

Literacy Policy

Central Hub Brighton

The Connected Hub and Brighton and Hove Pupil Referral Units

Approved by:	Co-Head Teachers	Date: February 2023
Last reviewed on:	February 2023	
Next review due by:	February 2024	

Note: Central Hub Brighton operates with a Management Committee as its governing body. For all references to Governing Body and Governors in this document, the duties and responsibilities will be carried out by the CHB Management Committee and its members.



Literacy Policy: Central Hub Brighton

Connecting before Correcting

Literacy is the ability to read, write, speak and listen in a way that lets us communicate effectively and make sense of the world.

National Literacy Trust

Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate (speak and listen) and compute, using printed and written materials associated with various contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, develop their knowledge and potential, and participate fully in community and wider society.

UNESCO

Literacy is the ability to read, write, speak and listen in a way that lets us communicate effectively and make sense of the world.

National Literacy Trust

1) Our Vision

Language sets us apart and makes us human. We form our 'selves' through language. We express our 'selves' through language. We navigate the world and we transform it through language. At Central Hub Brighton we are cognisant of this and create opportunities throughout each day for students to bathe in language.

We are committed to intuitive ways of relating to young people as unique individuals according to their developmental level, rather than an arbitrary age-related level, in order to foster healthy psychological growth and educational achievement. It is a dynamic, dialectical process between two people which can't be reduced to a prescribed, off-the-shelf programme of tasks to be achieved.

Literacy is the key to communication. A life-skill that allows a person to express themselves in reading, writing, speaking and listening. Without secure literacy a person is held back from fully communicating in all of these forms and they can be affected in every aspect of their life. It is as essential as breathing. Without words, and the necessary structure for those words, the person is debilitated and bereft. They are denied access to society, work, relationships and moving forward in a way that is hugely damaging and life-changing. Communicating effectively means having the vocabulary to do so, and the skills to use those words well. This policy aims to be inspirational for teachers and children in order to make a difference.

2) Our Key Principles

- That learning and development are processes unique to the individual;
- That all behaviour is communication;
- That the classroom is a safe, supportive space;
- That nurture is important for the development of self-esteem;
- That we, as educators, have a responsibility to develop children's communicative skills;
- And that language is a vital means of communication.

3) Our Key Principles Explored



That learning and development are processes unique to the individual

Key Questions:

- How can our student's learning be understood developmentally and holistically?
- How do we identify the strengths of each student's literacy and how this impacts their learning progress?
- How do we identify obstacles to acquiring literacy skills, including social, emotional and cognitive factors?

What can teachers do?

Recognise and address problems within young people's learning foundations, rather than 'plug the gaps'.

Find out about students' literacy journey so far by communicating with other staff, previous schools, home and professionals.

Take into consideration their literacy-heritage, such as whether English is a first or second language and also their cultural capital.

Appreciate that all students develop differently and we need to recognise where they are, not where they *should* be on their learning journey.

Get to know what social and emotional factors are affecting our students which may prevent them from reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Understand that literacy involves speaking, listening, reading and writing and that understanding language is key to all of these.

Scaffold, model and guide students in their literacy work.

What can school leaders do?

Facilitate the assessment and evaluation of individual needs: screen for dyslexia, working memory, and reading ability.

Ensure that external assessments are conducted with due regard to individual learning needs; such as in the use of reader/scribes and on-screen papers.

Build time into scheduling for all staff to do investigative work and training around literacy for their students.



That all behaviour is communication

Key Questions:

- What triggers specific behaviours in different students?
- How do our students behave around texts? What does this alert us to?
- Why might a student not want to work on a particular text?
- Is the work too hard, too scary, too easy?

What can teachers do?

Recognise and address young people's insecurity, lack of confidence and anxiety which may be the cause of disruptive behaviour.

Encourage a *culture of error** within which students feel safe to make mistakes.

Foster a sensitive classroom environment that does not force students to choose 'naughty' over feeling labelled as 'stupid'.

Check how students feel about their own progress and guide and support them on their individual journeys, using reassurance and praise.

Connect before correct: establish positive relationships, alongside an awareness of young people's attachment difficulties.

Take responsibility for forging links between a young person's external and internal worlds. Ask oneself if their external behaviour is communicating internal concerns that may be *out of awareness*.

Teacher's behaviour should consciously model their *own* self-regulated feelings and thoughts as an important guide to students.

What can school leaders do?

Have behaviour policies that recognise difference and support teachers and learners to succeed and flourish.

Provide training on supporting literacy with students with social, emotional and behavioural needs.

* culture of error: from Doug Lemov: <https://www.ambition.org.uk/blog/culture-error/>



That the classroom is a safe, supportive space

Key Questions:

- How can we ensure all students can thrive in the learning environment teachers create?
- In what ways can a student be supported in literacy in the classroom?

What can teachers do?

Let students know that they will fail and fail safely.

Remember that books, bookshops and libraries can offer significant challenge to a young person, who may not have been exposed to books and reading at home.

Encourage students to take positive risks.

Foster a classroom environment of mutual respect and mutual support with literacy: including peer assessment and peer teaching.

Plan and provide for literacy in lessons: such as by offering writing frames; support from teaching assistants; screen-based activities; alternative ways of recording and collaborative working.

What can school leaders do?

Create an ethos of mutual respect within the whole school environment.

Instil a culture of positive literacy schoolwide; conveying the expectation that all staff need to support students' literacy journeys.

Provide training on literacy tools and techniques that can be used in the classroom.

Provide adequate teacher assistant support as well as the necessary equipment to facilitate students in alternative ways of learning and recording work.



That nurture is important for the development of self-esteem

Key Questions:

- How can our nurturing approach offer a range of opportunities for young people to engage with missing early nurturing experiences, such as empathy, encouragement and support?
- How can we prioritise the relational and affective aspects of teaching through a close and supportive relationship?

What can teachers do?

Provide opportunities for staff and students to bathe in language in all subjects.

Work to ensure that there is no hierarchy and that reading, writing, speaking and listening are valued equally.

Demonstrate, model and scaffold to aid and develop interactions within peer groups and between adults/students.

Encourage and embrace failure as an opportunity to learn.

What can school leaders do?

Create and support a school-wide ethos of nurture and kindness within literacy experiences in the classroom; and one that sees failure as learning.



That we, as educators, have a responsibility to develop children's communicative skills

Key Questions:

- How do we encourage students to develop and use language skills more effectively?
- In what ways do we structure learning that enriches communication skills and provides literacy support?

What can teachers do?

Structure learning literacy skills as one might structure the learning of a new concept.

Give examples; provide sentence starters and practice and repeat every day communication.

Model the use of ambitious vocabulary, with effective use of tone and register in speech.

Encourage a *culture of error* with language: taking risks and making mistakes with words. Promote the notion that words need to be 'tried out to see if they fit', like clothes.

Provide and encourage words that describe feelings and help young people to become emotionally literate.

Give opportunities to explore language, pushing boundaries and enjoying words in speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Find and use resources that work, such as memory aids, reminders, quizzes, posters, words of the week; across all subjects.

What can school leaders do?

Give teachers adequate planning time and opportunities for collaborative work.

Recognise when staff may need additional support to aid students' communication skills; such as in their confidence; additional needs and EAL.



And that language is a vital means of communication

Key Questions:

- How do we empower our young people and enable them to develop good communication skills for life?
- How do we support young people to develop effective communication skills so that their language development supports their speech and the ability to express themselves?
- How can we help our students to communicate with peers and adults, finding the right words and enough words; creating meaningful interactions?

What can teachers do?

Develop our students' language for communication as this is the foundation for attachment and will underpin learning and development in CHB and beyond.

Model, scaffold and encourage young people to discover their voice in relationships, with teachers, peers and the wider community.

Encourage young people to communicate in different contexts, such as at careers fairs, on trips, in work experience and in different groupings in school.

Promote and support opportunities to develop a point of view; expressing opinions and ideas in speaking, listening, reading and writing work.

What can school leaders do?

Facilitate and support interactions in school and outside of school that allow students to experience communicating in a range of contexts.

Ensure reward systems recognise all forms of positive communication equally, from deep discussion to essay-writing.

4) How will the Literacy Policy change our way of working?



chblitpolks3.mp4



chbks4litpol.mov



TCHlitpolvid.mp4



What the policy means to us at CHB-KS3



What the policy means to us at CHB-KS4



What the policy means to us at TCH

5) Our List of Further Reading

In support of our vision and key principles:

Useful books:

Barton, Geoff: (2012) *Don't Call it Literacy*, London: Routledge

Truss, Lynn: (2009) *Eats, Shoots and Leaves*, London: Harper Collins

Boxall, M and Lucas, S: (2002) *Nurture Groups in Schools*, London: Sage

Interesting articles:

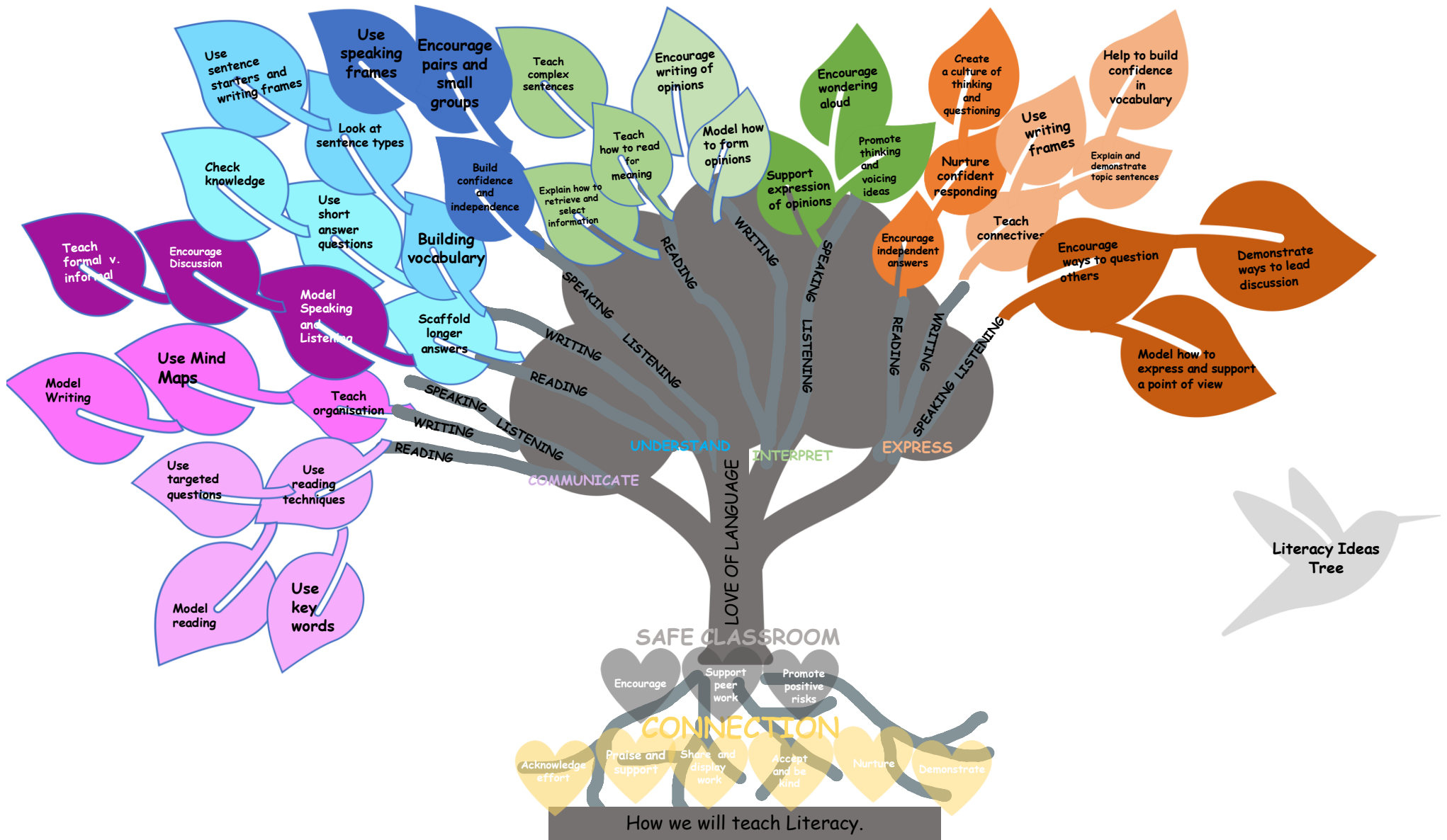
'Culture of Error' by Doug Lemov

<https://www.ambition.org.uk/blog/culture-error/>

'Meet the school with no classes, no classrooms and no curriculum' by Andrew Webb

<https://medium.com/pi-top/meet-the-school-with-no-classes-no-classrooms-and-no-curriculum-7cc7be517cef>

6) The Literacy Tree of Ideas



7) Evaluation

We would like this policy to be the beginning of change. The way it is used will be different for every site within Central Hub Brighton and every subject area within each school. We will evaluate the policy's impact at the beginning of the first year of its launch; in the middle and towards the end; with a view to making it even better. The evaluation will be qualitative and offer a chance for teachers, teaching assistants and school leaders to tell their literacy stories and build on future stories.