

Brechin High School Literacy Policy



Rationale

Brechin High School understands that literacy is the foundational engine of academic achievement and social mobility, operating not as an isolated subject but as a shared, cross-curricular responsibility spanning reading, writing, and oracy. Explicitly teaching disciplinary literacy—how to read, write, and speak within each distinct subject area—expands academic vocabulary, deepens critical thinking, and directly dismantles the poverty-related attainment gap. This strategy ensures every young person builds the communication stamina and confidence needed to master the full curriculum and succeed in adult life.

The UNCRC underpins literacy in Brechin High School because learning to read, write, and communicate effectively is essential for fulfilling a child's fundamental human rights to education, expression, and access to information.



1. Article 13: Freedom of Expression

- **The Right:** Children have the right to share information and ideas through speaking, writing, drawing, and other media, as long as it does not harm others.
- **Application in Literacy Policy:** A literacy policy should celebrate student voice. It encourages diverse forms of communication—such as creative writing, digital media, public speaking, and art—giving students a platform to express their unique perspectives, opinions, and identities.

2. Article 17: Access to Reliable Information

- **The Right:** Children have the right to get information from a variety of sources, and governments should encourage the mass media to provide information that children can understand and that promotes their well-being.
- **Application in Literacy Policy:** This underpins information literacy, critical thinking, and library provision. The policy can commit to providing a wide-ranging, diverse, and accessible selection of reading materials, as well as explicitly teaching students how to evaluate the credibility of sources in the digital age.

3. Article 28: The Right to Education

- **The Right:** Every child has the right to an education, and primary education should be free. Discipline in schools must respect human dignity.
- **Application in Literacy Policy:** Literacy is the cornerstone of all learning. A whole-school policy ensures that literacy support is inclusive, equitable, and accessible to every student, regardless of their starting point or learning needs, ensuring no child is left behind academically.

4. Article 29: Goals of Education

- **The Right:** Education must develop every child's personality, talents, and abilities to the full. It must encourage respect for human rights, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

- **Application in Literacy Policy:** Literacy goes beyond basic decoding; it builds empathy and cultural awareness. By engaging with diverse literature and global texts, students learn about different cultures, lived experiences, and viewpoints, fostering global citizenship and personal growth.

Literacy Policy Key Themes

	Reading for Pleasure	Embedding Reading Across the Curriculum	Support and Challenge for All	Literacy Attainment for All	Developing Oracy
Why	Reading for pleasure is an important part of developing confident, independent readers and widening learners' experiences. BHS currently promotes reading principally through English and library provision.	Literacy is a responsibility of all practitioners and is essential to accessing learning across the curriculum. BHS is at the beginning of strengthening a shared whole-school approach to literacy across learning.	Available literacy data should help staff understand individual learners' strengths, needs and barriers to accessing learning.	Our aim is for all learners to make appropriate progress in literacy and to be able to access the literacy demands of the wider curriculum. Existing attainment and assessment information provides a starting point for identifying strengths and areas for development	Listening and talking are core aspects of literacy and support learning across all curricular areas.
Strategies	During 2026–27, we will review how reading for enjoyment can be strengthened across the school, informed by pupil voice and existing library provision. Next steps may include greater staff modelling of reading, targeted reading promotion and opportunities for departments to contribute to	During 2026–27, faculties will increasingly identify the literacy demands of their subjects and develop consistent approaches to: • reading and understanding subject-specific texts; • explicit teaching of key vocabulary; • modelling and scaffolding subject-specific writing; • purposeful listening and talking. Professional learning and the Literacy SIG will support staff to develop confidence in these areas and to share effective practice.	Evidence may include classroom assessment, CfE information, reading/diagnostic information, teacher observation and ASN information where appropriate. Support should maintain appropriate challenge. Scaffolding and intervention will be responsive to need and reviewed for impact rather than used to label learners. A priority for 2026–27 is supporting departments to use	During 2026–27, BHS will strengthen how literacy progress and interventions are monitored, using a proportionate range of quantitative and qualitative evidence and tracking. Where targeted intervention is required, progress will be reviewed and approaches adapted where necessary. Whole-school evaluation will focus not only on attainment data but on whether agreed literacy approaches are becoming more consistent and	Existing approaches such as purposeful questioning, Think–Pair–Share and structured discussion provide foundations for developing oracy. BHS recognises that a more explicit and progressive whole-school approach to listening and talking is an area for development. During 2026–27, staff will increasingly provide structured opportunities for learners to: • listen actively; • articulate and explain thinking; • use appropriate subject vocabulary;

a whole-school reading culture.		literacy information more meaningfully when planning learning. The work of the Literacy SIG group will support this	improving learners' access to learning	• discuss and justify ideas; • communicate to different audiences.
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Key Responsibilities

Literacy Improvement Group Lead	SLT	PT of Languages	PT ASN	All Staff	Librarian
To promote and monitor the implementation of the Literacy Policy and to evaluate its effectiveness.	To take an active role in supporting the whole school Literacy Policy, supporting in the implementation of the strategies and encourage colleagues to share good practice.	Track and monitor literacy attainment over time	To coordinate with departments to ensure in-class and out of class support is effective in supporting pupils to make progress in numeracy.	Contribute to students' development of literacy across the curriculum	Ensure library is well resourced and has planned engagements with pupils and staff

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Policy Review

Self-Evaluation Framework

In line with **HIGIOS 4 (Quality Indicator 1.1: Self-evaluation for self-improvement)**, monitoring the impact of this literacy policy is an ongoing, consultative process. Self-evaluation is used to determine whether HWB interventions are improving outcomes for all young people, closing the attainment gap, and upholding pupils' rights (UNCRC Article 12).

Data Sources & Triangulation of Evidence

To evaluate the effectiveness of literacy provision, the school triangulates quantitative data, qualitative feedback, and direct observations across the three core areas of evaluation:

Category	Key Metrics and Tools
Quantitative Data	• Standardised Assessments: Tracking data from national assessments (such as SNSA in Scotland) and diagnostic tests (like reading and spelling ages) at key points in the year. • Reading Engagement Metrics: Tracking quantitative data from digital reading platforms (e.g., Accelerated Reader word counts, quizzes passed, or library book borrowing frequencies). • Attainment Tracking: Regular progress tracking against Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels to measure the percentage of pupils on track to achieve expected milestones.
Qualitative Feedback	• Learning Walks & Classroom Observations: Observing daily literacy lessons to assess consistency in teaching approaches and classroom resource use. • Pupil and Parent Voice: Gathering feedback through surveys, focus groups, or interviews to understand how students feel about reading and how supported parents feel at home. • Book Looks (Work Scrutiny): Reviewing student exercise books to assess the quality of feedback, pride in presentation, and progression of writing genres across year groups.

Evaluative Observation	• Gap Analysis: Evaluating data and qualitative feedback to identify attainment gaps between specific cohorts (e.g., free school meal status, gender, or EAL learners) to ensure equity. • Impact of Interventions: Reviewing whether specific literacy interventions successfully closed the gap for participating pupils. • Annual Policy & Action Planning: Assessing whether the goals set out in the literacy policy were met over the academic year, using findings to update the school improvement plan for the next term.
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Document Control & Review Details

- **Lead Responsibility:** Depute Headteacher in charge of Literacy; Dave Vernon (2026/27), Lead in charge of Literacy; Jane Fulton (26/27)
- **Implementation Date:** (August 2026)
- **Review Cycle:** Annually
- **Next Scheduled Review Date:** June 2027