



*Wester Overton
Primary School*

Literacy

Position Statement

August 2020



Rationale

The Literacy programme at Wester Overton Primary School follows Curriculum for Excellence Guidelines. Our core planning reflects the benchmarks and all teachers take careful consideration of the 7 design principles.

The Curriculum for Excellence recognises that literacy is a major component of primary education. It states that:

'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.'

Curriculum for Excellence: Literacy and English, Principles and Practice (Scottish Government, 2009)

The Curriculum for Excellence looks at literacy and language in the context of the 21st century, taking into account the changing forms of language which the young people of today will experience and use. This includes communicating face to face, communicating through the written word and communicating through 'an ever increasing range of media'. It defines literacy 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.'

Aims

Wester Overton Primary school aims to support all children as they develop through a structured programme of study which capitalises on everyday opportunities to plan responsively and develop literacy skills across the curriculum.

A variety of teaching strategies should be employed including direct teaching, group teaching, peer learning partners, active learning, ICT in education, creativity, outdoor learning, cooperative learning, assessment is for learning. We recognise the need to develop some of these areas.

Furthermore, as part of our improvement planning at school and National level, we have developed a focussed programme of support to close the poverty related attainment gap, improve literacy attainment and ensure that the needs of all learners are met.

Our pupils will be encouraged to develop a responsibility for their learning by ensuring:

- Awareness of what is expected of them through the sharing of success criteria and learning intentions.
- Provision of appropriate feedback through self, peer and teacher assessment.
- Promotion of reflection on where they are and on the next steps for progression.

Our framework for literacy and language provides a set of statements (benchmarks) that describe the success criteria our pupils will strive to achieve throughout school and our staff refer to these when planning for learning and teaching. We believe that literacy is pivotal to improving skills for learning, life and work.

Literacy and Language Organisers

Within the literacy and language framework, there are three organisers and within these organisers there are the following sub-divisions:

1. Listening and talking

- Enjoyment and choice
- Tools for listening and talking
- Finding and using information
- Understanding, analysing and evaluating
- Creating texts

2. Reading

- Enjoyment and choice
- Tools for reading
- Finding and using information
- Understanding, analysing and evaluating

3. Writing

- Enjoyment and choice
- Tools for writing
- Organising and using information
- Creating texts

Languages 1+2

The breadth of our literacy programme extends to embrace Scot's language and texts.

Opportunities are offered for children to explore the dialect, literature and culture of Scotland through class topics throughout the year, and a school wide Scotland focus in January. This includes a major focus on the Scots dialect through our Scots Verse Competition.

We have a clear framework which ensures a consistent approach across the school. In addressing the L1 + L2 Languages approach, our school focuses on English, French/Spanish and Scots Language, with every year group having the opportunity to participate in activities that span all three organisers.

Principles and Practices

At Wester Overton children and young people should experience achievement in Literacy, this entails-high expectations and careful consideration of best pace, differentiated work that engages pupils and takes their learning forward, meeting the needs of individual pupils, building on prior learning, responsive planning, working to maximise effective teaching and learning

through relevant contexts e.g. as Interdisciplinary work, Literacy Across the Curriculum and use of digital learning.

The experiences and outcomes promote the development of:

- Critical thinking
- Creative thinking
- Competence in listening and talking, reading and writing
- Personal, interpersonal and team-working skills
- Skills in using language.

At Wester Overton pupils will learn the basic tools of communication. In their reading, they will learn how to explore sounds, letters and words, and how to contribute ideas and take turns when talking with others. In their writing, they will learn how to use correct spelling, punctuation and grammar and how to ensure their writing makes sense. As our pupils become more skilled, they will learn how to find, comprehend and use information, and communicate more effectively.

Assessment

In planning, our staff will consider each organiser and sub-divisions across the curricular areas, taking account of individual needs and abilities. Robust approaches in monitoring, assessment and evaluation ensures appropriate pace and challenge for every child.

Across the Curriculum for Excellence levels, challenge and progression appropriate to individual abilities will be at the heart of learning and teaching to ensure that each child achieves his or her potential. Through active and collaborative learning strategies, we provide opportunities which support a range of learning styles.

We aspire to make learning coherent and relevant in order that learners link the purpose and value of the experiences to their lives, present and future.

Challenge and progression is at the centre of learning and teaching to ensure that every child achieves his or her potential. Every class includes formative and summative assessment, including self and peer which also relate to the current Benchmarks.

Benchmarks have been incorporated into our planners in the key organisers of Literacy, which clearly show progress and help in the monitoring of every pupil, thus maintaining appropriate pace and challenge. Learner conversations take place daily to ensure all pupils receive meaningful feedback and next steps.

Meeting Learners Needs

All learners will:

- Experience a curriculum which is rich in good Literacy experiences and opportunities which promote better outcomes for children.
- Access experiences which improve literacy skills and attainment in language.
- Apply their Literacy skills in a range of contexts across the curriculum.

- Experience learning and teaching approaches that stimulate, challenge and meet individual needs.
- Learn with teachers who use a broad, skilful range of approaches and strategies which deepen understanding for all learners.
- Access appropriate resources and technologies which enhance learning opportunities in Literacy and English.
- Engage in a variety of collaborative and independent approaches to learning.

Planning for success

Almost all staff have been trained in using North Lanarkshire Council's Active Literacy Programme. Active Literacy is an approach which is underpinned by evidence based research and focuses on reading, writing, talking and listening.

Through this approach, children are engaged in active and challenging tasks using a variety of exciting materials including hands on activities such as boards, Elkonin boxes and mnemonics.

The programme builds on what has been taught before and children are encouraged to continue to develop strategies for help with spelling and are also introduced to spelling rules.

This year the staff and pupils will focus on previously developed spelling strategies from last year and build upon the previous year's successes.

Throughout the year we will develop our understanding of the reading elements of Active Literacy which does not consist of using a reading scheme; instead a book banded approach is adopted. This is an area we are currently developing and will develop further over the course of the next two years. Working to expand our range of books from a range of publishers and authors, covering fiction and non-fiction, with variation in style and content, are graded in a colour system. The children can then be working on any book in the colour banding, therefore being exposed to a wide variety of books. The reading programme will be further developed focusing on developing children's Higher Order Thinking and Comprehension Skills using novels and non-fiction texts.

Throughout their education, children and young people should experience an environment which is rich in language and which sets high expectations for literacy and the use of language. Children and young people 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. In addition to our Reading programme, children will also have access to a variety of texts through our school Library which will further develop positive reading attitudes and behaviours. The aim is to provide each stage throughout the school with a variety of enriched texts which they can access and have read to them by the teacher to encourage reading for enjoyment but also to allow the pupils to be immersed in good quality literature, and adding enriching text to our bank of literature for each stage throughout the school.

Building on writing resources that have been purchased, development work is continuing to develop trial planners which cover a variety of writing. Teaching staff have also been trained in 'Talk for Writing'. The aim is that children are taught writing in a variety of ways and across a variety of contexts, linked to the ongoing learning in the school. Children are given opportunities to write on a daily basis, as well as 'taught' lessons. Throughout the week there are also

opportunities to link writing to interdisciplinary learning. To facilitate this, pupils write in three ways: Daily Writing, Taught Writing and Writing across the Curriculum.

Supporting innovation and quality learning and teaching

Wester Overton Primary School's Senior Leadership Team will track and monitor progress in literacy in all classes on a termly basis through tracking and forward plan reviews. Staff are provided with quality, constructive feedback and advice, in written and oral form. The SLT engage in regular professional dialogue with staff about pupils' progress.

SLT will monitor progress through jotter monitoring and classroom visits. The focus of classroom visits will always be shared in advance, in line with South Lanarkshire Council guidance. The SLT will keep abreast of all new developments, policies and where possible, resources, in order to ensure that staff are kept well informed about good practice in Literacy. The SLT will actively seek to develop teacher leadership at every opportunity and will provide guidance to staff with all matters pertaining to the learning and teaching of Literacy, where necessary.

Additional Support for Learning

The classroom teacher should act as the first level of Additional Support intervention, and regular dialogue about children's progress with the SLT may mean that some learners require support additional to that provided by the class teacher, or interventions to be put in place such as IDL sessions or Toe by Toe with a support assistant.

Timetables will be reviewed by the SLT on a termly basis, on a greatest need basis. The SLT will regularly review the resources available in the school and will take regular feedback from staff to ensure that the resources required to deliver high quality teaching and learning are provided, as far as possible.

The SLT will ensure that Support Staff are effectively deployed wherever possible to support children's Literacy development.

Self Evaluation

In Wester Overton Primary School, we recognise and value the benefits of rigorous self evaluation in informing continued improvement. As such, staff at Wester Overton employ a progressive overview of Literacy planners focussing on the benchmarks at each stage. This will ensure breadth of learning across the Science organisers.

Evaluating novels and reading books to develop a more varied and challenging series of text will be carried out throughout 2020-2021 session.

Evaluating our current Literacy resources and updating these to coincide with Active Literacy will take place throughout 2019-2021 and 2020-2021 sessions.

Career Long Professional Learning

Wester Overton Primary School's SLT will provide opportunities for staff to extend their skills in the teaching of Literacy, through provision of quality CLPL experiences. Wester Overton Primary SLT acknowledges the quality CLPL to be found in providing time for staff to observe others' teaching practice, to engage in quality dialogue with other practitioners and to learn from each other and visitors to our establishment at in school in-service meetings. In keeping with this, the SLT are committed to providing a variety of quality Literacy CLPL experiences for staff.

Parents/Carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to take an active role in their child's learning in Literacy and English. We provide parents with access to information about their child's progress and what they will learn next through our Sharing the Learning events, workshops and formal reporting. This will enable them to support their children's Literacy development.

