

Curriculum statement for English

Rationale

Within Woodview 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 teaching assistants 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 take an active part in English lessons. The Woodview English curriculum is underpinned by whole school intent for students' to be able to express themselves appropriately, 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;
- 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

Students are supported to build on and develop the skills that they acquired during their primary education. Woodview's English curriculum has been developed to ensure coverage of the keystage (KS)3 programme of study, as set out in the National Curriculum, although adapted to ensure students are able to engage in the content and therefore progress their skills.

The long term plans detail the cycle of topics being taught 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.

All students attend 4 English lessons per week, as well as 2 dedicated reading/phonics sessions although, when appropriate, students follow a sensory based curriculum where the development of literacy skills is embedded within multi-sensory activities.

In year 7, students follow Woodview's schemes of work and, as they progress into year 8, students work towards units from WJEC's Additional English Entry Pathway. This enables them to work towards a qualification whilst developing their skills so they are equipped with the skills and knowledge to move onto higher levels. A decision will be made in year 9, in consultation with the young person and their parents/carers, to decide whether they will continue working towards a higher entry level and focus on developing their functional skills, or work towards English Language GCSE during KS4 to enable them to sit the exam at the end of year 11.

Developing literacy skills across the curriculum is embedded in Woodview. Teachers in all curriculum subjects will encourage students to develop their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

Also, within morning activities, students have opportunities to practice their reading and communication skills.

Speaking and Listening

As Woodview is a provision for students whose primary need is speech, language and communication skills, there is a key focus, embedded across the school day, to support students develop their skills so they are able to express their feelings, wants, needs and views, as well as listen and respond appropriately to others.

Across all subject areas, students are supported and encouraged to take an active part in discussions and debates, as well as express/present their personal thoughts and ideas and to listen to presentations and discussions, so they can develop both their expressive and

receptive language skills. Within PSHE, students develop the vocabulary to enable them to express how they are feeling using the Zones of Regulation, which are then drawn on throughout the day, and within English lessons, the key texts studied enable students to broaden their vocabulary and discuss its use, including the use of Standard English within formal and informal contexts. In addition, all students take part in drama lessons, which help to develop their confidence and provides further opportunities to discuss the use and meaning of language, using role, intonation, tone, volume, mood, silence, stillness and action to add impact.

Teaching is adapted to meet the wide range of communication skills and cognitive ability of our students. A speech and language therapist works with the class teams to ensure individual programmes are written and implemented when required.

Reading

Within Woodview, 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, as well as to gain knowledge and information.

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. These will involve synthetic phonics, where students are taught skills for blending and segmenting letters and sounds. We support students to develop individually through the use of validated systematic synthetic phonics programmes. Teaching provides 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, key texts are carefully chosen to appeal to the students' interests and age. These may be read by the teacher and/or explored in guided reading sessions. In addition, students will have opportunities to access multi-modal texts, which have 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 to help students practice their decoding skills and their comprehension skills. 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.

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 genres. 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.

Students will also have access to non-fiction texts, such as newspapers, magazines and information texts. They will be supported to consider the different structure and layout of these texts, as well as 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.

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 but lack the confidence or ability to write independently. Another, who is able to write independently may find it difficult to segment letters for spelling and therefore limit the vocabulary they use. Another 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), caused through their special educational needs and/or disability (SEND).

The teaching team within Woodview 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 using assistive technology or handwriting. Students attend a weekly fine motor skills lesson, planned by a qualified occupational therapist, which helps students to develop the strength, skills and stamina for handwriting. Also, many of our students lack confidence in recording their thoughts and ideas so are supported through the use of individual white boards, where staff can scribe the students words, which the students then copy. This not only helps build confidence but also develop spelling skills. 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.

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.

Planning

Woodview plans the teaching of English to ensure coverage of the National Curriculum, in an appropriate broad and balanced way and ensure delivery at a pace that is suitable to enable our students to make progress commensurate with their abilities.

Woodview's long term plan for the teaching of English is designed to ensure students develop and build on their literacy skills as they progress through the years, 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 National Curriculum attainment targets or 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.

Impact

At Woodview, 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 we use an ipsative approach 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.

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. Work is annotated and shared with students at the start of the next lesson, including the next steps the student needs to work on to enable them to continue to make progress.

Work is stored within the students' books/folders 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. The use of PIVATs or NC attainment targets, which sets out the skills and knowledge that students should be achieving 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.

Most students from year 8 upwards will be creating portfolios of work as evidence for nationally recognized qualifications, such as WJEC 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 in year 11 and are therefore assessed through the completion of the exam.

See also, Assessment Policy and Communication Curriculum Statement