area.


Subject teachers can actively promote and enhance literacy by integrating it across a variety of classroom activities, supporting the development of reading, writing, and spelling skills in a meaningful and subject-specific way.

Aims of the Whole-school approach

- To develop and extend the language competence of all pupils.
- To build confidence in using language, both spoken and written.
- To enhance access to the curriculum, accelerate learning, and raise achievement.
- To improve pupils' social skills and their ability to work both collaboratively and independently.
- To establish a clear framework for consistent presentation of work and its evaluation.
- To make raising literacy standards a shared responsibility across all teaching staff.

Purpose of Policy

- To ensure clarity of whole school systems and approaches to support the literacy of all students.
 - To ensure all staff understand their responsibilities in relation to literacy so that we can provide an enriching environment for our students.
 - To support the development of a curriculum which enables the improvement of academic language and voice in all subject areas so that students are equipped with the skills required for success at GCSE and beyond.
 - The aim of this policy is to implement a whole school approach to the encouragement, support and monitoring of literacy across the curriculum.
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- Tibshelf School recognises that, for literacy to play an important role as a vital instrument of learning, teachers across all curriculum areas need to create an environment which provides contexts and conditions to facilitate the development of the core skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Evaluation

- The named personnel with responsibility for literacy to ensure the school's literacy policy and procedures are reviewed and updated regularly.
- Director of Literacy to evaluate the impact of interventions and initiatives termly.
- Outcomes and reflection from literacy training sessions used to inform updates to the school's programme of Continuous Professional Development.

Links with other policies


- Tibshelf School Shared Values
- Curriculum Intent Statements
- Teaching and Learning Policy

Accordingly, Tibshelf School will:

- Demonstrate to students the value of literacy skills in all aspects of their education.
- Highlight the central role of literacy in teaching and learning within each subject.
- Encourage and uphold consistent language standards appropriate to students' abilities and levels of maturity.
- Set high expectations to ensure that students acquire literacy skills that enable them to meet the increasing demands of their subjects in terms of specific skills, knowledge, and understanding.
- Identify and monitor the integration of literacy skills within Schemes of Work for each subject area.
- Encourage departments to share good practice by showcasing and exemplifying students' work.
- Provide baseline literacy assessments for all new students, with regular monitoring of progress—reading progress will be tracked and assessed through Renaissance Reading. Offer support and mentoring for students with individual literacy needs.
- Engage parents in supporting reading through involvement in celebration events and other literacy-promoting activities.
- Celebrate students' literacy achievements across Tibshelf School.
- Promote reading for pleasure alongside literacy and communication development, through form time reading sessions, National Poetry Day, World Book Day and the Topical Talk Festival.

Teaching and Learning

Each Faculty has carefully identified strategies for integrating literacy into teaching, which are now embedded within schemes of learning. This includes initiatives such as:

- **Text Appropriacy:** Faculty members review textual materials to ensure they are suitable for students' reading ages. Active reading techniques, such as skimming, close reading, and scanning, are emphasised, and teachers guide students on both the purpose of reading and the most effective methods to employ.
 - **Oracy Development:** Structured small-group discussions and whole-class dialogue are promoted to enhance speaking and listening skills. Teachers focus on open-ended questioning to encourage deeper thinking, and in more formal settings, students are encouraged to use Standard English. This is now a focus for a full half term in the form time Literacy sessions.
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- **Extended Writing Instruction:** Subject teachers employ a structured approach to teaching extended writing, including identifying writing conventions, modelling, scaffolding, and encouraging independent writing. Faculties follow the Tibshelf Writing Strategy and use visualisers during 'I do' and 'We do' phases.
- **Vocabulary Development:** Subject-specific vocabulary is prominently displayed, regularly referred to, and integrated into lessons. The teaching of subject-specific vocabulary and spelling is an essential part of each lesson.
- **Primary Transition Links:** Strong partnerships with primary schools ensure smoother transitions from KS2 to KS3. Reading and spelling ages are assessed during the transition to identify low reading ages early, enabling targeted intervention. Reading ages are assessed during Year 6 transition and reassessed in Year 7 with NGRT. The NGRT test is conducted HT1 and repeated HT6.
- **Examination Preparation:** Command words for exams are explicitly taught across all subjects to ensure students are prepared for subject-specific assessments.
- **Reading Age Monitoring:** Reading age progress for students in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 is tracked, with data shared with staff and parents through Arbor at key points in the year, aligning with KS3 data entry intervals.
- **Literacy Interventions:** Students with individual literacy needs receive support and mentoring. Specific intervention programs are designed to provide intensive literacy support, helping students master key skills transferable across the curriculum. Faculty Achievement Leads identify students with reading ages below expected levels for tutor-time interventions to ensure targeted literacy support. We use Read Write Inc to support students with low-literacy concerns and IDL to support students with dyslexic tendencies.
- **Targeted Vocabulary Learning:** All pupils participate in subject specific vocabulary curriculum, focusing on key academic words through explicit teaching and practice to reinforce retention and application. Faculties deliver key vocabulary with Word Power or Frayer models, and HT4 form time literacy focuses on consolidation of key vocabulary for each year group.
- **Inference Training:** Students in Years 7 and 8 receive bi-weekly inference training, focusing on six key areas: making predictions, questioning, clarifying, summarizing, inferring, and activating prior knowledge.
- **Tutor Time Literacy and Numeracy Plan:** Tutor time includes activities such as grammar recall and testing, reading for pleasure, vocabulary testing and oracy opportunities, supported by a detailed literacy and numeracy plan (see Appendix).
- **EEF Recommendations:** Faculty members focus on specific literacy priorities outlined by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), with three steps addressed in the Autumn term and four in the Spring term.
- **Whole School Priorities:** Following a staff audit, three immediate whole-school literacy priorities have been set: displaying key words in classrooms, including them on resource sheets, and focusing on active reading in lessons.
- **Classroom Resources:** Literacy skills checklists are displayed in all classrooms to support consistent literacy development.

The Literacy Resource Centre

- The **Literacy Resource Centre (LRC)** plays a pivotal role in supporting the school's literacy programme and is essential to the success of the literacy policy. It serves as a valuable resource for research, information gathering, and reading for enjoyment. Fiction books are color-coded by genre to help students easily find books that match their interests.
- The **Literacy Resource Co-ordinator** organizes annual **Book Fairs**, where students can purchase books. All proceeds are reinvested into enhancing the LRC's resources.
- The LRC extends learning experiences by promoting the use of **DVDs, audiobooks, and computers. Laptops** are available to students during breaks, lunchtime, and after school for homework, coursework, and revision.
- The **LRC** remains open after school to provide support for **literacy**, offer **homework club** assistance, and provide **1-to-1 support** for students who need it.
- **Student involvement** in the LRC has increased through the appointment of **Student Librarians**, encouraging ownership and engagement in literacy activities.
- **Student Librarians** and top library users are recognised and rewarded through **certificates, house points, positive referrals**, and **letters home** for their achievements.
- The LRC frequently displays **poster campaigns**, such as "What staff are reading" and details about literacy competitions.
- Students are involved in the **selection of books** for the library through the **School Council**, allowing them to have a say in what materials are available.
- Students in Year 7-Year 10 read once a week with their form tutor. Each group has a novel that they read over the course of a term.
- **Reading** is a celebrated and regular feature of life at Tibshelf School.



Literacy Support and Intervention Programmes

As part of our transition programme, we scrutinize KS2 results, CAT scores, and the outcomes of reading and spelling tests to identify pupils in need of additional literacy support. This support is offered in a variety of ways:

- Year 7 and 8 students participate in **RWI Inc and IDL** sessions, working in small groups with a highly trained staff team to improve reading comprehension throughout the year.
- We provide **high-quality literacy interventions** tailored to the needs of struggling students.
- **Parents are encouraged** to take an active role in their child's reading development by dedicating time to read together at home.

Learning Through Talk – Oracy

Tibshelf School:

- **Model** examples of effective speaking and listening to demonstrate precise and coherent language use.
- **Provide** structured opportunities for discussion.
- **Value** oral work equally with written work, recognizing that discussion often precedes writing.
- **Teach** students to participate in group and class discussions by:
 - Using talk to develop and refine ideas.
 - Identifying key points in discussions.
 - Listening with a clear purpose.
 - Engaging in discussion and evaluation.
- **Structure** tasks to ensure students understand the purpose of listening, using note-taking frames when necessary.
- **Encourage** public speaking in formal settings like assemblies, lessons, and debates.


Learning Through Reading – Comprehension

Tibshelf School:

- **Teach** strategies for improving reading comprehension, helping students infer meaning, recognize the writer's intent, skim, scan, and follow arguments.
- **Provide** opportunities to practice selecting information, taking notes, and summarizing.
- **Monitor** reading demands across subjects to ensure that reading for understanding is explicitly taught.
- **Ensure** a variety of differentiated texts that are appropriate for all reading levels and linked to Renaissance Reading.
- **Encourage** the use of challenging texts that foster inferential reading skills.
- **Clarify** the purpose of texts (e.g., informative, explanatory, persuasive) to guide appropriate reading strategies.
- **Reinforce** the understanding of subject-specific vocabulary.
- **Believe** that reading should never be a barrier to learning.

Learning Through Writing

Tibshelf School:

- **Encourage** writing in various forms (e.g., letters, reports, articles) for different purposes (e.g., to interpret, evaluate, explain, analyse, explore).
 - **Focus** on purpose, audience, and form when teaching writing skills.
 - **Model** the writing process explicitly to students.
 - **Connect** reading with writing, providing clear writing models.
 - **Set high expectations** for presentation, including punctuation, spelling, Standard English, and legibility.
 - **Provide** ample opportunities for sustained writing.
 - **Ensure** all school communications are correctly spelled and punctuated.
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- **Regularly test** high-frequency words and encourage students to learn from spelling errors.

Extra-curricular

Tibshelf School:

- **Organise** out-of-school events, including theatre visits and writers-in-residence programs.
- **Promote** local and national events like World Book Day.
- **Engage** students in writing competitions (e.g., science poems, creative writing).
- **Run** reading and writing clubs in the Literacy Resource Centre (LRC).
- **Offer** LRC-related responsibilities to interested students, allowing them to help manage books, suggest new titles, and support peers.

2025 -26 Academic Year Action Plan

Rationale

With a significant portion of our cohort facing barriers to literacy, it is imperative that we adopt a consistent approach to literacy improvement across all faculties, including form time and Personal Development.

Actions

Whole school

- **Promote Literacy as a Core Priority:** Ensure that literacy remains a primary focus in all decisions made at every level within the school, emphasising its central role in student outcomes.
- **Model Excellence in Literacy:** Develop a culture where staff consistently exemplify high standards in literacy through their writing, reading, and oracy, setting an example for students to emulate.


Tutors

- To deliver form time reading sessions adhering to the Tibshelf Reading strategy and reciprocal reading approaches.
- To know the red and amber students in their form group, particularly PP student, and to monitor their progress during form time Literacy sessions.
- To promote the subject specific reading lists and have discussions around further reading.

Teaching Staff

- To know and plan appropriately for red and amber students within their teaching groups particularly PP.
- To implement the Tibshelf Reading and Writing strategies in their planning and delivery.
- To liaise with HOF and HOY where necessary for support with those identified students.
- To ensure subject specific literacy intent is implemented in their lessons.

SLT

- To be familiar with the data of all red and amber students and action it within their roles.
 - To support the Director of Literacy in the implementation of whole school literacy development.
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- To ensure and monitor the implementation of faculty literacy intents through line management meetings and QA.

ELT

- To ensure staff within their faculty are aware of the red and amber readers, and that they are supported appropriately.
- To ensure that literacy is on agenda of all line management meetings and faculty meetings.
- To ensure and check that their SEFs highlight their actions towards improving literacy in their subjects.
- To ensure that all SOWs highlight opportunities for literacy strands.
- To ensure that faculty literacy intents are implemented, and to monitor this during QA periods.
- To ensure faculty Literacy Champions are allowed to develop literacy opportunities within the faculty/subjects.
- To work collaboratively as a leadership team to further develop literacy opportunities and reinforce the message that we are all teachers of literacy.
- To adhere to whole school policy for literacy marking and feedback.

TLR holders within Faculties

- To ensure staff within their faculty are aware of the red and amber readers, and that they are supported appropriately.
- To ensure that all SOWs highlight opportunities for literacy strands.
- To ensure that faculty literacy intents are implemented, and to monitor this during QA periods.
- To support DOF where necessary with any literacy actions needed.


SEN staff

- To be familiar with the data on all SEND red and amber students.
- To work collaboratively with the class teacher to support SEND students who are red and amber students within the classroom.
- To liaise with the teaching staff of those students they support, on any necessary actions that need to take place in or outside the classroom.
- To support the Director of Literacy with interventions needed for red and amber students.

Intervention Team

- To be familiar with the reading age data for red and amber students within their case load.
- To liaise with and support HOY/Tutors/ELT/Director of Literacy, when necessary, with red and amber students on their case load.

HOY

- To be familiar with all data for red and amber students, particularly PP within their year group.
 - To ensure that form tutors are carrying out Literacy tasks within tutor time.
 - To liaise and support the Director of Literacy with students identified for literacy interventions.
 - To support DOF and teaching staff with any issues with red or amber students escalated to them.
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PD Team

- To support literacy team with any actions needed within tutor time, trips, assemblies or extended learning time.
- To meet regularly with extended PD stakeholders, including the literacy team.

Literacy Team

- To ensure that there is an action plan in place for improving literacy within the school.
 - To create form time, assembly and extended teaching activities that improve whole school literacy.
 - To know the data of all red and amber students and action it within their roles
 - To plan and monitor intervention activities that improve the literacy of identified students.
 - To plan and monitor through different QA processes the use of literacy strategies within T and L.
 - To provide CPD on literacy strategies when necessary.
 - To share good practice as a school.
 - To support DOF, SEND Team, Intervention team and teaching staff with any issues with red or amber students escalated to them.
 - To ensure that teaching spaces and other spaces within the school promote literacy.
 - To improve the use of the LRC.
 - To work with the SEND to build relationships with parents/guardians of our red readers.
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