Tamborine Mountain State High School

Literacy Policy 2023

File Location: G:\Coredata\Admin\Policies\Literacy & Numeracy\2021\Literacy Policy.doc
Version 10, 11 March 2021
Ownership: Tamborine Mountain State High School

Review Date: December 2023
Approved: Principal

WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY FOR LITERACY

RATIONALE

Literacy underpins the school curriculum by developing students' abilities to speak, listen, read and write for a wide range of purposes. Literacy is used to think, explore and organise. Helping students to express themselves orally and in writing enhances and enriches teaching and learning in all subjects. All faculties and all teachers have a crucial role to play in supporting students' literacy development.

Objectives

The objectives of this policy document are to:

- support students' learning in all subjects by helping teachers to be clear about the ways in which their work with students contributes to the development of students' communication skills.

- 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 the development of students' ability to communicate effectively.

- recognise that language is central to students' sense of identity, belonging and growth.

- develop students' confidence and self-expression.

- raise students' own expectations of achievement thus raising standards.

- promote knowledge and understanding of the students' standards of achievement and assessment in speaking and listening, writing and reading; and the identification of any areas of strength and weakness.

Objectives of the three language modes

Although the following is divided into three sections - Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing - it is recognised that the three language modes are interdependent.

Speaking and listening

Speech is the main means of communication in everyday life and is fundamental to the development of understanding.

We want our students to develop increasing confidence and competence in speaking and listening so that they are able to:

- clarify and express their ideas and explain their thinking.

- adapt their speech to a widening range of circumstances including paired and group discussions and speaking to a larger audience.

- use varied and specialised vocabulary.

- speak for a range of purposes e.g. to persuade, narrate, analyse, explain, reflect and evaluate.

- listen with understanding and respond sensitively and appropriately.

Reading

Students should enjoy reading, to be able to use their reading to help them learn and develop increasing confidence and competence in reading so that they are able to:

- read fluently, accurately and with understanding.

- become independent and critical readers and make informed and appropriate choices.

- select information from a wide range of texts and sources including print, media and ICT and to evaluate those sources.

- apply techniques such as skimming, scanning, and text-marking effectively in order to research and appraise texts.

Writing

Many lessons include and depend on written communication. We want our students to develop increasing confidence and competence in writing so that they are able to:

- write in a widening variety of forms for different purposes e.g. to interpret, evaluate, explain, analyse and explore.

- develop ideas and communicate meaning to a reader using wide-ranging and technical vocabulary and an effective style, organising and structuring sentences grammatically and whole texts coherently.

- present their writing clearly using accurate punctuation, correct spelling and legible handwriting.

- apply word processing conventions and understand the principles of authoring multi-media text.

Implementation Strategies

Successful implementation of this policy is dependent upon the extent to which staff:

- take account of the needs of all students, with regard to ethnicity, gender, ability and social and cultural factors.

- structure lessons appropriately in ways that support and stimulate language development and show how learning objectives for students are to be achieved.

- recognise how resources will be organised and used to support this teaching.

- monitor and evaluate the impact of common goals and shared expectations of students' ability to speak, read and write effectively.

- specifically establish whether targets have been achieved.

Speaking and listening

In our teaching we should provide planned opportunities across the curriculum for students to:

- engage in purposeful speech, both formally and informally.

- maintain purposeful speech through pace and timing.

- listen to teacher exposition for realistic lengths of time.

Students should have regular opportunities to speak and listen in the following contexts:

> in pairs with a working partner

> in small groups with opportunities to take on the roles of chair or scribe

> with the teacher or another adult

> in whole class discussions

> presentations to a wider audience

- In these contexts, some of the following activities should take place:

> exploring and describing events, activities and problems, exploring and developing ideas with others

> reporting back to a wider audience in order to consolidate ideas and understanding

> asking questions as well as answering them

> speculating, hypothesising and imagining

> planning, organising and reviewing activities

> investigating and solving problems collaboratively

> evaluating experiences and reflecting on learning

> talking at length and adopting the 'expert' role

Reading

- Provide regular opportunities for students to read:

> silently,

> ➤ in pairs,

> ➤ in small groups,

> ➤ with the teacher,

> ➤ to a wider audience.

- Use available data on students' reading levels in order to make informed choices about appropriate texts and to plan appropriate support for students in order that they may successfully access texts.

- Demonstrate pleasure in reading.

- Make opportunities both in lessons and in tutorial times for students and teachers to share their reading experiences.

- Provide planned opportunities across the curriculum for students to:

> ➤ read and follow written instructions.

> ➤ read and engage with narratives of events or activities.

> ➤ follow up their interests and read texts of varying lengths.

> ➤ question and challenge printed information and views.

> ➤ read with understanding descriptions of processes, structures and mechanisms.

> ➤ read and explore ideas and theories.

> ➤ learn how to sift and select, take notes from text and read to locate and relocate information.

> ➤ learn how to scan for overall meaning and for key points, words and phrases.

> ➤ use reading to research and investigate from printed words and moving images ICT texts.

Writing

- Draw attention to the purpose and intended readers of each piece of writing. Whilst the audience for students' writing is often the teacher and the peer group, students should be encouraged to write for a range of intended readers e.g. writing to explain a scientific principle to a younger audience, writing guidance for

peers on an aspect of the subject, writing to agencies to elicit information or to express a viewpoint.

- Pay close attention to writing as a learning tool as well as a product of the learning.

- Assist students to appreciate the differences between standard English and non-standard forms of the language.

- Assist students to recognise the appropriate form for their written responses so that they know when to respond informally or formally.

- Limit the use of pre-structured writing e.g. copying, sentence completion, sentence rearrangement.

- Provide planned opportunities across the curriculum for students to:

  - make notes from a variety of sources e.g. printed word, moving images and ICT texts.

  - use writing to plan organise and record.

  - write logs and journals in order to clarify thoughts and develop new understanding.

  - plan, draft, discuss and reflect on their writing.

  - learn the conventions of different forms of writing in different subject areas e.g. by using writing frames and providing clear models.

  - write at appropriate length.

  - write collaboratively with other students.

  - present some writing for display or publication.

- We should:

  - expect a high standard of presentation in most of students' finished writing.

  - provide good models of particular kinds of writing and best practice scripts.

  - provide dictionaries, glossaries and lists of appropriate subject vocabulary and encourage students to use them.

  - help students to use a range of strategies to learn spellings, including:

    - look – say – cover – write – check.

    - making connections between words with the same visual spelling pattern.

    - exploring families of words.

Assessing Literacy Across the Curriculum

When assessing students' work across the curriculum we should:

- value their oral contributions and listening skills alongside their reading and writing.

- take into account students' performance in speaking and listening, reading and writing when assessing and reporting on students' progress in subject areas.

- make explicit to the students the key features of language which will be considered.

When responding to pupils' work we should:

- make comments which are positive and supportive.

- target specific areas for improvement through selective and focussed identification of errors.

- give guidance on how to achieve the short-term targets set. For example, whilst "improve your spelling" is unhelpful and vague, the identification of a particular spelling error for example "doubling of letters before adding –ing" is specific and presents the student with a target which can be addressed.

- give priority to content, ideas, organisation and meaning above secretarial features.

- create opportunities for students to reflect on the quality of their own work and for peer assessment.

LITERACY FOCUS AREAS

Focus Areas

In order to ensure that the introduction of a whole school literacy policy is successful, the importance of the following activities should be recognised.

1. Explicit teaching of literacy strategies to occur each unit and lesson. (Appendix 1)

2. Australian Curriculum format for all unit planning of relevant subjects (English, Mathematics, Science, History). QCAR format for other subjects.

3. Literacy focus areas in each unit are faculty determined. Literacy focus areas to be recorded on unit plans.

4. Unit planning is to reflect differentiation at three levels as well as NCCD/EAP identified students

5. Implementation of professional development learnings in unit preparation.

6. Pre and post diagnostic tool for literacy to be documented on unit plans.

7. Establish assessment procedures to monitor and evaluate students' progress with each faculty owning data gathering and reporting accountabilities.

8. Expansion of Literacy in Practice classes in Years 7, 8 and 9. Students selected in these groups had NAPLAN results in levels 4, 5, 6 and 7 in Year 7, and or Band 1 – 5 on their Pat R testing in Year 6. These students participate in 4 x 55 minute focussed Literacy in Practice lessons each week. (Appendix 2)

9. Implementation of writing lessons in Year 7 designed to target specific focus areas identified from NAPLAN data.

Teaching Literacy Across the Curriculum

1. Teaching strategies to help students to understand the structures of genres

- Ask students to predict what the purpose and structure of a particular genre is and discuss why they think that the structure suits the specific purpose
- Provide students with a model of a genre that they are going to have to read/view/listen to/create, ask them to identify the stages of the text and discuss as a class
- Cut up an example of a genre so that the different stages are separated – students in groups then reconstruct the genre and justify the order that they choose
- Provide students with information about the purpose of a certain genre and ask them to work in groups to create/identify the most appropriate structure.
- Provide students with a graphic outline that provides the structure of a genre and students make notes, filling in the information that they will include in each section
- Provide students with a model of a genre and ask them to illustrate the structure in diagrammatic form
- Construct the plan of a text together as a whole class and discuss how the planned structure meets the purpose of the text
- Compare and contrast the structures of two different genres and discuss why the similarities and differences exist

2. Teaching strategies to help students to understand the language features of genres

- Deconstruct a model of a genre, identifying the key language features and the function that they have within the text
- Provide a cloze exercise where some key language features have been eliminated and students complete with the most appropriate features
- Provide a genre with inappropriate language features and students work in groups to provide more appropriate terms
- Provide a graphic outline of a genre with some key language features given as possible examples for students to use in each section
- Construct parts of the text together as a whole class and discuss why certain language features are used
- Make lists and tables of key language features and the range of words that can be used to avoid repetition and make the writing more interesting

3. General teaching strategies related to literacy

- Make glossaries of topic specific words with students
- Provide guiding questions which help students to make links between the ideas presented in a text
- Provide explicit teaching related to mediums of presentation e.g. expectations in an oral presentation – allow time for practice
- "Unpack" a multimodal text with students – point out what to read first and how information is connected
- Give students numerous opportunities to read and ask questions about what they are reading
- Help students to make lists of difficult words, provide students with context for the words, support students as they use dictionaries and thesauruses to help them to understand definitions
- Break words into parts and teach what the parts mean (e.g. non—compliance)
- Provide self-assessment checklists that help students to plan and manage their learning (e.g. ones like the information process or evaluating and analysing texts)
- Students keep journals about their learning in a subject
- Teach explicitly paragraph structure: one main idea introduced in the topic sentence followed by developing sentences that expand on the idea introduced in the first sentence. Then supporting sentences which give examples and information to support the main idea, followed by a concluding sentence which summarises the main idea of the paragraph. Teach students the rule that paragraphs include one main idea

TMSHS Literacy in Practice

Rationale and Scope

TMSHS will continue its commitment to developing student literacy levels through Literacy in Practice.

Literacy in Practice is a highly successful school-based subject, developed and implemented by the TMSHS Literacy in Practice teaching team. Since its inception in 2011, the program has significantly improved the literacy skills of numerous students.

The Years 7-9 subject seeks to equip students with a variety of reading, writing and speaking skills in order to fully access the school's curriculum. A concerted and intensive effort is made to target and develop student literacy upon the middle years of high-school.

It is expected that between 50% and 60% of students in Year 7 and Year 8 at TMSHS will study Literacy in Practice. The Year 7 Literacy in Practice course is especially designed for students who require further consolidation/extension of written and spoken skills. Students in Year 8 and 9 self-select Literacy in Practice via subject selections.

Students in Literacy in Practice will develop the necessary literacy skills in these foundation years to go on and experience academic success in the later high school years. Such a model makes the study of Literacy in Practice common place and students acknowledge its rigour.

Literacy in Practice classes are not intended to be learning support classes only attended by the students with the weakest literacy skills. It is designed to strengthen the literacy skills of students with a range of literacy levels. The subject is taught in 4 x 55 minute lessons each week. Examination of student Semester 1 and 2 results over a three-year period reveal that students, who have moderate literacy skills, find the most success due to re-visiting particular concepts and receiving extension opportunities.

Offering Literacy in Practice classes requires the commitment of significant resources (human and financial) and indicates the school's prioritisation of literacy. Such a resourcing model recognises the role literacy plays in student educational outcomes and life choices.