

# Key Stage 4 Literacy: Parent Guide

## **What is literacy? Why is it important?**

Literacy covers the three key aspects of reading, writing, and speaking/listening. Mastering these skills is not only essential for life, but for success at GCSE, it is essential that pupils can read and understand exam questions and communicate clearly in their writing under time pressure. It is also important to note that many GCSE exams, not just English, award marks for SPaG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar). Pupils will also have to attend interviews when applying for post-16 places so confident speaking skills are essential. At Wilsthorpe, we take a cross-curricular approach to literacy. All staff receive regular training and we have lots of whole-school programmes and initiatives to promote and improve literacy.

## **How can parents support their child's literacy?**

Talk to your child about their literacy and encourage them to:

- Read for pleasure for a minimum of 15 minutes a night – more overleaf.
- Know how to use a range of punctuation and sentence types.
- Practice timed exam responses.
- Plan any extended responses.
- Write accurately and proofread their writing.
- Break down and highlight key words in exam questions to aid understanding.
- Know and understand a range of vocabulary, connectives, command words and the words on the 'Academic Word List'\*.
- Prepare and practice for any spoken presentations or interviews.

*\*Supporting resources are available on the Google Drive – see overleaf.*

## Reading for Pleasure

Your child needs to read for a minimum of 15 minutes every night, or equivalent.

Regular reading is proven to:

- Improve vocabulary, spelling, writing and speaking skills.
- Develop imagination, empathy and critical-thinking skills.
- Improve mental health and increase confidence.
- Improve your child's chances of getting better grades in all subjects; and improve career prospects in later life.
- Be fun and enjoyable!

Reading is the most significant indicator of life chances.

Lots of Wilsthorpe students say that they get distracted when trying to read, and this is where you as parents can really support them in establishing helpful routines around reading. For example: insist reading is completed before rewarding with screen time. Alternatively, ensure reading is completed in bed before sleep: this is much healthier than looking at a screen before going to sleep and will also improve sleep quality. Also ask your child questions on what they have been reading to encourage them and check comprehension.

Our Library is open before, after and during school hours and students have timetabled sessions in there three times per year. Students can choose a prize from the Library every time they can prove they have finished a book. To make choosing a book simpler, we have 'Year Group' reading lists and a 'Super Readable Reads' section in the Library for those students who may find reading more difficult. We expect all of our pupils to have a reading book in their bag at all times.

### Website Page

For more information and guidance on all areas of literacy, please visit the dedicated Literacy page on the school website. This includes lists of recommended reads.

[www.wilsthorpe.ttct.co.uk/curriculum/literacy/](http://www.wilsthorpe.ttct.co.uk/curriculum/literacy/)



Google Drive

### Online Learning

The Literacy folder in the Student Shared Google Drive is full of resources and activities that your child can access on any device and complete at home. There is a link to this on the website page.