

# West Park School

## Literacy Policy



<b>Policy Owner:</b>	<b>Literacy Lead</b>
<b>Date of last Review:</b>	<b>December 2024</b>
<b>Date of next Review:</b>	<b>December 2025</b>

## Literacy at West Park

Literacy at West Park is taught and delivered across the curriculum in all subject areas. The rationale for this being that pupils need to know good literacy is a key skill for life, not just something they need to focus on in an English lesson. This message is communicated to the pupils by giving literacy a high profile across the school. Teachers explicitly talk about literacy including vocabulary, reading, disciplinary literacy and spelling, punctuation and grammar. This can take place in any subject and during form time. Teachers can add to their understanding of literacy through professional development opportunities. The table below summarises what is done at West Park to raise standards and promote literacy across the curriculum to all pupils of all abilities. Literacy is an agenda item at every curriculum and standards committee meeting. Literacy features at Teaching and Learning briefings and literacy pedagogy books are often featured on the Teaching and Learning reading lists.

<b>Focus</b>	<b>What is done at West Park?</b>
Raising the profile of literacy and reading in the school.	<p>Literacy is promoted as a key skill at West Park. not just for academic achievement, but as an important life skill.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Literacy is an agenda item at every Curriculum and Standards Committee.</li><li>• Literacy is highlighted to pupils with word of the week on the screens. This is also sent to form tutors to share with their forms. Words for word of the week are suggested by teachers and pupils. Teachers can specify a particular week where they would like a word displaying so it coincides with a particular topic where a word is commonly misspelt.</li><li>• West Park has a common literacy marking policy so pupils receive consistent feedback on where to improve their literacy. This is displayed in all classrooms and sent to all new staff in September of each academic year.</li><li>• The marking grid was updated in 2014/2015 to include a section on what SPAG marks are to raise pupil awareness. This is in response to teachers wanting to ensure pupils are aware that SPAG marks are available on many GCSEs.</li><li>• A literacy audit was completed by all Heads of Department in June 2012 to identify pupils' areas of weakness so that teachers can focus on it in their practice. This audit was redone at the start of the 2020/21 academic year and demonstrated that departments were keen to promote literacy within their subject, they just needed the time and support.</li><li>• In 2015/2016 subject specific key words are displayed on the AV screens on the day or day before GCSE examinations. This was trialled for the mock examinations in 2016 and was successful. This is now a regular strategy.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Languages, as part of teaching grammar, there is an emphasis on making sure pupils are aware of common grammatical terms of at least noun, verb, adjectives and adverbs. Key grammatical terms such as tenses are discussed and the differences and similarities between French and English constructions are explored. French comes from Latin and uses many prefixes and suffixes that we also find in English, such as dé- = des-, pré- = pre-, re- = re- for prefixes and for suffixes -té = -ty, -ant = -ing, -é = -ed and many others. Key words like synonym, homophone and cognate are used to refer to words in class discussion.</li> <li>• To engage pupils in literacy in Languages there are displays that include interesting literacy facts.</li> <li>• Grammar maps are used in English that build on skills from Year 7 right through until Year 11 to consolidate understanding of grammar.</li> <li>• Every classroom has a literacy board. This has whole school words, subject specific vocabulary and subject specific sentence starters.</li> <li>• Each month has a specific literacy focus which is displayed on the literacy board, for example September is paragraphs. ELR is looking at how to embed this into activities within lessons during 2024-25.</li> <li>• Literacy posters covering the etymology of words are displayed around school.</li> <li>• The English department are embedding reciprocal reading into their schemes of work. KEM shared his findings developing reciprocal reading in other areas during a teaching and learning briefing in November 2022. ELR will look to continue developing reciprocal reading in other areas.</li> <li>• The Christmas poetry competition for the West Park School Christmas card, as well as other competitions run by the English department.</li> <li>• Pupils have a reading lesson on their timetable in Year 7 with a focus on fluency, comprehension and reading speed. This will be the case for Year 8 in 2025-26 too.</li> <li>• Year 7 and 8 have library lessons focused around reading. Pupils' attitudes towards reading are audited and the most reluctant readers identified. Each lesson focuses on target setting and monitoring each pupil's reading with a view to encouraging, challenging and extending their reading. Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure and it is their homework to read twice a week. If a pupil forgets their reading book or has not been doing their homework, they receive a strike. Three strikes results in a detention with SAD as Head of English. Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure and have the opportunity to work towards reading rewards and E-praise points.</li> <li>• A 'Book of the Week' is displayed on the school screens every week. These are often recommended by our Book Club pupils. Many tie in with specific events in school, e.g Black History Month or Pride Month.</li> </ul>
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- Year 9 lesson in Geography in the news looking at Tim Marshall's 'Prisoners of Geography' books. This proved very popular as the library had to order more copies of the book.

Specific activities to promote reading:

- School clubs – Book Club meets on Friday lunchtime, this is exceptionally well attended. There are lots of opportunities offered to develop and encourage readers.
- Book Club focuses on a year-long reading challenge alongside individual book awards. Pupils who complete the challenge are taken on a rewards trip. There are also opportunities to take part in Young Editors where pupils read and edit a pre-publication manuscript for Barrington Stoke publishers.
  - Bookbuzz is in its third year- All year 7 and 8 pupils receive a free book and complete a piece of creative homework on it. This is then showcased in school.
  - Royal Society Book Award for Young People – alongside the Science Department, pupils participate in the award including voting on their winner.
  - Duke of Edinburgh – Pupils have the option to volunteer as a reading mentor as part of their Duke of Edinburgh community service element. Year 9 pupils are paired with a year 7 who has a lower reading age. They work with them weekly to improve their reading ability, developing a social bond between students.
  - Reading takes place in form time in each year group. Following focus groups with pupils about silent reading in form time, a new form reading discussion activity was trialled and evaluated with Year 7 in the 2020/21 academic year. This is now a monthly feature of form time, in addition to the silent reading session pupils complete.
  - Book Fest – a week-long celebration of reading including author visits, quizzes and competitions.
  - Readathon – a sponsored reading activity to raise money for charity by reading as many books as possible. Due to other fundraising activities this is not necessarily an annual event.
  - Author visits, both in and out of school.
  - Literacy activities in individual subjects. E.g. The recommend a History novel display with mini book reviews from pupils. ELR will look to update the display in the 2024-25 academic year.
  - The Geography department now has a recommended reading list to support schemes of work and wider reading on Firefly. This will continue to be added to and developed. In future the librarian will work on rolling reading lists out to all subjects.
  - Reading Challenge – identifies reluctant readers and supports readers of all levels and attitude.
  - Many classrooms have a poster saying what their teacher is reading to normalise and model reading for pleasure.
  - SKM as reading lead will liaise with departments in 2024-25 to discover how quality texts can be further embedded into the curriculum.

Sharing good practice and literacy across the curriculum.

In order to communicate with pupils that good literacy is important in all subjects, not just English, it is essential that good practice is shared.

- All department areas develop literacy skills and refer to them during their teaching.
- Oracy opportunities are developed across the school. E.g. presentations in Humanities where presentation skills are discussed and developed instead of just focusing on the subject content.
- Individual department initiatives such as the spelling competition in Humanities. Form spelling competition in Humanities for year 7 and year 8. Certificates for this competition are given out at the end of the academic year for top performers and the most improved speller to allow good performances across the ability range to be recognised. The competitions run as a league table between forms over the course of an academic year.
- KEM and SKM delivered CPD to each department focusing on a whole school approach to deciding which words/vocabulary we focus on (tier 2 academic vocabulary). From this CPD a West Park academic word list has been developed. KEM delivered a summary of this CPD to the leadership team at the start of the 2021/22 academic year. This will be revisited in 2024-25 in departmental training with ELR and SKM.
- Time during the February INSET in 2023 was dedicated for departments to meet and have time to implement some of the strategies from this CPD and the toolkit (see below) into schemes of work.
- Longer answer questions training delivered throughout 2023-24 and the beginning of 2024-25, addressing aspects of disciplinary literacy, modelling, vocabulary and formality in academic writing.
- The teaching and learning group read the 'Closing the Vocabulary Gap' literacy book by Alex Quigley. Reviewed by KEM in the teaching and learning newsletter. In 2022, 'Closing the Reading Gap' is a recommendation of the teaching and learning group.
- KEM launched the literacy toolkit at the end of the 2020/21 academic year. This easy to use toolkit has ready-made proformas to be added to existing schemes of work to embed literacy strategies. ELR will continue to add to the toolkit. It will be highlighted to staff again in a Teaching and Learning briefing during the first term of each new academic year.
- KEM has previously led teaching and learning briefing sessions on literacy as part of quality first teaching. ELR will present to the early careers teachers at the beginning of 2025.
- Use of the 'closing the vocabulary CPD' in maths to explicitly explain and investigate key words in lessons.
- Engagement with Derby city's 'Priority Literacy' offer, including the Derby Academic transition project.
- KEM has completed the NPQLL and ELR is currently completing it in 2024-25.

<p>Effective use of the library.</p>	<p>The library plays a crucial role in the development and delivery of literacy at West Park. The library plays a key role in raising the profile of literacy across the school. It has a trained librarian and library assistant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The library is available to all curriculum areas and is used to enhance learning and literacy skills. E.g. Library research lessons on explorers in the England to Empire module in History, or countries research in Geography.</li> <li>• Regular timetabled library lessons/library visits in English lessons.</li> <li>• All year 7s are given a library induction session.</li> <li>• Year 7 reading survey and personalised book recommendations to Year 7 and 8 pupils.</li> <li>• World Book Day is promoted and supported by the library. Vouchers and free books are given away.</li> <li>• Library displays. A range of genre displays in the library which are updated regularly.</li> <li>• E-Platform – E-book options links to the Accessit Library software and available via a downloaded mobile app.</li> <li>• The library runs year 6 sessions for keen readers who gain access to a wider reading collection.</li> <li>• Writers’ visits. Previous visits have included Alan Gibbons, Dave Cryer workshops, Terry Terri and William Hussey.</li> <li>• Carnegie Medal Book Awards for Writing and Illustration – West Park shadows the awards and hosts an award day or visits another school to celebrate the books and announcement of the results.</li> <li>• DSBA (Derbyshire Schools Book Award) – years 7 &amp; 8 pupils take part – they can influence the final result with their votes. There is usually a celebration ceremony at the University of Derby which we attend. Pupil Premium pupils are also invited to take part and read one title alongside a member of staff.</li> <li>• The library collaborates with the History, Geography and Personal Development (P.S.H.E) departments to produce reading lists for each unit.</li> <li>• The library collaborates with departments to link library based initiatives into teaching e.g. the World Book Day ‘where in the world’ from the blurb with the Geography department.</li> </ul>
<p>Interventions to raise standards of literacy for less able pupils.</p>	<p>Reading is tested through TES literacy to determine reading ages. Twice yearly tests are undertaken to judge progress in Years 7 and 8. Pupils who do literacy sessions in Year 9 are also tested. Based on these tests, pupils who have reading ages below their chronological age receive extra support and targeted intervention. This takes many forms including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sets for timetabled reading lessons are different to the other English lessons, allowing support for pupil with lower reading ages.</li> <li>• Reading mentors.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading support and intervention by teaching assistants occurs by extraction during form times. This helps develop reading in the weaker pupils.</li> <li>• The Literacy Unit provides targeted support during lesson times in small groups by way of lesson extraction. This also helps develop Literacy skills to the most vulnerable pupils.</li> <li>• There are daily intensive literacy skills lessons in Base 9.</li> <li>• Differentiation such as word banks and writing frames in lessons.</li> <li>• Support from Springfield primary school with the teaching of handwriting and phonics for less able pupils.</li> <li>• Pupils who find literacy and reading especially difficult are, after consultation, withdrawn from French to participate in extra literacy lessons for two years.</li> <li>• Targeted Phonics lessons are provided by extraction from lessons by the Special Needs teacher.</li> </ul>
<p>Literacy opportunities for higher attaining pupils.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole school competitions are open to all pupils, but the most able pupils are especially enthusiastic and keen to enter.</li> <li>• National Teen Book Club offered via Speakers for Schools offers keen 14-18 year old readers and writers the opportunity to learn about the writing and publishing process from professionals, read a book as a group and produce a piece of writing which is published.</li> <li>• Debate club.</li> <li>• Higher tier resources like the Macbeth texts available for higher attaining pupils.</li> <li>• Geography reading book list on Firefly (July 2023.)</li> </ul>