

# ST JOHN LLOYD CATHOLIC COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

## *School Mission Statement*

***“Learning and Growing Together in Christ”***

*“As a Catholic School we aim to develop a Christian Community which believes in and affirms the dignity and value of the individual and encourages its members to develop their potential in terms of knowledge, understanding, spiritual, moral, cultural and physical awareness”.*

ST JOHN LLOYD  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL



## WHOLE-SCHOOL LITERACY POLICY

Reviewed by Governors December 2021

## ***“Learning and Growing Together in Christ”***

### **The National agenda for Literacy**

*‘Literacy is an essential life skill. To make sense of the world around them, young people need an understanding of written and spoken language, the ability to interpret what has been written or said, and to draw inferences from the evidence that surrounds them. It is also about being able to communicate – accurately, fluently and persuasively.’*

### **Achieving the ambition in Wales:**

The ambition for literacy in Wales will be achieved *‘by embedding literacy skills in every aspect of education’* and as *‘all teachers of every subject across every phase of education will become teachers of literacy.’*

(National Literacy Programme – Welsh Government – May 2012)

### **Whole-school mission statement:**

*‘Learning and Growing together in Christ’*

As a Catholic school we aim to be:

*“As a Catholic School we aim to develop a Christian Community which believes in and affirms the dignity and value of the individual and encourages its members to develop their potential in terms of knowledge, understanding, spiritual, moral, cultural and physical awareness”.*

**Literacy rationale**

At St John Lloyd Catholic Comprehensive School, we recognise that:

1. Literacy is fundamental to all areas of learning, as it unlocks access to the wider curriculum. By developing literacy skills in learners we are providing practitioners with opportunities to make effective use of this powerful tool for learning, within and across the curriculum areas and subjects.
2. Competence and confidence in literacy, including competence in grammar, spelling and the spoken word, are essential for progress in all areas of the curriculum.
3. Being literate is central to an individual’s development and well being in our society. It increases opportunities for the individual in all aspects of life and lays the foundations for lifelong learning, encompassed in the school literacy motto ‘*Literacy for life*’.
4. Literacy skills are essential in the developing of critical and creative thinking and competence in speaking and listening, reading and writing underpin important personal, inter-personal and team-working skills.
5. The teaching of, and whole-school approach to literacy across the curriculum, is key to the raising of standards in the school.
6. All teachers are teachers of literacy and that in their subject teaching they have a responsibility in the promoting and teaching of language and literacy development.
7. Language is the main medium we use for teaching, learning and developing thinking, so it is at the heart of teaching and learning.
8. The National Literacy Framework set out by the Welsh Government (May 2012) is central to our school policy and, as such, St John Lloyd is committed to the challenge and ambitions outlined by WG in the NLF document.
9. This policy is an integral part of the whole curriculum and that its content and approach is adopted consistently and systematically across the curriculum.

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### **Whole-school literacy mission statement:**

*‘At St John Lloyd Catholic Comprehensive School we aim to develop the knowledge, understanding and ability of our pupils, to their full potential, by providing them with opportunities to develop the requirements of literacy within a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of oracy, reading and writing across the curriculum.’*

We aim to help students to:

- ⇒ read and write with confidence, enjoyment, fluency and understanding – orchestrating a range of independent strategies to self-monitor, evaluate and correct;
- ⇒ develop an increasing working knowledge of Standard English;
- ⇒ have an interest in words and their meanings, developing a growing working vocabulary in spoken and written forms;
- ⇒ develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical thinking
- ⇒ be able to communicate effectively;
- ⇒ understand a range of text types and genres and be able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the task or situation;
- ⇒ grow in confidence as they develop their literacy skills;
- ⇒ have a suitable technical vocabulary to explain their thinking, articulate responses and communicate effectively;
- ⇒ enable all students to gain access to all aspects of the curriculum diet;
- ⇒ achieve recognised GCSE qualifications in English Language and/ or English Literature and ESW Communications at Level 1 and/ or 2.

### **Literacy focus areas at St John Lloyd:**

At St John Lloyd we aim to address the challenges outlined by the Welsh Government in the following ways:

#### **1. Implementation of the whole-school Literacy Action Plan**

- The whole-school Literacy action plan is a working document that aims to support the Welsh Government’s Literacy Framework. During 2012-2013, the school aims to implement the key features of this document in support of the WG’s priorities and the needs of our students.

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- This document has been produced following the whole-school literacy audit to ensure a consistent approach to the teaching and exploration of literacy skills across all curriculum subjects.
- The action plan outlines key focus areas for oracy, reading and writing, which are year-group specific and it is also supported by literacy toolkit booklets and ICT-based resources to support **ALL** teachers in their teaching of literacy.
- This action plan also supports the literacy vision outlined in the School Development Plan.

### **2. The Literacy PLC and staff training**

- At St John Lloyd the Literacy PLC has been formed to support literacy development across the curriculum. Part of the PLC's drive is to ensure staff have the correct knowledge, skills and tools to deliver and develop literacy effectively in lessons, and that pupils are aware of the importance of literacy for learning.
- As such, St John Lloyd is committed to providing Literacy INSET training for staff from varying curriculum areas on a rolling programme. Literacy will also become a key feature of skills' days at KS3, with each year group receiving support in the teaching of literacy skills to raise awareness of the school's approach to the teaching of literacy.

### **3. The learning environment and school planners**

- Each classroom in the school has a designated area for literacy resources, which include text types, connective phrases, the whole-school literacy marking grid, reading strategies and writing frames. Teaching staff use this area to encourage learners in the application of literacy within their subjects.
- School planners also contain literacy guidance for students, including text types and strategies to support reading and writing.

### **4. Intervention programmes to support less confident readers**

- At St John Lloyd there are two consistent intervention programmes in place to support the literacy skills of less confident readers and those of lower literacy ability.
- ALN pupils are withdrawn and supported using a range of literacy support packages including: Readwrite Inc's 'Freshstart' and spelling programmes, as well as handwriting support, speech and language packages and SALT.
- For pupils who are between 6 -18 months behind in their reading skills or are below the functional reading age of 9.5, more demanding Basic Skills'

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‘Freshstart’ and ‘Comprehension Plus’ programmes exist as the stepping stone into a full curriculum.

### **5. Whole school approach to assessment**

- St John Lloyd’s whole-school assessment policy encourages a consistent approach to assessment and the development of literacy skills / practice.
- As such, we have implemented a whole-school literacy marking grid, which all teaching staff use to assess oral and written tasks. This grid supports AFL marking strategies and is located at the front of each child’s subject learning book.

### **6. MAT**

- Literacy skills of all students, including these of the More Able and Talented, are fully catered for in lessons.
- MAT students are encouraged to become critical thinkers and readers through the questioning of what they have read.

### **7. The underachievement of boys**

At St John Lloyd we recognise the National issue in this area of education and are committed to the development of boys’ literacy through a range of strategies including:

1. AFL teaching approaches across all aspects of the curriculum;
2. Intervention programmes dedicated to the improving of boys’ phonic, decoding and comprehension skills and the raising of reading ages to the Functional Age of 9.5 and above;
3. Use of the whole-school literacy marking grid to support this target groups’ understanding and application of literacy skills in both oral and written work;
4. The teaching of text types and connectives in **All** subject areas to support the extended writing of boys.
5. The Readathon Challenge, which rewards reading for pleasure.
6. The development of the school library to encourage boys to read in an engaging and relaxing environment; focus areas are also established in this location to encourage boys to read, including: author of the month, new fiction and non-fiction and books for boys.
7. The ‘Cwtch Darllen’ has been developed to encourage all readers, including boys, to read in a comfortable area, which supplies a range of newspapers and magazines.
8. SJL has a number of male role models who promote reading for pleasure on a regular basis and support this aspect of the school’s literacy focus.

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### **8. Targets for oracy, reading and writing**

To ensure the raising of standards in literacy, St John Lloyd is committed to the attainment of the following literacy targets:

#### **Oracy**

All students:

- (a) Should value speaking and listening as essential means of communication and learning.
- (b) Should understand the rules and expectations governing speaking and listening across a range of contexts.
- (c) Should learn to listen and carry out instructions.
- (d) Should be encouraged to ask questions as well as answer them.
- (e) Should be encouraged to explore and develop ideas with others, through paired and group discussion.
- (f) Should be encouraged to express ideas, feelings and opinions confidently, and to treat other students' ideas, feelings and opinions with respect.
- (g) Should be supported in speaking through universal frames for speech.
- (h) Should learn the difference between standard and non-standard forms of expression.
- (i) Should choose appropriate forms and registers to suit particular purposes and audiences.
- (j) Should take part in structured paired, group and individual activities in which speaking and listening are essential components.

#### **Reading**

All students:

- (a) Should be encouraged and supported to become fluent and confident readers.
- (b) Should be supported and taught secure reading strategies for coping with reading a range of texts, including non-fiction media and ICT.
- (c) Should be able to read with understanding, exploring ideas through inference and deduction.
- (d) Should be aware of the language of reading – decoding, comprehension, location, deduction, inference, skimming, scanning, predicting, visualising, empathising, questioning and reading backwards and forwards - to support the reading process.
- (e) Should be able to read and follow written instructions.
- (f) Should be encouraged to read for pleasure and all students are expected to have a private reading book in school to support this expectation.
- (g) Should have access to a range of books and reading materials that are up-to-date, relevant and balanced in content.
- (h) Should learn to be critical readers, questioning what they read in books and in the media.
- (i) Should be encouraged to analyse and evaluate texts through termly book reviews in both their English curriculum lessons and as part of the school's Readathon Challenge.

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### **Writing**

All students:

- (a) Should use writing to plan, draft, re-draft. Proof-read and organise their written work.
- (b) Should use legible and clear handwriting to support the presentation of work.
- (c) Should structure their writing appropriately, using sentences, paragraphs and headings effectively.
- (d) Should be supported in writing through universal frames for writing.
- (e) Should have ready access to dictionaries, thesauri and departmental vocabulary lists and be encouraged to use them.
- (f) Should learn to write for a range of purposes and audiences.
- (g) Should be encouraged to control writing through use and application of effective punctuation including: capital letters, full stops, commas, exclamation, speech and question marks.
- (h) Should be encouraged to use spelling rules to support effective writing.
- (i) Should be provided with helpful models of particular kinds of writing.
- (j) Should be encouraged to discuss and reflect on their writing.
- (k) Should be entitled to have their writing treated with respect and interest.
- (l) Should learn to compose text on the computer screen, where appropriate.

### **9. Targets for assessment**

As a school, St John Lloyd is committed to the raising of literacy standards through assessment. As such, we will:

- (a) Make use of diagnostic cognitive, reading and spelling tests at each Key Stage to identify students' progress and needs, including the National Literacy tests when they are implemented in September 2013.
- (b) Use regular assessments of literacy skills, in all subject areas, to inform decisions about students' progress and needs.
- (c) Set literacy targets for each student, based on regular formative assessment of their progress.
- (d) Develop marking strategies across departments, which will inform, develop and encourage students' literacy.
- (e) Include assessments of literacy skills in reports to parents.
- (f) Use the key principles of the Literacy Action Plan and the National Literacy Framework (January 2013) to ensure consistency in assessment and the literacy approach.

### **Monitoring of the Whole-School Literacy policy:**

- The importance of monitoring the policy is recognised by all teachers in the school and **ALL** members of staff are expected to be teachers of literacy.
- Senior managers and HODs are responsible for ensuring that departments are working within the Policy framework and monitoring will be achieved through formal and informal meetings, lesson observations, departmental reviews, book monitoring and periodic audits.



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- Success of this policy will be measured through a range of formative and summative measures already acknowledged in this document.
- Heads of Department will be responsible for leading the implementation of the Policy when planning and teaching lessons, and in the devising of Schemes of Work.
- The LA supports the implementation of this policy through Literacy Reviews and meetings with senior teachers and staff responsible for Literacy.

### **Policy written in consultation with SLT:**

Miss Laura Evans – Head of English and Whole-school Literacy co-ordinator.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

### **Policy review date:**

January 2013 following the National Literacy Framework launch.

### **References:**

The following documents have been used to support the writing of St John Lloyd School's literacy policy.

1. The National Literacy Programme - WELSH GOVERNMENT – May 2012.
2. Developing higher-order literacy skills across the curriculum - WELSH GOVERNMENT – March 2010.
3. Guidance on the teaching of higher-order reading skills – WELSH GOVERNMENT – March 2010
4. Supporting learners' higher-order literacy skills – WELSH GOVERNMENT – January 2009