Wymondham College

Literacy Protocol (Reading, Writing and Oracy)

1. Overview and Rationale

Wymondham College recognises that literacy is the foundation of curriculum access, academic success and equity. Literacy is defined as the well-connected and well-supported interplay of reading, writing and oracy. Reading at or beyond a student's chronological reading age enables access to subject knowledge, while writing and spoken language allow students to organise, express and demonstrate understanding across the curriculum.

Literacy is not the responsibility of one department. Every subject is language-rich and every teacher is a teacher of reading, writing and oracy. A whole-school, evidence-informed approach is therefore essential to improving outcomes for all students, particularly those who are disadvantaged or have additional learning needs.

This policy is rooted in academic research, Ofsted's *Quality of Education* judgement, the ITT Inspection Handbook (2022), *Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools* (EEF, 2019), the Teacher Standards (2011), and the DfE Writing Framework (2025).

Education Endowment Foundation

IMPROVING LITERACY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS
Summary of recommendations

1 Prioritise 'disciplinary literacy' across the curriculum

- Literacy is key to learning across all subjects in secondary school and a strong predictor of outcomes in later life.
- Disciplinary literacy is an approach to improving literacy across the curriculum that emphasises the importance of subject specific support.
- All teachers should be supported to understand how to teach students to read, write and communicate effectively in their subjects.
- School leaders can help teachers by ensuring training related to literacy prioritises subject specificity over general approaches.

2 Provide targeted vocabulary instruction in every subject

- Teachers in every subject should provide explicit vocabulary instruction to help students access and use academic language.
- Effective approaches, including those related to etymology and morphology, will help students remember new words and make connections between words.
- Teachers should prioritise teaching Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary, which students are unlikely to encounter in everyday speech.
- Teachers and subject leaders should consider which words and phrases to teach as part of curriculum planning.

3 Develop students' ability to read complex academic texts

- Training focused on teaching reading is likely to help secondary school teachers teach their subject more effectively.
- To comprehend complex texts, students need to actively engage with what they are reading and use their existing subject knowledge.
- Reading strategies, such as activating prior knowledge, prediction and questioning can improve students' comprehension.
- Strategies can be introduced through modelling and group work, before support is gradually removed to promote independence.

4 Break down complex writing tasks

- Writing is challenging and students in every subject will benefit from explicit instruction in how to improve.
- Teachers can break writing down into planning, monitoring and evaluation, and can support students by modelling each step.
- Targeted support should be provided to students who struggle to write fluently, as this may affect writing quality.
- Teachers can use a variety of approaches, including collaborative and paired writing, to motivate students to write.

5 Combine writing instruction with reading in every subject

- Combining reading activities and writing instruction is likely to improve students' skills in both, compared to a less balanced approach.
- Reading helps students gain knowledge, which leads to better writing, whilst writing can deepen students' understanding of ideas.
- Students should be taught to recognise features, aims and conventions of good writing within each subject.
- Teaching spelling, grammar and punctuation explicitly can improve students' writing, particularly when focused on meaning.

6 Provide opportunities for structured talk

- Talk matters: both in its own right and because of its impact on other aspects of learning.
- High quality talk is typically well-structured and guided by teachers.
- Accountable talk is a useful framework to ensure talk is high quality, and emphasises how talk can be subject specific.
- Teachers can support students by modelling high quality talk, for example including key vocabulary and metacognitive reflection.

7 Provide high quality literacy interventions for struggling students

- Schools should expect and proactively plan to support students with the weakest levels of literacy, particularly in Year 7.
- Developing a model of tiered support, which increases in intensity in line with need is a promising approach.
- Assessment should be used to match students to appropriate types of intervention, and to monitor the impact of interventions.
- Creating a co-ordinated system of support is a significant challenge requiring both specialist input and whole school leadership.

Section 1: The Literacy Policy framework:

Sapientia Education Trust audit annually according to the 'bucket model' (appendix 1) where:

Bucket 1 = reading intervention/s (how, when, who + appropriate assessment trackers)

Bucket 2 = reading culture – including generic reading (eg ERIC/DEAR/ strategic reading initiatives across the school) and disciplinary reading (consistency in the way teachers read and are read to)

Bucket 3 = reading extension and challenge, including reading for knowledge. This bucket extends beyond reading and includes oracy and writing Teachers will support students by breaking writing into the stages of planning, monitoring and evaluation, modelling each stage to promote independence.

At the end of each academic year, Literacy Leads in each Secondary will be required to complete and submit a 2-page document (appendix 2) RAG rating Literacy development and providing Trustees with additional information concerning interventions as well as tracking links between students' literacy and absence/behaviour.

Bucket 1 – Reading Intervention

All students' reading needs are accurately diagnosed and supported through a tiered model aligned with the EEF approach: high-quality universal provision, targeted group support and intensive individual intervention.

Assessment and Identification

- All students complete STAR Reading assessments tracked centrally.
- Year 7 students complete CAT tests to support baseline understanding.
- Targeted students complete YARC diagnostic assessments where required.
- Chronological Reading Age (CRA) is assessed twice annually.

Incoming students at all year groups have their CRA determined on entry.

Reading Tiers

- Tier 1 (Green) – At or above chronological reading age
- Tier 2 (Amber) – Up to 18 months below CRA
- Tier 3 (Red) – 18 months to 2.5 years below CRA
- Tier 3+ (Red+) – More than 2.5 years below CRA

Reading tier information is shared with staff via MIS and seating plans to support adaptive teaching.

Intervention Provision

- Targeted students receive structured interventions coordinated by the SENCo, English Department and Learning Support Team.
- Emerging readers are allocated Bedrock Learning accounts to develop vocabulary and comprehension.
- Bespoke literacy groups operate across Years 7–11.

- Students in Years 10 and 11 may access Functional Skills Levels 1 and 2 where appropriate.

Impact is monitored termly for Tier 3 and 3+ students and at least twice annually for all others.

Bucket 2 – Reading Culture and Consistent Practice

Wymondham College has established a strong reading culture underpinned by consistent classroom routines and shared expectations.

- Whole-School Reading Practice
- All staff use the Wymondham College Reading Strategies, including:
- Teacher modelling of fluent, expressive reading
- Reading partners (mixed ability)
- Tracking text with a ruler or finger
- Front-loading challenging vocabulary
- Highlighting unfamiliar words
- Chunking longer texts to reduce cognitive load
- Students are never put on the spot to read aloud, and staff are mindful of reading age when selecting readers.

Generic Reading Offer

- Delivered regularly through tutor time and curriculum lessons
- Supported by resources shared via Padlet
- Quality assured through learning walks, PM observations and department reviews
- Library and Enrichment
- Reading Buddies and Reader Leader programmes
- Book clubs across key stages
- Carnegie Shadowing
- Author events and Poetry Slam
- Displays promoting reading for pleasure
- Annual reading award presented at Speech Day

The Librarian tracks participation and progress in reading programmes.

Bucket 3 – Writing and Oracy

Writing is the primary means by which students demonstrate knowledge and understanding. Wymondham College adopts a whole-school approach to writing, recognising that academic writing must be taught explicitly across subjects.

Core principles:

- Writing is taught as a process: planning, drafting, monitoring, editing and evaluation
- Sentence-level writing is explicitly modelled
- Subject-specific vocabulary and text types are taught in context
- Reading and writing are interleaved

Departments provide opportunities for extended writing and explicitly model high-quality examples. Grammar is taught in context using a consistent approach aligned with the national curriculum.

Oracy is recognised as essential to learning, supporting reading comprehension, writing quality and depth of understanding.

Staff:

- Model high-quality, accountable talk
- Use structured questioning and discussion
- Teach students to justify ideas, ask questions and build on the ideas of others
- Explicitly develop vocabulary through talk
- Shared expectations for oracy are embedded across the curriculum.

Section 2: Assessment, Tracking and Use of Chronological Reading Age (CRA)

Wymondham College systematically assesses and tracks the Chronological Reading Age (CRA) of all students to ensure that teaching is responsive to reading need and that literacy support is accurately targeted. Reading age information is shared with staff and used as part of both the College's generic and disciplinary reading approach, including seating plans and adaptive teaching strategies.

Assessment Cycle

- Year 7 students complete a CRA assessment in Autumn Term 1 to identify the bottom 20 percent of readers, as well as students working significantly above their chronological reading age.
- CRA is captured twice annually for all year groups.
- Students joining the College at any point have their CRA determined on entry.
- Sixth Form students have their CRA assessed where appropriate, particularly where literacy need may impact curriculum access or examination arrangements.

Tracking and Oversight

- The Literacy Lead is responsible for the collation and oversight of whole-school reading data.
- Whole-school tracking enables reporting on the number and progress of Tier 1 to Tier 3+ readers, using in-school systems.
- Tier 3 and Tier 3+ readers are monitored at least termly.
- The bottom 20 percent of readers in Years 7–9 are flagged on the MIS as 'emerging readers' to alert staff and support adaptive teaching.

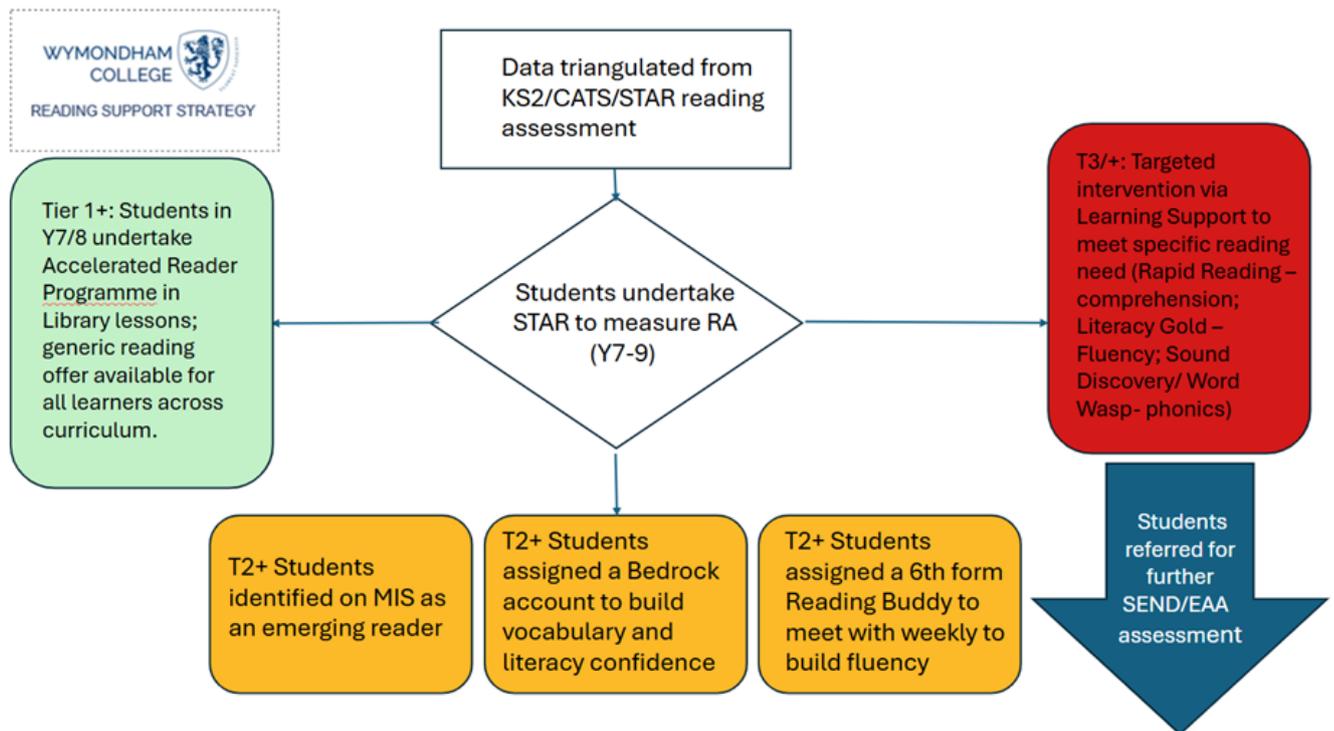Reading Tiers and Shared Language

Wymondham College uses a shared, Trust-wide language to describe reading ability. Reading tiers are RAG-rated and reflected on seating plans to ensure consistency of understanding and response across the College. All teaching staff have access to up-to-date reading age information following each assessment cycle.

- Tier 1 (Green) – On or above chronological reading age

- Tier 2 (Amber) – Below chronological reading age by up to 18 months
- Tier 3 (Red) – Below chronological reading age by 18 months to 2.5 years, requiring group and or individual intervention
- Tier 3+ (Red+) – Below chronological reading age by more than 2.5 years, requiring intensive group and individual intervention

At Wymondham College, teachers identify emerging readers on seating plans to inform planning, scaffolding and adaptive teaching. Reading tiers directly inform the type, intensity and duration of intervention students receive.

WYMONDHAM COLLEGE **READING SUPPORT STRATEGY**

Tier 1+: Students in Y7/8 undertake Accelerated Reader Programme in Library lessons; generic reading offer available for all learners across curriculum.

Data triangulated from KS2/CATS/STAR reading assessment

Students undertake STAR to measure RA (Y7-9)

T3/+: Targeted intervention via Learning Support to meet specific reading need (Rapid Reading – comprehension; Literacy Gold – Fluency; Sound Discovery/ Word Wasp- phonics)

T2+ Students identified on MIS as an emerging reader

T2+ Students assigned a Bedrock account to build vocabulary and literacy confidence

T2+ Students assigned a 6th form Reading Buddy to meet with weekly to build fluency

Students referred for further SEND/EAA assessment

At Wymondham College we have Bespoke groups in Years 7-9 for students whose Literacy and Reading levels fall below expected standards. These are delivered alongside their usual curriculum to supplement and target their reading accuracy and proficiency. The students in Years 10 and 11 will take Functional Skills Levels in order to support their developing Literacy journey.

Section 3: Disciplinary Literacy

At Wymondham College, disciplinary literacy is embedded across all subjects. Each department is responsible for explicitly teaching the reading, writing and communication demands of its discipline so that students can access, understand and express subject knowledge with increasing confidence and precision.

Departments identify and prioritise key vocabulary and concepts within schemes of learning, model subject-specific reading and writing processes, and provide structured scaffolding to support students as they move towards independence. This includes explicit modelling of how experts read, write and communicate within each subject area.

Disciplinary literacy is monitored and evaluated through curriculum reviews, department improvement planning and lesson observation.

Section 4: Quality Assurance and Monitoring

Literacy is a core focus of Wymondham College's quality assurance processes. Reading, writing and oracy are routinely considered as part of learning walks, performance management observations, department reviews and curriculum reviews.

The Literacy Lead works closely with SLT to monitor whole-school impact, evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and refine provision over time. Literacy practice and outcomes are reviewed regularly to ensure consistency, rigour and sustained improvement.

Section 5: Professional Development

Professional development in literacy is delivered through whole-school INSET and ongoing updates across the academic year. Training supports staff in developing consistent and effective approaches to reading, vocabulary instruction and writing across subjects, including explicit instruction in morphology, phonology and writing pedagogy.

The Literacy Lead ensures that professional development is proportionate, focused and evidence-informed, and that it directly supports classroom practice.

Section 6: Roles and Responsibilities

The Literacy Lead provides strategic oversight of literacy across the College. This includes leading the whole-school literacy strategy, coordinating assessment and intervention, quality assuring literacy practice and reporting to SLT and the Trust on progress and impact.

Senior leaders and Heads of Department are responsible for embedding literacy within curriculum design and teaching. They support the development of disciplinary literacy and monitor implementation and impact through departmental review and self-evaluation.

Teaching staff model effective reading, writing and talk within their subject areas. They use reading age information to adapt teaching appropriately and explicitly teach vocabulary and writing processes to ensure all students can access learning and demonstrate understanding.

Section 7: Review

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure continued alignment with best practice, Trust expectations and statutory guidance, and to ensure it remains responsive to the needs of Wymondham College students.