



# QMGs: Literacy Policy March 2023

## Statement of Intent/Aspiration

Literacy underpins the QMGs curriculum by developing students' abilities in the four domains of speaking, listening, reading and writing. There is no hierarchy in these skills; they are equally important and interdependent. Good speaking brings good writing, and so on. We aim to promote excellence in our students' communication, both orally and in written formats, and for a variety of purposes and audiences. All departments, and all teachers, have a crucial role to play in supporting students' literacy development. A high standard of literacy also allows pupils to develop their independent learning, and has a very significant impact on pupils' self-esteem, motivation and behaviour. Literacy and SEMH are closely entwined and all the more important for this reason. Literacy is at the heart of everything we do at QMGs.

## Policy in detail

### **Aims:**

The aims of this policy are to:

- Highlight the whole-school responsibility for teaching and promoting literacy.
- Develop disciplinary literacy across the whole school and ensure all staff take responsibility for literacy in their classrooms by actively encouraging students to see literacy as part of their learning across the whole curriculum.
- Encourage all students and staff to be motivated to read for pleasure and to develop a lifelong love of reading.
- Support staff in their provision of high-quality literacy teaching.
- Provide high quality literacy interventions for struggling students.

### **Overarching principles:**

In terms of literacy, QMGs seeks to:

- Provide a language-rich culture of reading and writing.
- Develop a love of books and high-quality literature in our students that will not only support their learning across all areas of the curriculum, but also extend beyond the classroom environment and enrich their lives.
- Provide students with regular and stimulating opportunities to listen to and learn from others.
- Model technically accurate writing in a variety of forms and confident and thoughtful speaking and listening skills.

### **Roles and responsibilities:**

Teachers will seek to:

- Model best practice in literacy.
- Prioritise 'disciplinary literacy' across the curriculum.
- Provide targeted vocabulary instruction in every subject.
- Develop students' ability to read complex academic texts.
- Provide opportunities for structured talk.
- Provide high quality literacy interventions for struggling students.

**Heads of Department should:**

- Ensure that literacy is suitably integrated into their curriculum.
- Build opportunities for wider reading into their curriculum.
- Seek to model and encourage best practice in speaking and listening (oracy) work.

**Form tutors will:**

- Encourage their tutees in reading for pleasure during form time, and use FREADay Friday for that purpose, in particular.

**The QMGS Library is a resource which provides:**

- A huge variety of texts, for staff and students, across a wide range of genres, and includes diverse, challenging material.
- A safe, welcoming, and inclusive space in which to read at break and lunch.
- A hub for a wide range of co-curricular activities and performances

**Parents are asked to:**

- Encourage reading at home and the active discussion of books, magazines and high-quality films, podcasts etc.

**Students should:**

- Always have a reading book with them and read in a focused manner when they are given the opportunity to do so, both in and out of school.

**Literacy in action at QMGS:**

Opportunities are provided, on a regular basis, for:

- Talking as a specialist in particular fields, using subject-specific vocabulary.
- Presenting in front of an audience.
- Reciting and reading aloud.
- Re-telling, role-play and drama productions.
- Listening to stories, poems, rhymes and songs.
- Talking about and discussing their reading and writing.
- Talking collaboratively.

**To help pupils develop a love of reading:**

- We offer opportunities in both lessons and pastoral time for students to read.
- We encourage and value the reading of all genres including poetry, fiction and non-fiction.
- We read across the curriculum.
- We offer subject-specific reading lists.
- We have a library with a qualified, experienced and full-time librarian.
- We set up visits from authors on a regular basis.
- We have book sales which gives pupils the opportunity to pick new books.
- We expect pupils to read at home.
- Staff share their reading experiences with the student body.

## **And finally:**

*How does the school assess and address reading skills? How do we ensure that students read widely, deeply, and often?*

Baseline testing is carried out in English lessons in September, alongside consistent and targeted assessment, across all teaching groups, through the rest of the academic year. Assessment folders are used alongside exercise books at KS3.

Literacy support is delivered by suitably qualified staff, either in whole-class or small group settings, once per fortnight, at KS3. Dedicated reading lessons are allocated every two weeks at KS3.

At KS3, progress and assessment are founded on baseline/end of unit tests as the year unfolds, with students entering and leaving support groups as appropriate. Our *Magic 18* literacy programme has been developed to streamline needs in this area and focuses on core skills and core knowledge. (*Grammar to 14* is used in Years 7 and 8 and *Eduqas Book 1 for GCSE English Language* in Year 9.) Reading lessons involve independent reading with a clear focus on suitability of texts in terms of challenge and progression through the school. Close liaison with the school librarian allows staff to support children in their choices of texts.

## **More widely, at QMGS we provide the following:**

- A wide range of reading groups
- The *Queen's Players* theatre company
- ESU Public Speaking group
- *See Yourself* diversity discussion forum
- QM Library Newsletter
- LAMDA lessons delivered by specialists in the field
- FREADay Friday directed-reading mornings, including voucher and certificate scheme
- Reading breakfasts with Head and HOD
- Visiting authors e.g. Alex Wheatle, Chris Bradford
- Visits to RSC for workshops/talks, and visits to school from RSC drama specialists
- Changed texts on the KS3 curriculum including more diverse voices
- *Readathon* week
- Poetry and essay writing competitions/Book Buzz/Mini sagas
- Year and key-stage assemblies delivered by staff and students
- Queen Mary's Observer newspaper
- QM Perspectives group
- History Society
- Medical Society
- QM Alliance
- Change Your Mind
- School Council
- School prefect system
- EPQ qualification (60/70 students)