



OUR LADY & ST JOHN  
CATHOLIC COLLEGE

*“The College that Cares”*

**LITERACY**

**GUIDE**

**LITERACY GUIDE**

FOR PARENTS



# WELCOME

## TO THE LITERACY GUIDE

This guide is intended to help parents and carers of pupils at Our Lady & St John Catholic College understand what you can do with your child to support the development of their **speaking and listening, reading and writing.**

### Why is literacy important for a child's progress?

Literacy is fundamental for your child's progress across a wide range of subjects in school. It is also important for their future as research has shown that people with good literacy skills are more likely to have higher self-esteem, better health, better jobs and higher wages than those with poor literacy skills. They are more able to take advantage of the opportunities that life may offer them.

### How can parents and carers help children with literacy?

Getting involved with your child's education can make a significant difference to their chances of success. Research has shown that children whose parents are involved get higher marks, have a better attitude towards learning and develop more confidence.

**LITERACY COVERS THREE DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF A PUPIL'S COMMUNICATION METHODS:**

**SPEAKING AND LISTENING**  
**READING - WRITING**

# SPEAKING

# LISTENING



## Ensure that:

- they have plenty of opportunities to talk;
- you listen to them with attention, and respond;
- they hear and listen to sustained talk by others.

## Encourage them to speak at length, by:

- helping them take a long turn in a conversation;
- prompting them to help them keep going – asking them to tell you about some event in detail or explain to you how something works.

## Help them understand how speakers help listeners, by:

- using repetition and different voices for different characters when telling a story;
- encouraging them to think about how to organise what they want to say;
- changing their pace.

## Encourage them to notice and talk about:

- interesting/unusual words;
- some of the different ways people speak.



# READING

## [ ENSURE THEY HAVE: ]

- access to books, magazines, comics and newspapers from home, school and the library;
- somewhere quiet to read;
- time to read regularly;
- opportunity to see you as a reader – reading, choosing books, going to the library, talking about what you read, searching online for book reviews.

## OTHER WAYS YOU CAN HELP SHAPE YOUR CHILD'S READING HABITS:

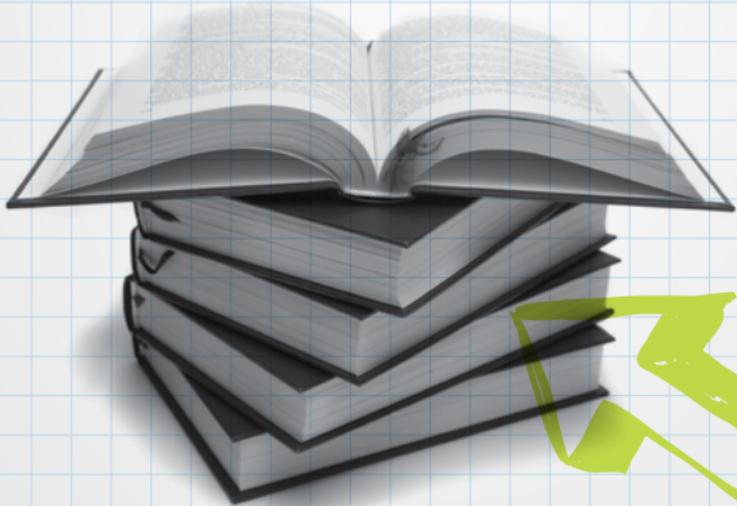
- make time for reading together - try picking reading material on subjects you both enjoy such as a sports team, music group or holiday destination;
- you could read to your child and take turns with them in reading a section each of the text, supporting and prompting their reading in positive ways;
- reading the books or plays your child is studying in school and discussing what you've read with them;
- keeping up-to-date with the news helps with schoolwork. Try to encourage your child to read a newspaper at least once or twice a week. Find news stories that connect to lesson topics. If your child is researching a subject, suggest the online archives of a good newspaper or the BBC website.

# TALK WITH THEM ABOUT THE BOOKS THEY READ:

- their favourite part or character and your favourite part;
- how the illustrations support the story;
- their favourite author;
- what makes a book different from (or similar to) others they have read.

**Talk about the meaning of what they have read. Ask them, for example, to explain:**

- how they know that X is the villain or Y the hero;
- why they like or dislike a particular character;
- what will happen next - and why they think so;
- a character's actions or motives.



# WRITING

## ENSURE THEY HAVE:

- opportunities to write at home;
- pencils, pens, crayons, but also card or folded paper to make booklets;
- opportunities to see you as a writer, for example, writing emails or lists.

## Read and talk about their writing:

- ask them to read their writing aloud to you;
- respond to the writing and praise what you like;
- ask them to explain why they wrote particular sections as they did.

## Help them with planning their writing:

- ask them to talk through their ideas with you before they write;
- prompt them to include more detail, sequence things more clearly, vary the pace.

## Help them to think about the person who will read their writing.

- Do they want the reader to like the main character?
- Should they include some clues about the ending?
- Does the writing build up to a climax?

# HOW DO YOU KNOW YOUR CHILD IS PROGRESSING?

The programmes of study show progress within each subject for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. In most subjects these are split into eight levels, plus a description of exceptional performance.

Children develop at different rates, but National Curriculum levels can give you an idea of how your child's progress compares to what is typical for their age. Children are expected to make two levels of progress as they move through each key stage, for example:

- by the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6), most will be working at level 4;
- by the end of Key Stage 3 (Year 9), most will be working at level 5 or level 6.

Level judgements can be broken down into three sub-levels which can help discussion about progress.

## FOR EXAMPLE:



- high 4 or 4a means that the pupil is working at the top of level 4 and is almost into level 5;
- secure 4 or 4b means that the pupil is working securely in level 4;
- low 4 or 4c means that the pupil's work is just into level 4, but aspects of their knowledge and understanding may not be secure.



# HOMEWORK

**HELPING WITH**

**HOMEWORK**



**As outlined in our school planner, homework is a very important part of learning.**

**YEARS 7 & 8**

**Approximately 1 hour per night**

**YEAR 9**

**Approximately 1½ hours per night**

**YEARS 10 & 11**

**Approximately 2 hours per night**

# HERE ARE SOME WAYS YOU CAN HELP:

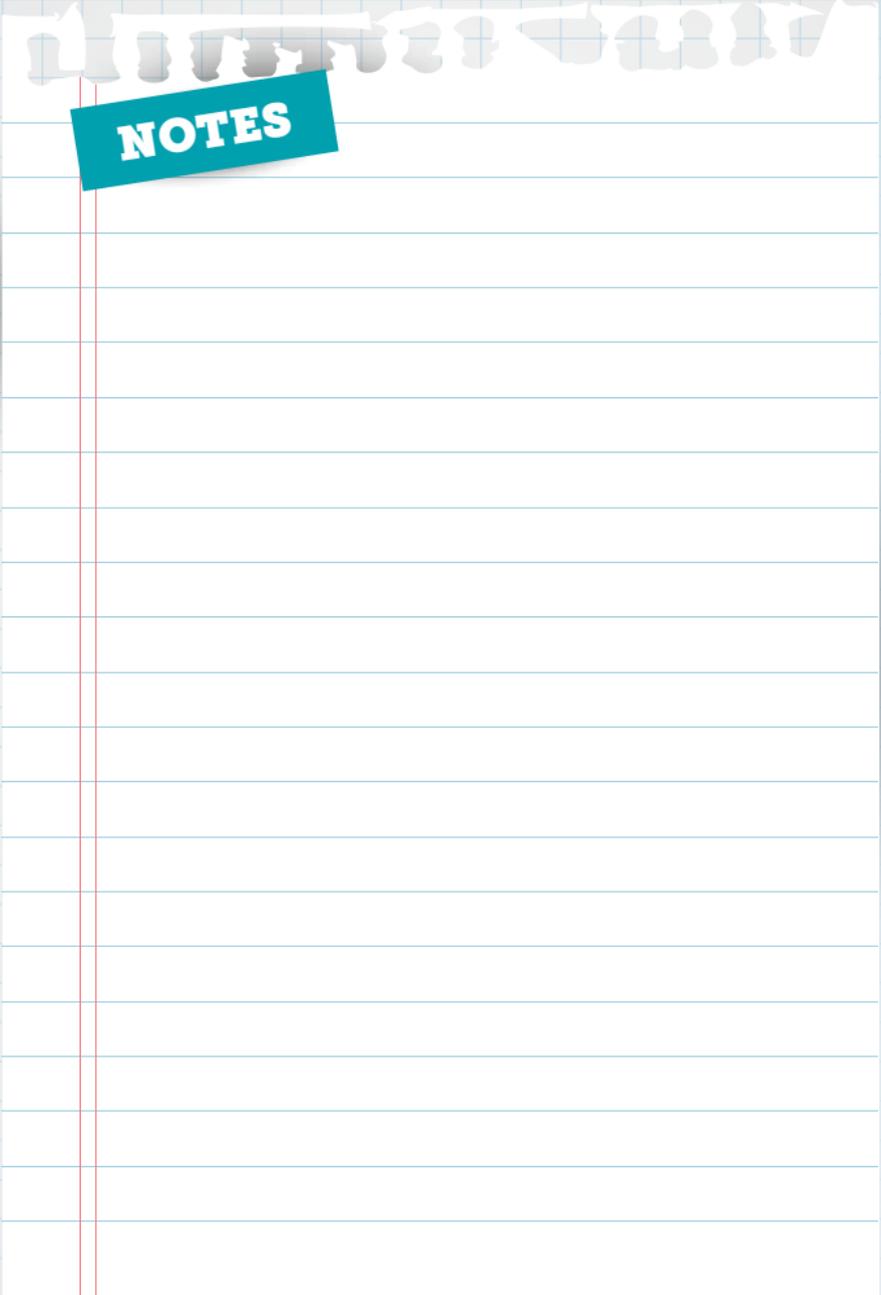


- suggest doing homework as soon as it is received so that the information is fresh in your child's mind from classes;
- encourage your child to speak up when in difficulty, as you may be able to help find the answers;
- make sure your child has a good work-life balance, and doesn't spend too much time either going out with friends, or sitting and doing homework;
- find out about educational programmes on radio or television;
- find out if there are any study support or homework clubs that may help.

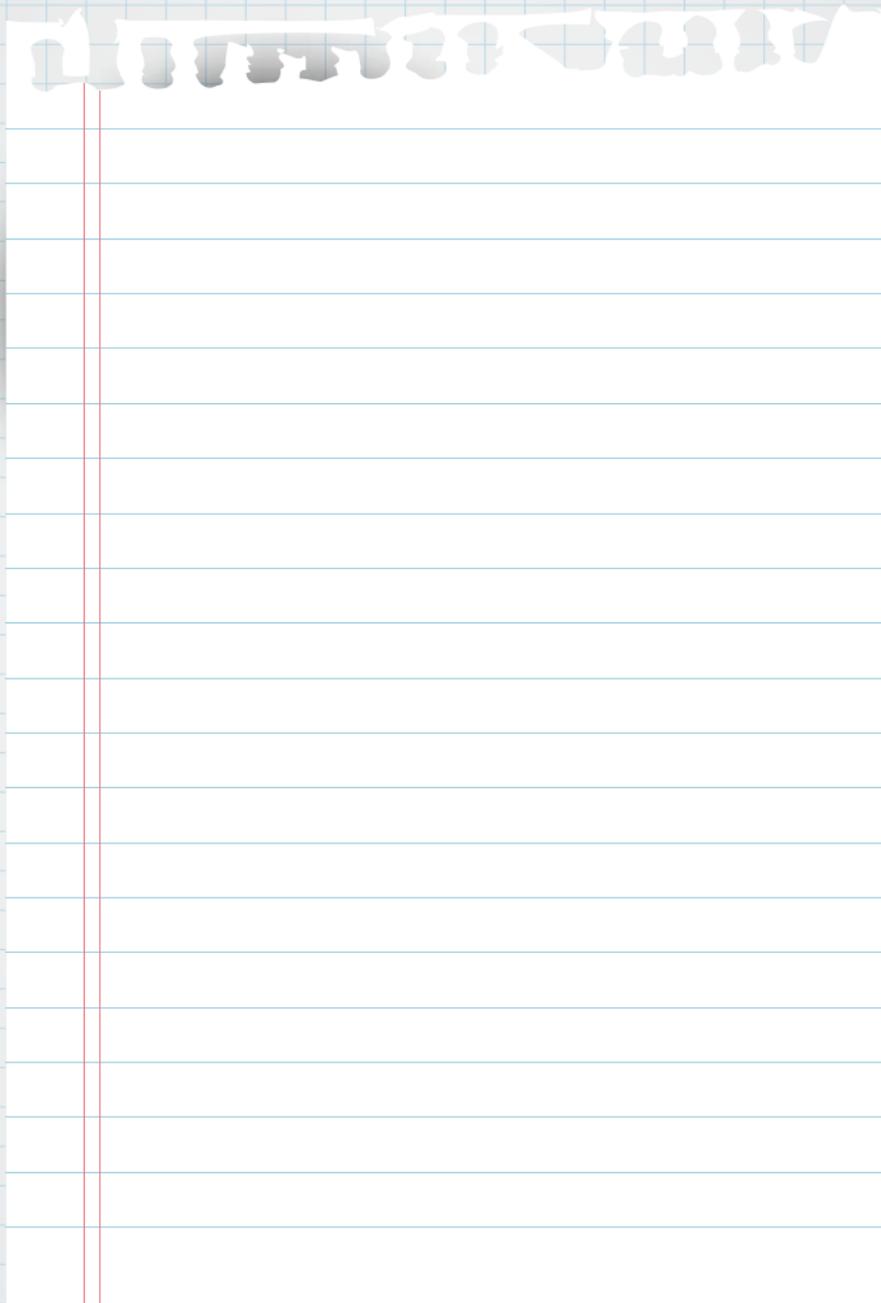
## AIDING REVISION

### You can help ease the pressure of exams by:

- helping your child develop a timetable, and help them stick to it;
- listening to your child and find ways to support them;
- encouraging your child with praise and rewards;
- creating a suitable environment for study and revision, for example a quiet area with a desk to work at.

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# NOTES





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