



My Language and Literacy Policy

Status

Current Policy

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Review Cycle

Every three years

Next Review

March 2027

Lead Staff

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Mission Statement.

We accept all students **as they are** and believe that every one of them is **entitled** to the very **best education**, delivered in an **environment** that is **supportive, caring and safe**.

Our goal is to develop our students to become:

- **Successful** Learners.
- As **independent** as possible.
- **Confident** individuals and self-advocates.
- **Effective** communicators and **contributors**.
- **Responsible** citizens.

We will do this by working to **ensure we get every aspect of their provision just right**, helping them to achieve academically, personally, socially and morally.

Stone Bay School: "***getting it right for every student***".

Rights Respecting Schools

The Unicef UK Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA) is based on principles of equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination and participation. The RRSA seeks to put the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of a school's ethos and culture to improve well-being and develop every child's talents and abilities to their full potential. A Rights Respecting School is a community where children's rights are learned, taught, practised, respected, protected and promoted.

Stone Bay School is a Rights Respecting School and this policy is written with reference to:

- **Article 23** (Children with a disability). A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community.
- **Article 28** (Right to education). Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child.
- **Article 31** (leisure, play and culture) Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities. Article 32 (child labour) Governments must protect children.

My Language and Literacy Curriculum Statement.

At Stone Bay, we believe that high quality literacy teaching is of paramount importance. Students must experience a wide range of motivating and appropriately challenging learning opportunities to support the development of their literacy skills. The emphasis throughout is on confidence building, well-being, promotion of functional communication skills, developing independence and following daily routines.

My Language and Literacy in its fullest sense extends throughout the waking day curriculum. All students have access to language and literacy teaching according to their individual needs and abilities. A range of approaches to the teaching of literacy are available at Stone Bay and should be carefully selected to maximise progression for each individual pupil. In addition, all classrooms support the acquisition of literacy skills through their displays, labelling, resources, photographs and examples of student's work, in addition to other appropriate printed materials.

Rationale.

The my language and literacy curriculum is designed to give students experience of all aspects of literacy through as comprehensive a range of experiences as possible, depending on individual need. All students will be given opportunities to experience a wide range of literacy activities with access to rich and diverse texts, ideas and images. 'Text' may include books and print, symbols, photographs, pictures, objects of reference and other specialised communication aids which support an individual's access to learning.

As language and literacy pervades everything we do, it is essential that it is a key part of the curriculum, taught in both discrete lessons and throughout other lessons. All pupils will acquire skills at their own level, including reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Curriculum content

The My language and literacy curriculum at Stone Bay School is based on a rolling programme of English and communication content differentiated throughout the school.

Across all age groups, there is a focus on teaching literacy at a functional level so as to prepare our students for adulthood and life after school. Literacy, language and phonics is taught both discretely and is embedded in other lessons.

Currently, we use the well-established system of wide ranging qualitative assessment to baseline, target set and review progress. Evidence Me is used to track and record this progress.

Pupils in the upper school will also work towards the certification outlined by the AQA (Assessment and Qualifications Alliance)

Speaking and Listening

Language is not restricted to verbal expression and comprehension. We encourage the pupils at Stone Bay to communicate their needs as effectively as possible with the support of the

communication team using their prescribed “voice”. This can take any form AC, AAC etc. and will be monitored through communication profiles and targets.

Pupils will access targeted interventions both across the school day and, where appropriate, on the residential flats. At Stone Bay we take a total communication approach, and Students have access and are encouraged to use a variety of communication systems including spoken language, sign (Makaton), low and high tech augmentative and alternative systems. These systems have been chosen very carefully to best meet pupil individual needs.

This speaking and listening element should be taught in discrete lessons and across the curriculum to encourage two way communication, joint attention and to foster a literary environment focussed around student response and participation. Focus will also be placed on increasing independence in reading taught through evolving AAC challenges.

A key aspect of speaking and listening is the ability to interact functionally with adults and peers in school and in the community. For further details regarding speaking and listening.

Reading

At Stone Bay, reading is interpreted as any activity that leads to the derivation of meaning from visual sources such as the written word, symbols, photographs and, in some cases, objects of reference.

Visual cues are used throughout the school for a range of different purposes in order that students are able to develop their use of functional reading skills in different contexts, thus developing independence alongside functional reading skills.

At Stone Bay, we aim to promote the love of stories for students of all ages and abilities. Pupils participate in daily scheduled ‘drop everything and read’ sessions. Within discrete language and literacy lessons, we use a range of carefully chosen books, relevant to the current topic, age, ability and interest of the students. We use sensitive questioning methods to ensure reading comprehension at all levels.

Sensory stories such as bag books and other in house created resources use a multi-sensory approach to involve and engage all our students. Teaching staff differentiate texts so that they are suitable and stimulating for the whole class.

All pupils have a weekly, timetabled visit to the library where they will participate in structured, adult directed literacy related activities. This may be in the form of a writing intervention, reading a sensory story, sharing a book with the teacher or using technology to access a range of language and literacy activities on digital media.

A focal part of the literacy curriculum in the annual World Book Day event, with activities and themes designed to encourage the development of literacy skills across the age and ability ranges of students in the school, and includes professional story tellers, workshops and displays.

Phonics

At Stone Bay we follow the Little Wandle SEND phonics programme. Teachers are guided by the scheme but where intervention is required, they are free to adopt and adapt the programme to best suit individual’s needs and learning style. The Little Wandle phonics assessment and screening system will be used to assess ability effectively and ensure continuity and progression in phonics as students progress through the school.

Handle Approach

The handle approach may be used for some pupils as a support intervention for reading where pupils struggle to access the Little Wandle phonics programme. This method focuses on students learning to recognise words by how they look. The vocabulary that students are exposed to using this method will be directly linked to specific motivators, words that will support them in becoming more independent and words linked to the curriculum topics currently being taught in the classroom.

Teachers will be required to display words and pictures related to the next term's topic/lessons to support in pre-teaching of the key vocabulary to support understanding when the topic lessons are taught.

Key areas in the classroom and around the school are labelled with words and widgit symbols to encourage functional reading.

Carefully selected pupils that are using communication books will focus on recognising words in their book with the aim to gradually reduce and delete the symbols leaving just words to prepare for more independent reading in context.

Reading scheme

Pupils have access to a reading scheme directly linked to the Little Wandle SSP. The scheme ensures that there are phonetically decodable books for pupils to access with a range of different titles. The books are visually appealing and are designed to capture the interest of our pupils and be as accessible as possible.

The reading scheme is also available via Big Cat Online which allows carefully selected reading scheme books to be accessed by pupils on any electronic smart device in school and at home if required.

Writing

Writing may be interpreted as any activity that communicates and records events and experiences, information, thoughts and feelings. Students may use photographs, symbols, ICT aids or the written word for this purpose. Hand writing skills are worked on when appropriate, including work on pencil grip and letter formation.

Fine and gross motor skills are developed with specific interventions to challenge each individual student's skills and develop early writing. Students will then progress onto basic pencil control activities and then onto letter formation as appropriate. The key aim of the programme is to develop fine and gross body movements to support the student's individual skills to make them as independent as possible in the future.

Students should be supported in developing ICT based writing skills i.e. using a computer keyboard, touchscreen, smartphone etc.

Skilled writers may be encouraged to write independently using techniques such as their Little Wandle phonics, handle and grammatical knowledge. The use of Context Specific Communication Boards are one of the strategies used to help students develop their use of a wider range of vocabulary and/or more complex sentence structures.

Write Dance/Type Dance

Pupils access a specially adapted write dance scheme in school to develop skills for writing and to encourage expressive mark making. The scheme uses chart music and popular songs to support pupil engagement and enjoyment in the sessions. We recognise that as technology moves on, the need for pupils to type effectively is equally as important as writing therefore we have developed a type dance programme to support pupil development of skills in this area.

Due to the complex and diverse needs of our students, the my language and literacy curriculum needs to be flexible and individualised enough to be accessed by all, whilst still providing a structured approach to the subject. It is essential that, along with reading and writing, there is a focus on communication throughout.

Planning

Planning at Stone Bay takes place on a number of different levels:

1) Long term planning

- In KS1, 2 and 3, Stone Bay follows a three year rolling topic cycle with an individualised progression programme through the sand, sea and sky attainment areas.
- In the KS4 and 6th Form provision, Functional English is embedded into the Identified Pathway and ASDAN Curriculum and offers cross curricular links across all 6 subject areas.

The long term planning details the My Language and Literacy strands and topic books across the three year rolling cycle to ensure that the subject offers balance and variation throughout.

2) Medium term planning

Medium term plans are derived from the long term plan, devised by teaching staff and differentiated as appropriate to meet the needs of the students in their class. These plans are formulated using the current topic and the related book. Cross curricular links between My Language and Literacy and the other 5 subject areas are detailed on these plans.

Weekly lesson plans

These are devised and differentiated by teaching staff from the targeted focus for that week as outlined in the medium term plan. Weekly plans detail what pupils are learning based on teacher formative assessment.

Delivery

The delivery of my language and literacy to groups and individuals across the school will vary widely depending on the skills and needs of the individual students. Some students may require visual

support to enable them to access the auditory information they receive, whereas, others may require a full multi-sensory approach to gain meaning from the topic being taught. As part of their literacy, students' ability to respond to their experiences and contribute to the group should be paramount, with methods being taught in a structured manner during these sessions.

Students may communicate in a number of different ways including spoken language, sign and low and/or high tech AAC.

The Role of the Literacy representative

The My Language and Literacy leader at Stone Bay is Michael Setterfield. He is responsible for securing high levels of literacy proficiency by:

- 1) Monitoring and evaluating provision
- 2) Identifying priorities for continual development of literacy across the school
- 3) Ensuring appropriate resources are available to teachers and students
- 4) Organising Book Week
- 5) Updating the teaching staff on changes to the curriculum
- 6) Providing training regarding training Professional leadership

Safeguarding, Equality and Equal Opportunities Statement

Stone Bay School, and all policies and procedures, will promote equality of opportunity for all students and staff from all social, cultural and economic backgrounds. The school will ensure that no student or staff member is disadvantaged, discriminated against or treated less favourably because of their gender (including gender reassignment), race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or due to pregnancy or maternity.

Stone Bay School aims to;

Foster good relationships and create effective partnerships with all sections of the community

Ensure that the school's service delivery, commissioning and employment practices will not discriminate unlawfully, either directly or indirectly

Provide an environment free from fear and discrimination, where diversity, respect and dignity are valued and celebrated

All aspects of Safeguarding will be embedded into school life and will remain the responsibility of all members of our school community.