



Whole College Literacy Policy: a shared responsibility.

Director of Pedagogy and Practice | July 2024

Minsthorpe Community College: A place where everyone plays a part in strengthening our learning community through Motivation, Commitment & Care.



Minsthorpe
Community College

'...demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for *promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy* and the *correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject.*' Teacher Standards

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Section 1

Literacy Intent

“Lifelong Literacy and learning”

Our whole College ‘Curriculum Intent’ is to raise the achievements and aspirations of all learners through the delivery of a highly personalised, broad, balanced, and inclusive curriculum that ensures all students are literate. Literacy skills (reading, written and spoken language) are an essential and integral part of students’ learning in all subjects, and as such, all teachers are teachers of literacy. Literacy skills have remained central to a young person's life chances. Without them, full participation in the workplace and society as an adult will be a constant struggle and we recognise that improving literacy can have an impact on a student’s self-esteem, motivation, behaviour, and attainment. We have a rigorous whole-college literacy policy which is implemented systematically across the curriculum and all teachers view themselves as teachers of literacy, regardless of their subject specialism.

Through a co-ordinated development programme of ‘literacy across the curriculum’, we work towards empowering our students to become motivated, committed, and successful learners, which in turn will lead to raised levels of attainment across all subjects.

Section 2

Aims of the policy

- To raise the profile of literacy across the curriculum as a whole college shared responsibility;
- To improve the literacy skills of all students to raise standards of achievement across the curriculum;
- To provide a further programme of support for students struggling with reading;
- To disseminate best practice.



Section 3

Literacy Priorities 2022- 2025

One Year Plan:

1. Assessing, addressing, tracking reading. Reading interventions will be implemented for students whose reading ages are below their chronological reading age;
2. Promote consistent reading strategies across the curriculum – ‘Before, During and After Reading’;
3. Promote consistent vocabulary strategies across the curriculum;
4. Continue to promote students spoken language skills, teacher modelling, structured talk-tasks and presentations;
5. Provide a wide and varied programme of literacy enrichment activities and embed Minsthorpe’s ‘Reading Culture’

Three Year Plan

6. Continue to embed all of the above strategies.
7. Embed effective writing strategies to improve the accuracy and quality of students’ writing across the curriculum.

Section 4

Literacy Implementation

Vocabulary

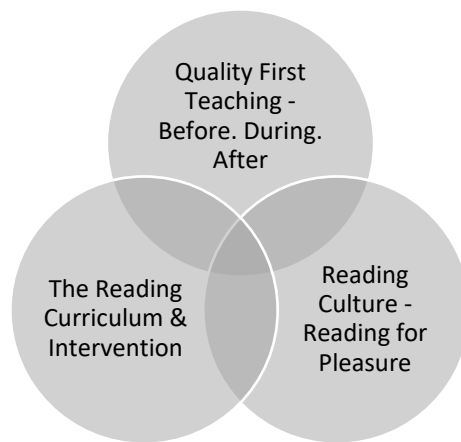
There must be a focus on vocabulary teaching in every lesson. This is one of our teaching ‘non-negotiables’. Staff will explicitly plan vocabulary instruction, focusing on Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary in each lesson. Staff know the barriers to vocabulary acquisition and will plan accordingly (decoding, poor comprehension, limited vocabulary).



Our approach:

1. **Say** and **define** the word you are teaching, we ask students to chorally repeat back, if appropriate. We ask that staff ensure the word is placed in the context of a sentence. Additionally, all opportunities to exploit the etymology of the words into the parts (roots, prefix, suffix) will ensure that students begin to make links with other lexical items.
2. **Write it:** Use in classroom talk or writing during that lesson.
3. **Link/ Use it** *Inside* and *Outside* the lesson
4. Finally, we ask that staff encourage the **recall** of vocabulary within a lesson, week and term. We focus on low stakes recall activities.

Reading



"Reading is the gateway skill that makes all other learning possible" Barak Obama

Quality First Teaching: Before. During. After

Across the curriculum, students will have the opportunity to read non-fiction texts relating to each subject area. We are committed to reading challenging source material to help extend and push our students' understanding of the world around them and to introduce them to more vocabulary needed to become fluent readers.



Our approach:

As a college, we embrace a whole school reading strategy entitled: 'Before reading, during reading and after reading' the process is as follows:

Before Reading – The teacher will explore background knowledge of a topic and text; make predictions; clarify any unfamiliar or challenging vocabulary and discuss text types and structure – process? information? opinion? Remind students how it is organised.

During Reading – All texts are to be read aloud by the teacher or student. Students are asked to follow, the teacher will model strategies to students such as summarising, clarify, predicting and questioning.

After Reading – Students will be asked to summarise the text they have read, engaging in a 'pin down' activity.

Reading Culture- Reading for Pleasure

Reading for pleasure is an integral part of the curriculum, promoted through P&A time for all students. In addition, we have strengthened our reading culture by providing numerous opportunities throughout the day for students to access a range of texts, including fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. These opportunities include Reading for Pleasure sessions within the P&A Curriculum, The Book Exchange, a weekly Y7 pop-up library and a well-attended after college Book Club. In addition, our superbly resourced Library Learning Centre, which can be accessed both before and after college, encourages students to keep reading through engaging competitions and supporting their participation in annual events such as The Readathon, National Poetry Day and World Book Day.

Closing the Reading Gap through the English Curriculum

When students join Minsthorpe in Year 7, they are all assessed using the "STAR Reader Programme" to provide a 'Reading Age', and complete a WRAT 5 test, designed to identify reading, spelling and numeracy skills (see "Student Support" section). This data, along with KS2 scaled scores, is used to identify those students whose reading ability is significantly below the expected standard for their chronological age and rank students according to their level of need.

Students identified as **significantly below the expected standard** for their chronological age, undergo further diagnostic screening, using "Lexia", an online Literacy Programme, informed by the "Simple View of Reading" to assess students in the following areas:

- Decoding (Word Study strand)
- Word Reading (Word Study, Grammar, and Comprehension strands)
- Oral Comprehension (Comprehension strand)
- Fluency (Accuracy, Pace, Expression- Comprehension strand)



Identified students in KS3 benefit from at least 150 minutes of intervention through the Lexia programme every fortnight in their **English lessons**, providing personalised interventions in the areas highlighted above through rigorous online use, supported by teacher-led instruction.

Students' improvement in these areas (following initial placement) can be monitored by the progression through the Foundational Zone (KS1), the Intermediate Zone (KS2) to the Advanced Zone (KS3) and termly STAR reader tests allow us to compare their progress with the rest of the cohort.

Students whose Reading Ages are **within one year or above their chronological age**, benefit from the explicit teaching of reading skills (informed by the EEF's Reciprocal Reading initiative) in their fortnightly "Literacy Lesson" delivered by their English teacher. Students read extracts from a range of genres (thematically linked to their current scheme of work) to widen vocabulary, develop skills in navigating different forms, enhance cultural capital, and explicitly model to students how to read fluently by predicting, clarifying, questioning and summarising texts. We deploy extra staff during these lessons to minimise group size and maximise the impact of the direct instruction they receive. All progress is tracked termly through "Star Reader" tests and reviewed in collaboration with "Student Support" to inform next steps.

"Reading Age" data is communicated swiftly with parents in Autumn 1 of Year 7 as well as information about the support their child will receive to improve their reading ability.

Small group tuition for Alternative Provision students

Students who are following the Reset pathway are supported with their English skills by having small group tuition twice a week with a qualified HLTA. These students are also enrolled on the Lexia programme with dedicated time given to improving reading within their bespoke curriculum.



Writing

Many lessons depend on written communication. Students need vocabulary, expression, and organisational control to cope with cognitive demands of all subjects.

Our approach:

1. **Technical accuracy:** students are expected to write using standard English and basic punctuation, spelling and grammar are taught explicitly. Staff will use metacognitive strategies to enable students to see where writing is successful and unsuccessful.
2. **Modelling: Teachers will model writing,** emphasising the importance of technical accuracy (basic punctuation and spelling of common words and of specialist vocabulary) and effective organisation of material (sentence structure, paragraphing, headings/ subheadings). Modelling, working alongside students, will help raise the importance and value of the task.

3. **Proofreading: "If it is not proofread it is not finished"**

It is important that we encourage students to value the writing they do. Students are expected to seek out and correct errors before submitting work for marking. It will take time and effort to train students to do this willingly and thoroughly. Staff are encouraged to dedicate reflection and proofreading time after any substantial piece of writing produced. In addition, all students should be reminded about neat and presentable work; each piece of work should have a clear heading and date.

Spoken Language (oracy)-

At Minsthorpe Community College, we fully understand the link between confident, fluent reading and confident, articulate speaking. Developing spoken language, including vocabulary, is essential for the academic progress of all children and especially so for those from disadvantaged backgrounds, who are the most likely to be word-poor. Across our curriculum, opportunities for talk are planned and require students to engage in dialogic discussion, exploratory talk, and presentational talk.

Our approach:

Modelling - Teachers should model competence as a speaker and listener promoting the use of Standard English. This modelling contributes significantly to developing pupils' spoken language.

Structured Talk – Teachers facilitate effective exploratory talk by scaffolding sentence stems, turn-taking, managing interactions, active listening and responding appropriately.

Presentational Talk – All students engage in a formal presentation at least once per year, per curriculum area wherein there is a heightened focus on interrelated aspects that constitute effective spoken language (physical, linguistic, cognitive, and social and emotional).



Section 5

Literacy Support

Curriculum planning: Individual lesson plans and schemes of work refer to where literacy skills are being addressed. This may be in the form of a retention activity, be part of the main teaching sequence or be linked to the consolidation of learning. All literacy activities are differentiated according to the ability of the students being taught and should aim to stretch the most able students as well as cater for those with weak literacy skills.

Marking for Literacy:

- It is not expected that teachers correct/identify every literacy error in every piece of written work;
- In line with the Curriculum Area policy, teachers should use the codes below to support the development of students' literacy skills. Some Curriculum Areas may have also adopted additional subject-specific codes;
- The codes should be used, where appropriate, to indicate to students where an error has been made, with further comments or corrections being added at the teacher's discretion under A (accuracy) at the end of a piece of work. It is not necessary to use A (accuracy) on every piece of marked work;
- Spelling errors should be corrected based on knowledge of the individual student. For example, by prioritising the most important area for that particular student to improve first, rather than highlighting every single error;
- Where appropriate, students should write out the correct spelling three times;
- Teachers must insist on well-presented written work and should praise neat work, whilst targeting students to improve illegible/careless work;
- Work should start with a date & title; recap and recall tasks and home learning should be clearly labelled by students.

Teachers should plan time for students to proof read and, if necessary, to redraft written work before marking (see Whole College Literacy Policy).

Displays:

Displays are an important source of information for students, both within the classroom and on the corridors. Each curriculum area should take responsibility for ensuring that displays include key terminology/definitions for their subject in order to help consolidate students' ability to recognise, understand and be able to use these terms independently.



Section 6

Student Support

Teachers are informed of specific adaptations they need to make to their practice in order to meet the literacy needs of students who have any additional needs. All students are assessed by the Student Support Department for a range of literacy skills upon entry to the college whether this be in Yr7 or as an in-year transfer. Referral requests can also be made by parents, teachers, and students where there are identified barriers to learning.

Literacy

Students identified as needing additional literacy support, that includes reading accuracy, reading fluency and spellings have intervention, working in small groups with HLTAs and TAs using reading schemes and resources (bespoke to the ability of the student) designed to improve their literacy skills. Progress is measured using WRAT V and KTEA-3 assessments.

Precision Teaching

This is offered to students who have one or more complex area of literacy need and require more intensive support. This will be targeted at an identified area for an intensive period, typically for a half term, to help the student to develop skills and strategies to support progress.

Speech and Language

Students identified as needing additional support for language and communication, work in small groups with a Speech & Language Therapist and TA. A variety of activities are planned and used to stimulate thinking skills, inferential thinking and active reading and listening using resources recommended by a Speech & Language Therapist (SALT). The SALT will report on progress through their assessments.

English as an Additional Language

Students who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) will receive language support where necessary from a HLTA. Assessments and resources are provided by the Advisory Teacher from EMAT and delivered by the designated HLTA.

Handwriting

Students identified as needing additional handwriting support will work on improving letter formation, writing speed and practising new writing styles. Progress is measured using DASH Free Writing Assessment.

Thinking Skills

For students who are identified as having slow phonological processing speeds. Students with these difficulties have thinking skills intervention. The students are taught strategies to organise their thoughts and how to plan their work to improve their speed of thought. Students are assessed for progress using CTOPP2 assessments.



ICT

Students identified as needing additional support for the recording of work where initial handwriting support has not improved legibility or writing speed, are offered intervention to improve ICT skills. Students will be issued with a laptop to use in lessons and exams.

Access arrangements

Access Arrangements are a range of provisions we can use to support students during exams. These are typically offered to students identified as needing additional literacy support, and where earlier literacy interventions have not improved a student's difficulties to a level where they could access examinations independently. The criteria for this is set by JCQ exams board. Information is shared with teaching staff to ensure that this is their 'normal way' of working.

Intervention Implementation

Interventions take place weekly for a half term, the student is then to attempt to ensure they are using the skills taught in intervention in lessons. Teachers are aware of what interventions the students have experienced through the student's Provision Map and how they can support the students through the Provision Map Information and Strategies document. Students are assessed at the end of the intervention for progress. This enables for those above cut off (Standardised Score of 85 and above) to carry on their learning through normal curriculum support and those requiring further intervention (84 or below) to be planned to be intervened with at another point.



Section 7

Impact: Monitoring, Review and Evaluate

At Minsthorpe we provide a rich curriculum which supports students' development of reading and critical literacy across all subjects. With our ambitious curriculum in place, we are now in a strong position to evaluate and improve how reading, writing and spoken language are delivered in all areas of the curriculum and evaluate the extent to which our students make good progress and become better prepared for the next stages of their learning.

All curriculum areas will monitor and review the teaching and assessment of literacy within their subject areas by annually reviewing schemes of work and the delivery of literacy, especially vocabulary teaching, within lessons. We invest heavily in high quality CPD for all our teaching staff on a termly basis focusing on aspects of the core principals of our literacy policy. Our well established 'Literacy Impact' group is attended by the L&T Team who deliver training to all curriculum areas, they are vital in disseminating professional learning regarding literacy to their teams.

The impact of our rigorous and unrelenting focus on improving the literacy skills of our students can be seen in the classroom where we have consistent pedagogical approaches in the teaching of reading, writing and spoken language, which as a result increases our students' subject knowledge. The impact of our reading agenda can be seen through improving reading ages. Moreover, staff are asked to be aware of reading ages and this vital information is tracked on our internal SIMS marksheets, reading tracker and on seating plans. Ultimately, when Literacy teaching is at the heart of all lessons impact can be seen in progress, attainment, and the engagement of all students, especially when responding to high quality texts.

Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Whole College Policies, which are available on CIS:

- Learning and Teaching Policy
- Assessment and Feedback Policy
- Support for Achievement – Specialist Support Policy
- Appraisal Policy
- Curriculum Policy



Section 8

Executive Summary



Literacy Implementation: Executive Summary

Reading

<u>Quality First Teaching</u>	<u>Intervention</u>	<u>Reading Culture</u>
<p>Vocabulary: Explicit instruction explores disciplinary vocabulary within lesson context and, where appropriate, the polysemous meanings of Tier 2 terms.</p> <p>Reading Comprehension: A reciprocal reader approach (Before, During, After) is systematically applied in lessons to support students with their decoding and language comprehension.</p> <p>Reading Fluency: Teachers model accuracy, automaticity and prosody by reading texts aloud to students.</p>	<p>Students significantly below their chronological RA: The 'Star Reader Programme' provides a diagnostic assessment of reading skills/ages. A select group of KS3 students benefit from fortnightly Lexia intervention (during English lesson time), to support development in their specified area of need. In addition, class-size is minimised (additional sets and teachers) to maximise the impact of direct teaching.</p> <p>Reset: Students experience small group tuition twice a week with a qualified HLTA. These students are also enrolled on the Lexia programme with dedicated time given to improving reading within their bespoke curriculum.</p> <p>Student Services Students will continue to undergo a WRAT test upon entry to Y7 and where appropriate, benefit from a planned intervention programme for the duration of a term.</p>	<p>Reading for Pleasure: The P&A curriculum is enriched through a well-planned 'guided reading' programme which immerses students in fictional writing, allowing them to develop their love for reading.</p> <p>Opportunity: Our reading culture is strengthened by providing numerous opportunities for students to access a range of texts: Read More Know More P&A Sessions, The Book Exchange, Y7 Pop-Up Library, a weekly Book Club.</p> <p>Library Learning Centre: Our superbly resourced LLC encourages students to keep reading through engaging competitions and supporting their participation in annual events such as World Book Day.</p>

Writing

<p>Technical accuracy: Students are expected to write using standard English and basic punctuation, spelling and grammar are taught explicitly.</p> <p>Modelling: In addition to technical accuracy, teachers model effective organisation of material (sentence structure, paragraphing, headings/ subheadings).</p> <p>Proofreading: "If it is not proofread it is not finished" Students are expected to seek out and correct errors before submitting work for marking. Staff are encouraged to dedicate reflection and proofreading time in recognition that it will take time and effort to train students to do this proficiently.</p> <p>Presentation: Students are guided on how to produce neat and presentable work; ensuring each piece of work has a clear heading and date (including recall and home learning tasks).</p>	<p>Marking for Literacy</p> <p>Expectations: It is not expected that teachers correct/ identify every literacy error in every piece of written work.</p> <p>In line with the Curriculum Area policy, teachers should use the codes below to support the development of students' literacy skills.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Sp) Spelling error (Gr) Grammatical error</p> <p>Accuracy (A): Other errors and/or improvements in written communication are highlighted under the general category for 'accuracy'. When appropriate, a specific formative comment will be provided to target the area for development; whether this be improved SPaG and/or the need to improve illegible/careless work.</p>
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Spoken Language

Students are guided in effective spoken language communication by embedding explicit teacher instruction of oracy skills into the implementation of **structured talk tasks, whole class discussions and presentational talk**. The key oracy skills are:

PHYSICAL

LINGUISTIC





COGNITIVE





SOCIAL



Key word: Avenge (verb vengeance)	
Say it: A venj 	Define it: Inflict harm in return for (an injury or wrong done to oneself or another).
 Use it – <u>outside</u> the lesson Maximus promised to <u>avenge</u> the murder of his family.	 Use it – <u>outside</u> the lesson The avengers protect global stability from inner or extra-terrestrial threats.

Before	Activate prior knowledge	Make predictions	Chunk text	Clarify vocabulary
	Why was Thomas' life in danger?	What do you think Henry's next move will be?		
During	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask questions Check understanding Summarise 	<p>The four knights with one attendant entered. They were received with respect as the servants of the King. The servants who waited on the Archbishop invited them to the table. They rejected the food, thirsting rather for blood. The Archbishop was informed that four men had arrived who wished to speak with him. He consented and they entered.</p> <p>agreed</p> <p>The knights sat for a long time in silence. After a while, however, the Archbishop turned to them, and carefully scanning the face of each one he greeted them in a friendly manner, but the wretches, who had made a treaty with death, answered his greetings with curses.</p> <p>Unfortunates</p> <p>Pact</p> <p>Fitz Urse, who seemed to be the chief and the most eager for crime among them, breathing fury, broke out in these words, "We have something to say to thee by the King's command.... The King commands that you depart with all your men from the kingdom... from this day there can be no peace with you, or any of yours; for you have broken the peace."</p> <p>you</p>		
After			Pin down the learning	Big question?
				At this point, who would you blame for the murder of Thomas Becket and why?

Talk Task	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voice projection Pronounce words with clarity Maintain good eye contact
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speak in full sentences using Standard English Vocabulary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give reasons to support views Build on the views of others Structure. Organisation. Timing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turn taking Listening and responding appropriately Liveliness and flair

Presentational Talk			
	Voice	Body Language	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voice projection Pronounce words with clarity Pace and tonal variation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gesture and posture Facial expression and eye contact 		
	Vocabulary	Language	Rhetorical techniques
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate vocabulary choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speak in full sentences Standard English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Metaphor, humour and irony) 	
	Content	Structure	Reasoning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choice of content Build on the views of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure and organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asking questions Summarising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give reasons to support views Challenge the views of others
	Working with others	Listen & respond	Confidence in speaking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guiding or managing interactions Turn taking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening actively and responding appropriately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-assurance Liveliness and flair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking into account the level of understanding of the audience.



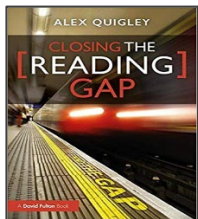
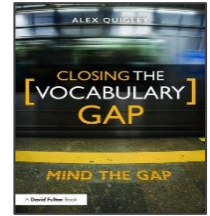
Section 9

Appendices

Appendix - 1

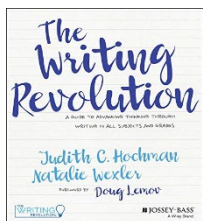
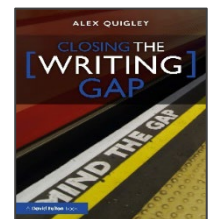
Reading list-

Closing the Vocabulary Gap (Alex Quigley): A ground-breaking book that examines how improving vocabulary can improve attainment – and more importantly, strategies for how to achieve that in the classroom and throughout a school.



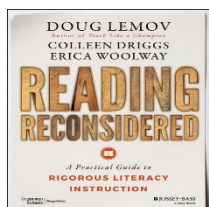
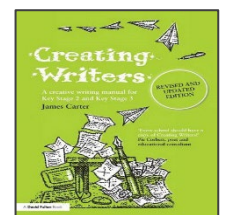
Closing the Reading Gap (Alex Quigley): Alex Quigley explores the intriguing history and science of reading, synthesising the debates and presenting a wealth of usable evidence about how children develop most efficiently as successful readers.

Closing the Writing Gap (Alex Quigley): This book explains seven critical steps to improve children's writing. It trains teachers to be an expert in how pupils learn to write, from the big picture of planning, editing and revising your writing, to the vital importance of grammar and spelling with accuracy. Highly practical strategies and easy-to use classroom activities are included.



The Writing Revolution (J.C. Hochman & N. Wexler): The Writing Revolution provides a clear method of instruction, (The Hochman Method), which focuses on specific techniques to match student needs, providing them with targeted feedback. It also helps boost reading comprehension, improve organizational and study skills and enhance speaking abilities.

Creating Writers (James Carter): Well-worth reading, this how-to guide for creative writing in KS2 and KS3 may well force teachers to rethink how they approach teaching the composition of writing. This book is a must-have for anyone teaching English to 8-13-year-olds.



Reading Reconsidered: A Practical Guide to Rigorous Literacy Instruction (Doug Lemov): This book examines and challenges perceptions on how we learn to read, how we teach reading, the effect of reading on attainment and how we measure and appreciate that within a school, and life in general. Truly absorbing and thought-provoking.

EEF (2019) '*Reciprocal Reading Evaluation Report*' [Online] Available at:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/reciprocal-reading> This report details the reciprocal reading approach that our reading strategies are modelled on.



Final Section

Equality Assessment

This policy has been assessed with regard to its impact on equalities issue, with specific reference to the aims of the Equality Act 2010. The equality impact assessment focused on race, gender, disability, pregnancy and maternity, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and religion/belief.

Policy Review Schedule

Policy last reviewed:	Due for next review:	Role Responsible:
September 2019	Spring 2021	Vice Principal (Pedagogy and Practice)
June 2021	June 2024	Assistant Principal (Director of Quality of Education)
January 2023	June 2025	Associate Assistant Principal (Director of Pedagogy and Practice)
July 2024	July 2025	Associate Assistant Principal (Director of Pedagogy and Practice)

