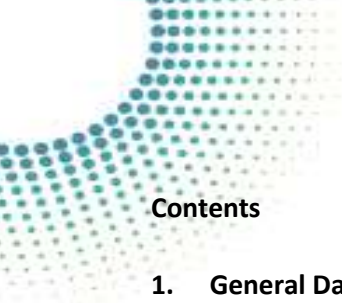# Literacy Policy

Adopted by the Board of Trustees

Date: April 2020

Trustee Reviewers: Standards Board

Contents

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1. General Data Protection Regulations

This policy has been reviewed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which will replace the Data Protection Act 1998 from 25th May 2018. The introduction of GDPR has resulted in changes to many existing data protection rules and regulations that educational establishments adhere to. The Evolve Trust has undertaken a full data protection audit and have ensured that appropriate changes that have been made to data protection rules and regulations have been adhered to in full. The Evolve Trust has carried out all additional compliance requirements and fully accepts their duty of care to ensure individuals' data is kept safe and secure, resulting in increased compliance in our systems, processes and policies.

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1. Rationale/Aims of the policy

At The Beech Academy, we believe that an effective literacy skillset (that is, speaking, listening, reading and writing) is fundamental to the overall development of children and their access to the curriculum in all aspects. We use these skills every day in order to communicate with, and make sense of, the world around us. As such, the better we are at these skills the more successful we can expect to be in life. At The Beech Academy we recognise that at the heart of improving literacy skills is the opportunity to practise them. We also believe that in the society in which we live, an ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, and to read a wide range of texts is essential. Improving literacy and learning can have an impact on students' self-esteem, motivation, behaviour and attainment. It allows them to learn independently and is empowering.

On entry to the Academy, Beech learners often arrive with levels below national and age related expectations and are lacking in confidence and self-esteem. This can lead to disengagement and 'fear' of failing in a range of different subjects. The Beech Academy curriculum is underpinned by developing students' abilities to speak, listen, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including using language to learn, communicate, think, explore and organise. Helping students to express themselves clearly, through development of vocabulary, both orally and in writing, enhances and enriches teaching and learning in all subjects and prepares the student for life after school. Staff develop learners' confidence and effectively break down the barriers to learning by creating a safe and stimulating learning environment based on individual needs.

Our Aim is to:

- Support students' learning in all subjects by supporting teachers to be clear about the ways in which their work with students contributes to the development of students' literacy skills.
- Increase students' standards of achievement in literacy and across the curriculum.
- Promote knowledge and understanding of the students' standards of achievement and assessment in literacy across the curriculum, and the identification of any areas of strength and weakness.
- Raise students' own expectations of achievement, thus raising standards and aspirations.
- Develop a shared understanding, between all staff, of the role of language in students' learning and how work in different subjects can contribute to and benefit from the development of their ability to communicate effectively both in school and in preparation for life.
- Recognise that language is central to students' sense of identity, belonging and growth.
- Develop students' confidence and ability to express themselves.
- Support the staff team to implement effective literacy development and wider achievement across the school.

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2. Key requirements of implementation

Reading - We want our students to enjoy reading, to be able to use reading to help them learn and to develop increasing confidence and competence in reading. At the Beech Academy we will:

- Create an environment where reading is promoted across the school.
- Provide time in school every week for all students to read.
- Support reading through a range of varied and appropriately differentiated reading resources and interventions.
- Promote and support reading in non-school hours.
- Implement a more robust assessment process in order to identify weakness and strength, which in turn is used to inform planning and intervention

Writing - writing helps pupils to sustain and order thought. We will:

- Provide students with a range of challenging writing tasks.
- Provide students with real audiences and creative writing outlets where possible.
- Support students to verbalise responses before writing by using the Teaching Sequence for Writing
- Support writing with frames or scaffolds where appropriate, and use modelling, within subjects.
- Ensure grammar, spelling and handwriting are supported in all subjects.
- Promote and support writing in non-school hours.

Speaking and Listening - language helps pupils to prepare, reflect, revise and evaluate the tasks they undertake, and on the things others have said, written or done. We will:

- Provide planned opportunities across the curriculum for students to engage in purposeful talk, both formally and informally
- Encourage a more systematic approach to the use of speaking and listening tasks in all subjects.
- Support all departments and subjects in embedding speaking and listening within their area.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- **SLT**: 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;
- **Learning support staff** will provide additional scaffolding for students with identified literacy weaknesses.
- **Literacy co-ordinator**: supports departments in the implementation of strategies and encourages departments to learn from each other's practice by sharing ideas. They will regularly monitor students' progress in literacy and the impact of literacy interventions and review provision accordingly.
- **Parents**: encourage their children to use the range of strategies they have learnt to improve their levels of literacy;

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- **Pupils**: take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs and making improvements;
- **Governors**: an identified governor could meet with staff and pupils and report progress and issues to the governing body and to parents in the governors' annual report.

Speaking and Listening

All staff will:
- Lead by example, ensuring Standard English is used at all times and is expected in response.
- Challenge students when slang or inappropriate colloquialisms are used.
- Reinforce the differences between Standard English and non-standard forms of the language where appropriate
- Encourage students to correct their own speech when errors are drawn attention to for example, correcting 'we was…' in students' speech
- Use a wide range of questioning techniques and strategies to improve spoken responses from students
- Create opportunities for talk in a range of contexts and forms: whole class discussion, small group discussion, paired discussion, individual contribution, role play etc.

Writing

All staff will:

- Model high standards of presentation. All work to be presented with date and title underlined.
- Model all pieces of writing – never assume that the student will know what structure or tone to employ. Use writing frames etc. to aid extended writing for those who need them.
- Promote punctuation, spelling and grammar within any writing task.
- Take every opportunity to expand vocabulary and range of expression. Be explicit about what vocabulary or key words you expect to find in any given piece of writing. The use of vocabulary 'starters' and knowledge organisers are particularly useful here.
- Insist on the use of full sentences within writing tasks.
- Ensure that learning assistants are encouraging students to spell out words and discuss use of punctuation when scribing.
- Learning assistants and teachers use a variety of questions to encourage writing in more detail.

Reading

All staff will:

- Provide opportunities for reading as a class, in groups and individually.
- Encourage the use of phonics strategies to sound out words where appropriate to do so.
- Encourage reading aloud if appropriate to task through consistent use of reading tokens.
- Encourage further reading around the subject where appropriate.
- Promote skimming and scanning skills in lessons.

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- Develop students' ability to locate and retrieve information; to select and interpret information; to collate supporting details within a text; to collate material from a variety of texts, including different types of text.
- Take every opportunity to promote the enjoyment of reading.

Marking

All staff will:

- Follow the Beech Academy Literacy marking policy when assessing students' work. Circle mistakes and place appropriate symbols in the margin. If no margin available, symbols can be placed next to the error. It is not policy to indicate every single mistake in students' work especially when marking work of students who have low levels of literacy in all areas of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Specific areas may be targeted in different assessments. Ensure that the student knows which particular literacy focus will be assessed beforehand e.g. The particular focus for this piece of writing will be the correct spelling of all key words and the correct use of capital letters.
- Take opportunities to praise, either verbally or through marking, the effective and accurate use of literacy skills.
- Utilise the self/peer marking of literacy with students marking their own or a partner's work. Use knowledge organisers to aid assessment.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation:

The Senior Leadership Team will review samples of planning and work from each area to monitor the implementation of this policy and the effectiveness of the delivery of literacy throughout the school. An analysis will be made and feedback will be given to staff. A review of samples of work in work scrutiny, lesson observations and learning walks should inform the following:

- The Accelerated Reader Programme and the use of Read/Write inc. modules will allow clear monitoring of pupil progress in reading and will help staff develop targeted strategies to improve reading throughout the school.
- Improvement in learners' achievement and attainment in key literacy areas;
- Consistency in the delivery of literacy across subjects and key stages;
- Participation of learners in the process.
- Improvement in reading and spelling ages on termly basis.

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