

# Whole School Literacy Strategy 2024-2025

(This strategy has been informed by DFE's Reading Framework and the EEF's 'Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools' guidance.)

## **The importance of literacy at The Marches School**

At The Marches School it is our aim to increase opportunities for our students in all aspects of life and being literate lays the foundations for lifelong learning. We want our students to be able to use their skills to listen and communicate with clarity and sensitivity, and develop their own ideas over time in an insightful and thoughtful manner. Our staff recognise that we are all responsible for supporting the literacy journey of our students.

By emphasising the importance of strong literacy skills across all areas of the curriculum, we can foster the individual experience, develop cultural appreciation, and build a clear and developed sense of identity through:

- Enabling learners to develop into sensitive, critical and efficient readers who understand the importance of forming the habit of reading for pleasure, interest and research purposes;
- Developing learners' writing skills so they can harness a multitude of written styles, which serve many purposes and outcomes;
- Developing and promoting the learners' ability to be creative and imaginative across the curriculum;
- Emphasising the importance of oracy which will lead to our learners understanding how to speak in a range of contexts;
- Developing learners' who are attentive, responsive and respectful listeners; as well as confident, articulate and reflective speakers;
- Allowing learners to read symbolically, enabling them to be sensitive to their own learning as an opportunity to empathise with others;
- Emphasising that every member of staff is a teacher of communication and literacy who enables our learners to apply their subject knowledge so they can talk, think, write and read like subject experts;
- Enabling our learners to appreciate their role as citizens in the wider community;
- Engendering a belief in equality by ensuring that learners have access to a wide range of multicultural text and experiences in their studies across the broader curriculum;
- Adopting an efficient and cohesive approach to the teaching and learning of literacy using technology to support ideas, where possible;
- Allowing every learner, no matter what their ability, the equality of access to learning activities both inside and outside the classroom;

## **Our Oracy Strategy**

### **Developing oracy by:**

- Understanding why talk matters
- Using language capability to support reading and writing
- Becoming engaging speakers
- Developing linguistic techniques
- Developing disciplinary oracy - a language for learning
- Recognising that talk matters.
- Enhancing spoken language ability to ensure that all students are capable and confident speakers.

### **Our Reading Strategy - Growing a reading culture by:**

- All members of the Marches Academy Trust appreciating and championing the importance of reading.
- Increasing students' vocabulary
- Developing decoding ability
- Developing reading fluency
- Knowledge and language acquisition
- Language comprehension

- Engaging all students in reading

### **Our Writing Strategy - Developing writing skills across the curriculum by:**

- Ensuring students write like readers and read like writers.
- Improving standards of academic writing so that all students can demonstrate a confident control of Standard English
- Including Pre-writing and early writing
- Promoting fluency of writing
- Developing Disciplinary Literacy
- Instilling a love of writing

## **Literacy Interventions**

### **Reading Rangers**

Pupils in year 7 with a reading age lower than the expected standard are paired with coaches (Year 10) for one reading session a week. These sessions take place in the LRC. Year 7 students read their fiction book aloud to their coach who supports when they reach difficulties. As well as developing reading fluency and comprehension, these sessions are geared towards enhancing reading for pleasure.

### **Bedrock testing**

New students at induction in Year 6, and new starters, have their reading ages assessed using online 'Bedrock' testing, an adaptive test which suits each individual student and analyses their comprehension, understanding and reading capabilities. All Year 7 pupils, along with those with a standardised age score below 100, are retested in term two and appropriate interventions are put into place to address gaps. This information is shared with teachers across the school to support students' reading progression in lessons.

### **IDL (International Dyslexia Learning)**

We use IDL, the computer based multi-sensory system to supports learners with dyslexia and other learning difficulties to increase reading and spelling ages. The programme is delivered to students in Years 7-10 as part of our school wide literacy solution. Numerous research studies have shown that IDL Literacy is a proven solution for increasing the reading and spelling ability of pupils with dyslexia and other learning difficulties, by an average of 11 months after just 26 hours of use.

### **Lexonik**

Lexonik Advance trains learners to develop phonological awareness and make links between unknown words using common prefix, stems and suffix definitions. Delivered over six weekly one-hour sessions, this intervention is proven to make immediate, significant and sustainable progress for students of any age.

### **Futures weeks- Reading the World**

All students will engage in 'Reading the World' through being exposed to relevant articles and TED talks linking to the specific themes around Futures weeks. Each session links to an overarching theme and builds to a specific written task. This promotes discussion and debate among students and staff and keeps them up to date with current events and international opinion.

### **Academic Reading**

All teachers are responsible for improving students' word depth knowledge through the explicit teaching of vocabulary across the curriculum. In sixth form students are clear on A Level and university language so that there are no surprises as they continue through the school.

### **Use of student planners**

The student planner is a powerful tool for learning and as such literacy resources are available for use to support teaching & learning. Students have access to the Literacy Mat to help with class and homework.

### **Evidence Informed Practice**

Our Marches Model for Great Learning includes a literacy strand which is used to guide research driven professional development and practice.

## Reading School Structure – All students in Y7-9 in Reading School from 1.45-2.05

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>Year 7</b>	Year 7 follow a carousel of activities over the five days: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Two days of Bedrock Literacy</b> - Bedrock Literacy explicitly teaches vocabulary and grammar, all in the context of original and engaging prose, ensuring learners are reading a diverse range of high-quality texts. It uses an AI algorithm to adapt the learning to the specific challenge point of each student.</li> <li>• <b>Two days of Reading Families</b> – form group shared reading.</li> </ul>				
<b>Year 8</b>	<b>Individual silent reading</b> with focused comprehension questions	<b>Reading Families:</b> Form Group Shared Reading	<b>Reading Families:</b> Form Group Shared Reading	<b>Non-fiction reading:</b> Exploring context and key vocabulary,	<b>Non-fiction reading:</b> Consolidation of key vocabulary, followed by
<b>Year 9</b>	<b>Individual silent reading</b> with focused comprehension questions	<b>Reading Families:</b> Form Group Shared Reading	<b>Reading Families:</b> Form Group Shared Reading	<b>Non-fiction reading:</b> Exploring context and key vocabulary,	<b>Non-fiction reading:</b> Consolidation of key vocabulary, followed by

- **Reading Rangers:** Year 7 with Year 10 mentors every Monday
- **Individual Silent Reading:** Fiction and Non-Fiction texts e.g., biography, revision guides, wider subject-specific reading; subject-specific anthologies
- **Reading Families:** Shared reading, using copies of texts (class sets) to allow class to read together – Teacher modelling reading to develop fluency; group reading strategies
- **Non-fiction reading:** interesting articles with time for discussion; developing cultural capital and shared British values. Futures themes included.

## Reading Families

Reading aloud fosters positive attitudes, enhances pupils' motivation to read, and develops vocabulary and other knowledge, including of books, authors and genres that they might not choose to read for themselves. It also contributes indirectly to their fluency, as they listen to an accomplished reader bring a text to life (**The Reading Framework, DFE July 2023**)

The following questions will support tutors to encourage discussions with their classes in their 'Reading Families' sessions.

### **Probing**

Questions which push for more clarity or more depth.

***What do you mean by...?***

***Can you say more about...?***

***In what way...?***

***How exactly...?***

### **Challenging**

Questions which require re-evaluation or justification of thinking.

***But how do you know...?***

***Why do you think that...?***

***Are you sure that...?***

***But what if...?***

### **Bridging**

Questions which move thinking across to another example or topic.

***So is it the same as/for/when...?***

***How does it/that compare to...?***

***Can you think of other/a different...?***

***When else...?***

### **Reflecting**

Questions which ask about the thinking or learning process behind an idea or point.

***When/how/what did you discover...?***

***How did you find/work out...?***

***What made you think of...?***

***Why did you decide...?***

### **Extending**

Questions which move the pupil towards greater complexity or difficulty.

***Could you explain...?***

***What would happen if...?***

***Does that suggest any other...?***

***What might be the problem with...?***

### **Personalising**

Questions which ask for a more personal angle or an evaluative response.

***What do you, personally, think...?***

***What's your own view about...?***

*How well...?*

*In your opinion, why...?*

## Reading the World

During Reading the World sessions, staff can use the following questions to further encourage debate and conversation among their tutor groups:

<p><b>Did this really happen?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Have you heard of the media company who has written/published this story?</li><li>· Has it been published by other media companies?</li><li>· Does it provide evidence from</li></ul>	<p><b>Is it a news story?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Did it happen recently?</li><li>· Is it discussing something 'new' and not known before?</li><li>· Does it share information that is useful or interesting?</li></ul>
<p><b>Who is telling this news story?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Which media company has published this story? What do you know about them?</li><li>· Which journalist authored this story? Have they written about related topics before?</li></ul>	<p><b>Who is the news story for?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Who does the journalist want to read this story?</li><li>· Why do they want to tell this story? Why might it be of interest to them?</li></ul>
<p><b>Is the news story balanced?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Whose point of view is included?</li><li>· Are different points of view presented?</li></ul>	<p><b>Is the news story presenting fact or opinion?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Is the journalist expressing their own opinion? How can you tell?</li><li>· Are there quotes, statistics, or other</li></ul>
<p><b>Is the news story unbiased?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Are any points of view missing?</li><li>· If yes, how would the story change if this point of view were included?</li><li>· What language does the journalist use? Is it positive, negative, or neutral?</li></ul>	<p><b>Who has the power?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Is anyone acting unfairly in this news story?</li><li>· Is anyone being treated unfairly?</li><li>· Who has the power to change this?</li></ul>
<p><b>What is the news story trying to achieve?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Is the journalist trying to change what you think about something? How are they doing this?</li><li>· Is the journalist trying to make you</li></ul>	<p><b>What do you think?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Which of the points of view presented in the story do you agree with? Why?</li><li>· Has the news story made you think in a different way? Why or why not?</li></ul>