St. Eoghan's P.S. Moneyneena

Literacy Policy

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY POLICY

Rationale

We at St Eoghan's fully supports the idea that Literacy is part of the 'core business' of schools(School Improvement Programme DENI 1998) and that language is central to living and learning. This is reflected in the commitment of the staff to promoting language development as one of the schools main priorities, and in the development of a daily Literacy time in all classes throughout the school. We aim to provide a supportive   ,stimulating environment where children are encouraged to express themselves and where their contributions are valued.

The diversity in experiences , skills and understanding that children bring to school with them will be recognised by the staff who will seek to work with the children and their families in the development of each individual as an able and enthusiastic language user.

Principles

We at St Eoghan's recognise Literacy acquisition as a right for all pupils. Literacy will be promoted holistically and the definition in the document Every School a Good School (Deni 2008) encompasses the reason why;

- <u>Literacy</u> is the ability to read and use written information and to write appropriately and legibly for a range of purposes, within a range of contexts and for a variety of audiences. It also involves the integration of talking, listening and critical thinking with reading and writing and includes the knowledge that enables a speaker, writer and reader to recognise and use language appropriate to different social situations. Literacy permeates and develops learning in all areas of the curriculum, formal and informal, and all areas of social interaction and development.

- In our school , we will strive to have pupils immersed in a stimulating environment of print as well as other reading materials which will be presented in an inviting and attractive way

- Progression will be seen in pupils increasing independence in talking , listening, reading and writing and their understanding and response to what they hear , read and write.

- By linking with our SEN and inclusion policy we will ensure equal access and opportunities for all pupils

Aims

1. To through careful monitoring and evaluating raise the standards of literacy for all.
2. To enable pupils to express and communicate meaning in spoken language, listening to and interpreting what others say and matching style and response to audience, context and purpose;
3. To teach children to read fluently and with understanding, using a variety of reading methods and strategies.
4. To teach children to communicate using written language effectively, making and shaping text appropriately, according to context, purpose, reader or audience using spelling , punctuation and syntax appropriately and with increasing confidence
5. To develop pupils' Thinking and problem-solving skills;
6. To develop pupils as creative users of language.
7. To promote a wide use of ICT and media texts as a medium for the further development of language across the curriculum.
8. To develop children's ability to use information texts by linking language to thinking processes in a range of curricular contexts.
9. To enable children to communicate clearly and with assurance in appropriate forms of speech.
10. To increase parental involvement when implementing new strategies .., ie synthetic phonics.
11. To improve the dissemination of good practise within and across schools.

Talking and Listening

Rationale

'Oral Language is used to communicate with people, to share and release feelings, to give and obtain information and to understand ideas and develop thoughts' NI Curriculum

Talking and listening are fundamental skills upon which the educational development of our children depend. Through the development of oral and aural skills, they learn about language and this equips them to demonstrate and refine their learning.

Our overall aim is for our children to become efficient language users. This will be achieved by devoting time, energy and resources to the development of talking & listening. Through purposeful interaction with teachers, children will be provided with experiences that develop their skills and their thinking.

The Statutory requirements for Talking & Listening in the **Foundation Stage** are:

- Attention and Listening Skills
- Phonological Awareness
- Social Use of Language
- Language and Thinking
- An Extended Vocabulary

(pg 19 The Northern Ireland Curriculum)

Key Stage 1

'Children should be given the opportunity to listen and respond appropriately and effectively to a range of stimuli, including multimedia. They should be helped to speak clearly with clear pronunciation and intonation, appropriate to the needs of their listeners. They need to learn to use language in imaginative ways. They should be helped to structure their talk, using it to develop and clarify their thinking'

(Pg 50 The Northern Ireland Curriculum)

Key Stage 2

'Children should be helped to develop the ability to listen and respond in a range of contexts, thinking about what has been said and the language used, and to speak coherently and confidently for a variety of purposes and audiences. They should also be given opportunities to develop their ability to communicate and capture the interest of listeners'.
(pg 51 The Northern Ireland Curriculum)

Classroom environment

At our school we aim to establish an environment where children feel relaxed, accepted and affirmed and so feel comfortable to express opinions and talk openly. All children are given an opportunity to speak and we affirm to the children that all contributions are valued. We don't always use' hands up' but other strategies like 'think ' , 'pair' and 'share'. In all classes all children get an opportunity to speak through various circle time activities.

Teaching approaches to promote Talking and listening

- We plan for talk in all areas of the curriculum
- Experiences and activities are planned to promote a wide range of types and talk
- Talking and Listening is promoted as a social, communicative and cognitive process
- All teachers will model oral language
- We use a variety of resources and also displays for talking and listening eg Planning boards', interest tables, tape recorders, book displays,
- Moving Images are used to promote talking
- Show and tell activities are promoted across foundation and Key Stage 1
- Shared and guided reading sessions provides one of the best vehicles for Talking and listening which leads onto writing where children are able to talk about their work(Foundation), or read what they have written).
- All teachers will continue to work on their questioning techniques, and their encouragement of pupils questioning ability to develop deeper thinking and improved talking.
- We will continue to recognise the link with the statutory requirements of Drama, whereby children use drama strategies to make meaning and engage in a range of creative and imaginative role-plays.

Reading

Rationale

'Children should be helped to develop confidence in reading using a range of methods. They should be given opportunities to develop their confidence and independence through enjoyable reading experiences that will help them develop individual tastes and preferences and make sense of what they read' NI Curriculum

Our aims are that our children will learn to read, will enjoy a wide variety of texts and will become independent, critical, life-long readers and learners. We believe that reading is a problem-solving activity. We want the children of the school to enjoy their reading experiences in an attractive environment in which books and other types of texts are given a high priority. We want to build on the natural enthusiasm for books that can be encouraged in the Foundation Stage. We recognise the importance of the children seeing teachers and other adults reading for both information and enjoyment and having a variety of texts at their disposal. . We will try to enable the children to access digital texts at regular intervals and to explore a variety of day to day reference materials e.g telephone directories and catalogues. We will always try to ensure attractive displays of reading materials and a good variety of children's own writing about books they have enjoyed. We will attempt to invite 'real' authors to the school and to encourage their own visits to local libraries.

A Classroom environment which promotes reading

We aim to provide a classroom environment which promotes a love of books and reading where children feel inspired to read . Each classroom is a language rich environment , with lots of environmental print , labels, posters , information , children's work etc. Books are given their rightful place throughout the school. Each room has a class library where books are displayed in a variety of ways. Frequently a display of topic books are easily accessible to the children.

Teaching approaches and organisation of learning

- We ensure our children are exposed to a wide range of reading materials, including print and digital media
- In Year 1 children will move from non-ability groups to emergent groups towards guided reading groups
- Books are banded in Foundation and Key Stage 1 to provide a breadth of reading
- We regularly read to all children in all classes P1 – P7;
- developing phonological awareness;
- we will use a synthetic phonics approach to support early reading and all teachers will recognise it as a key strategy to reading acquisition
- We will use the strategies Modelled and Shared, Guided towards Independent Reading
- Uninterrupted, sustained, silent reading (USSR) is encouraged for age appropriate times in Key Stage 1/2;
- We will visit a local library to promote independent reading especially from Primary 3
- We will use group novels in Key Stage 2
- Involvement of others eg Reading Partners, classroom assistants, Reading Buddies
- Children are read to frequently in all classes
- Children who are identified as under achieving in reading are referred to the SENCO and may where deemed appropriate read from an alternative scheme.

We recognise that our children will have varying needs and we will seek at all stages to provide appropriate, differentiated reading tasks to meet their needs and extend their understanding and increase their enjoyment of text.

Reading for information

Reading for the purposes of study requires specific skills. It is linked to the skill of Managing Information (from the TS & PC framework) whereby children access, select, record and communicate information. *Reading for information requires specific skills and through modelled, shared and guided reading we will try to develop these skills including:*

Skills we are developing in our children are:
extracting information from books using the contexts pages or index;
classifying information by alphabetical order;
Posing questions for their research
using dictionaries
using a search engine on the intern
using reference material such as encyclopaedias, atlases, directories, timetables, brochures, etc;
formulating questions which require a search for information eg KWHL grids;
skimming a text to get an impression of what it is about;
scanning a text to search for specific information;
making notes, selecting what is relevant and appropriate;
distinguishing between fact and opinion in evaluating information.

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Writing

Rationale

'Children should learn to communicate meaning through enjoyable writing activities, whereby they express themselves in writing both imaginatively and factually and including digital resources' NI Curriculum

Writing is an essential tool in the learning process. Children write to express their emotions, to convey their thoughts and opinions and to present evidence of research. By developing these skills we can equip our children to use writing across the range of curricular activities in which they are involved.

Our aim is that our children will develop the ability to write effectively in various forms according to purpose and audience. They should be encouraged to develop as independent writers, learning over time to use conventional spelling, punctuation, grammatical organisation and handwriting.

Classroom Environment

We strive to provide an environment where children are inspired to write . We have writing area in Foundation stage and writing is encouraged during play. Word banks , dictionaries and thesauri available in all key stages. Classroom displays also contain language which children may require in their writing . Each classroom will be a writing rich environment where children's writing is displayed alongside teacher's writing. Books are compiled of children's writing. Books to support writing topics are displayed in an attractive way and colourful posters encourage the children to write. Support in the form of 'tricky words' and 'key words are used to support their writing.

Teaching approaches and organisation of learning

- Examples of various forms of writing are displayed and discussed so that children become familiar with the structure and language features of these forms eg letters, diaries, lists, invitations, notes, etc.
- The key teaching strategies of modelled, shared, guided and independent writing are taught from Foundation through to Year 7.
- All teachers will acknowledge recognition of the writing process and the approaches to be employed ie. Familarisation, Problem-Solving, Modelled, Shared, Guided and Independent stages

- Children will write for themselves, their peers, the school and the wider community at times.
- Children will occasionally enter writing competitions eg.., Credit Union
- How do collaborative approaches of Assessment for Learning engage pupils in thinking and problem solving? Do pupils suggest the success criteria (WILF) Do pupils assess each others' work?
- The purpose of the writing will be made clear to children before they begin eg are they trying to amuse, persuade or frighten the reader according to their ability.
- Children encouraged to revise and redraft from P.4 , initially on screen.
- Children from Foundation level engage in guided writing and are all encouraged to have a go.
- Spelling is taught primarily from the phonics programme in Foundation and Key Stage 1 and is supplemented from Key Stage 1 with the Prim-ed spelling programme.
- Handwriting is taught alongside Jolly phonics in Foundation and through Nelson Handwriting from Key Stage 1 onwards.
- We respond to childre's writing primarily through oral feedback and where age appropriate two stars and a wish are used. Written comments are also used where age appropriate.
- We track children's writing developments through book scoops, spelling tests INCAS and NFER.

The following structure is used in Key Stage 2

- **Familiarisation -(**exposure to many samples of the genre)
- **Problem Solving- (**exploring text genre)
- **Agreeing success criteria** for the piece of writing
- **Modelled Writing (**teacher writing for children**)**
- **Shared Writing** -(teacher writing with the children)
- **Guided Writing** -(teacher supporting children's writing)
- **Independent Writing-** (Children writing on their own**)**
- **Feedback to pupil against success criteria**
- **Peer assessment using the language of the form**

HANDWRITING

From the earliest mark making, children are showing an understanding that messages can be recorded and as they recognise that print carries a constant message , they recognise the need for more conventional forms of handwriting which other people can read. (Handwriting in the Foundation stage). Throughout the classroom we aim to have a variety of handwriting displayed..

Children need to see examples of good handwriting so teachers , classroom assistants should model suitable handwriting at every opportunity.

Teaching approaches to promote Handwriting

- In P.1 children are given plenty of opportunities to develop gross and fine motor skills, hand eye co-ordination and visual discrimination through practical activities and games.
- A good pencil grip is modelled and taught
- Letter formation is taught in a fun way!
- Children are encouraged to form all letters correctly
- Neat handwriting is encouraged at every opportunity
- Children begin to join letters in P.4

THE LITERACY CO-ORDINATOR

The literacy Co-ordinator in our school is Mrs Marie Molloy.

The Role of the Literacy Co-ordinator

All teachers in our school accept shared responsibility for promoting Literacy throughout the school. However, the Literacy co-ordinator has responsibility for overseeing this work in liaison with all staff and so her primary duties include:

- The provision of leadership and direction in promoting literacy
- The encouragement of high standards of teaching and learning, with particular responsibility for language and thinking across the curriculum.
- The development and maintenance of a school Literacy Policy in consultation with all staff.
- The support and motivation for colleagues to raise standards of achievement
- The setting of targets and priorities, in liaison with staff to improve provision
- The identification of needs in the area of language in relation to the needs of the school
- Contribution to monitoring and evaluating procedures
- Commitment to her own on-going professional development to keep staff informed of recent innovations.

THE ROLE OF THE CLASS TEACHER

The teacher's role is to:
- Build up a caring, trusting and supportive relationship where different points of view are listened to and self esteem is developed
- To be flexible in approaches and develop sensitivity to learning styles and rate of learning
- To be aware of own language use and position as a role model
- To avoid negative responses to children's contributions
- To use effective questioning
- To be aware of careful planning progressively across the curriculum , differentiating where appropriate
- To recognise that skills need to be taught right through the school
- To keep records and monitor progress
- To review policy and progress regularly
- To direct classroom assistants to work with individuals or small groups

ENVIRONMENT; organisation/methodology/management

We recognise that a sound underlying organisation and management of the classroom environment is crucial to supporting learning. The following range of organisational strategies will be employed;
- Whole class teaching
- Small group teaching
- Paired work
- Individual/ one-to-one with teacher , classroom assistant or SENCO
- Independent work
- Due to the nature of our composite classes differentiation by outcome is employed where two or three year groups are working together

As literacy permeates all areas of the curriculum cross curricular opportunities will be used to the best advantage to develop all aspects of talking and listening reading and writing. Teachers will employ a range of teaching approaches which will meet the needs of individual pupils, groups or whole classes.
The following methods will be used;
- Modelled reading and writing
- Shared reading and writing
- Guided reading and writing
- Provision of scaffolds or frameworks
- Involvement of the pupils in self – monitoring of achievements

Parental involvement

We believe that the education of our pupils is a collaborative enterprise involving teachers, parents, pupils and the wider community. Regular and positive communications will be made between teachers and parents, on a formal and informal basis(See Homework Policy for more details)

Resources
We use a wide range of resources. For more detail refer to the inventory of resources.
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ICT
We aim to make make maximum use of ICT across the curriculum to promote the pupils literacy skills as well as developing competence in ICT skills. The following list contains some of the resources used;
- Computers
- Laptops
- Interactive whiteboards
- Radio
- Television
- Listening centres
- Tape recorders
- Cd players
- Dvd players
- Overhead projector
- Internet access

Other Activities

We promote literacy through book fairs , library visits , community visitors, invited story tellers.

Special Educational Needs

All teachers have responsibility for identifying and providing for children with special needs. Diagnostic testing will be carried out by the SENCO to assist teacher

with planning. In our school the SENCO is also the Literacy Co-ordinator . For details of the procedures followed in identifying children with SEn and remediation please refer to the SEN and INCLUSION policy.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Planning/   *Assessment*

Regular communication takes place between all staff at all levels of planning

- Planning is done at 6 weekly intervals
- The children's progress and achievement is measured using a range of diagnostic, formative and summative assessment procedures which both monitor progress and inform planning. These include;

Test records are kept and forwarded on to next teacher. Progress is reported to parents verbally and written three time annually. General progress is often discussed at staff meeting due to the size of the school.

Classroom observation
Book 'Looks'
Class and corridor displays
Folders/portfolios of pupils' work
Discussion and sharing of approaches at staff meetings
Key stage planning meetings
Teachers' Planners
Home-school reading diaries.
Pupil target-setting process.
Standardised tests eg. PIE, SPAR, WRAPS NFER
End of Key Stage data and Benchmarking data
Running Records
Computer Based assessments

Long term planning (scheme)
Mid-term planning (8 weekly notes)
Pupils' self assessment records/pupils' reading diaries
Work samples of pupils' responses to reading
Parent Questionnaires
IEPs

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

All staff will aim to treat every child as an individual and will respect their individuality regardless of gender, academic or physical ability or socio-economic background. The staff will be aware of stereo-typing in their selection of resources and in light of the underachievement of boys they will monitor gender needs.

POLICY REVIEW

This Literacy policy will be reviewed annually by the staff.

MARCH 2016

Signed: _____   Date: _____

Mr. Brian McGuigan - Chairperson