



## Curriculum statement for English

### Rationale

At Ingfield Manor School, we recognise the importance of students developing effective literacy skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) as they are fundamental to the achievement of a rich and fulfilling life. These skills are used every day to communicate with, and make sense of, the world around us. As such, the more proficient we become with these skills the more successful we can expect to be in life.

We understand that at the heart of improving literacy skills is the opportunity to practise them. Improving literacy and learning can have an impact on students' self-esteem, motivation, behaviour and attainment. It allows them to learn independently and is empowering. Developing literacy skills is the collective responsibility of all staff in all curriculum areas to ensure that literacy is constantly addressed to improve standards and raise levels of attainment. Therefore, teachers and team members will take every opportunity to provide students with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write, speak and listen effectively. In addition, students will take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs and in making improvements.

Our underlying ethos is to provide a holistic and personalised curriculum which challenges students to fulfil their potential and enable them to make meaningful choices in order to be as independent as possible in all aspects of their lives.

### Intent

To support in the development of literacy skills, all students will take an active part in English lessons. The English curriculum at Ingfield is underpinned by developing students' abilities to express themselves, (assisted if necessary), listen, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including using language to learn, communicate, think, explore and organise.

Helping students to express themselves clearly, through development of vocabulary, both orally and in writing, enhances and enriches teaching and learning in all subjects and prepares the student for life after school. Acquiring literacy is an empowering process, enabling students to enjoy access to knowledge and information which broadens horizons, increases opportunities and creates alternatives for building a better life.

Literacy encompasses all aspects of communication: non-verbal, verbal and written.

It is our aim that our students will:

- Gain pleasure from reading and/or listening to a range of texts;
- Be inspired to develop their creativity through literature; 2
- Gain a sense of empowerment through the creation of texts;
- Use a range of texts to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world around them;
- Develop their literacy skills to a functional level and apply this in a range of contexts;
- Record their thoughts, feelings and opinions;
- Interact and communicate effectively with others in a range of social situations;
- Obtain information, question and be actively involved in decision making.

### **Implementation**

Within early years, there is a literacy focus to sessions and developing literacy skills is embedded within the daily routine.

Within keystage 1 and 2, students are taught English, including phonics, in their class groups, with peers of a similar age.

Within keystage 3, 4 and 5, students are grouped according to their ability for English and literacy lessons.

The topics are taught in a cycle to ensure broad and balanced subject coverage, which provides students with the opportunity to develop, build on and revisit skills progressively and with a high level of individualized adaptation.

Each class caters for a broad range of abilities with students working with peers of a similar age, where possible.

Ingfield Manor School has its own schemes of work, developed to ensure coverage of the National Curriculum at an appropriate level. Within early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2, schemes of work are informed by the Cornerstones Curriculum.

In primary, students are taught English across the weekly timetable through dedicated phonics and literacy lessons which are embedded within the learning journey. As the needs of the students within each class can be diverse, teachers plan differentiated group activities to ensure each child is able to achieve and make progress. In addition to their weekly lessons, the students have additional reading/writing activities which they work on during discrete sessions. These activities are planned by the class teacher, are highly differentiated and readily available for team members to be able to support the students with accessing them.

Within secondary, all students attend three English lessons each week, with one being dedicated to developing their communication skills, including the use of alternative and augmentative communication (AAC). They are grouped according to their needs and abilities and students build on the skills they have learnt in primary. One group follows a sensory based curriculum, whereas the other groups focus more on developing their functional skills. When a student has been assessed as having the potential to achieve GCSE it is important that teaching starts to equip them with the skills and knowledge to enable them to be successful in their exams further up the school. At the end of key stage 4, students may be entered for WJEC Entry Pathways Additional English or WJEC English Language GCSE.

Within tutor time, students have opportunities to practice their reading and communication skills.

Students in 6th Form attend a minimum of three English lessons per week, including a communication focused lesson. Students are grouped according to their needs and abilities and build on the skills learnt within the secondary phase. All students have the opportunity to work towards an accredited outcome, which could be WJEC Personal Progress, Edexcel Functional Skills, WJEC Entry Pathways Additional English or WJEC English Language GCSE.



## **Speaking and Listening**

Within the English curriculum, all students across the school take part in weekly communication lessons where students are grouped according to their communication styles. These lessons are supported by speech and language therapists (SaLTs):

### **Early Years and Primary groups**

- Spoken communication
- AAC users (IDV) accessing high tech and light tech systems

### **Secondary & Sixth Form groups**

- Spoken communication
- AAC Ingfield Dynamic Vocabulary (IDV)
- AAC Vocabulary for Life (VfL)

Within these sessions, students are supported to develop their own individual communication styles including the use of AAC, facial expressions, gestures, Makaton signing, body language, vocalisations and verbal skills. Using personalised teaching strategies such as songs, games, workbooks and role play, students are supported to develop both their receptive and expressive language skills. These strategies will be unique to each of the streamed groups depending on the age and individual needs of the students, including those following a multisensory curriculum and who are in the early stages of communication development.

Students who are at an early stage of communication development are provided with opportunities to see that their communicative behaviours carry meaning and can have a purpose including seeking attention, needs satisfaction, finding ways to show when they want another person to share an object or an event with them which they find interesting. Therefore, personalising the approach is very important so it engages them and makes it meaningful.



Speaking and listening skills are also embedded across all curriculum subjects where students are supported to communicate with increasing independence in a variety of contexts and for a range of purposes and audiences (using both AAC and verbal communication). Students will be supported to communicate with familiar and unfamiliar people, in formal and informal contexts, including developing conversation skills, which is achieved through individual work as well as small/whole group discussions and activities.

The development of speaking and listening skills are also supported across the whole school day through the conductive education 24-hour curriculum. Students are supported to take an active role in their own lives through choice making, sharing their thoughts and opinions as well as directing their own care.

Teaching is adapted to meet the wide range of communication skills and cognitive ability of our students. For any students who uses alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) to support their voice, please see the Communication curriculum statement which sits alongside this document.

### **Reading**

At Ingfield Manor, we recognize that reading is a complex activity so we provide opportunities for all students to develop a range of different skills to enable them to read as confidently, independently, and accurately as possible. Our definition of reading is any activity which leads to the derivation of meaning from visual or tactile representations, for example, objects, pictures, symbols or written words. These may be accessed visually, aurally or through touch, for example, looking at objects, pictures, symbols or words, feeling objects of reference, looking and listening to CDs or computer programs, listening to an adult reading aloud or on an audio device. We recognize the importance of students having exposure to a range of texts for enjoyment, to develop empathy, creativity and imagination.

All students, regardless of ability, will have opportunities to explore and learn word recognition skills using a range of techniques which teach decoding skills and the expansion of vocabulary, as well develop an understanding that the written word has meaning. These will involve synthetic phonics, where students are taught skills for blending and segmenting



letters and sounds. We support students to develop through different stages, whilst it is understood that for the majority of our students it will take much longer than average for them to progress through these stages due to their disability. Teaching within these stages therefore requires a creative and multi-sensory approach to ensure students enjoy listening to, playing with and discriminating different sounds, and are motivated to optimize progress.

Students are also given a toolbox of other strategies to use when learning to read such as learning sight words, using the illustrations to help understand what a text might say, making an inferred 'guess' at what a word might be from the context of the whole sentence, recognising patterns, rhymes and rhythms within a book.

To encourage a love of stories, teachers read age-appropriate fiction to their classes which, in primary, is ideally linked to the learning journey topic. In addition, all students have access at appropriate times to audio books as well as being able to watch films or clips relevant to their topic. This use of multi-modal texts has many benefits including the development of imagination and empathy, comprehension and higher-level thinking skills, as well as speaking and listening skills.

Several reading schemes are used in primary to help students practice their decoding skills and their comprehension skills whilst hopefully finding reading an increasingly pleasurable experience. Different schemes are used to allow those students who remain at the same level for extended periods of time to have wide range of texts to explore and enjoy. Teachers and team members use these reading times to reinforce decoding and whole word recognition as well as asking careful questions to assess and develop comprehension.

While in the Secondary phase, students who are still developing their phonic knowledge move on to Moondog, Dockside and Phonicbooks series reading schemes. However, students do not need to work through a series of stages in order to demonstrate they can read but are able to explore a range of books appropriate to their level of reading. Confident readers are encouraged to choose books from the school's library, a book from an appropriately banded level and are encouraged to move on to different level books as appropriate. All students also continue to explore books with an adult and so experience the diversity of books: both fiction and non-fiction and in a range of genre. The purpose of this is twofold: firstly, to build on their



decoding and comprehension skills, including to think critically about what they are reading and to foster a love of stories and reading for meaning.

In 6th Form, students are encouraged to read a range of texts: non-fiction, such as newspapers, magazines and information texts, as well as fiction, including multi-modal texts. Where appropriate, students can choose fiction and nonfiction books from the school library or bring in texts from home. The emphasis is on using reading skills to develop knowledge and in functional contexts, as well as to develop a love of reading. Building on their decoding and comprehensions skills, students are encouraged to think critically about what they have read, i.e. to consider if bias is used or if the text is trying to persuade them to do something or think in a particular way. Developing these deeper thinking skills is important to support students move successfully into adulthood. Students who are symbol readers use audio books to develop their love of stories and to develop their comprehension skills.

### **Writing**

At Ingfield we are very mindful of the fact that our students may develop at very different rates within the different components of writing. For example, one student may have a very good imagination and ability to link thoughts and ideas to 'write' a story using symbols but due to an inability to produce sounds verbally or because of difficulties seeing and processing letters they may find it very difficult to segment letters for spelling and therefore would be unable to communicate their ideas using words and sentences. Another student may have a particular strength in the area of spelling but struggle to record their writing because of physical limitations. A third student may find the development and expression of ideas a challenge.

With all our students, it is essential that their strengths and composition skills are recognised and that they are given the time, space and technology to develop these and are not held back by any difficulties with the mechanics of spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG), their communication or physical ability.



The teaching team at Ingfield use a diverse and creative teaching approach to match the learning styles and strengths of the students in their group and ensure a personalized approach.

Students are encouraged throughout the curriculum to make a permanent record of their work by selecting objects, photos, symbols, using assistive technology or handwriting. Students are initially taught that making a mark or selecting an object, image or symbol can have meaning and this is powerful tool to communicate with others. From single words and images to more complex combinations of words and images, students learn how to communicate increasingly sophisticated messages.

The different purposes of writing are considered along with the conventions associated with them, as well as different modes of writing such as long-hand, text or email. Accuracy in writing is also developed in terms of spelling and punctuation and for those students for whom it is relevant this is targeted using direct instruction and practice.

The process of writing begins with awareness of fingers and hands and the development of manipulative skills. These are encouraged through the daily motor learning programmes that are an integral part of the day at Ingfield as well as by activities such as dough play, scissor skills, ball play, stacking blocks, jigsaws, threading and playing musical instruments. Writing in sand/other mediums, finger painting and craft activities and the use of magnetic letters are all used to reinforce the teaching of graphemes. Students are given the opportunity to use a variety of writing implements in their free play such as, chalk, pencils of various shapes and sizes, crayons and white board markers.

When developing the motor skills necessary for writing, students may begin by over-writing and then copy writing in which they will have first composed the sentence verbally and/or through the use of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC).

Students are encouraged to recognise and learn to write the letters in familiar words e.g. their names and may begin this process by:





1. Using magnetic letters
2. Over- writing solid teacher writing
3. Over-writing dotted lines
4. Underwriting with dots to guide for letter placement
5. Underwriting without dots
6. Copying adults writing from another piece of paper.

N.B. When using a symbol programme for writing or reading not every word is symbolized. This is because some symbols are too abstract and so the student would be better off learning the word shape itself. Furthermore, over symbolization makes the page too busy. The size of symbols is also reduced so students see the word shape first and then the symbol, if needed.

Those children unable to cope with the physical demands of writing have access to symbol or text programmes (writing with IDV symbols and Clicker) or computers which can be accessed through the usual keyboard or using on screen keyboards/grids, the touch screen monitors, switching or Eye Gaze. Some students, who have some letter recognition, use keyboards or VOCAs and their work can be downloaded to a computer for printing.

As appropriate to their stage of learning, students learn how to write effectively. They are given specific targets to enable them to develop their writing style so that it is appropriate to the audience and purpose. These are linked to each individual's Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) outcomes.

The teaching and learning experience of students within one key stage can be hugely varied and so each student's work is individualised.

### **Planning**

Ingfield Manor School plans the teaching of English to ensure coverage of the Early Years Curriculum and National Curriculum, in a broad and balanced way and ensure delivery at a pace that is appropriate to enable our students to make progress commensurate with their



abilities. Our long term plan for the teaching of English maps its coverage across the school to ensure students develop and build on their literacy skills as they progress through the key stages, to enable them to fulfil their potential.

Termly schemes of work support individualised teaching and learning objectives which enable students to work towards their annual review targets, which are informed by their EHCP outcomes. To support with the sequencing of learning, we use Performance Indicators for Valued Assessment and Targeted Learning (PIVATs) to help inform target setting and ensure a cohesive approach across the school.

The curriculum is delivered through a cycle of topics and consideration is given to the coverage, within that cycle, of different genres and experiences.

In EYFS, students begin to develop their learning through the 'communication and language' and 'literacy' areas of learning following a 2 year cycle.

In Key Stages 1 and 2 students follow a 2 year planned cycle of topics.

In Key Stage 3, students broaden and deepen what they have studied and follow a 3 year cycle of planned topics. Students are grouped according to ability to ensure that the subject material and approach is appropriate.

In Key Stage 4, students are also ability grouped and follow a cycle of learning to enable them to build on and develop the skills learnt in the previous key stages. As appropriate, students follow the programmes of study for accredited qualifications such as WJEC Personal Progress, WJEC Additional English Entry Pathway and GCSE English (WJEC).

In Key Stage 5, the focus is on providing students with opportunities to use their existing literacy skills to access and navigate everyday situations. In particular, the ability to use strategies for extracting and transferring information as well as share information with a variety of different audiences and for a variety of different reasons. This is developed within school, with familiar people and in a familiar context, but with the aim of ensuring that skills demonstrated in school can be used in functional ways elsewhere in the community with unfamiliar people.



Students are active members of the local community, learning the social etiquette that is required in places such as the library, Post Office, leisure centre and bank. They learn skills such as how and when to queue, to be polite or to complain. They learn how to respond to unexpected problems. The students learn to make informed choices about services and products that they require, for example ordering from a menu in a restaurant.

The ability to both understand messages that are being conveyed and to be able to communicate needs, wants, likes, dislikes and broader opinions are key to being a part of any community so language and communication skills are essential for all of our students. To this end these skills are taught discretely as well as generalised across all of the other curriculum areas. In enhancing our students' skills with language and communication we are enabling them to intentionally relate to another person, with the expectation that the other person will respond to, or act on the message as part of a two-way process.

### **Impact**

At Ingfield Manor School we believe it is essential to continuously review the impact of our teaching and learning on our students' progress and, when appropriate, put in place measures to support individual students or make changes when a group of students are affected. This is carried out in a number of ways, all of which are monitored through our robust quality assurance programme, which involves learning walks, work scrutiny and lesson observations, as well as garnering feedback from the students.

To support our individualised approach to learning, at Ingfield Manor we use ipsative assessment to enable each student to recognise the progress they have made personally. Ipsative assessment is used to set annual targets, linked to EHCP outcomes and broken down into termly objectives, which are further broken down into lesson targets. Each lesson three targets are set for students, using our lesson proforma, which reflect the holistic ethos of the school:



- Literacy/English specific, informed by student's previous achievements
- Communication
- Gross or fine motor skills

These targets are shared at the beginning of each lesson and are available throughout the lesson for students/staff to refer to. Time is given at the end of the lesson for self, peer and staff evaluation of achievement towards targets, which is recorded on the proforma. Teacher's feedback includes the next steps the student needs to work on to enable them to continue to make progress.

All completed proformas are filed within the student's book/folder, together with annotated work products or photos relating to the lesson, to show the learning journey of the individual. We use this formative assessment as a continuous process to inform teachers of what students have learned and the gaps in their knowledge, thus informing future planning. All assessment is sensitive, constructive and to foster motivation, involving the students as active partners in the process, which gives them an understanding of what they need to do to improve. We use PIVATs, which sets out the skills and knowledge that students should be achieving in English and skills for learning. This provides a shared language in terms of progress; when students have met specific criteria it is recorded on Evidence for Learning and used to track progress and inform future planning. As well as being used for formative purposes, students are assessed at the end of a particular unit of work and/or at the end of each term. This informs teachers of how well students have understood, retained learning and the progress they have made over a period of time. It can be used to inform the following year's teacher; to inform parents of their child's progress and attainment, and/or to inform school improvement.

At the end of each term, teachers meet with a member of the senior leadership team to review individual student's progress and appropriate strategies and interventions are put in place where progress is not as expected.

Some students within Upper Secondary and 6th Form will be creating portfolios of work as evidence for nationally recognized qualifications, such as WJEC Personal Progress and



Additional English Entry Pathways. This work is moderated, both internally and externally, by the awarding body. Additionally, some students may be entered for WJEC English Language GCSE and are therefore assessed through the completion of the exam.

See also, Assessment Policy and Communication Curriculum Statement