

St Mark's Catholic School

Whole School Literacy



Strategies to Support Literacy Skills



What is Literacy?

On the most basic level literacy is defined as the ability to read, write and communicate effectively. It is also the ability to use, understand and apply what you read and to communicate effectively in writing as well as speaking.

Literacy is instrumental to success in all subjects; it allows students access the curriculum and express their ideas therefore enhancing their learning.

Supporting Your Child



- Encourage your child to read aloud to you and discuss their reading. The reading lists on the school website offer suggestions for texts which may be of interest.
- Encourage your child to look up or work out the definitions of unknown words, using clues in the text, root words or a dictionary. To check understanding, encourage them to use the word in a sentence of their own.
- Ask your child questions about what they have read and open up a dialogue about it.
- Encourage reading of a range of genres and styles, including newspapers and magazines. Tap in to their interests (both in and out of school).

How can your child become a better reader?

- Read widely.
- Confidently discuss their reading with others. Interpret their reading.
- Read regularly.
- Be critical about texts.
- Analyse texts.

A basic reader can...	A confident reader can...	A sophisticated reader can...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the main ideas of a writer.• Read some familiar words.• Read using punctuation marks.• Use some evidence to support their ideas.• Understand the meaning of basic vocabulary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the writer's ideas and viewpoint.• Use evidence to support their opinions or ideas.• Make conclusions about a text.• Show some interpretations of the main points of the text.• Understand a wide range of vocabulary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be critical about a text and the writer's viewpoint.• Be precise when using evidence from a text to support their opinions or ideas.• Interpret the text or evidence effectively and thoroughly.• Identify layers of meaning and different interpretations.• Understand a range of more complex vocabulary and employ strategies for working out the definitions of unfamiliar words.



- Read through your child's work and help them to check for literacy errors. Support them in identifying the mistake rather than telling them what is wrong.
- Support your child in correcting errors identified by the teacher. Errors will be identified using the marking code which is found in your child's homework diary.
- Encourage your child to write for pleasure, such as a postcard, a letter to a relative or song lyrics. Encourage your child to write a diary.
- Support your child in planning their written work. Talk through ideas together and decide on a plan.
- Read examples of effective writing (non-fiction as well as fiction) and discuss what makes it effective writing. Encourage your child to emulate the style of writing.
- Use the Back to Basics booklet in the literacy section of the school website to revise literacy skills with your child.

How can your child become a better writer?

- Use clear paragraphs.
- Vary sentence structures for effect.
- Vary punctuation for effect.
- Vary vocabulary.
- Show an awareness of the audience and purpose.
- Use connectives.

A basic writer can...	A confident writer can...	A sophisticated writer can...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write in sentences. • Use full stops. • Begin to organise their writing. • Use simple vocabulary. • Spell familiar words accurately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use some varied sentence structures. • Use a wider range of punctuation. • Use paragraphs. • Show some understanding of the audience and purpose of their writing. • Use connectives to link ideas. • Vary vocabulary. • Spell more ambitious vocabulary accurately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a variety of sentence structures for effect. • Use a range of punctuation accurately and for effect. • Use varied paragraphing accurately and for effect. • Write imaginatively and creatively for the appropriate audience and purpose. • Use connectives to give their writing shape. • Use sophisticated vocabulary. • Spell a wide range of sophisticated and unfamiliar words accurately.

Communication



- Encourage your child to think about how they speak in different situations.
- Encourage your child to become aware of, and discuss, the effectiveness of different types of speech in day-to-day life.
- Encourage your child to respond in full sentences where necessary.

How can your child become a better communicator?

- Ask and answer questions effectively.
- Use Standard English where appropriate.
- Develop more detail in spoken responses using connectives.
- Speak in full sentences.
- Show an awareness of audience and purpose.

A basic communicator can...	A confident communicator can...	A sophisticated communicator can...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talk clearly.• Respond to questions.• Speak in full sentences.• Use aspects of Standard English where appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talk confidently.• Ask questions.• Speak in detail.• Use Standard English.• Use eye contact.• Create a clear character.• Present their thoughts and ideas effectively in discussion.• Use connectives in speech.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talk fluently.• Lead discussion.• Sustain ideas in an interesting way.• Use Standard English effectively.• Use a range of non-verbal features.• Create a convincing character.• Engage in debates.