



Wychwood School

**LITERACY POLICY**  
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This policy refers to the development of good language skills which is an entitlement for all pupils and a responsibility of all teachers. In all aspects of their learning girls should be given opportunities to:

- speak clearly and effectively to convey information and ideas to a variety of audiences (HoM: Thinking and Communicating with Clarity and Precision; Questioning and Posing Problems)
- listen attentively to others to understand their meanings, intentions and feelings (HoM: Listening with understanding and empathy)
- read confidently to gain ideas and information from written text, showing fluency, enjoyment and comprehension (HoM: Remaining Open to Continuous Learning)
- write accurately and appropriately to express understanding and present information and imaginative ideas. They should be able to plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing. (HoM: Thinking Flexibly and Creating, Imagining and Innovating)
- develop fluent and legible handwriting (HoM: Thinking and Communicating with Clarity and Precision; Striving for Accuracy)
- develop a growing vocabulary to aid their comprehension and expression, including specialist vocabulary associated with different subjects (HoM: Applying Past Knowledge to New Situations; Metacognition)
- apply their understanding of language and written forms to particular contexts (HoM: Applying Past Knowledge to New Situations; Metacognition)

The library is a resource for all subjects and Schemes of Work should ensure that girls are encouraged to use it for projects, research work and background reading as well as for enjoyment and personal reading.

### **Speaking and Listening**

In most activities there are opportunities for developing girls' spoken language by asking and answering questions, giving precise information and instructions and giving and receiving

explanations. They will speak and listen in classes and large and smaller groups and in individual conversation with their teachers.

School Assemblies, Celebration Day, Open Mornings and Evenings, Youth Speaks presentations, MUN and debating all enable girls to gain confidence and experience in speaking formally to audiences of adults and their peers.

In classroom discussion there should be appropriate conventions such as an awareness of the need for girls to listen attentively to each other and value others' contributions and opinions.

## **Reading**

Reading involves not just basic comprehension and reading for different purposes but also more specific skills such as skimming, scanning, selecting and collating information and evaluating how information is presented. Most subject areas will afford opportunities to develop these skills.

Standardised scores from Edinburgh Reading tests are available from the Director of Studies and staff may use such data to aid differentiation by reading speed and ability; sub-test scores may help to identify areas of weakness or skills to be revised or supported. Concerns arising from reading or comprehension difficulties should be referred to the SENDCo and copied to the Head of English.

## **Writing**

### **Spelling**

Girls should have their own spelling lists in planners and should know how to use the dictionaries and thesauruses in all teaching classrooms and in the library. Subject staff should provide clear spelling of any technical words, either on the board or by means of a subject-specific word list.

Correction of spelling may be selective to ensure that key words are learned. Spelling patterns should be reinforced by clear articulation of syllables and learned by the "look, say, cover, write, check" method.

### **Key Stage 3.**

Words should be indicated with marginal annotation of Sp and corrected three times in a vertical column after the piece of work. Mnemonics may be helpful for recurrent mistakes.

### **GCSE and A Level.**

Each girl should have a personal spelling sheet in the front of each subject file. Words marked with marginal annotation of Sp should be written once correctly on this sheet which will act as a personal dictionary for that subject, a list to be learned and also as a diagnostic aid to reveal any recurrent mistakes. Standardised sheets for all subjects will be produced by the English department. In the creative arts departments, spellings are corrected and correct spellings are required in all pieces of extended prose but they are not required in the sketchbooks.

### **Handwriting**

Clear, comfortable and legible handwriting enables pupils to produce written work efficiently and effectively and also helps the retention and recall of words in reading and spelling. Girls

should be encouraged to use fountain pens or roller ball pens and not biro for all neat work because of the detrimental effect of biro on handwriting development.

The pen should be held lightly, about an inch from the point, between the thumb and first finger with the middle finger giving support. If there are problems with handwriting, consideration of the following points can aid diagnosis: body posture; position in relation to the desk; positioning of paper; amount of pressure; formation of letters in the correct direction and appropriate methods of joining.

Staff should be aware of girls with dyspraxic difficulties and offer positive support and encouragement. Handwriting club is available to girls with persistent handwriting difficulties.

### **Presentation**

Careful presentation enhances the content of written work. Girls should be issued with rough books for planning, drafting and rough work; handwritten final work in neat books and on file paper should be neat and legible.

Work should be dated and headed. Rulers should be used for underlining.

### **SEND and Dyslexia.**

Concerns about girls who show signs of dyslexia should be raised immediately with the SENDCo and the appropriate English teacher and copied to the Head of English. Screening and testing may follow and girls may be offered support lessons, a booster course or a short course in study skills to improve general literacy and organisation of written work.

