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| East Renfrewshire Council  Reading Guidance  Education Department |

East Renfrewshire Council – Education Department

**Contents**

**Rationale**

**Curriculum for Excellence**

Literacy and English Framework

Learning and Teaching Approaches

**East Renfrewshire Council**

Aims

Definition of Reading Literacy

**The Reading Process**

Prepare, Engage and Reflect Methodology

**Stages of Reading Development**

Learning to Read

Reading to Learn

**Reading Components**

Language Acquisition

Literacy Development

Prior Knowledge and Experience

Concepts of Print

Phonological Awareness

Phonics

Spelling

Comprehension

Engagement and Motivation

Metacognition

**Learning Environment**

Literacy Rich Environment

**Supporting Children with Reading Difficulties**

Characteristics of Successful Interventions

**Assessment**

**Appendices – where possible hyperlink instead of appendices.**

Reading Set 1

Phonological Awareness

Reading Set 2

Phonics and Spelling

Reading Set 3

Comprehension Strategies

Reading Set 4

Comprehension Fostering Approaches:

Reciprocal Reading

Literature Circles

Thinking Reader

Reading Set 5

Making and Using Notes

Reading Set 6

Supporting Learners with Reading Difficulties

Reading Set 7

Literature Review

Reading Set 8

Glossary

Appendix 10

References

**Rationale**

We live in a rapidly changing world, where both the quantity and type of written materials are increasing and where people are expected to use these materials in new and more complex ways. Our understanding of the nature of reading has evolved along with changes in society, economy and culture and developments in theory and practice.

Reading is not simply decoding, comprehension or reading aloud. The concept of lifelong learning has expanded the perception of literacy as no longer an ability acquired in the early years of schooling, but as an expanding set of knowledge, skills and strategies that individuals build on throughout life in various contexts, through interactions with peers and the wider community.

New developments in theory and practice and the expansion of understanding of the nature of reading and changes in the world, highlights:

* the foundational nature of reading as key to all areas of education and a prerequisite for successful participation beyond
* the importance of reading skills for active participation in society
* the interactive nature of reading
* the motivational and behavioural characteristics of attitudes, interests, habits and behaviours
* engagement and metacognition (an awareness and understanding of how one thinks and uses thinking strategies)
* reading of a wider variety of texts encompassing both printed and digital texts.

**Curriculum for Excellence**

*‘Literacy is fundamental to all areas of learning, as it unlocks access to the wider curriculum. Being literate increases opportunities for the children in all aspects of life, lays the foundations for lifelong learning and work and contributes strongly to the development of all four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence.’*

*Literacy and English, Principles and Practice, Pg1, 2010*

Within Curriculum for Excellence, literacy is defined as:

*‘the set of skills which allows an individual to engage fully in society and in learning, through the different forms of language, and the range of texts, which society values and finds useful.’*

*Literacy and English, Principles and Practice, Pg1, 2010*

The four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence describe literacy as an essential prerequisite for:

* communicating in different ways and in different settings
* thinking critically and creatively
* learning independently and as part of a group
* making reasoned evaluations
* linking and applying different kinds of learning
* relating to others and managing themselves
* working in partnership and in teams
* solving problems.

**Literacy and English Framework**

The two key resources which support teachers to plan learning, teaching and assessment are:

* Experiences and Outcomes
* Benchmarks

**Experiences and Outcomes**

The experiences and outcomes define the standards and expectations for the literacy and English curriculum. They include both literacy and English statements and emphasise that learning is an active process.

The experiences represent the important continuing aspects of learning such as exploring and enjoying text, and the outcomes describe the stages in the development of skills and understanding.

The literacy and English framework is organised under listening and talking, reading and writing and details the development and progression in the experiences and outcomes for listening and talking, reading and writing at each level.

There are subdivisions within the organisers:

*Enjoyment and choice* – within a motivating and challenging environment, developing an awareness of the relevance of texts

*Tools* – to help me when interacting or presenting / use texts with increasingly complex or unfamiliar structures and vocabulary / using knowledge of technical aspects to help my writing communicate effectively within and beyond my place of learning

*Finding, Organising and Using Information* – when listening to, watching and talking about / reading texts with increasingly complex ideas, structures and specialist vocabulary; considering texts to help create short and extended texts for different purposes

*Understanding, Analysing & Evaluating* – investigating and / or appreciating fiction and non-fiction texts with increasingly complex ideas, structures and specialist vocabulary for different purposes

*Creating Texts* – applying the elements others use to create different types of short and extended texts with increasingly complex ideas, structures and vocabulary.

Within Curriculum for Excellence the definition of texts is:

*‘A text is the medium through which ideas, experiences, opinions and information can be communicated.’*

*Literacy and English, Principles and Practice, Pg4, 2010*

Texts include those presented in traditional written or print form, but also orally, electronically or film. The literacy and English framework reflects the increased use of multimodal texts, digital communication, social networking and the other forms of electronic communication encountered by children and young people in their daily lives.

**Benchmarks**

The Benchmarks support teacher professional judgement of achieving a level. They set out very clear statements about what children need to know and be able to do to achieve each level of the curriculum. They streamline and embed a wide range of existing assessment guidance (significant aspects of learning and progression frameworks) into one key resource to support teachers’ professional judgement.

Evidence of progress and achievement will come from:

* Observing day to day learning within, and outwith, the classroom;
* Coursework, including tests;
* Learning conversations;
* Planned periodic holistic assessments; and
* Information from standardised assessments.

Evidence should be used to determine if the standard has been achieved and the learner can consistently demonstrate the application of the knowledge, understanding and skills for that level in new and unfamiliar situations. However, it is not necessary for every aspect of learning to be evidenced within the benchmarks before moving to the next level.

Moderation activities should support staff with assessment decisions and professional judgements.

**Learning and Teaching Approaches**

*Curriculum for Excellence* signifies that effective learning and teaching of literacy and English should involve a skilful mix of appropriate approaches including:

* the use of relevant, real life, worthwhile, enjoyable and coherent contexts which build upon children and young people’s own experiences
* direct and interactive teaching
* a balance of spontaneous play and planned activities
* harnessing the motivational benefits of following children and young people’s interests through responsive planning
* collaborative working and independent thinking and learning
* making meaningful links for learners across different curriculum areas
* building on the principles of formative assessment
* frequent opportunities to communicate in a wide range of contexts, for relevant purposes and for real audiences within and beyond places of learning
* the development of problem solving skills and approaches
* the appropriate and effective use of ICT.

The balance between these approaches will vary at different stages and across different sectors and areas of the curriculum.

**East Renfrewshire Council**

East Renfrewshire Council (ERC) aims to ensure all children and young people:

* are fluent readers, able to identify words accurately and read text quickly with good expression thus gaining more of the text’s meaning
* comprehend what they are reading, that is, understand, reflect on and learn from the text
* can apply and communicate their knowledge and skills in new contexts
* have a strong motivation to read which is the essential element for their active engagement in the reading process.

The ERC literacy strategy aims to improve:

* attainment in reading, particularly those in identified equity groups.
* teacher confidence and competence in teaching reading literacy
* the quality of learning and teaching.

A significant amount of work has already taken place across all ERC schools to support staff implement the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence and provide staff with a clear understanding of the place of skills and attributes within the experiences and outcomes.

One such support is the ERC skills framework which was developed to assist schools and teachers to:

* + - * plan how they meet and assess individual learners’ needs
      * improve learners’ experiences
      * use the experiences and outcomes and the identified skills to take a coherent approach to learning, teaching and assessment
      * use the terminology of skills with learners in order to help them understand why skills are important, reflect on how they are developing their skills and identify the next steps in their skills development
      * help learners understand how the skills acquired can be used across learning and in their lives in and outside the classroom.

**ERC Definition of Reading Literacy**

Reading literacy is the term which best captures the changes and developments in the concept of reading and takes account of the literacy and English framework of CfE.

ERC accepts the following definition of reading literacy:

*‘Reading literacy is understanding, using, reflecting on and engaging with texts, in order to achieve goals, to develop knowledge and potential, and to participate in society.’*

*Definition Adapted, Pisa 2009*

The term reading literacy is preferred to reading because it includes:

* cognitive competencies
* basic decoding
* knowledge of words
* grammar
* linguistic and textual structures and features.
* metacognitive competencies
* the awareness of and ability to use a variety of appropriate strategies when processing texts
* are activated when readers think about, monitor and adjust their reading activity for a particular goal.

The term also expresses the active, purposeful and functional application of reading in a range of situations and for various purposes.

The definition highlights:

* *understanding* is readily connected with reading comprehension
* *using* refers to application and function, doing something with what we read
* *reflecting on* emphasises that reading is interactive and requires readers to consider the content of text, apply their previous knowledge or understanding, or think about the structure or form of the text
* *engaging* implies the motivation to read and comprises a cluster of affective and behavioural characteristics that include an interest in and enjoyment of reading, a sense of control over what one reads, involvement in the social dimension of reading, and diverse and frequent reading practices
* *texts* refers to the broad definition within CfE
* .. *in order to achieve goals, to develop knowledge and potential* …captures the full scope of situations in which reading literacy plays a role, from private to public, from school to work, from formal education to lifelong learning and active citizenship.
* .. *participate in society* …means that reading literacy allows people to contribute to society as well as to meet their own needs.

**Stages of Reading Development**

As children learn to read, they progress through a series of stages. These stages are named and described in different ways, but they are essentially the same.

In the earliest stages, children mimic the reading process without actually reading. They begin to understand what reading is about and how it works. They learn that what can be spoken can be written down and read by someone else.

In the beginning reading stage, children learn about oral language, letters and words. They need to understand how print works and the way that printed letters and words represent the sounds and words of oral language.

In the fluency stage, children are able to identify words with greater skills and ease, and read with better comprehension. They need many opportunities to read texts that are predictable, patterned, and interesting in order to read words quickly and without effort. Children will need to read extensively to develop a level of fluency that enables them to read with increasing enjoyment and understanding.

As children and young people progress in their learning, they should encounter texts of increasing complexity in terms of length, structure, vocabulary, ideas and concepts.

**Learning to Read**

Learning to read is not only about skills, it’s about learning to behave like a reader. Beginning readers need to have the following knowledge in order to learn to read, knowledge of:

* how the world works world knowledge, cultural knowledge and knowledge of social conventions are necessary to understand a book
* how language works familiarity with the forms an author uses in order to recognise and comprehend what is happening in a story or information book
* how texts work a common grammar of story structure in which certain events are predictable
* how a book works conventions of print and how a book is put together.

Children gain and develop all four types of knowledge in many social situations, from going to the shops to watching television, but this knowledge can also be developed systematically by early year’s staff and teachers. However, these components should not be taught in a fragmented and incoherent way. They should not be taught independently of reading good books for enjoyment

**Reading to Learn**

The focus on teaching in the early years is on learning to read, but over time the focus shifts to reading to learn.

To reach this goal, learners will need:

* explicit teaching in comprehension and thinking skills
* help in integrating the information in the text with their prior knowledge in order to build on their learning and deepen their understanding.

The ease and speed with which a child progresses from learning to read to reading to learn will depend on:

* exposure to a rich language environment
* the quality and quantity of teaching
* focused early intervention for those who are at risk of reading failure
* ongoing support from parents / carers, the family and community.

**Language Acquisition**

#### ‘Language is a tool for carrying out joint intellectual activity, a distinctive human inheritance designed to serve the practical and social needs of individuals and communities and which each child has to learn to use effectively.’

#### (Mercer, 2000)

Children and young people’s understanding of language develops faster than their ability to use language. This distinction is understood in terms of receptive language and expressive language skills.

* Receptive Language – what we hear and understand
* Expressive Language – what we say

Typical language development is rapid in the early years. By the age of three years, the majority of children and young people will have a receptive vocabulary of approximately 1000 words, and by five years, 6000 words.

By the time children start school most are able to talk about things they see and hear and which interest them. They can express their feelings, ask and answer questions, predict events, reflect upon their experiences, share imaginative ideas and take an equal part in conversation. Many children also show an interest in sounds and letters and begin to hear patterns in the sounds of words. Children who are proficient in oral language have a solid beginning for reading.

Not all children begin school with a solid foundation in oral language. Some children come from a language background where they have little opportunity to develop a rich vocabulary and complex language structures. These children may have additional support needs e.g. speech and language difficulties, hearing impairment or they may be bilingual learners. These children require teaching that develops their oral language ability in conjunction with their reading ability; however, language skills can be supported and developed upon a child’s entry to the nursery.

Through experience, children and young people acquire language by learning:

* individual sounds (phonology)
* vocabulary (lexicon)
* meaning (semantics)
* language structure / grammar (syntax)
* contextual use of language (pragmatics).

The pattern of language acquisition is considered to progress in the following order:

* Nouns – words used as the name of a person, place or thing
* Verbs – words indicating action, occurrence or being
* Adjectives – words that describe
* Prepositions – words used with a noun or pronoun to show position, time, or means
* Pronouns – words used as a substitute for a noun (e.g. I, we, who, which, you, he, she).

Over time, children and young people are exposed to and develop their use of language and begin to appropriately use:

* Adverbs – words that qualify a verb, adjective or other adverb
* Conjunctions – words that connect others
* Prefixes – words or syllables placed in front of a word to change its meaning
* Plurals – forms of a noun or verb used to convey more than one
* Participles – words formed from verbs to convey past or present
* Subjunctives – forms of a verb used to express imagination, wishes or possibilities
* Suffixes – words or syllables placed at the end of a word to change its meaning.

Through interaction with children and young people, adults support language acquisition and development by:

* providing children and young people with a language rich environment (modelling)
* responding to children and young people’s language errors with the correct language (recasting)
* responding appropriately and with praise to children and young people’s successful use of language (reinforcement) (Koralek, et al., 1993)

**Language Acquisition Guidance for Practitioners**

An effective practitioner will:

* have an understanding of language developmental milestones
* provide frequent and meaningful opportunities for children and young people to develop their vocabulary (e.g. through play, drama)
* model a rich vocabulary, curiosity about words and a variety of language structures
* ask and answer questions with children and young people, especially around language
* include all children and young people in group discussions
* help children and young people to classify their language, this can help develop critical thinking around language
* explicitly teach children and young people when and where to use language appropriately
* encourage children and young people to teach each other
* identify language delay and language difficulties early and implementing appropriate additional support strategies

**Literacy Development**

#### ‘“Literacy is a bridge from misery to hope. It is a tool for daily life in modern society. It is a bulwark against poverty, and a building block of development, an essential complement to investments in roads, dams, clinics and factories. Literacy is a platform for democratization, and a vehicle for the promotion of cultural and national identity. Especially for girls and women, it is an agent of family health and nutrition. For everyone, everywhere, literacy is, along with education in general, a basic human right.... Literacy is, finally, the road to human progress and the means through which every man, woman and child can realize his or her full potential.”

#### (Kofi Annan)

Literacy development is an individual and fluid process (Snowling, 1998). It is helpful to discuss literacy development in terms of phases rather than discrete stages (Beech, 2005). Ehri’s (1995) model of literacy development identifies four phases of emergent literacy:

* Pre-alphabetic phase – where children begin to recognise, through natural exposure, the visual aspects of words and connect them to meaning
* Partial alphabetic phase – where children begin to recognise the link between letters and sounds, and make attempts to pronounce words on this basis
* Full alphabetic phase – where children begin to map individual letters to sounds, and identify phonemes and graphemes
* Consolidated alphabetic phase – where children increasingly and automatically recognise the representative sounds of individual letters and recurring combinations of letters, and gain mastery of the system by which language is encoded in print (Adams, 1990).

To make progress in literacy, children need to acquire: the alphabetic code, a well developed vocabulary, visual recognition of words, decoding (reading) and encoding (writing / spelling) ability, an understanding of component word parts, and the capacity to integrate these to form meaning (comprehension) (Ehri, Nunes, Stahl & Willows, 2001).

Children‘s literacy skills are developed through talking, listening, reading and writing. Young children begin to learn about literacy while they are becoming competent users of spoken language. Children see and hear adults reading and writing at home and in the community, and they seek to emulate this behaviour in their own play. Many young children will join in with reading or mimic the reading behaviour of adults and also begin to write as they have seen others do. Children also develop an interest in words that are familiar and have meaning within the context of their lives.

Literacy development can be influenced by a range of factors. Literacy attainment is directly determined by; individual ability and motivation, teaching pedagogy and the class, school, family and community context (Ehri et al., 2001; Camilli, Vargas & Yurecko, 2003; Rose, 2006; Torgerson, Brooks & Hall, 2006). ‘The Rose Report’ (2006) highlighted the importance of high quality teaching practice and promoting literacy in an environmental context at home and school. A rich, holistic reading programme and a well developed literacy environment for pupils is important (Lyon, 1998), and this can be supported where teaching and learning strategies vary to suit the needs of pupils (Smith and Ellis, 2005).

The following key factors contribute to successful literacy development:

* Concepts of print
* Phonological awareness
* Phonics
* Vocabulary
* Comprehension and Meta-cognition
* Engagement and Motivation
* Literacy Rich Environment

**Concepts of Print**

#### ‘A concept of print is a general term for the conventions of written English, such as books having covers and authors, reading from left to right, the use and meaning of punctuation, and other written language concepts.’

#### (Hulme and Snowling, 2007).

Children and young people develop early print concepts where they are in a language and literacy rich home environment (Phillips and Lonigan, 2007). Print concept occurs through observation of others using printed materials, through both shared and pretend reading activities, and develops through children and young people’s exposure to oral and written language, (Phillips and Lonigan, 2007). Early print concept is known to relate to successful development of oral language, phonological awareness and to future reading achievement (Phillips and Lonigan, 2007).

***‘Whole word, also known as "Sight Word" and "Look and Say", teaches reading skills and strategies in the context of authentic literature. Word recognition accuracy is considered less important than meaning accuracy; therefore, there is an emphasis on comprehension as the ultimate goal.***

***Students in this method memorize the appearance of words, or learn to recognize words by looking at the first and last letter from rigidly selected vocabularies in progressive texts (such as The*** [**Cat in the Hat**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cat_in_the_Hat)***). Often preliminary results show children taught with this method have higher reading levels than children learning phonics, because they learn to automatically recognise a small selection of words. However, later tests demonstrate that literacy development becomes stunted when hit with longer and more complex words later.***[***[***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reading_education_in_the_United_States#cite_note-Adams.2C_MJ_23.2C24-5)

#### (*Adams, Marilyn*)

Recognising words and letters

Once the initial concept of reading has been established, most children will recognise words, which have meaning to them. These may include their own name, household items, food labels, street signs and other environmental print. At this stage children are generally recognising the word because of the whole word shape, or distinguishing it from other words because of detail, logo and colour. Although these may not be relevant details it is an important stage in children’s reading development, particularly when children are in a literacy environment where each letter can be presented in a wide variety of forms. For example, a can be written as: A, a, a, a, a …. This can cause confusion if not explained to children and linked to their writing. We have to ensure that children can identify which parts of the letters are constant, which parts helps us recognise it whatever the form? What is it that tells us that ‘hand’ is different from ‘nana’? Although, these are small differences to detail, they are very significant differences.

*Function of words - Structure and Content*

Children, gradually, build up a bank of letters and words, which they associate with some kind of meaning or context. This is easier with certain words as they are content words, e.g. bus, car, chair. These ‘content’ words allow children to read using the word recognition method or ‘look and say’. Other words are more difficult for children to deal with. These are known as ‘structure’ words and are often linked to relationships of time and place and causality, i.e. over, because, etc. For children to understand and recognise these words the teaching role is more difficult. It isn’t only concerned with increasing children’s vocabulary, but more about developing children’s awareness of language.

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**Reading and Writing**

**Talking and Listening**

*‘Reading and Writing floats on a sea of Talking and Listening’*

As Deans (1) in Teaching young readers states, it isn’t so much a matter of adding to a child’s vocabulary, as a matter of adding to the ideas he can express. She also poses the following questions:

* Can he use language to talk about what happened yesterday and what will happen tomorrow?
* Can he speculate on what would happen if…?
* Has he grasped the ways we usually make plurals so that he can have a sensible shot at giving you the plurals of words that are new to him?
* Can he talk about why something happened?
* How far has he got towards using complex sentences in talking and later in writing?
* Does he appear to understand these things when others use them?
* How do you know?

It is important that children realise when words are operating as nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs even if they are not familiar with these terms at this stage, similarly teachers should encourage children to recognise the relationship between things expressed by propositions, the use of punctuation and different types of fonts e.g. italics, bold, uppercase. This can be developed further during reading aloud activities.

By highlighting the function of words we increase children’s awareness of how words convey meaning and help us create a picture. We can explore the picture the writer is trying to create and which words build this picture. Children can physically recreate the picture through drawings, drama, etc. This can be extended to include the creation of a word wall, display or labels and signs around the room. Development of vocabulary in this way enables pupils to understand, discuss and read about the world.

**Concepts of Print Guidance for Practitioners**

An effective practitioner will support children to:

* demonstrate how a book is organised by planning for children to regularly handle and enjoy books
* turn the pages of books with care
* identify that text remains constant
* identify that pictures and print are different
* identify that print and pictures carry meaning
* develop an awareness of a range of books and texts, e.g. library, bookcase, book shelf, and other printed materials such as magazines, cards, postcards and letters etc.
* develop an awareness of directionality in English: top to bottom of page, left page then right page, left to right in the lines of print
* understand that in other languages pages are turned differently and that print is read in a different direction
* acknowledge that the word on the page corresponds to the spoken word
* realise that words are separate and spaced on the page
* appreciate that words are made up of letters
* become familiar with the vocabulary for reading: sentence, line, letter, word etc.
* become familiar with the concepts of title, author, illustrator, front and back cover, synopsis etc.
* identify the difference between fiction, non-fiction and poetry books
* develop the motivation to figure out what words mean
* develop the motivation to think about a story – predict, imagine and project
* develop the motivation to make sense of the book by relating it to what they already know
* develop an awareness of various types of print and punctuation: capitals, lower case, italics, full stop, exclamation mark, etc
* identify and explore environmental print using relevant and appropriate notices, signs, labelling, words, logos and packaging.

**Phonological Awareness**

#### ‘Phonological awareness refers to an individual's awareness of the [phonological](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phonological) structure, or sound structure, of spoken words.’

#### Gillon (2004)

Phonological awareness is the ability to hear and detect the similarities and differences in sounds and words and may operate at the level of word, syllable, onset and rime and phoneme.

Phonological awareness is the foundation on which phonics and spelling is built. It is a prerequisite skill for children to: learn to associate sounds with letters, manipulate sounds to blend words during reading, and to segment words during spelling. The research evidence demonstrates that early phonological awareness predicts early literacy progress (Muter, 1996; Tunmer, Chapman, Greaney & Prochnow., 2002), decoding accuracy, reading fluency and reading comprehension (Badian, 2001), and future reading attainment (Blachman, 1997; Goswami & Bryant, 1990; Rack, Hume and Snowling, 1993).

A significant number of children may, on entry to school, still require a more explicit approach to phonological awareness through direct teaching. Many published phonics programmes assume that children are secure in their phonological awareness and so immediately start with grapheme-phoneme (letter-sound) correspondence. Schools should ensure children are secure in their phonological awareness before they progress to phonics.

**Phonological Awareness Guidance for Practitioners**

An effective practitioner will:

* Provide phonological awareness activities that are oral and aural and are about training the ear to listen.
* Develop phonological awareness through stories, songs, riddles, nursery rhymes, syllable segmentation, recognising and producing rhyme, alliteration activities and language games.
* Provide activities that help children to hear the similarities and differences in sounds and the sounds within words.
* Ensure written letters or words are not the focus of phonological awareness activities until the children can identify the letters of the alphabet.

Reading Set 1: Phonological Awareness provides a range of experiences and activities to:

* develop early auditory and listening skills
* support reciting and learning nursery rhymes
* develop recognition and production of syllables and rhyme
* develop an appreciation of alliteration

**Phonics**

#### ‘Phonics refers to a method for teaching speakers of English to read and write their language. It involves connecting the sounds of spoken English with letters or groups of letters and teaching them to blend the sounds of letters together to produce approximate pronunciations of unknown words.’

#### (National Literacy Trust).

Phonics is a key tool in the acquisition of literacy skills. It is the explicit teaching of the relationship between the letters (graphemes) of written language and the individual sounds (phonemes) of spoken language. The aim of teaching phonics is to enable pupils to read and write independently. The teaching of phonics is distinct from the teaching of phonological awareness. Most children should be ready to access a structured and explicit phonics programme within the first two years of primary school. Phonic knowledge is not only the key to developing reading skills but also to the development of writing, especially spelling. If teaching and learning methods are effective then children recognise the link between reading and writing.

An appropriate phonics programme will develop the following skills:

* segmenting and blending
* knowledge of the alphabetic code
* understanding the principles which underpin how the code is used in reading and spelling.
* fluent word recognition skills; essential for pupils to decode (read) and encode (spell) words accurately in order to concentrate on comprehending and composing.

An appropriate phonics programme should also enable pupils to see the relationship between reading and spelling, that the teaching of one reinforces understanding of the other. Decoding (reading) and encoding (spelling) should be treated as reversible processes.

The two main techniques in the teaching of phonics are synthetic phonics, and analytic phonics, sometimes referred to as bottom-up and top-down approaches respectively. The synthetic approach to the teaching of phonics involves breaking words down into their smallest units, teaching grapheme / phoneme correspondence of these units, then blending and synthesizing the sounds of these units to form words. The analytic approach to the teaching of phonics also breaks words down but not necessarily into the smallest units. Children are taught to recognise the beginning and ending sounds of words; alliteration is used to learn these e.g. man, mat, map. Onset, rime, and pattern matching are used to develop word recognition. Of the two main techniques, the synthetic approach is advocated by the Rose Report (2006).

Practitioners should follow a structured synthetic phonics programme and make use of analytic techniques. Practitioners should deliver their phonics programme using a multi-sensory approach including auditory, visual and kinaesthetic activities to help children assimilate their knowledge of letters and sounds. A multi-sensory approach is recognised for successfully accommodating learning preferences and is a well-established prevention and recovery strategy for children who are vulnerable to or experience difficulty acquiring basic literacy skills (Brooks, 2013)

### Phonics Guidance for Practitioners

An effective practitioner will:

* be able to plan and implement a high-quality phonics programme
* use multi-sensory activities and a mix of resources including ICT within phonics sessions
* monitor children's progress through careful observation and robust assessment
* praise and encourage achievement at every opportunity
* judge how to organise teaching groups to provide optimum conditions for learning
* Provide additional support for those struggling with literacy

Reading Set 2 provides:

* key features of a phonics programme
* phonics methodology and word building approaches
* key features of teaching phonics
* a range of interactive and collaborative activities for phonics.

Phonic knowledge is a crucial aspect of developing literacy, however it is not sufficient in itself; children need to develop skills in comprehension and inferring meaning to become accomplished readers (Rose, 2006).

***Spelling and Vocabulary***

***Spelling and reading are closely linked in the findings that children who are good readers are usually good spellers. Knowledge of a word’s spelling almost always aids the reading of that word***

***(Foorman & Francis, 1994).***

Teachers want their pupils to become fluent and effective writers and accurate spelling is a means to that end. Competent spellers need to spend less time and energy in thinking about spelling to enable them to direct their time and energy into the skills of creating, sentence structure and precise word choice. Spelling should be a natural consequence of reading and writing in all contexts.

For children and young people to become successful spellers, teachers need to develop their language and word awareness as well as their interest in words and how they work. Learners need to focus on words from a variety of curricular areas which are new, tricky or difficult. Teachers and pupils need to examine the parts of words they know and what makes it difficult or tricky.

The key to supporting learners to become confident spellers is to systematically and explicitly teach spelling patterns, rules and strategies and help them recognise which strategies they can use to improve their spelling. Spelling strategies also need to be applied to high frequency words and cross-curricular vocabulary.

***Spelling Programme***

A good spelling programme should gradually build pupils’ spelling vocabulary by introducing patterns and conventions while continually practising those already introduced. Within a spelling programme learners should regularly, interactively and collaboratively discuss, look at, think and learn about words.

It should be noted that acquiring proficiency in spelling for most children is unlikely to keep pace with acquiring proficiency in reading.

***Stages in Spelling Development***

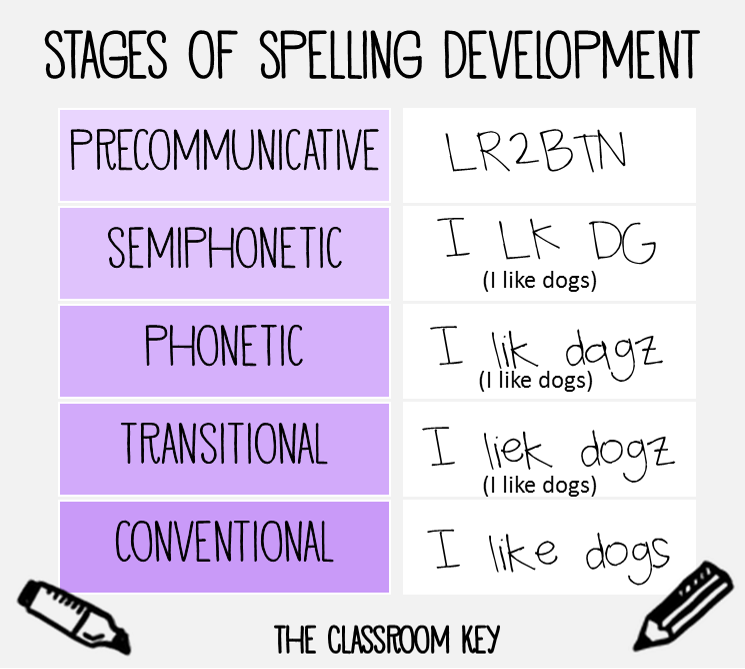
Research into the nature of children’s writing and spelling abilities has revealed that young writers move through clearly recognisable stages which parallel earlier language development.

The existence of these stages suggests that learning to spell is developmental and not merely a matter of memorising words. It is associated with developing cognitive strategies and linguistic growth.

In teaching spelling, it is necessary to understand the developmental stages in order to identify which stage each child has reached and promote progress through each stage until spelling competency is achieved. An understanding of the spelling stages provides a useful framework by which to describe the developmental aspects of children’s spelling attempts.

However, spelling development cannot be viewed strictly according to defined stages. One strategy may be predominant at a given point in time, but some children can use multiple strategies and integrate different types of knowledge from the beginning of spelling development.

Stages should be viewed as a period in the child’s development wherein a particular strategy may dominate, but the use of this strategy does not exclude the possibility of the child concurrently using other strategies or processes.



### Spelling and Vocabulary Guidance for Practitioners

An effective practitioner will:

* follow a structured multisensory spelling programme
* have a clear spelling methodology and clear spelling strategies
* take a systematic approach to spelling rules
* provide a range of interactive and collaborative spelling activities and games
* relate new vocabulary and spelling rules to children and young people’s existing knowledge and interests
* use all the senses when introducing new words and spelling rules
* offer meaningful opportunities for using new words
* encourage children and young people to teach each other
* model curiosity about vocabulary to the whole class
* teach about word derivation and introduce etymology
* use a wide range of texts.

Reading Set 2 provides:

* spelling methodology and strategies
* spelling rules
* key features of teaching spelling
* a range of interactive and collaborative activities for spelling.

**Reading Comprehension**

***‘Reading comprehension is defined as the level of understanding of a text / message. This understanding comes from the interaction between the words that are written and how they trigger knowledge outside the text / message.’***

***(Keith, Foorman, Perfetti, Pesetsky, and Seidenberg, 2001)***

The most important aspect of an individual’s literacy acquisition is the development of effective reading comprehension, that is, the ability to draw meaning from text. Reading comprehension is fostered where children are actively engaged in tasks and explicitly monitor their own comprehension by identifying text that they don’t understand, and finding appropriate solutions. Children’s reading comprehension is supported through dynamic, flexible teaching that incorporates modelling, shared comprehension building, and explicit use of different techniques to analyse content and context, including: prediction, questioning, image construction and summarizing (Smith & Ellis, 2005).

***Reciprocal Teaching Strategies***

Reciprocal Teaching is a technique for the teaching of reading that fosters reading comprehension (Palincsar and Brown, 1984). Reading comprehension depends initially upon a person’s decoding ability, and subsequently upon:

* the accessibility of the texts they read – determined by the quality of writing in terms of syntax, style, clarity of presentation and coherence
* the extent to which the reader can relate their existing knowledge to the text content
* the strategies they actively use to develop understanding and retention, thus avoiding comprehension failures

(Palincsar and Brown, 1984)

Two common reading comprehension failures are;

* situations where the reader’s expectations about the text are not confirmed
* situations where concepts are unfamiliar and occur too frequently to ignore.

People overcome these using automatic and strategic reading states (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). The automatic state, used by practised readers, allows smooth and rapid processing, decoding and comprehension of text, until a comprehension failure arises. The reader then needs to switch to a strategic state, using increased processing effort and a slower reading rate, in order to overcome the comprehension failure.

When people read for enjoyment, the automatic state dominates over the strategic state. Contrastingly, when people read to study and to learn, a *split mental focus* is required to support the dual task of focussing on text whilst simultaneously checking that what is read is also retained (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). Palincsar and Brown focussed on this dual task in developing the reciprocal teaching technique: firstly, because skilled readers are able to engage with texts that, either through poor writing or creativity, challenge the familiar literature conventions to which they are accustomed (achieving this is ultimately one of the main aims of reading instruction); and secondly, because the basic skills of argument are valuable and can be developed through comprehension-fostering activities in which readers use questioning, elaboration, testing and generalisation to enrich their knowledge and understanding of texts.

Six common functions facilitate most comprehension-fostering activities:

* understanding the explicit and implicit purposes of reading;
* using relevant background knowledge;
* concentration on major content at the expense of trivia;
* critical evaluation of the content’s internal consistency and compatibility with prior knowledge and common sense;
* comprehension monitoring through periodic review and self-interrogation;
* drawing and testing inferences such as interpretations, predictions and conclusions.

Palincsar and Brown (1984)

These functions underpin four concrete skills that form the basis of reciprocal teaching:

* summarising – identifying the key points within a text to demonstrate retention and understanding;
* questioning – identifying questions a teacher or a test paper might ask about a text;
* predicting – using the information given in a text to hypothesise what might come next;
* clarifying – explaining text that is confusing or may have been misinterpreted by the reader

Combined, these strategies could enable readers to perform the dual function of *comprehension-fostering*, where understanding is enhanced, and *comprehension-monitoring*, where understanding is confirmed (Palincsar and Brown, 1984).

Reciprocal teaching techniques are consistent with Vygotskian theory (1978, 1997), social constructivism, and in particular, the *zone of proximal development* concept (see Newman & Holzman, 1993). Children encounter challenges they cannot overcome alone; they require support to find and internalise a successful solution from either an adult or an experienced peer. The adult or experienced peer provides a framework for the child to build and develop their thinking and problem solving skills, until they are able to consistently apply them without help. As children take incremental steps towards achieving this, support is gradually withdrawn. For this reason, the support is often referred to in the literature as *scaffolding* (Bruner, 1996; Blanck, 1990; Rogoff, 1990; Wertsch, 1989).

Research into reciprocal teaching has identified the following benefits for pupils:

* increased gains and maintenance in reading comprehension;
* more sophisticated questioning and summarising of text;
* reliable and large improvement in both standardised and curricular based comprehension tests;
* evidence of the ability to generalise and transfer the skills of questioning, summarising and clarifying across new tasks and settings.
* improved student dialogue about text
* those with previously poor reading comprehension presented equally or favourably in comparison to their peers who hadn’t experienced reciprocal teaching.

(Palincsar and Brown, 1984)

Rosenshine and Meister (1994) critically reviewed sixteen reciprocal teaching studies, and concluded that the technique was a well evidenced model of effective cognitive strategy instruction that should form part of reading pedagogy. They identified five features of best practice in the implementation of reciprocal teaching:

* *‘the focus on helping students acquire comprehension-fostering strategies instead of simply asking them comprehension questions*
* *the provision of four specific comprehension-fostering strategies instead of the tens of “reading skills” that have appeared in reading workbooks*
* *the provision for practising the strategies while reading the actual text*
* *the popularization of procedures for scaffolding or supporting students as they develop their strategies*
* *the popularization of the idea of students providing support for each other within reading groups.’*

### *Literature Circles*

A Literature Circle is a type of reading group that incorporates student-centred inquiry and the strategies of the reciprocal teaching technique. Students are supported to engage with reading in different ways using a variety of different strategies, and these are developed through the students’ improving ability to fulfil different group roles. Literature Circles have been found to benefit pupils in the following ways:

* pupils share ideas about text, leading to more meaningful understanding (Powell-Brown, 2006)
* pupils develop deeper conceptual thinking, fostering long-term reading interest (Sanacore, 1992).
* pupils develop their ability to read with focus, to meaningfully discuss text with peers, and to identify and explore important parts of text (Blum, Lipsett & Vocom, 2002).
* pupils’ reading is promoted as a social rather than an individual activity, helping to engender individual and group enthusiasm for reading (Allan et al., 2005).
* pupils can experience a variety of different types of literacy-related success through the various group roles (Stringer, Reynolds & Simpson, 2003).

In practice, a Literature Circle involves four to six pupils reading the same text, and rotating through different group roles each time they meet. The pupils are involved in choosing a book and deciding what to discuss, and the groups are often formed with children of mixed-ability (Allan et al., 2005; Burns, 1998). This is thought to contribute to student co-operation, shared responsibility, and in turn, a pleasurable reading environment (Daniels, 1994).

Fink (2002) suggests four roles for successful Literature Circles:

* *Discussion Director* – this person asks questions to increase comprehension.
* *Literary Professor* – this person locates significant sections of text for reasons such as writing style, being thought provoking, new character introduction, humour etc.
* *Vocabulary Enricher* – this person clarifies word meanings and pronunciations.
* *Checker* – this person ensures completion of assignments, evaluates participation, helps monitor discussion for equal participation.

The student objectives in a Literature Circle are to: discuss, define, and explore unfamiliar words, predict text events using previous knowledge and details in the text, use evidence in text to verify predictions, ask relevant and focused questions to clarify understanding, respond to questions and discussion with relevant and focused comments, paraphrase and summarize information from the text, and identify and analyze literary elements in text (Fink, 2002).

Teachers who use Literature Circles have been found to:

* foster reading comprehension;
* develop pupil’s appreciation of themselves as readers;
* encourage free-flowing, expressive discussion about literary and emotional responses to text;
* to improve pupils’ enthusiasm for, attitude towards, and behaviour in reading;
* increase pupils’ activity and autonomy in reading, and their reading frequency;
* improve the receptive vocabulary of boys;
* implement a reading strategy that is consistent with the underlying philosophy of Assessment is for Learning and the four capacities of A Curriculum for Excellence (2004).

(Allan, Ellis & Pearson, 2005).

***Meta-Cognitive Strategies***

The research on meta-cognition is particularly helpful in guiding practice in the area of reading comprehension. Meta-cognition is where an individual is consciously attempting to monitor, understand and adjust their own thinking strategies. Meta-cognitive strategies deal with the higher level thinking strategies that learners use when preparing, engaging and reflecting on their learning (Ponnusamy, 2000). Studies suggest that the most effective outcomes are experienced in pupils when they actively combine both meta-cognitive and traditional cognitive strategies (Sheila 1999). Meta-cognition has two main components:

* an awareness of the skills needed to perform a specific task effectively, that is, a knowledge of the appropriate attack strategies to use
* the ability to use self-regulation to ensure successful completion of the task, that is, individuals plan their move, evaluate the effectiveness of their actions and check progress.

When meta-cognition is applied to reading it refers to the:

* knowledge a learner has about the reading process
* ability to apply this knowledge in order to promote reading with understanding
* monitoring of the reader’s understanding of the text
* ability to implement appropriate strategies that will help understanding.

Explicit teaching of meta-cognitive skills leads to an improvement in text understanding and information use. More specifically, the reader becomes independent of the teacher after these text processing strategies have been acquired and applied. By using these strategies, the reader can effectively interact with the text by conceiving reading as a problem solving task that requires the use of strategic thinking, and by thinking strategically about solving reading comprehension problems. If a learner is to be thinking meta-cognitively then s/he must:

* know the demands of the task, what the task is and its purpose
* know how to approach the task, e.g. read on, read back, look again at the title, look for specific words, phrases, letters etc.
* select and appropriately implement the most effective skill, that is, when a specific strategy should be used and why the specific strategy will help their comprehension.

Studies have shown that increases in learning have followed direct instruction in meta-cognitive strategies (Blakey and Spence, 1990). McGuinness (2007) developed a framework for explicit teaching of meta-cognitive strategies which included the following:

* engaging learners in cognitively demanding tasks
* making thinking more visible in classrooms
* developing a vocabulary for talking about thinking
* modelling thinking
* giving learners opportunities to talk about thinking
* joint construction of meaning
* evaluating thinking and making connections at the level of process to other contexts.

The importance of meta-cognition in reading has increasingly been recognised (Wong and Chang, 2001). It needs to be emphasised to children that people read to get meaning from text. In particular, struggling readers might hold the belief that reading is about pronouncing the words correctly rather than making sense of text. Some readers will lack the comprehension monitoring repair strategy that can assist them in realizing when they do not understand the text. Meta-cognitive strategies are found to help children better comprehend what they have read (Zhang, 2000).

### Comprehension Guidance for Practitioners

An effective practitioner will:

* Support all students to participate at their own appropriate level;
* Ensure all students experience success;
* Be transparent about their teaching objectives and the core skills being taught in the reading context.
* Use comprehension skills discriminately so that they become strategies for learners, e.g. generating questions, highlighting, summing up text information, clarifying.
* Teach children to use the following strategies:
  + clarifying the purpose of reading and understanding the task demands;
  + identifying the important aspects of a text;
  + allocating attention to major content areas;
  + monitoring the level of comprehension;
  + clarifying and checking whether goals are being achieved;
  + taking corrective action when comprehension failures are detected;
  + recovering from disruptions and distractions;
  + forming a mental image;
  + rereading;
  + adjusting the rate of reading;
  + searching the text to identify known words;
  + predicting what lies ahead.

Reading Set 3 provides:

* reciprocal reading methodology and strategies
* key features of teaching metacognition
* DARTS (Directed Activities related to text)
* Critical Literacy
* a range of interactive and collaborative activities for reading comprehension.

**Engagement and Motivation**

***‘Engagement in reading can refer to time on task, which has been used to refer to paying attention to text, concentrating on text meaning, and sustaining cognitive effort.’***

***(Berliner, 1979; Dolezal et al., 2003; Stipek, 2002)***

***‘Motivation (or a lack thereof) is the result of an individual's self-efficacy related to a task. One of the most powerful sources of self-efficacy is mastery experience. Mastery experience occurs when a child evaluates his or her own competence after learning and believes their efforts have been successful. Mastery experiences increase confidence and willingness to try similar and more challenging tasks.’***

***Albert Bandura (1986).***

In order that children and young people may understand what they are reading, it is important that they come to the text with a variety of experiences that will allow them to appreciate the contexts embedded in the text. These experiences enable them to anticipate the content and such anticipation leads to easier decoding of the text and deeper understanding of its meaning. Children should therefore be introduced to texts that are relatable to their experiences.

The development of reading literacy is not confined to the development of skills and knowledge. It also involves motivation, attitude and behaviour. Current research recognises these elements as key factors relating to reading achievement.

Individual reading engagement includes the following four characteristics:

* interest in reading – reads literature and information texts for enjoyment and the satisfaction of curiosity
* perceived autonomy – value being in control of their reading, self-direct reading activities, choices and behaviours
* social interaction – rely on a social network to extend their competences and share their knowledge and experiences
* reading practices – read frequently and widely to gain knowledge or information, for literary experience, to perform a specific task or for social communication.

An effective classroom and school will promote pupil engagement with reading on both a social and emotional level (Smith & Ellis, 2005). Engagement in reading is associated with high attainment and is recognised as an effective counterbalance to the impact that socioeconomic status can have on pupils from disadvantaged areas, particularly those with good reading ability. Teachers engender reading engagement and consequently improve literacy attainment when there is:

* a balanced literacy curriculum which makes use of a variety of teaching and learning strategies (Smith & Ellis, 2005).
* an appropriate holistic reading programme and literacy rich environment Lyon (1998).

Reading engagement is determined by an individual’s motivation and reading strategies (Newman, Wehlage & Lamborn, 1992; Guthrie, Van Meter, Dacey-McCann, & Wigfield et al., 1996). Engaged readers participate in a range of literacy related activities and interact with friends on the subject of literacy (Guthrie & Van Meter et al., 1996). Engaged readers are more likely to:

* develop higher order learning strategies (Dole, Duffy, Roehler & Pearson, 1991)
* develop skills of reading comprehension (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000)
* read more often and more broadly than less engaged readers (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997)
* experience achievement in reading (Guthrie, Wigfield, Humenick, & Perencevich et al., 2006; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997).

Teachers have a pivotal role in helping children and young people to develop and maintain a positive attitude to reading, particularly as a lack of motivation places children at risk of long term reading difficulty (Baker, 2000; Quirk & Schwanenflugel, 2004). Children can be motivated to read by intrinsic and extrinsic factors(Guthrie & Wigfield et al., 1996). These factors will influence literacy choices, behaviours and the development of comprehension strategies (Pintrich & Schrauben, 1992).

Intrinsic motivation comes from an individual’s curiosity and desire for reading involvement whereas extrinsic motivational factors are external to the reader and include, for example, the desire for recognition, grades, or approval (Guthrie & Wigfield et al., 1996; Guthrie & Hoa et al., 2006). Reading engagement and comprehension are fostered better by intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivational goals (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997; Guthrie, Wigfield, Metsala & Cox, 1999; Wang & Guthrie, 2004). Children develop intrinsic motivation as their level of reading skill develops: an upward spiral of achievement (Guthrie et al., 1999). Intrinsic motivation can reduce, however, when reading skills plateau or the learner experiences difficulty (Eccles and Wigfield (2002), resulting in the opposite effect: a downward spiral of achievement (Guthrie et al., 1999).

Intrinsically motivated learners will enjoy the world of stories and books and will tend to have a vivid imagination. For these learners, the events, character and plots in a story will come alive inside their imagination. They will be able to visualise the story unfolding and will often make a personal response in line with storyline or plot. Essentially the story will have personal meaning and the learner will be engaged at that level.

Extrinsic motivation in reading deals with learners realising that reading can provide the explanations or answers to other questions, reading for information. Learners who are extrinsically motivated in reading will use text to solve problems, find solutions or to add clarity to their own understanding. This is the essence of reading comprehension. *This kind of motivated reader has a great deal of meta-cognitive ability in understanding that reading text, in full or in part, can aid their learning (Reference?)*

Interest in reading can be either *individual,* where children demonstrate a stable interest in a topic, object or activity over time, or *situational*, where children are temporarily drawn to a topic, object or activity (Hidi, 1990). A situational interest can lead to development of long-term individual interest in reading (Hidi et al., 2002; Guthrie & Wigfield et al., 2006), and to changes in children’s motivational goals from *extrinsic* to *intrinsic* (Guthrie & Hoa et al., 2006).

Several key factors that support the development of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, and the transference of situational to individual interest in reading, are:

* Teacher modelling – found to positively influence student perceptions of reading activity (Methe & Hintze, 2003) and encourage low and high achieving pupils to replicate the teacher’s behaviour (Pluck, Ghafari, Glynn & McNaughton, 1984)
* Encouraging pupils to choose the books they read – increased intrinsic motivational goals, reading engagement, and reading comprehension has been found (Reynolds & Symons, 2001; Grolnick & Ryan, 1987).
* Teacher encouragement and scaffolding (Worthy, Patterson, Salas, Prater & Turner (2002)
* Meta-cognitive approaches to reading *–* this affects a pupil’s motivation because it directly affects attribution and self-efficacy (Pierce, 2003).
* Self efficacy – students’ appraisal of their own ability; struggling readers’ low expectations contribute to their lack of success because they believe they have a fixed lack of ability (Stuever, 2006).

**Guidance on Engagement and Motivation**

An effective practitioner will:

* demonstrate a passion for reading
* provide a rich and varied literacy environment and ensure a wide range of literacy sources / texts are available and attractively displayed
* regularly read a variety of novels to pupils
* act as model readers demonstrating reading behaviour, fluency and expression, awareness of language and its rhythms
* know how children perceive the value of reading
* link reading with the learners’ own interests and goals
* develop learners’ understanding of the goals of their work in terms of what they are learning and provide feedback in relation to these goals
* know how learners perceive their own ability as readers
* support learners to develop a positive self-image by having them work with texts that are at their current reading level and that are directly linked to their personal interests, background knowledge and experience (relevance)
* discuss with learners the purpose of reading tasks, provide them with enough time to complete tasks and provide feedback that will help the learning process
* encourage learners to apply reading strategies
* make learning meaningful, taking into account of the age, interests and needs of learners
* provide opportunities for learners to choose their own reading texts and develop a sense of control (autonomy) over the reading process.
* use pupil recommendations and positive role models
* intervene when children experience difficulties
* promote the development of positive self-esteem and reading skills
* regularly interact with pupils about books, build upon their ideas, and utilise games and humour to foster reading engagement.
* ask a balance of open and closed questions
* harness situational interest with stimulating tasks such as modelling and coaching; peer discussion; student-guided direction, expression, reflection, and social collaboration; interaction with tangible objects, events and experiences; and interesting texts (Guthrie & Knowles, 2001).

**Learning Environment**

***‘Schools should regard every available space as a space for meaningful learning to take place, both within the confines of the school estate and beyond.’***

***2020 Learning and Teaching in Schools in ERC, April 2012***

Within the school building, the learning environment is playrooms, classrooms, corridors and open areas. The environment should provide a positive learning climate and a sense of belonging and achievement. It should involve children and young people in defining rules, supporting independence and decision making, motivating them and fostering their interests. Children and young people should be involved in organising and maintaining the learning environment to promote a sense of responsibility and shared ownership.

Outdoor learning, whether in the school grounds, local community or on educational excursions must be planned and focus on learning and skills development linked to the experiences and outcomes of *Curriculum for Excellence*. Outdoor learning experiences should ensure that learning is active, experiential and have relevance to the real world.

Teachers should ensure that the learning environment is literacy rich in order to facilitate children and young people’s learning, challenge thinking and support teaching.

***Literacy Rich Environment***

A literacy rich environment is one which children and young people are exposed to:

* different types of print, commercially produced, computer generated and hand-written and displayed at an appropriate reading height
* prominently displayed notices, instructions, directions, posters, lists, charts, labels, signs and materials that encourage learners to develop vocabulary and use written language across the curriculum
* a wide variety of texts at a range of reading levels that reflect their interests, and backgrounds, including resources in their first language to support and promote independent learning
* a range of vocabulary that learners use regularly and is valuable to their interactive and independent learning
* a range of writing materials
* electronic technology and multimedia resources as teaching tools and to support literacy learning
* interactive teaching walls that teachers refer to when teaching
* visual teaching prompts that aid recall and inform
* high quality displays of their work and current interests that celebrate and affirm success and achievement
* prompts and displays that change regularly and give more prominence to learners’ work than commercially produced materials.

The literacy rich environment should allow learners to regularly interact with it and direct and take responsibility for displays and writing labels and captions.

In the context of reading, the literacy rich environment should allow children and young people to:

* read words, sentences, phrases, captions and signs
* identify a range of vocabulary e.g. tricky and common words, reading vocabulary, subject specific words and specific classroom language
* read words and phrases for various purposes and from various contexts
* copy and letters and words
* read and spell words
* read and use examples of learners’ writing and models of genres to improve their writing
* use the range of print on display to assist with reading and spelling
* develop a positive attitude to reading.

**Guidance on Learning Environments**

An effective practitioner will:

* provide an overall programme of literacy development that is characterised by exposure to a range of various types of literacy to encourage the development of children’s comprehension and composition of language
* encourage children to express and discuss their experiences and feelings through language, as this can enrich vocabulary.
* place books at the centre of school literacy programmes to create and sustain positive attitudes towards reading.

**Supporting Children with Reading Difficulties**

Even with effective teaching some children will need additional supports or interventions. Teachers should consider other interventions only when effective and adapted teaching has failed to resolve reading difficulties.

Effective intervention requires that teachers recognise as early as possible those children who are experiencing reading difficulties, tailor teaching to address their needs and provide additional teaching and intervention when necessary.

Early intervention is critical before reading difficulties become entrenched, affect motivation and compound their difficulties in learning to read and write.

**Characteristics of Successful Interventions**

No one intervention works for all children with reading difficulties. Successful interventions have several characteristics in common:

* generally occur on a daily basis and in focused, short blocks of time
* more time for teaching and instruction
* teaching methods that are supported by research
* carefully planned assessments that allow for monitoring of the child’s progress and lead to modifications of the intervention
* attention to the materials used with a focus on interesting and enjoyable texts at appropriate reading levels
* a range of activities.

It is crucial that interventions can be measured against these criteria and that their effectiveness in helping learners with reading difficulties be carefully assessed and monitored.

Effective early identification and intervention will help prevent and decrease reading difficulties for learners and improve their prospects for school success. Some learners will continue to need additional support to succeed.

**TO BE COMPLETEDAppendix One**

0-2 Years- Typical speech and language development

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1 - 3months | Crying, cooing, smiling, gazing  Begins to communicate by turn taking with adult |
| 4 - 6 months | Imitates, smiles, laughs.  Babbling sounds appear (consisting of sounds made up of consonants and vowels).  Begins to establish joint attention with caregiver, who labels objects and events. |
| 7 - 9 months | Joint attention with caregiver becomes more accurate.  Comprehends some word meanings.  Babbling may contain strings of sounds.  Uses preverbal gestures (showing, pointing) to influence others’ behaviours. |
| 9 - 12 months | Repetition, echolalia, more intonation, jargon, comprehension  Babbling expands to include sounds of spoken languages and patterns of the child’s language community.  Takes turns in games, such as pat-a-cake and peekaboo.  Introduce gestures and facial expressions (wave ‘bye-bye’, respond to name, understand ‘no’)  First words are used in limited situations (e.g. ‘cat’ may only refer to family cat).  Sounds not heard in their language are lost and the intonation becomes similar to the spoken language they hear. (Children with significant hearing impairment may not make this change). |
| 12 - 15 months | Mixture of babbling and words. Talk to themselves using ‘jargon’ but use language to communicate  4-6 words vocabulary- can use words spontaneously in different contexts (‘cat’ means all cats).  Increasing use of gesture. |
| 15 - 18 months | 2 word utterances, comprehends 50 words at 13 months; produces 50 words at 18 months.  Most learnt words are nouns at first.  Enjoy books and singing.  Can point to parts of the body, objects around them and often give correct name.  Single words can often represent a whole sentence. |
| 19- 21 months | Roughly 200 word vocabulary.  Use of pronouns |

2-3 Years

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Receptive Language | By age 3, understands around 1000 words or more .  Understands more words than can use.  Can follow instructions to fetch 2-3 objects from another room.  Understands, “what’s that for?” and “why?”  Understands talk about future events e.g. “we’ll go shopping after dinner”.  Understands more complex prepositions e.g. next, under etc.  Maximum attention span is about 8 minutes.  Developing concepts of time |
| Expressive Language | Begins to use longer sentences and links them together.  Can describe and event that has already happened.  Talks about pictures or stories using a range of colour, size and position words.  Asks many questions – what, where, who?  Initiates conversations  Has difficulty waiting for a turn to speak in group discussions  May relate conversation to personal experiences regardless of topic.  May make mistakes with tenses e.g. runned  Can play with sounds in words during games with pictures and objects  e.g. given a sound, “m” may be able to give a word, “mouse”. Or given a word, “sun” may be able to give initial sound, “S”.  Makes major improvements in pronunciation – most are understood by an adult who is not familiar to them.  50% of children can use sounds: l, sh ch, j, z and v |

3-5 Years

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Receptive Language | By age 4 understands up to 3000 words – will acquire roughly 2000 more through year.  Can understand more complicated language e.g. first, last, might, above, in between.  Can understand spoken instructions related to an activity without having to stop what they are doing to look at the speaker.  Shows understanding of a story read to a large group.  Can understand more complex questions e.g. what do you think will happen next?  Has some understanding of rhyming – can fill in missing words in familiar rhymes.  Can play “I Spy” using objects or pictures.  Uses language to engage in imaginary play.  Average attention span is about 11 minutes |
| Expressive Language | Continues to relate information to personal interests but topic maintenance improved.  May have some difficulties with grammar e.g. using plurals such as saying “sheeps” for sheep, or with tenses e.g. “goed” for went.  Begins to be aware of using volume, tone and inflection in spoken language.  50% of children able to use sounds: r and th |

**Appendix Two**

# Early reading learning environment checklist

Providing a range of quality literacy experiences and a print-rich physical environment is an important factor in the facilitation and support of literacy learning. It may be useful to review the learning environment using the following guidelines.

|  | In place | Area for development | Comments |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Environmental print: letters and words**   * Is the setting bright, well organised and inviting to walk into? * Are resources and working areas clearly labelled? * Do the resources reflect the range of families and cultures in Britain? * Are children’s names and high-frequency words displayed at child height? * Are greetings/days of the week displayed in English and other languages and scripts? * Is there an attractive pictorial alphabet frieze displayed at child height? * Are poems, songs, children’s writing and extracts from shared texts displayed? * Do displays include typed and handwritten text? * Does the teacher read and refer to the print that is displayed around the setting? * Do displays include typed and handwritten text and captions from adults and children? * Are children encouraged and supported to ‘read around the room’? |  |  |  |
| **Opportunities for children to read independently and for adults to read with children**   * Does reading and writing happen inside and outdoors? * Do adults read to the children most days? * Are there are lots of opportunities to hear, sing and discuss rhymes? * Is the big book stand easily seen by all children during shared reading? * Do children take an active role in group, shared and guided reading? * Are children building a good bank of known texts? |  |  |  |

|  | | In place | | Area for development | | Comments |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Books and literacy areas**   * Do the books in the book corner match the needs and interests of the children? * Are the books of appropriate quality, quantity and variety (hard cover, soft cover, fiction, non-fiction, rhymes…)? * Are big books, favourite and new books and phonics games available for independent use? * Are books included in displays and available resources related to areas of learning other than communication, language and literacy? * Are books for guided reading identified and organised with reference to Book bands (or another system of fine grading)? * Are there enough guided reading resources to meet the needs of Reception (20–30 titles are likely to be needed at Book band Pink level)? * Do the books have regular predictable structure that matches the illustrations? * Do they have repetitive predictable text that includes repetition of high-frequency words? * For shared reading, is the type and page layout simple and clear so children can isolate known high-frequency words? * Are the texts short enough to be completed in a 10–15-minute shared reading session? | |  | |  | |  |
| **Resources for phonics teaching**   * Are there sufficient resources for children, including whiteboards and pens, letter fans (one each), and Yes/No cards? * Do the teacher resources include puppets for demonstration, large clearly visible whiteboard, sticky notes, cards of each phoneme, magnetic letters, and cards for games and activities? * Does the practitioner have a well-organised selection of phonics resources to draw on (fans, mini-whiteboards, etc.) for direct teaching sessions? |  | |  | |  | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | In Place | Area for Development | Comments |
| **Early writing**   * Do children see adults reading and writing for different purposes and in different contexts? * Is there an appealing writing area that includes writing materials, high-frequency word cards, interactive displays, messages, and examples of children’s writing available for independent use? * Are there lots of different resources for writing and mark making such as large sheets of paper, boards, chalks, big brushes, and pens and paper? * Are literacy targets displayed at child height in child-friendly language? * Is there an inviting listening post with a variety of stories and rhymes on tape? * Are puppets, props and small world available for role-play? * Do the outside area and role-play area include opportunities for reading and writing, and have these been modelled by an adult? * Is there enough floor space inside and out for being dramatic and creative, e.g. acting out stories, making dens, working on large sheets of paper? * Are children able to access physical development activities that will build their fine and gross motor skills, e.g. building wrist strength by twirling ribbon sticks, practising writing patterns with big brushes and water, making letters in the sand? * Are there lots of opportunities to link language with physical movement, e.g. in action songs and rhymes, cookery, gardening? * Do children have access to a computer and are there suitable reading and writing software programs in use? * If there is an interactive whiteboard, is it accessible to children and are they taught how it is used? |  |  |  |

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**Reading Methodology**

It is helpful to divide the reading process into preparing, engaging and reflecting. This approach helps teachers plan teaching and learning experiences to help their learners acquire specific reading skills and strategies and develop growing independence as they read a wide variety of texts in print and electronic forms.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Methodology** | | |
| **Prepare** | Engage | Reflect |
| * Introduce the text and encourage the children to look for clues to determine the context. For example: * cover * title * blurb * author / illustrators * illustrations * source * headings. * Make connections by reminding / revising of the genre: * fiction – characters, plot, setting * poetry – poetic devices known, poems read or written * non-fiction – structure and language of the genre. * Scan the text and highlight subject specific / unknown vocabulary – hear / say the words, discuss meaning. * Share learning intention - a purpose for reading. | * Initial reading of the text for literal comprehension: * teacher reading (text, pictures) to class / group * class / group reading independently * children reading aloud. * Support learning by reinforcing decoding strategies / word attack skills/ reciprocal reading approaches. * Provide opportunities to (think / reflect / discuss) parts of the text to support literal comprehension. * Recall the learning intention and agree the success criteria – focus for assessment. * Generate questions linked to learning intention:   + literal – in the text   + inferential – search for clues and think what the author means and make inferences   + evaluative – from what read, own knowledge and experiences, own thoughts, feelings and opinions. * Interrogation of text linked to the learning intention. For example: * independent group task to assess children’s understanding of the skill being taught * directed activities related to text (DARTS) * answer frames – oral or written. * discuss, share and compare their findings, thinking and opinions. * Assessment task (make, say, do and write). | Assess to improve:   * assess if success criteria has been achieved. * evaluate learning – self / peer assessment * teacher feedback * identify next steps. * Share your learning – plenary. |

**Prepare**

**Engage**

**Reflect**

Teachers must ensure that children are introduced to the sound first not the symbol or letter that represents that sound. Sounds existed in our language before symbols and letters. It should be stressed that letters don’t make sounds, they represent sounds.

‘Reading isn’t based on visual stimulus, but on an oral one, the sound. It is the sounds that our forefathers were attempting to represent when they invented the written code, not the other way around.’

(McGuinness & McGuinness, Reading Reflex, Penguin 1998)