

Literacy Policy

Introduction

For the 2015/16 school year, a focus at St. Bede's Catholic Voluntary Academy is to raise the profile of Whole School Literacy with the main aim being to develop the technical accuracy of students' writing in all year groups. A number of strategies have been put in place, not only in English lessons, but throughout the curriculum in order to achieve this aim.

Strategies

English Lessons

In Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9), one lesson every fortnight (1 out of 6 lessons) is dedicated to Literacy. During this lesson, students will look at a specific literacy focus (for example: common spelling errors; word classes; subject-verb agreement) and complete a range of activities concentrated on that week's topic. At the end of the lesson, the students complete a quiz to assess what they have learnt that lesson, along with reviewing other topics they have covered previously in a term. Their attainment in these lessons is then used by the class teacher to aid future planning which focuses on areas that need development.

In Key Stage 4, literacy activities are built into lessons. A literacy focus is often given to starter activities in order to develop students spelling, punctuation and grammar skills which can then be applied to the writing activities in the rest of the lesson and aid them in exam preparation.

Tutor Time Literacy Activities

This year the use of Literacy has been developed in tutor time to become a more frequent focus of the sessions. Each half term, form tutors will be provided with a series of literacy activities, which again focus on technical accuracies in writing. These sessions will be completed by all tutor groups with each House having a specific day to deliver the sessions. The sessions will also tie in to the topics Key Stage 3 students look at in their Literacy sessions in English lessons. At the end of each half term, all students in the school complete a short assessment as part of tutor time. These assessments are correction exercises which cover the areas of Literacy that have been looked at that half term. The form tutors then input the results onto a tracker for analysis purposes. This analysis is used as an aid for English teachers and to highlight students who may need intervention.

English Intervention

From September, an after-school programme has been looking at developing the Reading Skills of Key Stage 3 students. Each half term focuses on a different year group (so far students from Years 7 and 8 have been part of the sessions) with students being selected based on their reading ages. The invited students then take part in 6 sessions which include activities to develop their analysis skills and understanding of vocabulary choices. The Accelerated Reader programme is used to assess the students' reading age at the beginning and end of the sessions to assess the progress that has been made.

Intervention will also begin in the Spring Term for students in Key Stage 3 who are underachieving in English. Students will be selected who are below target and who also have not been making the expected progress from the beginning of the year. These Intervention sessions will be led by two members of the English Department and be delivered to small groups of approximately six students. The sessions will focus

on developing the Reading and Writing skills of the selected students with their attainment being assessed at the beginning at end of the Intervention Programme to determine the progress being made.

Whole School Literacy

Across the school, departments are encouraged to also include a literacy focus in their marking. Departments across the school will focus on highlighting spelling, punctuation and grammar errors in students' work while marking books.

Each department will also create a literacy display for either their classrooms or the corridors in their department area. These literacy displays may include spellings based on current topics, sentence structures and common misconceptions. The English Department have shared resources with other departments so that they can produce displays that are relevant to their department.

Extra-Curricular

The English Department run a Writers' Club for students to attend on Wednesday lunchtimes. The aim of the club is to encourage the creativity of students and develop their writing skills. The club includes activities such as group narratives, creating and developing character and also competitions. These include national competitions such as those run by Young Writers and the BBC's 500 Words competition.

Members of the Writer's Club also have the opportunity to take part in the Northern Lincolnshire Education Consortium's (NLEC's) Newspaper Project, which has recently produced its first newspaper to be distributed to the nine educational institutions who are members of the group.

The school's Library also offers out of school hours for students who wish to read or complete homework and independent research. It offers time before (8:00-8:40am) and after school (3:05-4:00pm) as well as set days at lunch time depending on which year a student is in.

Summary

The majority of these Literacy strategies have been newly introduced this year and therefore are continually under review. If you have any queries about Literacy and how we support your child then you can contact Miss Allen (Literacy Co-ordinator) or Mr Tait (Director of English).