



Literacy & English Policy

November 2025

Rationale and Aims

At Aberuthven Primary School, we are confident that our Literacy Policy will enable our learners to:

- engage with and create a broad range of texts, including Scottish and Scots texts
- use reading, listening and talking strategies to understand, analyse and evaluate texts
- find and use information
- develop critical literacy skills, including evaluating sources
- write with increasing accuracy, making effective use of spelling, grammar and punctuation
- create texts of increasing complexity using more sophisticated language
- use higher-order thinking skills

Literacy is the responsibility of all; therefore we commit to making the most of literacy learning opportunities, including literacy across learning. Literacy is fundamental to all areas of learning, as it unlocks access to the wider curriculum. Being literate increases opportunities for the individual 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)

Across the school, we ensure that literacy is an integral part of pupil learning: we have a range of opportunities that enhance personal achievement, and we value and plan for interdisciplinary learning as a way of developing breadth, challenge and application. Literacy is embedded in the life and work of our school community.

Teaching and Learning

In Aberuthven Primary School our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in Literacy. Pupils have access to quality supportive resources including a wide range of texts, iPads, dictionaries, thesauruses, as well as hands on tools to support their progression. Digital technology may be used to support and enhance pupil progression across all aspects of Literacy. We encourage children to use and apply their Literacy skills and knowledge across all areas of the curriculum.

We recognise the need for a variety of supports to ensure Literacy lessons can be accessed by all, with staff planning learning and outcomes of lessons to suit the needs of all learners. There needs to be explicit links made between reading, talk and listening and writing with the features of a genre explored explicitly through high quality texts and conversations. Whole class teaching is crucial in teaching and expertly modelling all aspects of Literacy. Planning should also factor in regular opportunities for children to discuss responses with a partner/ as part of a small groups setting to enable them to explore and strengthen their own understanding. Planned discussion should also allow opportunities for pupils to give their own thoughts and feedback.

Pupils will take part in a variety of Literacy lessons which feed into their specific text type focus. In both Guided and Shared Reading they will read, analyse and explore texts of the same genre. Grammar, Spelling and Listening activities will also share the same focus. This

approach will immerse our pupils in Writing theme and support their depth of knowledge and understanding.

Literacy Planning

Class teachers complete a weekly plan which includes Literacy learning outcomes. All aspects of Literacy centre around one topic/genre as far as possible and link with class IDL. This offers pupils a depth of understanding in the focus text topic/genre. Termly plans are completed by Class Teachers and reflect the central topic across all aspects of Literacy. Termly and weekly plans are drawn up by individual teachers and monitored by the Headteacher.

Talking and Listening

This is developed through a variety of activities and experiences. Opportunities are provided for children to talk and listen on both formal and informal settings. Strategies include:

- The use of drama and role-play.
- Regular story times when the teacher or other adult reads aloud to the class, and discusses the text with them.
- Class small group or paired discussions, debates etc
- Showing times or news sharing when children are encouraged to speak to classmates.
- Children participating in class assemblies, school productions etc.
- Individual use of a variety of multi - media devices such as audio books, EPIC app etc
- Talk Homework & Whole School Talk Topics

It is our intention to develop the pupil's ability to speak with confidence, clarity and fluency in a variety of situations, for a variety of audiences and for a range of purposes of increasing complexity and demand; and correspondingly to develop their capacities to listen with attention and understanding in a similar variety of situations and for a similar range of purposes. The school recognises that talk is central to learning.

Reading

We aim to develop pupil's fluency in, and understanding of a wide range of written texts to promote confidence in themselves as readers and to become aware of reading as a source of communication, information, research, interest and pleasure.

We believe that children become successful readers by learning to use a range of strategies to get at the meaning of a text and that these strategies can be taught at three different levels; word, grammar and text. We also acknowledge the need for a wide range of books and so provide a variety of narrative, fiction, poetry, playscripts and non-fiction etc.

Our school provides pupils with a variety of Reading opportunities and experiences each school week. Pupils take part in Shared Reading and Guided Reading lessons. Individual Reading books chosen by staff in Class 1 and pupils in Class 2 as part of pupil homework.

Shared Reading

The whole class are explicitly taught the features of the genre and analyse this together through a shared text. This includes:

- All aspects of reading can be modelled by the teacher.
- The text (short story, excerpt or novel) should ideally be slightly challenging for the class but this is not critical as the teacher is leading and the children can and should read along.
- Not simply reading out loud, specific things such as comprehension, use of language, features of text types need to be taught systematically.
- Other aspects of reading can be taught ie sentence and word level work in a real context.
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Guided Reading

This is much more focussed with a very close match of ability to book. The strategies are taught to a group who are very similar in ability. This should be linked wherever possible to the genre and outcomes being taught in the shared reading and writing sessions, so the children are supported to achieve the learning outcomes shared at the beginning of the session.

Independent Reading

This is when children practise their reading skills and can be done in school with an SLA or parent helper or at home with parents.

Spelling

Phonics are explicitly taught from Primary 1-3 in a very paced, clear and systematic way. The Single Word Spelling Test is used from Primary 4 upwards. Children are assessed formally using this scheme twice a year, an initial assessment in August and again in January. The recognition and spelling of High Frequency words is also taught systematically and are incorporated where possible into pupils' weekly Spelling words.

All pupils receive 10 words for spelling homework each week. Pupils are then assessed on the depth of the knowledge of these words on the following Friday, through a test or dictation exercise.

The use of correct spelling is developed and taught through specific marking of work, regular learning of spelling lists according to ability and the encouragement of dictionary use. Methods including Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check will be employed as a methodology to help with the learning of spelling. Other methods will be employed according to class/ individual need.

Handwriting

Pupils will initially be supported in refining their fine motor skills using sand, finger paint, a variety of media as well as daily practice of pattern flow and letter formation. This will be linked to spelling and phonic work when possible.

Pupils will be taught and supported to hold a pencil comfortably. They will be taught to write from left to right, correct use of capitals, appropriate letter sizing, shape, punctuation and

spacing. Children in the Early Years class are taught to form their letters according to the Jolly Phonics scheme and older pupils (from P3) are given the opportunity to develop legible handwriting in a joined up cursive style.

Writing

We aim to encourage pupils to write in different contexts for a range of purposes and audiences, and to organise the content of what is written in ways appropriate to the purpose, and to use spelling, punctuation and syntax accurately and with confidence.

We teach 9 key text types over the period from Primary 1 to Primary 7 in line with the 'Explicitly Teaching Writing' program. Class Teachers use the following approach providing a consistent approach across both classrooms.

Text Analysis

Pupils to first have the opportunity to access a variety of piece of writing from this genre to gain a good understanding of how they generally look, sound, are set out etc.

Key Features

Pupils should take part in lessons focusing on developing each of the Key Features which must be included in each genre. Pupils are given a checklist with these features to ensure they include them in their own pieces of writing.

Writing Structure - Skeleton Outline

Pupils should have the opportunity to draft a skeleton outline of how each piece of writing should be structured and presented.

Literacy Lessons

Pupils will take part in a variety of Literacy lessons which feed into their specific Writing focus. In both Guided and Shared Reading they will read, analyse and explore texts of the same genre. Grammar, Spelling and Listening activities will also share the same focus. This approach will immerse our pupils in Writing theme and support their depth of knowledge and understanding.

Plan & Write Chapter

Pupils should complete a plan for each piece prior to writing. Pupils should then be given the opportunity to bring all of the above features and skills they have developed together in their own piece of writing. This will firstly be modelled by the Class Teacher, then explore through supported Writing in pairs/ small groups before eventually attempting independent writing.

Edit & Up-level

Pupils should reflect on each piece of writing using their Checklist. They should also check through their use of VCOP and be encouraged to up-level the content to make it even better.

Redraft

Pupils should redraft their final copy of each piece of Writing.

Pupils are encouraged to analyse the language used within each genre of work and may be directed to uplevel the following aspects of their writing:

- Connectives
- Punctuation
- Vocabulary
- Openers

Grammar

Pupils take part in at least one Grammar lesson each week to further their understanding of sentence structure, use of tense, types of vocabulary, writing techniques etc.

Grammar is taught directly alongside our Writing topic each week with key features from of each text type explicitly visited and analysed to further pupil understanding of how this is used and can be applied to their work within each genre.

National Assessments in Literacy

SNSA assessments are completed annually for pupils in P1, P4 and P7. Pupils completed Reading and Writing Assessments as part of the suite of assessments.