



## LITERACY POLICY

“Literacy is a bridge from misery to hope. Literacy is the road to human progress and the means through which every man, woman and child can realize his or her full potential.”

Kofi Atta Annan  
General Secretary, United Nations, 1997 – 2006

# Britannica International School

## INSPIRE, EXCEL, EXCEED

### 1.1 School Vision

At Britannica, we challenge and stretch our students to become responsible, respectful and resolute global citizens. Within our caring, safe and secure international community, they evolve into independent and inquisitive lifelong learners, happily striving for excellence in everything they do.

### 1.2 Rationale

Literacy underpins the School curriculum by developing students' abilities to speak, listen, read and write for a wide range of purposes. Helping students to express themselves clearly, orally and in writing, enhances and enriches teaching and learning in all subjects, whilst ensuring that students can access examination materials. All teachers have a crucial role to play in supporting students' literacy development.

*"If standards of achievement are to be improved, **all teachers will have to be helped to acquire a deeper understanding of language in education.** This includes teachers of other subjects than English, since it is one of our contentions that every school should have an organised policy for language across the curriculum, establishing **every teacher's involvement in language and reading development throughout the years of schooling.**"*

*The Bullock Report – A Language for Life (HMSO 1975)*

### 2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 **All teachers are teachers of literacy.** As such the staff of Britannica are committed to developing literacy skills in all our students, in the belief that this will support their learning and raise standards across the curriculum, recognising their responsibilities as outlined in the revised National Curriculum.
- 2.2 Effective delivery of literacy will broaden students' knowledge and experience, increase students' abilities to learn for themselves, build self-esteem and promote the development of good relationships.
- 2.3 At Britannica we accept the fundamental principle that Literacy is the key to improving learning and raising standards across the curriculum. Poor levels of literacy impact negatively on student self-esteem and progress. All members of staff have responsibility for the delivery of literacy across the curriculum.
- 2.4 Literacy involves the ability to read and write; however, it is also the capacity to recognise, reproduce and manipulate the conventions of a range of texts. Literacy and English are intertwined and they are an important aspect of our ability to communicate. There are also new forms of literacy (on-screen literacy and moving image media) to consider alongside the more traditional print literacy. Literacy is important because it enables students to gain access to the subjects studied in school, to read for information and pleasure, and to communicate effectively. Poor levels of literacy impact negatively on what students can do and have a negative impact on students' self-esteem.

### 3.0 Aims

#### 3.1 The Aims of the Policy are to:

- Adopt a whole school approach to literacy across the curriculum.
- Enable students to reach and exceed their potential in reading, writing, speaking and listening. Additional provision will be made for students who do not reach the minimum age-related national expectations.
- **Develop awareness that literacy is the key for all teaching and learning**, with a clear link to the cognitive demands of subjects and success in public examinations.
- Embed literacy across the whole school curriculum using a range of resources.
- Continue to raise levels of literacy to improve learning and raise standards across the whole school.
- Provide a framework for teachers to monitor, evaluate and develop literacy provision.

### 4.0 Raising Standards of Literacy

#### 4.1 The framework for literacy and learning identifies three main areas for development:

- Learning through talk
- Reading and Learning from text
- Learning through writing

#### 4.2 These main areas can be sub-categorised as:

##### 4.2.1 Learning through talk/Speaking and Listening:

- Using talk to clarify and present ideas
- Active listening to understand
- Talking and thinking together

##### 4.2.2 Reading and Learning from Text:

- Developing research and study skills
- Reading for meaning
- Understanding how texts work

##### 4.2.3 Learning through Writing:

- Using writing as a tool for thought
- Structuring and organising writing
- Developing clear and appropriate expression

##### 4.2.4 Learning through Talk/ Speaking and Listening

Talk is our 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 present their ideas and explain and develop their thinking
- Develop their ability to listen actively and respond sensitively and appropriately
- Adapt their speech to suit a wide range of circumstances, including paired and group discussion and speaking to a larger audience
- Use varied and specialised vocabulary, including subject specific vocabulary
- Speak for a range of purposes, eg to narrate, to analyse, to explain, to reflect and evaluate
- Recall the main points of a presentation, reflecting on what has been heard to ask searching questions, make comments or challenge the views expressed
- Identify and report the main points emerging from discussion
- Provide an explanation or commentary which links words with actions or images
- Use talk to question, hypothesise, speculate, evaluate, solve problems and develop thinking about complex issues and ideas
- Use standard English to explain, explore or justify ideas
- Identify the underlying themes, implications and issues raised by a talk, reading or programme
- Discuss and evaluate conflicting evidence to arrive at a considered personal viewpoint.
- In order to achieve this, our teaching plans will include specific reference to purposeful pupil Speaking and Listening. This involves, as appropriate:
  - Developing materials for tutor time sessions which will provide pupils with opportunities to engage in purposeful talk, in both formal and informal situations
  - Structuring tasks in lessons so that students know the purpose for their listening, providing note-taking frames as appropriate
  - Planning carefully the size and organisation of groups, matching these to the purpose of the activity, ability of the pupils and the desired learning outcomes
  - Model effective examples of successful speaking and listening for pupils
  - Evaluate speaking and listening activities through Assessment for Learning
  - Give students the opportunity to deliver formal Speaking and Listening presentations, in all subjects and, when appropriate, use these presentations as part of the formal assessment process
  - The role of the teacher is to raise students' awareness of the strategies and skills involved when developing their Speaking and Listening skills.

## **5.0 Reading and Learning from Texts**

5.1 We want our students to enjoy reading; to be able to use their reading to help them to learn and to develop increasing confidence and competence in reading so that they are able to:

- Read fluently, accurately and with understanding
- Become independent and critical readers who 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

5.2 We use available data on students' reading abilities in order to make informed choices about appropriate texts and to plan appropriate support for students in order that they may successfully access texts. Reading assessments are an integral part of the English Team assessment process. Our Learning Support Coordinator also assesses students when necessary. The reading ages are then distributed to staff so that staff can use this information to determine appropriate texts for the reading age range of a particular class.

- 5.3 In Secondary, we use a tool called Read Theory, a fun interactive reading tool that enables students to improve their reading skills through a diverse range of challenging texts. This is monitored by students' English/ESOL teachers and is used to ensure that lessons are planned that support and challenge.
- 5.4 In Primary, the students are allocated one session of library time where reading skills and reading across the curriculum will take place. The librarian may lead or participate in these sessions.

## 6.0 Resources

6.1 Britannica is committed to providing:

- Interactive displays of reading material relevant to the topic or National Curriculum subject. Each classroom displays subject specific vocabulary which students are encouraged to use regularly
- Available high quality reading material, which is up to date, relevant and balanced in its presentation of ethnicity, culture and gender. Students have access to the Library, a good quality range of texts during lessons. The Library is also open for students' use on a daily basis.
- Dictionaries, glossaries and lists of appropriate subject vocabulary are readily available during lessons, which students are encouraged to use
- Access to appropriate audio-visual equipment
- A classroom environment which is conducive to good literacy practice

6.2 The Lesson Plans within the School include explicit reference to the skills or strategies to be used, taught or reinforced. Our plans include, as appropriate:

- Making clear the intended purposes of reading within our curriculum, eg describe, repeat, interpret or analyse texts read
- Teaching, and giving opportunities to practise skimming for overall meaning, scanning for key points, words or phrases, or close reading
- Teaching, and giving opportunities to practise sifting and selecting information and taking notes from texts
- Teaching, and enabling students to infer and deduce meanings, recognising the writer's intentions;
- Teaching and giving opportunities to research and investigate from printed words, moving images and ICT texts
- Teaching how to use quotations selectively to support points and link them to students' own comments

## 7.0 Practical Application: Learning Through Reading

- 7.1 In order to foster a positive reading culture, the School will provide Key Stage 3 and Year 12 students an allocated reading lesson each week to encourage, monitor and assess the quantity, suitability and quality of students' reading. These sessions take place in the Library and are used to encourage reading for pleasure, staff will model reading themselves.
- 7.2 Year 12 students participate in an Academic Literacy Programme for the duration of the academic year. This course bridges the gap in expectations between iGCSE and A level, whilst also ensuring that students are developing skills requisite for success at university. Academic Literacy is a key component in student success and the programme focuses on developing reading, writing and oracy within a framework of skills-based activities; the bespoke

Academic Literacy Programme also develops students' awareness of current affairs, other cultures and academic advancements in students' fields of academic interest.

- 7.3 In Primary, all students have a group/guided reading session with their teacher twice a week for a 55-minute slot. This may be divided into period 4a and 4b to make 4 shorter sessions. The groups are then rotated within these sessions so that all students read with the teacher at least once a week. When reading is not teacher-led, students participate in activities based on their reading, pre-reading, post-reading or other reading activities. Students will read a range of fiction and non-fiction books including ones from the Oxford Reading Tree, Project X, Navigator Rigby, Badger Learning and Collins Big Cat collection.
- 7.4 In Primary, reading is assessed twice in the longer autumn and once in the spring term using Headstart or once using PTE in the summer term. EAL students are tested using the NGRT (New Group reading Test) which generates a phonics and comprehension SAS and a reading age. The Headstart and PTE tests generate a standardised score which can be converted into national curriculum level (recorded in the Assessment and Tracking spreadsheet) and generate targets. These targets should be recorded in the Student Planners/Reading Diaries in order to be shared with parents. Oxford Criterion Scale for reading will be used by teachers in order to generate additional targets and targeted questioning in guided reading sessions. Comprehension during guided reading and the AfL analysis by students afterwards further assess levels. At the end of each academic year, the students undertake a PTE (Progress Through English) assessment of spelling, grammar, punctuation and comprehension of retrieval and inference. These results are analysed and reported to SLT and Orbital.

## 8.0 Practical Application: Learning Through Writing

- 8.1 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, eg to interpret, evaluate, explain, analyse and explore
  - Develop ideas and communicate meaning to a reader using wide-ranging and technical vocabulary and 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
- 8.2 The School's Schemes of Work and assessment practices make clear:
- The purpose and intended audience for each piece of writing
  - How pre-structured writing (writing frames) is used and gradually withdrawn as appropriate
  - The vocabulary related to specialist subjects and the use of helpful spelling strategies
  - The relevant ways of paragraphing writing and linking paragraphs
  - How students are helped to develop the ability to synthesise information from different sources
- 8.3 In Primary, although writing is taught within the English lessons, the skills that the students learn are used in other curriculum subjects as much as possible. Cross-curricular links are made between subjects so that non-fiction writing will always be related to the work in

wider curriculum subjects. Whenever possible, fiction work should also be made more meaningful through cross-curricular links. Every child has a Portfolio where assessed writing samples are kept for each year, tracking their progress. Every term the students do at 2 pieces of writing to put in these portfolios. This is levelled by the teacher using Ros Wilson's Criterion Scale. These portfolio folders are used to monitor students' progress in writing through school. In Term 3, Year 6 also uses APP for writing. NC levels are used due to similarity with updated 2014 curriculum version and also it enables tracking.

## 9.0 Assessment and Monitoring

9.1 Britannica has a Whole School Marking Policy which identifies the key aspects of Literacy that each department addresses in their marking of pupils' work.

## 10.0 Training

10.1 Britannica provides training for all members of staff so that they are able to comply with this policy document. This will apply to new members of staff as well as those established at the time of adoption of this Policy. The Primary Literacy Coordinator and Secondary Head of English also works periodically with different teachers and Teams to develop specific aspects of literacy.

## 11.0 Roles and Responsibilities:

### 11.1 Key Staff

EAL Coordinators	Balint Letay-Nagy
Head of Languages	Alice Brown
KS5 Coordinator	Richard Roberts
KS4 Coordinator	Marta Sosa-Lama
KS3 Coordinator	Holly Stroud
Learning Support Coordinator	Kitti Kovacs
Librarian	Dorina Bognar
Literacy Coordinator	Nick Bateman
Key Stage 1 Coordinator	Rosie Wolland
Key Stage 2 Coordinator [Lower]	Ben Willoughby
Key Stage 2 Coordinator [Upper]	Ryan Phillips
SENDCo	Kitti Kovacs

### 11.2 The Literacy Coordinator and Head of English [Secondary] will:

- Develop strategies and resources as required providing CPD opportunities where required or requested
- Ensure Literacy strategies are fully implemented across their respective areas, supporting other middle leaders in maximising opportunities for develop students' literacy
- Coordinate literacy events including, but not limited to: World Book Day, International Literacy Day, Competitions, No Pens Day and the Budapest International Schools' Poetry Competition

**11.3 Senior Leadership Team will:**

- Lead and give a high profile to Literacy through the Line Management
- Ensure literacy strategies are fully implemented in their Line Management Areas

**11.4 The School will:**

- Identify students who have low levels of literacy.
- Provide intervention strategies to support in developing students' reading ages
- Provide opportunities for CPD on literacy issues to support the whole school literacy strategy
- Monitor implementation of the Literacy Policy

**11.5 Key Stages [Primary] Subject Areas [Secondary] will:**

- Review schemes of work to include explicit Literacy foci
- Develop and display key spellings and terminology in classrooms
- Develop and use writing frameworks pertinent to their subject
- Use the Literacy marking symbols when assessing students' written work and implement the Spelling and Punctuation Policies
- Develop a dictionary/thesaurus station in their area where appropriate
- Develop and use strategies to support students in improving writing, speaking, listening and reading skills

**11.6 Teachers will:**

- Develop and use approaches which are relevant to their curriculum areas and students of all attainment levels
- Communicate differentiated success criteria and learning objectives to students explicitly, using speaking and listening, reading and writing skills.
- Continue to develop and use a variety of activities that promote interactive learning using literacy skills
- Monitor student progress, using formative and oral assessment. This should inform strategies that can support students in their learning and provide them with support and feedback to make progress in line with and above national expectations
- Support students in developing literacy skills through displaying in each classroom and using the CUPS posters to provide a framework for students to check their written work

**11.7 Library:**

- Contribute to students' reading development by supporting staff and students with resources for individual projects and providing reading enrichment opportunities
- Maintain a well-stocked, diverse range of fiction and non-fiction texts to facilitate students' learning and literacy development at all Key Stages

**11.8 The SENCo will:**

- Assess students with specific language and literacy difficulties
- Plan intervention programmes for students with severe literacy difficulties.
- Liaise with the English Department/Literacy Coordinator/ Class Teacher about SEN student attainment in literacy
- Communicate to all staff the Educational Needs of students who have difficulties in literacy and provide staff with IEP strategies for supporting these students



- Monitor SEN students who have difficulty with literacy through IEPs, TAs and review meetings

## **12.0 Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Key Stages [Primary] and Subject Areas [Secondary] will be supported in reflecting upon, and then evaluating, Literacy Practice in their areas. Middle Leaders will periodically create Literacy Action Plans to support them and their teams in focusing on key areas of Literacy Practice that should be developed
- All staff will ensure that Literacy-based Interventions are implemented when underperformance is identified; interventions will be fully evaluated after each period of intervention to ascertain progress made
- Lesson observations, Learning Walks and Book Scrutinies will be used to assess the implementation of the school's Literacy Policy.

### Appendix 1: Spelling Policy

**The following strategies are to be followed when correcting and teaching spelling:**

- Don't insert or cross out letters which are misplaced e.g. peple, tawk. Write the word out in full.
- If students are correcting their own or peers' work they should follow the same principle and write words out in full.
- When marking work, concentrate on a maximum of **three error types**.
- Use key words to concentrate on mastering basic vocabulary for each topic. These could be reinforced as a homework but need to be checked quickly to ensure they are learned.

### Appendix 2: Punctuation Policy

**These basics must be taught by all teachers to all students:**

- Capital letters at the start of sentences and for proper nouns i.e. names, places, festivals, days of the week etc
- Sentences should end with appropriate punctuation; usually a full stop but question marks and exclamation marks must also be used as appropriate
- The use of commas in lists
- The correct use of apostrophes for omission e.g. I'll, don't.
- The correct use of apostrophes for possession e.g. the boy's book.
- Simple paragraphing to indicate a change of time, place, topic or person [TiPToP]

**It should be made clear to students where your marking has a specific punctuation focus. All marking and feedback should reflect this.**

### Appendix 3: Britannica Marking and Feedback Policy

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Ni40CivR22J60Y1FtOmnbnOLFslS7oYE5F5yO-DoLpA/edit#>

### Appendix 4: Handwriting for Primary

In Primary, the Spectrum handwriting scheme is used as a basis for teaching handwriting. All students work through the pupil books and may have a supplementary 'Handwriting Practice Book' in which to keep their work if letter formations need to be practised further. Handwriting is explicitly taught in English lessons or at least for one session of 10–20 minutes a week. Students may also practise

during registration or at other times. The SEN team may also run intervention groups for handwriting at the request of year teams.

Key Stage 1 may practice handwriting more frequently in short bursts 2-3 times per week, while Year 1 explicitly teach the letter formation alongside phonics so this will not be a discrete session. Once students have made significant improvements and are using the agreed handwriting letter formation, students receive a certificate and a handwriting pen licence, allowing them to write in pen in all subjects except Numeracy.