



Mossvale Primary School and Nursery Class

Literacy and English Policy

‘Language and literacy are of personal, social and economic importance. Our ability to use language lies at the centre of development and expression of our emotions, our thinking, our learning and our sense of personal identity. Language is itself a key aspect of our culture.’

Building the Curriculum 1

This policy is based on Curriculum for Excellence. As with all of our programmes of study, through our literacy and English work we fully endorse the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence, enabling our children to develop as successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

Vision

In Mossvale Primary School and Nursery Class, our vision is for all of our children to have the necessary knowledge and skills in literacy and English to access all areas of the curriculum. We want our children to have the ability to think critically and creatively in order to develop within the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence. Communicating clearly and effectively is a vital part of our daily lives and we acknowledge its increasing demands in an ever changing world. Through literacy and English our children will gain the skills required for lifelong learning and skills for work.

Aims

In Mossvale Primary School and Nursery Class we aim to:

- provide a curriculum which is rich in language and appropriate to each individual child
- promote enjoyment and appreciation of language through exposure to different genres, styles and cultures
- link learning between different areas of the curriculum so that children experience language in different settings and use language for different purposes
- develop critical, creative and reflective thinking
- develop understanding of the vibrancy and value of the Scots language and other word cultures
- ensure our children have the skills to successfully communicate, collaborate and build relationships through their use of language

Learning and Teaching

Throughout their education, children should experience an environment which is rich in language and which sets high expectations for literacy and the use of language. Children need to spend time with stories, literature and other texts which will enrich their learning, develop their language skills and enable them to find enjoyment. Spoken language has particular importance in the early years. In Mossvale teachers will balance play-based learning with more systematic development and learning of skills and techniques for reading, including phonics.

In Mossvale, effective learning and teaching in literacy and English will involve a skilful mix of appropriate approaches including:

- the use of relevant, real-life and enjoyable contexts which build upon children's own experiences
- effective 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 Assessment is for Learning
- 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 throughout the school and within the different areas of the curriculum. Continuing dialogue amongst staff and cluster colleagues about learning and teaching approaches will help to ensure continuity and progression.

The three organisers within the literacy and English framework are:

- listening and talking
- reading
- writing

Listening and Talking

Listening and talking is an integral part of the curriculum and children's skills are developed through critical skills and co-operative learning approaches, circle time, collaborative learning and planned talks and debates around a theme or topic. Children listen and talk throughout the day for information in all areas of the curriculum and develop listening and talking skills for enjoyment. During showcase events, performances, assemblies and services children apply listening and talking skills for the benefit of parents and families and members of the local and wider communities.

Reading

Through the use of the Storyworlds, Literacy World and novels, skills are taught to promote stimulating discussion, understanding, analysis and evaluation of texts and higher order thinking. Our school and class libraries, a wide selection of reference books and access to ICT provide opportunities for research and information gathering skills to be taught. Buddy reading with older children is promoted for children at the early stages and is also useful to support children with English as an additional language.

Children have the opportunity to develop non-fiction and early research skills. Forming personal questions about texts and searching for the answer in different sources is an integral part of class topic work. Similarly, organising information is an integral approach to non-fiction writing and promotes personalisation and choice within children's work. Children in Mossvale have the opportunity to read daily for information, for enjoyment or to develop the aforementioned skills.

Writing

Children are taught writing skills through the Big Writing programme and develop security in writing through the application of these skills across other areas of the curriculum. Children are encouraged to write for a variety of purposes including to convey information and communicate effectively beyond their place of learning, to express their feelings, to order, clarify, record and reflect on ideas, experiences and opinions and to give imaginative and

aesthetic pleasure. A variety of other resources are used to help reinforce areas such as punctuation and grammar, phonics and handwriting. These include Collins Punctuation and Grammar, Nelson Handwriting (see Handwriting Policy) and Jolly Phonics/Grammar. Spelling Made Easy provides a progressive spelling structure throughout the school (see Spelling Policy).

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment in Literacy and English focuses on pupils' progress in developing and applying essential skills in listening and talking, reading and writing. Teachers use a variety of formative and summative assessments to track pupil progress through the Curriculum for Excellence E/Os and Levels. Information gathered is shared amongst staff at transition meetings between stages and schools, in pupil progress reports and at parent meetings.

Children are given many opportunities to reflect on and talk about their learning. Class teachers place great emphasis on the use of Assessment is for Learning strategies in class to help the children achieve learning targets and identify their next steps. This process provides valuable assessment information.

Personalised targets are set in literacy throughout the year in children's Personal Learning Plans. Teachers and children work towards these in class.

In Reading, class teachers formally assess the children each term using a variety of appropriate text book exercises, checklists and questioning of texts and record and track progress. In Primaries 3,4,6 and 7 children are assessed using the NFER digital assessment which provides a variety of data including a reading age and gender comparisons. In Writing, class teachers formally assess the children in 3 terms using the Big Writing assessment criteria sheets.

In Listening and Talking, class teachers use a variety of methods of assessing the children's skills including checklists and, most importantly, through observation.

The Headteacher gathers this data each term from every class for monitoring and tracking purposes.

Planning

From Nursery to Primary 7 teacher's planning, using the Literacy and English Experiences and Outcomes, should include details of ability groupings and the activities planned to support pupils' learning and meet their needs across the curriculum. Teachers should plan activities which take account of the principles of Curriculum for Excellence and allow children to apply their learning in a variety of real life, meaningful contexts.

In Nursery this will be done through medium term plans and individual staff member's daily plans. In school, staff submit their longer term planning 3 times per year, in October, December and April, and plan detailed weekly diaries which link to this longer term planner.

Equal Opportunities

In Mossvale, our literacy and English activities and resources reflect our commitment to equality, diversity and multi-cultural education. We value diversity and the wide range of children we have in the school and the wide range of cultures and languages they bring. We seek support for children whose first language is not English as appropriate and in line with Renfrewshire Council policy.

For those facing difficulties accessing the literacy and English curriculum for other reasons, for example, those who have been absent for significant periods of time, those who are learning at a slower pace than classmates and those who need greater pace and challenge, a programme of additional support is provided by the Depute Headteacher.