



## Literacy Education in Our Primary School

*“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. Competence and confidence in literacy ... are essential for progress in all areas of the curriculum.”*  
(Curriculum for Excellence: Literacy across learning - Principles and practice paper)

### Aims

Achieving equity and excellence for all learners in St Peter's Primary School is a whole school priority. Literacy is recognised as being particularly important and is seen as being the 'responsibility of all' staff. This policy exists to provide a framework to support and enable all staff to raise attainment in literacy and close the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children. Learning through literacy enables children and young people to:

- develop their ability to communicate their thoughts and feelings and respond to those of other people
- develop the high level of skills in listening, talking, reading and writing which are essential for learning, work and life
- use different media effectively for learning and communication
- develop a secure understanding of how language works, and use language well to communicate ideas and information in English and other languages
- enhance their enjoyment and their understanding of their own and other cultures through literature and other forms of language

*(Building the Curriculum 1)*

This is achieved by appropriate teaching and learning experiences in literacy at all stages, and ensuring that these core skills for learning and life should be progressively developed across a range of meaningful and motivating contexts from early to second level. In St Peter's Primary literacy is planned to enable all children to develop the four capacities and become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors as described in the Curriculum for Excellence. This policy aims to support all staff:

- to raise attainment in literacy for all learners
- to provide an effective framework for the delivery of high quality learning and teaching in literacy
- ensure that all staff and stakeholders understand their role in raising attainment in literacy
- to ensure all learners are provided with planned curricular experiences to acquire the essential literacy skills, knowledge and understanding and are given opportunities to apply these skills effectively across the curriculum.
- to ensure progression and continuity at all stages and across areas of transition to ensure a coherent and relevant literacy curriculum for all learners.

### Curriculum for Excellence: Literacy within CfE

CfE defines literacy as a set of skills including reading, writing, talking, listening, and viewing. Literacy is not only taught as a discrete subject but also embedded across the curriculum.

CfE Literacy Strands

- Reading
- Writing
- Talking & Listening

- Viewing & Media Literacy

## Language Rich Learning Environment

Children should experience a school and class environment which is rich in language and where class teachers set 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 encourage enjoyment. All classrooms should have access to a wide range of literature, with texts being modelled and shared regularly by adults. There is a reading spine provided for each class, which recommends high quality texts to be read and enjoyed with the children. Each classroom will also have literacy displays related to their recent work sharing examples of pupil work as well as visual tools to support learning.

## Planning

Whole school literacy planners are in place for all stages from early to second level with individual planners for the progressive development of reading, writing and talking and listening skills. Each planner contains the experiences and outcomes for the level alongside the key skills to be developed from each experience and outcome. The associated national benchmarks are incorporated into each planner to support with class teacher planning and assessment.

## Listening and Talking

The first literacy skills acquired by children are those of listening and talking, and these skills should be built upon to support the development of reading and writing skills. The planned class listening and talking curriculum should:

- provide opportunities for children to participate in discussions through listening and sharing ideas
- develop skills in listening and talking to others, clarifying their ideas and understanding
- develop the skills, knowledge and understanding to create and develop arguments, opinions and viewpoints linked to a wide variety of texts and situations
- develop the skills which will allow them to listen attentively, talk clearly and coherently and respond appropriately in different contexts and situations

## Reading

Every child should be given a wide range of reading opportunities which should be differentiated to meet the needs of the child. Class teachers should ensure that texts are appropriately challenging and enjoyable for all children. Teachers should use running records and miscue analysis to regularly assess the suitability of the texts that children are reading, and these should inform planning and target setting. During each term each reading group should cover a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts. The key resources available are the following:

- Big Cat Reading Books (Collins)
- Ginn 360 Reading Books
- Novel Studies
- Poems
- Reading comprehension passages linked with and which support interdisciplinary
- Texts which support interdisciplinary learning.

Reading for enjoyment is promoted throughout the school and encouraged as much as possible. Each class should have a class library and weekly access to the school Parent Run Library for children to choose to read for enjoyment. Time should be planned for children to use these reading resources as part of their weekly literacy programme. Specific initiatives to develop reading for enjoyment include Book Week Scotland, Book Bug Bags, Read, Write, Count Bags, World Book Day and shared reading experiences. These enable children to make connections in their literacy

learning to the wider world, apply skills and knowledge across a variety of experiences and take part in special planned events.

## Dive Into Reading and Reciprocal Reading

Teachers should use a range of approaches to develop comprehension skills in reading. These can include ideas suggested through Renfrewshire's Dive Into Reading approach. This approach encourages a creative "dive" into reading comprehension and can include cross curricular experiences such as:

- freeze framing scenes
- hot seating characters
- text annotation
- illustrating settings, characters and plot points
- story mapping/story mountains
- working wall displays – role on the wall; inspiration wall; character quotes; post-it responses

When exploring texts children should have the chance to develop skills, knowledge and demonstrate understanding of:

- Prediction (before, during and after reading)
- Clarifying (what words mean)
- Visualising
- Summarising
- Questioning (literal, inferential and evaluative questions)

## Writing

Writing is a major part of the literacy curriculum and along with reading, listening and talking, makes a significant contribution to the development of children as thinkers and learners.

Class teachers will plan a balance of all genres over the course of a school session. When planning for writing, stimuli should be relevant, and include real life contexts as well as interdisciplinary learning.

At the early level P1 stage writing activities should be planned from pupil personal experiences as well as links across the curriculum using the 'draw and talk'/ emergent writing approach which involves the teacher annotating and over/under writing to demonstrate writing for meaning.

Teacher will assess writing regularly throughout the year, and children should be encouraged to use self and peer assessment strategies as well. Teachers will also use the cluster writing assessment criteria grids once a term to assess children's unassisted independent writing against a criteria linked to the benchmarks in writing. We use a Writing Assessment jotter to record all assessments, including unassisted writing, cold and hot tasks for writing units and spelling assessments.

## Spelling and Phonics

Children in P1-3 (and later for some children) will follow a systematic pathway learning each of the sounds needed for reading and writing. This programme follows the guidance outline by Jolly Phonics, and encourages the use of a synthetic approach to phonics.

Once this pathway has been completed, children in P4-7 will follow Highland Council's "Wraparound" spelling programme to develop and consolidate spelling rules and patterns, with the words differentiated in a 3-chilli challenge style to provide challenge, breadth, personalisation and choice. Each primary will focus on the same spelling rules and patterns to ensure consistency.

Teachers will use the Schonell spelling test twice a year to collect data of children's spelling ages. **Test A** will be completed in August and **Test B** will be completed in May.

## Talk for Writing & Dive into Writing

Teachers should use a range of approaches to develop writing skills and raise engagement for writing. These can include ideas suggested through Renfrewshire's Dive Into Writing approach and Pie Corbett's Talk for Writing. Both of these approaches encourage the use of well-known children's stories and high quality texts to model and support the development of descriptive characters, settings and plots.

Both approaches also encourage the use of a range of real-life experiences and stimuli to help children develop the language and vocabulary needed to achieve success in writing. These experiential learning experiences link closely with Renfrewshire Councils 3 domain model of cognitive knowledge and skills, personal/social identity, and cultural/social capitals.

### Talk for writing

Talk for Writing is used as a whole-school approach to the teaching of writing, providing a consistent and progressive framework across all stages. The approach is based on the principle that children learn to write most effectively when they are able to internalise language through talk before writing. Pupils engage with high-quality model texts, learning them orally and exploring vocabulary, sentence structures and text features before adapting and applying these skills in their own independent writing. Through the structured stages of imitation, innovation and independent application, learners develop confidence, creativity and increasing independence as writers, while teachers use ongoing assessment to support progression in line with Curriculum for Excellence benchmarks.

Across all stages, teaching will include:

- A cold task before each unit, to identify areas for writing skills development within the unit
- Oral rehearsal before writing, including the learning of story maps using actions and words
- Explicit teaching of grammar, vocabulary and sentence structure through a range of short burst writing lessons linked to the model text
- Use of model texts and shared writing
- High expectations for language and presentation
- Opportunities for peer and self-assessment

Grammar, punctuation and spelling are taught **in context**, linked directly to the writing being developed

Writing lessons should be taught every day, and there should be opportunities throughout the week to write across the curriculum as well as writing for personal reasons and for enjoyment.

## Policy Review and Development

This policy will be reviewed no more than 3 years after its implementation date in line with national guidance. It will be reviewed 2028.