

Improving writing

Literacy matters

Soon after his appointment in January 2012, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills, Sir Michael Wilshaw, gave a speech in which he declared: 'Improving standards of literacy must be a priority for all our schools.'

He made a commitment to help in improving national standards in literacy by introducing a greater focus on literacy in school inspections.

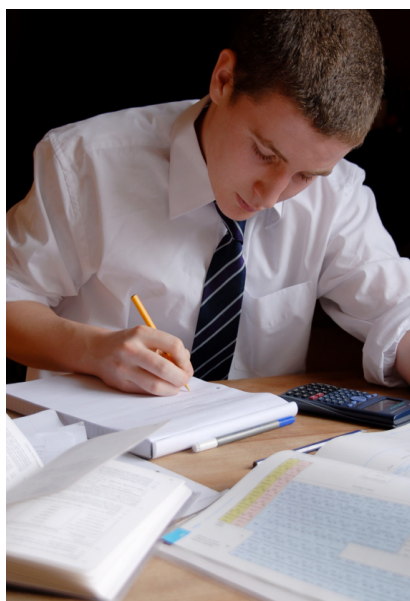
The Department for Education is clear and emphatic – the curriculum should offer opportunities for pupils to:

- develop writing skills through work that makes cross-curricular links with other subjects
- work in sustained and practical ways, with writers where possible, to learn about the art, craft and discipline of writing
- redraft their own work in the light of feedback. Redrafting should be purposeful, moving beyond



proofreading for errors to the reshaping of whole texts or parts of texts.

Outstanding practice



The most recent schedule for the inspection of maintained schools and academies in England has emphasised the importance of literacy. The descriptors for an outstanding school now include the following criteria.

- Excellent practice ensures that all pupils have high levels of literacy appropriate to their age.
- Pupils read widely and often across all subjects.
- Pupils develop and apply a wide range of skills to great effect, in reading, writing and communication.
- The teaching of reading, writing and communication is highly effective and cohesively planned and implemented across the curriculum.
- Excellent policies ensure that pupils have high levels of literacy, or pupils are making excellent progress in literacy.

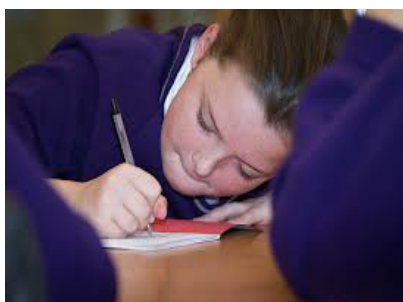
Ofsted: Improving literacy in secondary schools: a shared responsibility April 2013, No. 120363

Improving writing in English and across the curriculum conference
Friday 21st June

Hethel Engineering Centre, NR14 8FB

For details and how to book, go to: <https://goo.gl/dizKg> or call 01603 307762

The lessons from the Ofsted survey



Ofsted's report *Improving literacy in secondary schools* contains a case study of Spring-

field School, Portsmouth's work on developing extended writing across the curriculum. Senior leaders understood the need to make the case for literacy through arguments such as :

- Literacy supports learning. Pupils need vocabulary, expression and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of

all subjects.

- Writing helps us to sustain and order thought.
- Better literacy leads to improved self-esteem, motivation and behaviour. It allows pupils to learn independently. It is empowering.
- Better literacy raises pupils' attainment in all subjects.

What attendance at our conference will offer

The advice and guidance from Ofsted is quite clear. The effective teaching of writing in English and across the curriculum needs to be a priority for all schools. The reform of GCSEs will make students' ability to write standard English vital for their success.

While Ofsted is clear that there is no quick fix to improving writing, there is now a settled understanding of the steps

that need to be taken.

The joint Norfolk, Suffolk and NATE *Improving writing in English and across the curriculum* conference will provide delegates with an opportunity to consider how best to move forward in their own setting.

Our four eminent speakers are all leaders in their fields. Drawing on their research and experience, they will give presentations in the morn-

ing and lead seminars in the afternoon. Delegates will thus have the opportunity to understand the principles involved and to dig into the practicalities.



Our keynote speakers

Debra Myhill and Helen Lines of Exeter University are well known and respected for their work on the teaching of writing and in particular on the role of grammar in the secondary curriculum. Debra will focus on using grammar to develop writing in English lessons, while Helen will outline her work on developing skills in academic writing in other subjects.

Simon Wrigley is a former Chair of the National Association for the Teaching of English and the founder of the Association's Writing Project. Simon will talk about his work in developing teachers as writers in their own right and the benefits this has for their students.

Dale Banham was Humanities Adviser for Suffolk before becoming a Deputy Head in Ipswich. He has written textbooks and developed web-based resources. He has a particular interest in developing literacy and thinking skills in humanities. Dale will describe his practical approach to embedding the teaching of effective writing in subjects other than English.