



Leigh Academy  
**Longfield**

## **Languages Policy: Literacy**

September 2025
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# Literacy Policy

## Vision

At Leigh Academy Longfield the majority of our students speak English as their native tongue, however there are variations in students' aptitude with this language. For this reason students should be given every opportunity possible to develop their reading, writing and speaking skills, so that they have the tools necessary to access the whole curriculum and achieve outcomes for a happy and successful life. No student's progress will be hindered due to poor literacy. We expect all of our students to leave Leigh Academy Longfield able to communicate effectively.

## Rationale

"Reading is the gateway to learning. It is the key to students' future academic achievement and wellbeing. Students who struggle to read words accurately quickly fall behind their peers. They read less and do not accumulate the necessary background knowledge and vocabulary from reading. To fulfil the demands of the secondary school curriculum, students need to be able to read age-appropriate texts fluently. Students who cannot read well are not able to access the curriculum and are disadvantaged for life. It is therefore essential that reading is a priority to prevent students from falling any further behind with their education." (GOV.UK Gill Jones, Deputy Director, Schools and Early Education, April 2022)

At Leigh Academy Longfield, we fully support the above statement and strongly believe that each student should be given every possible opportunity to develop their reading, writing and oracy skills. As a school, we are committed to ensuring that our students experience quality first teaching across the curriculum and we recognise that the explicit teaching of literacy is integral to this. Therefore, at Leigh Academy Longfield, every teacher is a teacher of literacy.

The term literacy refers to all aspects of language development: reading, writing, speaking and listening. It is imperative that all subject areas are aware of the importance of literacy and contribute to the successful teaching of it. Our regard for its importance also extends to support areas and the whole school environment, as well as links with home and the wider community.

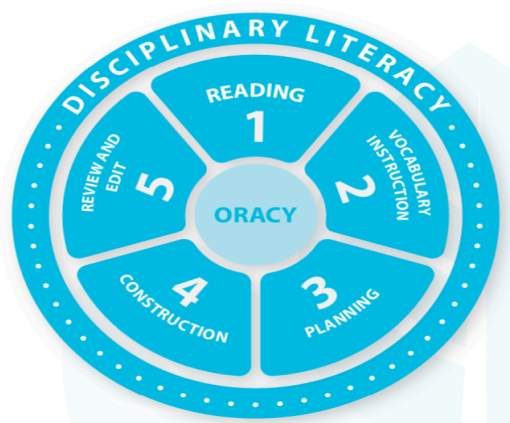
The aim of this policy is to assist all members of staff in improving whole school literacy levels by establishing a shared approach to literacy development. As part of the literacy strategy, we have created the 'Longfield Literacy Drivers' (pictured page 3) to provide teachers with areas of specific focus when planning for and developing literacy in the classroom. The strategy places an emphasis on disciplinary literacy which highlights the importance of every teacher communicating their subject through academic language, and that reading, writing, speaking and listening are at the heart of engaging successfully with every subject at the academy. Furthermore, the policy aims to clarify the fundamental principles which underpin the 'Longfield literacy Drivers'.

At Leigh Academy Longfield it is recognised that literacy is central to developing internationally minded learners. Our literacy policy supports students in becoming confident communicators who can understand and express ideas across languages, cultures, and contexts. We promote international mindedness through the following strategies:

- Inclusive Text Selection - We intentionally include texts within our 'Tutor- Time Reading' sessions from a diverse range of cultures, perspectives, and global contexts. This encourages students to engage with ideas beyond their own experiences, fostering empathy and global awareness.
- Critical Literacy - Through our 'Reciprocal Reading' strategy, our students are supported to question texts critically, recognising bias, cultural perspectives, and the power of language in shaping viewpoints.

# Longfield Literacy Drivers

## Longfield Literacy Drivers



The 'Longfield Literacy Drivers' are designed to be used where appropriate depending on the area of literacy development. They can be used sequentially, however we know that to provide the best teaching of literacy, this is not always the case.

The strategy recognises five key strands for literacy development: reading, vocabulary instruction, planning, construction and review and editing. At the heart of the strategy is oracy as we believe this underpins the other strands as each strand provides an opportunity for the development of student oracy. The entire strategy is encompassed by disciplinary literacy as we aim to promote student progress in all subjects through the development of literacy.

## Disciplinary Literacy

As an IB school we celebrate literacy as the approach to learning of "communication". This has interdisciplinary elements (for example understanding the basic components of writing to evaluate) and disciplinary elements (evaluating like a historian, using subject specific language). For this reason the approach to learning "communication" is an integral part of all subject groups in our MYP curriculum.

Research from the EEF shows that mapping, understanding and supporting the individual needs for literacy significantly improves students' literacy progress. Unlike primary school, secondary education is delivered by a range of teachers with different subject specialisms, many of which are not experts in reading or literacy. Disciplinary literacy seeks to build a better understanding of the literacy needs within each subject area, the crossover between subject areas, and how literacy can best be supported across the curriculum. In order to fully embed disciplinary literacy across the school, we ensure that:

- The literacy offering is consistent across the academy.
- Teachers' understanding of literacy teaching is accurate and current in order to provide subject specific support.
- The cognitive load of students is managed effectively by avoiding the teaching of contradictory or repetitive methods of writing across different subject areas. Instead, consistent methods are used.
- All staff feel secure enough to ask for literacy support, offer guidance to students and feel confident when modelling and stating that they are a teacher of literacy.
- Reading for pleasure, academic reading and reading aloud are all explicitly used and/or encouraged across the curriculum. This includes opportunities for students of different cultures and those who don't speak English as a first language to read in their own native language in our library.
- Students are given opportunities to develop their oracy skills; discussion and structured speech are established practice and students adapt their speech to suit different contexts and audiences.
- [EEF Guidance](#) informs and supports our rationale at Leigh Academy Longfield.

## Reading

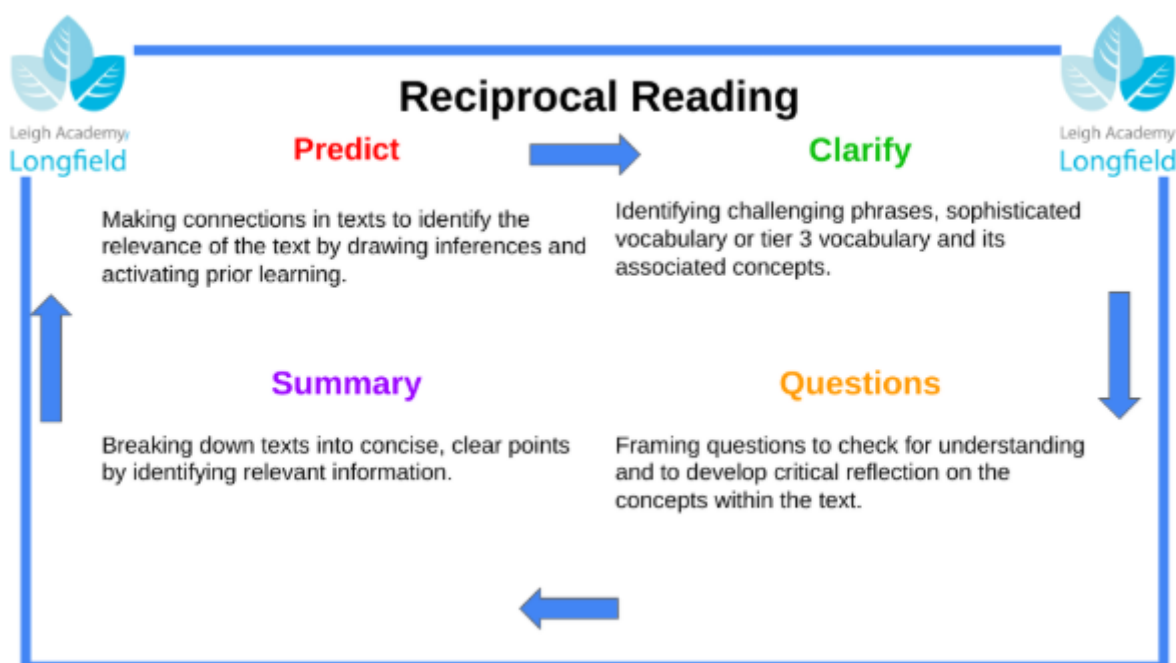
Reading refers to the teaching, modelling and scaffolding of reading so that students become strategic and knowledgeable readers. At Leigh Academy Longfield we also recognise the importance of reading to inform writing.

Reading is promoted across the academy by subject departments and whole school initiatives in a variety of ways: Sparx Reader, Bedrock, post-16 and peer reading buddies, intervention programmes, tutor-led reading, the Learning Resource Centre (LRC), literacy specific CPD, and annual events such as World Book Day.

Our LRC is a hub of activity and is a place that is accessible to all. Students are encouraged to use it as a place for study and to read for pleasure. Students are supported by the LRC Manager with book selections and specific requests for new titles are encouraged through the use of the academy LRC website.

We are aware that students who find reading difficult are unlikely to read for pleasure and therefore likely to fall behind academically compared to those students who read regularly. As a result, we have made it a priority for all students in years 7-10 to have access to Sparx Reader – a digital reading programme designed to improve reading fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Students are assessed and a selection of suitable books is offered based on their reading ability. Regular targets are set and progress is celebrated by the academy. Students have designated time both in school and at home to complete the programme which is monitored by their tutor. We also look to make reading accessible through digital tools such as our Read&Write toolbar so that neuro-diverse characteristics such as dyslexia do not hinder the accessibility of these texts.

All students in KS3 and KS4 undertake tutor-led reading sessions at least once a week. During these sessions, staff model reading fluency and decoding strategies and explicitly teach new vocabulary using the reciprocal reading approach. Reciprocal reading is also a strategy that has been adopted at Leigh Academy Longfield by all teaching staff and across all subject areas. The strategy encourages students to focus on four key elements when reading a text: predicting, clarifying, questioning and summarising. It also provides opportunities for both teachers and students to read aloud.



Students are assessed regularly throughout the year to assess the need for specific reading interventions and support and to closely monitor student progress. Data is gathered from NGRT tests, phonics assessments and scaled scores gathered from SATs exams at KS2. Depending on the reading needs identified, students will be placed on a 'Longfield Reading Pathway'. Each pathway provides specific support for students' needs. This will include, but is not limited to:

- One-to-one or small group reading support
- Extra opportunities for students to read aloud
- Phonics programmes
- Invitations to attend specially selected book clubs
- The use of Google Read&Write toolbar

## Vocabulary Instruction

Vocab instruction is essential to building a student's schema (general understanding of an idea). It is our duty to our students and peers to build rich knowledge of vocabulary through effective vocab instruction. A great curriculum considers what words to explicitly teach to help build their schema but also be a clothespin of the lesson.

We aim to systematically develop students' academic and subject-specific vocabulary and recognise that fluency will not happen if students decoding and vocabulary comprehension is not secure or well practised. Through the whole school 'Reciprocal Reading' approach the clarification of tier 2 and 3 words is expected in lessons. With a disciplinary literacy focus, departments identify and teach vocabulary essential to understanding and expressing subject content with accuracy as well as clarifying any tier 2 vocabulary when needed. As well as the 'clarify' component to the school's reciprocal reading approach, Frayer models are also used as a whole school strategy to promote conversations (development of oracy) around vocabulary. Key strategies include, but are not limited to:

- Reciprocal reading
- Frayer models
- Use morphology, etymology, and context to explore new words.
- Dual coding, and retrieval practice to reinforce learning.
- Encourage the use of knowledge organisers for tier 3 vocabulary
- Digital strategies such as Read&Write toolbar

## Planning

At Leigh Academy Longfield, we recognise that effective writing is a process that requires deliberate thinking, organisation, and reflection. Planning is a crucial stage in this process and is therefore embedded as a key element of our whole-school approach to writing.

All teaching staff are expected to build in dedicated time for planning written work as part of the teaching sequence. This ensures that students are given the opportunity to generate ideas, organise their thoughts, and structure their responses before drafting. Research, including the [EEF's Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools guidance](#), highlights that the explicit teaching of planning strategies significantly improves the quality and coherence of student writing.

Planning supports learners by:

- Reducing cognitive load, allowing students to focus on content and accuracy

- Developing metacognitive and self-regulatory skills, enabling students to become more independent writers
- Supporting inclusivity by providing clear structure for students who may have literacy difficulties, SEND, or EAL needs
- Reinforcing subject specific conventions through structured preparation for writing in different disciplines.
- Encourages and supports oracy by helping students organise their thoughts before speaking, increasing clarity, confidence, and the use of subject-specific language in verbal responses.

Teachers should model planning processes appropriate to their subject, such as: boxing-up grids, outlines, bullet points, graphic organisers, flowcharts, or mind maps and encourage students to revisit and adapt their plans as they move through the drafting and editing stages. Planning should be visible, valued, and consistently embedded across departments to promote high quality, thoughtful writing across the curriculum. As an IB school dedicated to inclusion, we use the pedagogy of universal design for learning to develop independence with our students here. Over time we expect students to use the models presented by teachers to find their own effective means of planning their writing and outlining their notes so that the cognitively demanding task of extended writing can become a practice that all of our students can master.

## Writing: Construction

All students at Leigh Academy Longfield, regardless of the subject they are studying, will be given opportunities to develop their writing skills. Staff are expected to support students through explicit instruction when completing writing tasks. We recognise that writing is not only a tool for communication, but also a means of deepening thinking and learning across the curriculum. To support students in becoming confident and effective writers, we prioritise the explicit teaching of writing construction at sentence, paragraph, and whole text level.

Teachers across all subject areas are expected to model the writing process and break it down into manageable stages. This includes:

- Sentence level work, focusing on grammar, sentence variety, clarity, and subject-specific vocabulary
- Paragraph level construction, emphasising topic sentences, development of ideas, evidence, and cohesion
- Whole text structure, including introductions, logical sequencing of ideas, and conclusions appropriate to the task and subject
- Communicating through mathematical notation.
- Annotating images and diagrams in subjects such as Art and Design.

Students should be supported through the use of modelling, shared writing, and scaffolded tasks, with clear success criteria provided for both short-form and extended writing. Planning strategies (see *Planning*) should be used consistently to help students organise their thoughts and structure their responses effectively.

By embedding these practices across the curriculum, we ensure that all students develop transferable writing skills, are equipped to meet the demands of subject specific writing, and can communicate their ideas with clarity and accuracy.

Staff are expected to mark for literacy by identifying errors in students' writing using the published codes. This is presented in every student exercise book and record of progress across all subjects.

## Review and Edit

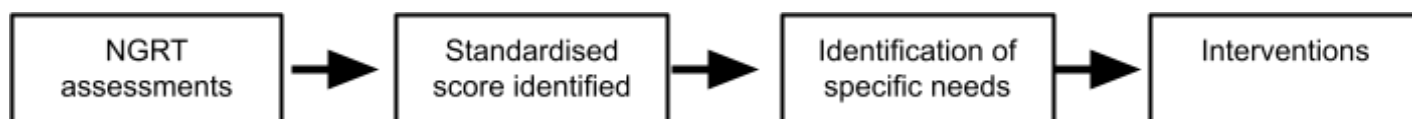
At Leigh Academy Longfield we recognise that developing strong literacy skills requires opportunities for students to reflect on, refine, and improve their work across all subjects. Reviewing and editing are essential stages in this process, allowing students to respond to feedback, strengthen the clarity of their communication, and take greater ownership of their learning. We distinguish between:

- Revising – making thoughtful changes to the *content and structure* of writing in response to teacher feedback or peer/self-assessment. This might include clarifying meaning, strengthening arguments, or reorganising information.
- Editing – refining writing at the sentence and word level to improve grammar, punctuation, spelling, and overall coherence.
- Reviewing clarity by self-correcting their grammar.

## Intervention

We assess KS3 students for reading ability three times a year; once at the start of module one, again during module three if areas of significant weakness are identified and finally at the end of the academic year during module six. The academy uses The New Group Reading Test (NGRT) to measure reading skills against the national average. This data is then used to identify the root cause of any difficulties and the required interventions. We then arrange the interventions ensuring that they are carefully tailored to the identified needs of individual students. Progress and impact is tracked. Interventions include:

- Dyslexia screening by SEN
- Speech and language interventions by SEN
- Use of reading pens
- Reading Quest
- Post-16 and peer reading buddies to support developing readers



## Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy is monitored, evaluated and reviewed both day-to-day and more strategically:

1. On-going monitoring:
  - Lesson observations and learning walks
  - Work scrutinies
  - Staff discussions and feedback
  - MER process
  - Student progress in lessons
  - Bedrock and Sparxreader reporting system
2. Strategic monitoring and evaluation:
  - Schemes of learning are reviewed at the end of each module or annually
  - Analysis of NGRT reading test data