



Saint Joseph's Primary School Ballycruttle

Literacy Policy



*"to ensure that every learner fulfils her or his full potential at each stage of their development."
(Count, Read, Succeed)*

Rationale

At St. Saint Joseph's Primary School, we believe that pupils' literacy skills, ie. their ability to talk, listen, read and write effectively, for purpose and audience, is the key to educational progress, to social integration and to personal development and happiness.

This policy document will outline the strategies and approaches we will support and develop in order to ensure that each child becomes equipped with the necessary language knowledge, understanding and skills. This policy is intended as a working document and sets out clear principles for the teaching of writing and reading. It has been compiled and agreed by all staff in Saint Joseph's Ballycruttle. It is made available for staff and parents.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the N Ireland Curriculum for English (CCEA, 2007) and include:

In the Foundation Stage children should be given opportunities to:

- talk and listen and represent ideas in their activities;
- use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum;
- become immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

At Key Stage One (Primary 3 and 4), children should learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They should begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They should use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

At Key Stage Two (Primary 5-7), children should learn to change the way they talk and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They should read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They should explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

Inclusion:

We aim to provide for all children so that they reach their full potential in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and those with special educational needs in order to take steps to improve their attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

At Saint Josephs the following strategies are employed to identify pupils level of achievement and highlight any issues:

- *Pupils are identified using standardised test scores in combination with teacher professional opinions. Standardised scores are assessed against Cognitive ability scores (P4/6) at*

the end of June and results indicating a 10 mark discrepancy or more are highlighted for discussion and children are then targeted for support/intervention beginning in the following September.

- The in-class strategies used to ensure all pupils are being challenged and able to achieve targets set for them - differentiation, teacher, self and peer assessment*
- Parents are provided with a number of opportunities to meet with staff to discuss their child's progress range and variety of resources used, including uses made of technology.*

The class teacher is normally the person who highlights a child as having a particular need within their class and this will be supported by evidence on progress and attainment. At Saint Joseph's we also believe that parents above all know their child best and we listen carefully and act on parental concerns.

Intervention programmes

The school has a number of intervention tools and approaches.

Mrs Cochrane (SENCO) works closely with all staff to ensure that pupils who are not achieving in line with their cognitive ability are targeted for intervention. Pupils targeted for intervention include;

- Pupils underachieving (10 marks or lower than NRIT/ CAT score)*
- Pupils scoring less than 85, but in line with their ability*
- Pupils scoring 10 or more marks higher than their cognitive ability*
- Pupils who have missed programmes of study due to for example ill health*

Pupils (P3-7)participate in Standardised tests at the end of May and this information is used to inform the timetable for Intervention Programmes at the beginning of the next school year.

The main aim of intervention is to improve children's' learning. Intervention programmes may be devised for an individual or group. The Learning Support Teacher will either withdraw pupils from class or work is differentiated accordingly. Individual pupils or small groups of 2 /3 pupils are generally withdrawn for 30- 40 minutes sessions.

Equal opportunities

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

Aims and Objectives

- Writing is seen as purposeful.
- That children are taught and recognise the range of social functions that writing can perform e.g. persuade, instruct, inform, entertain
- Children should have a clear understanding of the structure and language features associated with different genres of writing.
- Children should demonstrate the ability to choose the appropriate form and content to suit the purpose and audience.
- Pupils should have access to a variety of reading materials.
- Teachers should use their expertise and knowledge to teach reading.
- Pupils will have skills to read unfamiliar words.
- Pupils will show comprehension of text.

HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING:

The following indicators from ESaGS will be reflected in the school's approaches:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A broad and relevant curriculum is provided for the pupils.• An emphasis on literacy and numeracy exists across the curriculum. |
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- Teachers are committed and enthusiastic, enjoying a positive relationship with their pupils and with other school-based staff and dedicated to improving learning.
- Teachers use adaptable, flexible teaching strategies that respond to the diversity within the classroom.
- Assessment and other data is used to effectively inform teaching and learning across the school and in the classroom and to promote improvement.
- Rigorous self-evaluation is carried out by teachers and the whole school, using objective data and leading to sustained self-improvement.
- Teachers reflect on their own work and the outcomes of individual pupils.
- Education outcomes reflect positively on the school and compare well, when benchmarked measurement is undertaken, against the performance of similar schools.

Subject organisation

The English Curriculum is delivered using the requirements in the N. Ireland Curriculum for Language and Literacy.

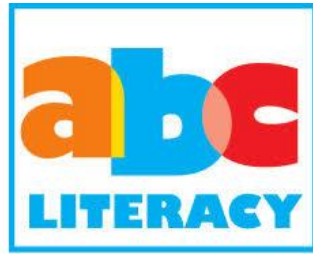
Due to the size of the school, classes are either based on whole year groups or are composite. Staff plan together when year groups are split and programmes are carefully devised to ensure no overlapping of activities from year to year. Classroom Assistants are mostly involved in daily planning and supporting and monitoring pupils alongside the teacher.

Long Term Planning

Our whole school planning framework ensures that lessons are part of a coherent sequence of work which builds on the children's previous experience, makes links with learning in other subjects and prepares children for future learning.

The school follow yearly overviews in Talking and Listening and Reading and Writing, which detail progress over the three terms for years one - seven. In preparing this the staff use SELB Primary Languages Framework., Northern Ireland Education and Library Boards publications,

CCEA guidance materials and curriculum support materials from EA.



These overviews ensure that all areas of the curriculum are covered.

Medium Term Planning

Teachers plan on a two monthly basis, completing a standard template. This template highlights the content, activities, differentiation, assessment opportunities, ICT employed, learning outcomes, resources and monitoring and evaluation of the two months planned for.

Short-term planning

Teachers use their own or a shared format within Key Stages on a daily/weekly level

Formative assessment practices should inform planning at this level:

Teachers should therefore ensure that lessons:-

- have a **clear learning intention** which is **shared** with the children.
- link with previous learning
- make use of effective questioning
- may include relevant **success criteria** which is **shared** with the children
- will allow the adults to provide feedback to children on the progress of their learning
- should be evaluated and the learning assessed to inform future planning

All teaching staff are encouraged to hold a Planning/Information folder (located on their desk) with all planning documents and also reading groups and relevant information on children with any particular need.

At Saint Joseph's we believe in the sharing of good practice. The Literacy Co-ordinator monitors overviews and monthly planning documents and supports all staff in meeting planning deadlines and completing documents as appropriate.

Staff meet regularly to plan for learning - e.g. use of resources, planning for split year groups.

Differentiation

Throughout the school teachers divide classes into guided reading groups. As part of classroom management Classroom Assistants work with the teacher to support groups as required and in rotation with the teacher. Groups are highlighted in planning and differentiation noted on two monthly and daily/weekly planning. Monitoring and reviewing are part of planning and noted on planning documents.

e aim to provide a range of writing and reading experiences including whole class, small group and independent writing.

Modelled Writing

The teacher talks aloud the thought processes as a writer. They have complete control over the writing and make explicit the structure, language features, spelling and punctuation of the text type as appropriate.

Shared Writing

This is a collaborative approach; pupils contribute their ideas and thoughts for the teacher to select the most appropriate. The teacher needs to give reasons for the choices made.

Guided Writing

Pupils are grouped by writing ability. The teacher works with each group in rotation during the week. The task is carefully selected to provide an appropriate level of challenge and will focus on a particular aspect of the writing process as opposed to writing a complete piece. Tasks may include the processes of planning, drafting and editing pieces of writing.

Independent Writing

Children are given opportunities to apply their understanding of the text type in their own writing. This is vitally important if children are to develop their skills as writers within different genres.

Writing Progression

Writing is a complex process. Teachers plan carefully to provide writing opportunities that develop successful, effective writers. This involves differentiated planning suited to the ability of the writer, levelling writing, discussion with colleagues and scrutiny of work within the year group and throughout the school.
(See Lines of Progression)

Modelled reading

This is especially effective in the foundation stage. This allows the teacher to demonstrate the process of reading by thinking out loud. The children are only listening and observing at this stage. Also this can be used throughout the school to show the children how to obtain information from a variety of texts and to show how to be selective when gathering information.

Shared reading

Shared reading is used for a variety of reasons in our school. It gives pleasure, allows the children knowledge of new reading strategies, concepts and vocabulary. Through a selection of shared non-fiction and fiction texts the children get knowledge of a variety of writing genres.

Guided reading

We have changed our guiding reading from hearing reading to having reading lessons. We aim to have lessons 2 to 3 times a week. We will look at new words, phonics patterns, comprehension and features of the text

within these lessons. We teach word attack skills. We aim to have a follow up activity alongside these lessons. Our guided reading books are Oxford reading tree in foundation and key stage 1 and a selection of novels up the school. We have moved away from sending guided reading home as we found children were learning their reading by rote and not using word attack skills to read.

Independent reading

We have invested in a wide range of easy read books. These are banded so the children can take them home and read independently and not have to be taught their reading at home. We give them access to fiction, non-fiction, poetry and comics to broaden their reading experiences.

Cross Curricular Links

Opportunities for writing and teaching writing skills should be integrated into all aspects of the curriculum. By utilising cross curricular links we can give writing a purpose and audience. Children are helped to see links between different areas of the curriculum and to appreciate how their knowledge, skills and understanding in one area can inform learning in others.

ICT

This is a vital means of developing language in the context of the modern world. Pupils should:-

- Have opportunities to compose text directly on the screen.
- Be taught how to use word processing techniques to develop writing skills
- Check their composition for written accuracy using grammar and spell check facilities.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Teachers use summative and formative assessment to track attainment. Work will be assessed in line with the Assessment Policy. Staff use a variety of AFL techniques and strategies to enhance children's learning.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

A key aspect of the subject leader's role is to monitor, evaluate and review the teaching and learning of writing throughout the school. This is achieved in a variety of ways including reviewing planning, scrutinising work, discussions with staff and pupils, observing in lessons, providing appropriate and high quality resources. Responsibility for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning of writing rests with the Literacy Co-ordinator. For further details see Monitoring, Evaluation and Review Policy.

Staff Development

We are committed to ensuring that all staff develop and maintain their skills in the teaching of reading and writing. Staff are encouraged to identify areas in which they feel they may benefit from further training. Training may be provided in a number of ways including in school provision and attendances of courses. Classroom assistants also have in school training so that they can contribute to the teaching of the child.

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP:

The following indicators from ESaGS will be reflected in the school's approaches:

- An effective school development plan is in place, providing clear and realistic targets for improvement based on a sound vision for the school.
- Governors understand their responsibilities and provide clear strategic direction as well as support and challenge to the Principal in carrying forward the process of improvement.
- School leaders demonstrate a commitment to providing professional development opportunities for staff, particularly teachers, and promote a readiness to share and learn from best practice.
- Teachers are given the opportunity to share in the leadership of the school.
- The resources at the disposal of the school are managed properly and effectively, with appropriate arrangements in place for financial management, attendance management, and working relationships
- School leaders monitor and evaluate effectively school outcomes, policies, practices and procedures and the School Development Plan itself.

Role of the Literacy Co-Ordinator

Co-Ordinator: Mrs Helen Turley

The Literacy Co-Ordinator should be responsible, in consultation with the Principal, teachers and parents, for improving the standards of teaching and learning in Literacy through:

- Monitoring and evaluating Literacy:-
 - pupil progress
 - management and analysis of relevant data
 - provision of Literacy (including Intervention and Support programmes)
 - the quality of the Learning Environment;
- Auditing and supporting colleagues
- Taking the lead in policy development
- Purchasing and organising resources
- Keeping up to date with recent Literacy developments
- Maintaining contact with all concerned: Principal, Senior Management in the school, teachers, other staff, parents, and pupils
- Ensuring channels of communication are open and active with all relevant outside agencies, including DENI, the Board, CCMS, RTU, CCEA, etc.

The Board of Governors

Regular reports are made to the governors on the progress of English provision and on the standards being achieved by the school.

REVIEW OF POLICY:

A commitment is made to the review and monitoring of this policy document on an annual basis.

See additional spelling/ handwriting policy.

