

Literacy Policy

Preamble

Katoomba High School acknowledges that literacy skills are fundamental to the learning process. Literacy is defined in the *Australia's Language and Literacy Policy* Policy Paper of 1991 as: 'the ability to read and use written information and to write appropriately, in a range of contexts. It is used to develop knowledge and understanding, to achieve personal growth and to function effectively in our society.

Literacy also includes the recognition of number and basic mathematical signs and symbols within text. Literacy also includes visual and technological skills. Literacy involves the integration of speaking, listening and critical thinking with reading and writing.

Effective literacy is intrinsically purposeful, flexible and dynamic and continues to develop throughout an individual's lifetime.

Literacy is a whole school responsibility.

Objectives of the Policy

This policy aims to identify, co-ordinate and improve the strategies used by staff to teach the skills required of a literate person.

Implementation of the Policy

1. Whole School Responsibilities

A. Implementing DET testing

The Literacy Committee is responsible for organizing the administration of the ELLA test to Years 7 and 8 with the assistance of relevant Executive Staff. All staff is required to be able to administer the test with appropriate professional development beforehand. The committee is also responsible for the administration of the SNAP test. All staff is required to be able to administer this test with appropriate professional development.

B. Professional Development

Training. All staff should have access to professional development regularly on current theories, practice and improvements in teaching strategies. This should include training to run the ELLA test, analysis of ELLA test results, implications of those results and strategies to improve the results.

Teacher Reference Material. The Teacher Reference section of the School Library should hold backup copies of all current documents. Individual faculties should file copies of documents specifically relevant to their subjects. The responsibility for distributing documents lies with the Literacy Committee.

C. Welfare

Literacy problems impact on every area of a student's life. All staff has a responsibility to identify literacy problems and refer students to appropriate personnel in the school. Classroom strategies should be developed in consultation with these personnel.

Support Teacher Learning Activities. The STLA is available to classroom teachers to support the development of teaching strategies for specific problems. Staff should be aware of the current process of referral of students and use of the ILC when other options have been unsuccessful.

R.A.T.S. Reading across the school should operate in Roll Call. Students are encouraged to read a variety of texts or complete homework.

Peer Reading Program. The STLA operates a reading mentor system for years 7 and 8. Mentors and teachers volunteer for this program on a yearly basis. Students are withdrawn on primary school recommendations and ELLA test results.

Boys Literacy. Teachers should be aware of the specific problems boys encounter in literacy and implement best practice in this area.

Primary School Liaison. The incoming Year 7 adviser is responsible for visiting Primary feeder schools for induction purposes. They are responsible for the collection of data on students including teacher recommendations, literacy test results and/or portfolios of work. The STLA should accompany the Year Adviser to administer reading tests if required or liaise with Primary school teachers for literacy information.

2. Key Learning Area Responsibility

Programs

Every Key Learning Area should have literacy outcomes written into their programs. These outcomes should be compatible with NSW syllabus outcomes, and should be reflected in assessment and reporting practice.

Teaching Practice

Every Key Learning Area must teach the specific skills and vocabulary required by their programs. These skills and vocabulary should be regularly re-evaluated and updated.

Information Skills

Every Key Learning Area is responsible for teaching ICT skills, and the literacy elements of these skills. This teaching should be carried out with the support of the Technology Committee.