

Thomas Adams School



Literacy Strategy

Monitoring	Frame of engagement	Date
Member of Staff Responsible	Literacy Co-ordinator	September 2025
Governor Accountability	Link Governor	
Consultation Parameters	Local Governing Body	
Information		
Date of latest version		September 2025
Date for next review (and cycle)		August 2026
Uploaded to Website		Yes

Section 1 – Introduction

- 1.1 “‘Literacy’... is more than the mechanics of reading, writing, speaking and listening. The National Curriculum demands that connections be made between each strand and across subjects, which calls for thought and understanding, for recall, selection and analysis of ideas and information, and for coherent, considered and convincing communication in speech and in writing.” [Improving Literacy in secondary schools: a shared responsibility – Ofsted 2013]
- 1.2 We believe that the development of an effective Literacy skillset (that is, speaking, listening, reading and writing) is fundamental to the achievement of a rich and fulfilling life. We use these skills every day in order to communicate with, and make sense of, the world around us. Therefore, the better we are at these skills the more successful we can expect to be in life. We recognise that at the heart of improving Literacy skills is the opportunity to practise them. Improving Literacy and learning can have an impact on pupils’ self-esteem, motivation, behaviour and attainment. It allows them to learn independently, and is empowering.

Section 2 – The Policy Scope

Commitment to Review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually by the relevant Policy Owner named below and/or in light of the changes to the National Curriculum requirements and DfE guidance/regulations

Literacy Policy	
Named Responsibility of Policy	Literacy Coordinator
Date of Policy	September 2024
Date of next Review	August 2025
Key Roles and Responsibilities	
Senior Leadership Team	The Senior Leadership Team will take an active role in supporting the overall initiative
Subject Leaders	Subject Leaders have the crucial role of leading and supporting activities within their teams
Heads of Year (Pastoral)	HOY are expected to take a key role in supporting form tutors with reading during form time
Mentors	Mentors will lead the initiative of reading during form time and encourage pupils to take part in a range of reading activities.
Learning Support Department	The Learning Support Department is expected to identify pupils with literacy difficulties, to co-ordinate with the Literacy co-ordinator and provide tuition to improve literacy skills in addition to delivering the English National Curriculum. The department will provide differentiated materials and support in mainstream departments through in-class support

Teaching Staff	All staff have a responsibility to plan and teach lessons which make good use of opportunities to develop pupils' literacy skills and uphold their own departmental literacy policies outlined below.
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Section 3 - What is literacy?

3.1 To be literate, in its most basic form, is to have the ability to read, write, communicate and react to ideas in text and language. Literacy skills provide strong foundations on which students can build on across subject disciplines. The Thomas Adams literacy policy, however, runs much deeper than our ability to read, write and communicate.

3.2 National statistics show a concerning downward spiral with regards to the literacy of the nation. National Literacy Trust statistics suggest that:

- 1 in 8 disadvantaged children in the UK say that they don't have a book of their own
- The longer children maintain an enjoyment of reading, the greater the benefits are in the classroom.
- Children born into communities with the most serious literacy challenges have some of the lowest life expectancies in England.
- Only half of children in the UK enjoy writing.
- Children who enjoy reading and writing are happier in their lives.
- 1 in 6 adults in the England (16.4%/7.1 million people) have very poor literacy skills.

Social disadvantage and deprivation play an undeniable part, not only in the national picture, but also in the local communities that Thomas Adams serves.

Section 4

4.1 From these statistics, it is clear that an increased level of literacy leads to a longer and happier life, which must be a priority for students at Thomas Adams School. Therefore, the vision of the literacy policy is simple: for no child to be left behind. Shared literacy and language are important in the ways in which we communicate and also the ways in which we understand and respect each other. Consequently, the Thomas Adams literacy policy is underpinned by 3 key areas and are titled under the term 'Read to Succeed':

1. Disciplinary literacy
2. Reading for pleasure
3. Intervention

Disciplinary Literacy	Reading for pleasure	Intervention
<p>The approach to reading, writing and oracy across distinct subject areas.</p> <p>This emphasises that all teachers are teachers of literacy.</p> <p>This focuses on the elements of literacy evident in all subjects and how subject leads and subject teachers can best be supported to deliver this effectively.</p> <p>The development of academic reading and writing within the classroom.</p> <p>Direct instruction of vocabulary is a key part of all subject teaching</p>	<p>The school culture and ethos with regards to reading</p> <p>A strong focus is placed on reading aloud (by both teachers and students), discussion and engaging with both fiction and non-fiction texts.</p>	<p>Reading ages are assessed and monitored and available to all staff to inform classroom and small group interventions</p> <p>Data informed interventions are selected through data driven intervention models</p>

4.2 Key area 1: Disciplinary literacy

Disciplinary literacy covers the academic reading, writing, spoken and multi-modal skills used within each subject area. Understanding disciplinary literacy essentially means mapping, understanding and supporting the individual needs for literacy within each curriculum area. Unlike primary study, 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 help Literacy Leaders understand the needs within each subject area, the crossover between subject areas and how literacy can best be supported across the curriculum. In order to fully understand the disciplinary literacy needs in each department, Literacy Leaders from each subject are recruited with the school, and meet regularly with the Literacy Coordinator to prioritise the mapping of literacy needs across the academy. This ensures that:

- The literacy offering is consistent across the school.
- The Literacy Co-ordinator develops teachers' understanding of literacy teaching, and support with the planning, resourcing and delivery of different reading and writing elements within subject areas.
- The cognitive load of students is managed effectively by avoiding the teaching of contradictory or repetitive methods of writing across different subject areas. Instead, this is streamlined and simplified to ensure consistent methods are used
 - All staff feel secure enough to ask for literacy support, offer guidance to students and feel confident when stating that they are a teacher of literacy.
 - Reading for pleasure, academic reading and reading aloud are all explicitly used across the curriculum.

4.3 Thomas Adams 'Read to Succeed' expectations

At least 5 minutes of every lesson should be dedicated towards disciplinary literacy within each subject. Subject leaders have devised their own subject literacy departmental policies and governors, parents and students can expect the following from core departments at Thomas Adams from KS3-KS5:

English

- Text books which embed reading activities
- Provision of subject related newspaper articles and books
- Unseen questions: reading first, then looking at some questions. *This encourages reading of the full text without skimming*
- Search questions: using a text to find answers to specific questions. *This helps develop scanning techniques*
- Reading and wider reading tasks for homework using *Fiction Express* for KS3.
- Terminology glossaries in textbooks/exercise books/attention drawn to lesson key terminology and definitions during lesson

Mathematics

- Use of textbooks which embed reading activities
- Expert reading modelled by classroom teachers
- Terminology glossaries in textbooks/exercise books/attention drawn to lesson key terminology and definitions during lesson

Science

- Use of text books and subject related books which embed reading activities
- Unseen questions: reading first, then looking at some questions. *This encourages reading of the full text without skimming*
- Search questions: using a text to find answers to specific questions. *This helps develop scanning techniques*
- Summarising
- Terminology glossaries in textbooks/exercise books/attention drawn to lesson key terminology and definitions during lesson

4.4 Measuring impact

The impact of the above will be measured in the following means:

- Quality assurance learning walks identifying appropriate deployment of departmental literacy policies
- Reduction in the number of pupils identified as reading age below chronological age/reduction in the gaps between pupils reading and chronological age
- Staff feedback on subject literacy skills

Key Area 2: Reading for pleasure

4.5 At Thomas Adams School, we actively encourage reading for pleasure and recognise it as a core part of every child's education, regardless of their background or attainment. We make reading a key part of our curriculum and expose pupils to a wide range of texts in a variety of different situations. At Thomas Adams, we aim that every child becomes a lifelong reader. The national Literacy Trust has noted that becoming a lifelong reader is based on developing a deep love of reading. There is a growing body of evidence that illustrates the importance of reading for pleasure for both educational purposes, as well as personal development (cited in Clark and Rumbold, 2006). As well as this, reading enjoyment has been reported as more important for children's educational success than their family's socio-economic status (OECD, 2002)

4.6 At Thomas Adams School, we give pupils opportunities to read a wide range of texts both in the classroom, embedded in the form time programme and through access to our Library. These texts include:

- fiction and non-fiction books
- picture books (age appropriate)
- poetry
- internet based texts (Google Chrome Books)
- other pupils' work e.g. book reviews, work on displays

4.7 At Thomas Adams School, the teachers and other adults have the important role of fostering a love of reading. This is done through a wide range of activities:

Teachers regularly read aloud to pupils.

Studies show that children who are read to are more likely to do better in school, both academically and socially. Teachers have a selection of core texts which they read aloud to the pupils throughout the year during form time so that by the end of year 11, the pupils have a common bank of stories that they all know. Effective reading aloud during form time is about creating a positive reading experience to engage pupils, so teachers model their enthusiasm for books and reading them. Teachers interact with the pupils during this reading time, sharing thoughts, putting on voices, using actions and asking questions to improve comprehension.

Teachers encourage a love of reading and promote the reading of a wide range of books.

As role models to the pupils, teachers model themselves as readers by discussing their own reading experiences with pupils. Teachers recommend books to pupils and complete book reviews promoting books they have read by including a '*currently reading*' section in their email signatures. Teachers also encourage reading for pleasure by ensuring that pupils can use the library, that they can choose books to read at home and that they record, and get rewarded for wider reading by using the dedicated function on Arbor for reading.

4.8 Measuring impact

The impact of the above will be measured in the following means:

- Number of book loans reported using Oliver software
- Engagement in whole school literacy events such as World Book Day

Key area 3 – Intervention

4.9 While intervention is only a small part of a whole academy literacy strategy, this key area focuses on the use of appropriate, meaningful and measurable intervention to improve literacy skills, vocabulary, comprehension and decoding skills. In order for all students to achieve their potential, intervention strategies must be used to improve literacy skills and ensure that all students can make significant progress, regardless of their entry point to the secondary phase. Students must be identified for interventions using data (e.g. reading age data and IDL literacy screeners).

Interventions for the following must be put in place, according to student need:

1. Phonics intervention

For those students with a reading age below 9, the Learning Support department, need to consider, (on a child by child basis), the need for a phonics intervention package. It is advised that the SENDCO and teaching assistants are trained and timetabled to deliver and disseminate this programme for maximum impact.

2. Decoding and Comprehension

For those students below their chronological reading age but with a reading age of 9+, decoding and comprehension support is needed. IDL features an assessment placement test which gives granular data to help understand pupil literacy needs and the most suitable strand of the intervention package. Students are measured on engagement with reading, vocabulary and comprehension to give an overall reading proficiency score. IDL will need to be monitored by the Literacy Co-Ordinator / Learning Support Department or a designated member of staff.

4.10 Measuring impact

The impact of the above will be measured in the following means:

- Reduction in the number of pupils identified as reading age below chronological age/reduction in the gaps between pupils reading and chronological age
- Staff feedback on subject literacy skills
- Less negative behaviour points logged on Arbour

Marking and Feedback

5.1 Marking and feedback:

Although Thomas Adams has moved away from the strict adherence to previous SPAG marking and feedback policy. There should be an obvious emphasis on the correction of misspelt tier 3 vocabulary. This should be directed as an identification of misspelling and 3 attempts from students to correct misspelt word. Each department is also expected to follow their own departmental marking and feedback policy and provide 'live' literacy feedback where appropriate.

Purposes of 'live' Marking for Literacy

- To give feedback to pupils which will help them to improve their use of literacy in all subjects
- To motivate pupils to communicate their subject knowledge and understanding effectively
- To monitor pupil progress in the use of language
- To respond to pupils' use of language in speech

Professional development:

- Staff will receive regular training on the policy and how to use it effectively to ensure high standards and progress are maintained through staff twilight CPD sessions

Appendices

Appendix 1 : Overview of departmental literacy policies

Appendix 2: Oliver online library

Appendix 3: Form time literacy programme