



Harland House English & Literacy Policy Summary

(The full policy is available on request.)

What we want & why

At Harland House we want all young people to be able express themselves and know their contributions are valued. We provide opportunities for our students to develop the ability to use language to think, explore, recognise and communicate their ideas. We strongly believe literacy is a right for all pupils regardless of ability, gender, disability, race, religion or sexuality. All staff are involved in teaching literacy and communication.

Aims

- To ensure students raise their standard of literacy, have high expectations and make outstanding progress
- To enable students to communicate through spoken language – speaking and listening
- To enable students to communicate through written language – reading and writing

How

All staff use positive language and communication skills. This is particularly crucial in ‘social’ situations such as Group Time, meals and enrichment. A variety of resources and opportunities are provided to develop skills in talking, listening, reading and writing. Where appropriate, students may access Bridlington School mainstream English lessons. The National Curriculum is followed.

Talking and Listening in Harland House

Talking and listening is an essential skill for our young people to develop. It helps them to show and improve their learning in all areas. We want all our students to become good communicators. The nurturing environment of Harland House lends itself to discussion. We try to make students feel relaxed, accepted and listened to. Their contributions are valued. During lessons, planned talking and discussions are work. Emphasis is placed on being polite and appropriate. We also deliver a scheme based on ‘SEAL’ called ‘Group Time’. SEAL is all about being able to communicate our emotional feelings. Once a week, this is extended into ‘Crown Court’ where speaking and listening skills are developed through discussion.

Reading in Harland House

Our aims are that our students will learn to read and enjoy a wide variety of texts. This is achieved through making reading important. It is included in the majority of formal lessons as part of the lesson, and through less formal situations such as enrichment. To cater for the very different reading needs and abilities of each student we teach English in three areas:

1. Literacy Skills. Students are given intense reading support 1-2-1 using phonic building, shared reading and/or silent reading time. These sessions also include ICT programmes.
2. English Language. Lessons use a mixture of silent, shared, paired and group reading.
3. English Literature. Students read passages and books to others. We find that most students want to do this and feel comfortable enough to do so, whatever their ability. Listeners are taught to respect the ability and pace of others and there is a real sense of mutual respect which engages all students.

Harland House is setup to make reading attractive through the use of display boards – students' own work is given priority, posters, a tidy library area, a good choice of reading material – fiction and non-fiction books and other media. Comfortable seating and readability of class boards/lesson material is considered so all can access. These are regularly updated and replaced.

Writing in Harland House

Writing is an essential tool for learning. Students write to express their emotions, their thoughts and opinions and to show their learning. By developing writing, we can equip our young people to be confident writers in many situations. Writing can be an issue for many of our students who all attend Harland House. For many reasons, some students have fallen well below the level of their mainstream peers, lacking basic skills and/or confidence in producing quality writing. It is therefore approached sensitively, always with high levels of expectation but with individual needs being put foremost.

To cater for the very different writing needs and abilities of each student we teach English in three areas:

1. Literacy Skills. Students are given intense individualised support that may concentrate on particular aspects of writing – e.g. handwriting, sentence structure or spelling.
2. English Language. Objectives and outcomes usually linked to reading and speaking and listening.
3. English Literature, students will usually write about their findings for any given book or text in much the same way as they will in humanities, the arts etc.

How can parents /carers get involved?

- Listen to your child reading regularly
- Ask to see homework completed
- Use of online software (login details are provided)
- Discuss daily reports & progress reports with your child
- Attend Academic & Annual Reviews

Assessment

Students are tested within their first 6 weeks of entry to Harland House and then regularly during their time here. Tests or tasks are used to determine ability and progress made in line with the National Curriculum for English. Reading ages and Spelling ages are assessed and recorded termly. All student work is marked. A mixture of staff, peer and self-assessment is used on a day-to-day basis. Students are encouraged to comment on their own progress and have access to detailed step by step requirements in order to improve through a system called Green for Growth. Staff discuss literacy progress and record all formal assessments.

How do we monitor literacy?

- Check student work and displays
- Check progress
- Talk to students about their work
- Staff development and training