
The Junior School Literacy Policy

“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.” -- Dr. Seuss

What is Literacy?

Literacy is defined as the united skills and knowledge of reading, writing and oral language. In order for children to become literate they must understand that the written word is a representation of the spoken word and that both have a variety of forms related to purpose.

Mastery over language empowers children to communicate creatively and imaginatively as well as allowing them to engage with the world at large.

Principles of the Teaching and Learning of Literacy

Literacy is a fundamental life skill; it develops the children’s ability to communicate effectively to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as non-fiction and media texts.

Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding across a range of different situations.

The Junior School works to ensure that all children develop the ability to communicate effectively and that any barriers to learning are swiftly identified and steps taken to remove them.

Aims

At The Junior School we aim to help children to develop a love for the English language through the spoken and written word. We recognise that English is a core subject within the National Curriculum and a pre-requisite for educational and social progress.

We aim to develop pupils’ abilities by providing effective teaching which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Primary Framework for Literacy. By the end of Year 6 we aim for pupils to be able to:

- ***Read, spell, write and speak with confidence, fluency and understanding***
- ***Develop enthusiastic and reflective readers, through contact with challenging and substantial texts***
- ***Use a full range of strategies – phonic, graphic, grammatical, contextual – to deal with reading and writing tasks independently***
- ***Have an interest in words and their meanings***

- ***Encourage children to listen with concentration to others, to respond and build on their ideas and views and to identify features of language used for specific purposes.***
- ***Have developed a growing vocabulary in speaking and writing***
- ***Discuss reading and writing comprehensively, expressing opinions, justifying preferences, about a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts***
- ***Write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to purpose***
- ***Enable children to improve their planning, drafting and editing of their work***
- ***Demonstrate developing powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness and use suitable vocabulary to articulate their responses, through writing, speech and drama***
- ***Produce a legible, joined, fluent style of handwriting***

Teaching and Learning Style

At the Junior School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our English lessons to ensure all children are included and valued, as recommended by the National curriculum in England. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding. We do this through daily lessons in which children experience a range of activities suited to their unique personal learning style; including whole---class big reading or big writing activities. There is a high proportion of whole- -class and group teaching to give children an opportunity to talk and collaborate and so embed and enhance their learning, followed by independent tasks for target setting. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and to support their work with a variety of resources, such as dictionaries, thesauruses, phonic cards, puppets and a range of interactive tools to enhance their learning, as in drafting their work, to record, review and analyse dramatic performances and in using multimedia to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning. Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning to other areas of the curriculum to ensure children can make clear links to their lives and the world around them.

In all classes children have a wide range of abilities and learning and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability and learning style of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons we do it through differentiated group work, while in others we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use classroom assistants to support some children and to enable work to be matched closely to the needs of individuals.

Planning and Progression

The school has made cross curricular links with other subjects, ensuring that there is a focus on social, moral and cultural links. We use the National curriculum to ensure that all genres are covered in depth by the end of Year Six. Every week children do a Big Read and Write activity with next step targets which are set each time. Pupils are taught objectives appropriate to their year group. We encourage pre-assessment of student knowledge prior to starting a new topic in order to be further tailored to student needs and to ensure that progress is evident.

Children have a clear understanding of the objectives being taught. Teachers plan for well-paced lessons using the Framework as their basis. Teachers have high expectations of success for the children. A range of teaching strategies are employed:

- Whole-class teaching/ Learning outcomes
- Variety of activities to engage learner
- Plenary to check individual progress
- Guided group work
- Demonstration and modelling
- Explanation
- Targeted higher order questioning
- Discussion
- Success Criteria
- Self /peer assessment
- Target setting/E.B.I.

The English planning incorporates all aspects of the English curriculum and ensures that progression and objectives are covered.

Differentiation

To ensure teaching is effectively differentiated within mixed ability and mixed year group classes, lesson plans identify ability levels at support, core and extension within the class.

Teaching is differentiated by:

- Outcome
- Task
- Questioning
- Level of support

Teaching and Learning

The curriculum is delivered by classroom teachers with aid from Learning support Assistants (LSAs). Each class has a Big Reading and Big Writing VCOP wall. When we teach Literacy we ensure that the following key aspects are covered:

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Aim

- ***To develop as fully as possible each child's competence, confidence and enjoyment in speaking and listening.***

Speaking and listening activities are embedded throughout the curriculum. The Primary Framework provides guidance on incorporating Speaking and Listening into planning through specific speaking, group discussion and listening tasks. Throughout the school day children are involved in:

- Listening to talk
- Asking and answering questions
- Play where fictional roles are explored
- Small group story reading
- Small group oral support/extension activities
- Using spoken language to get things done
- Adjusting what they say depending on others' response

The Primary Framework ensures clear focus for teaching and suggests a variety of contexts, purpose and audiences. It ensures that opportunities for drama and group discussion are carefully planned and integrated into other activities.

In addition there are weekly 'circle time' discussions. This 'circle time' also takes account of 'School Council' business and promotes confidence in speaking and listening. The children also take part in assemblies, Christmas and end of year productions, which provide opportunities for public speaking.

In order to achieve our aims we must:

- Provide a stimulating environment, which arouses children's interest and curiosity.
- Provide good role models
- Listen carefully and with respect and interest to what the children say
- Extend their viewpoint by encouraging explanation and interpretation
- Give all children equal opportunities to develop their oral skills

READING

Aim

- *For the children to be able to read for pleasure, information and with comprehension.*

Reading comprehension is taught weekly and may cover a wide range of activities including answering questions related to the text, picture, comprehension and rewriting text from a different viewpoint.

Children have a reading and vocabulary record book to log useful words and ideas to support their writing. Children are also encouraged to read books from their individual class libraries or the school's main library. Both oral and written book reviews are undertaken to encourage a desire to widen their reading experience. Children are also encouraged to record when they have read in their own reading record books.

As the children progress, they are encouraged to widen their use of books for reading for information, developing specific skills:

- Looking up and locating information
- Skimming
- Scanning
- Making notes

ICT is also used to support reading and comprehension through a range of interactive texts.

Reading for comprehension involves work based on the ability to recognise and recall:

Literal –

- Facts
- Main ideas
- Sequence of events
- Comparisons and contrasts
- Character statements and reasons

Organisational –

Analyse, synthesise and organise ideas and information explicitly stated in the text. Explain why a writer has chosen to organise a text in a particular way.

Inferential –

Ability to use ideas and information stated in the text with own intuition and personal experience as a basis for conjecture and hypothesis. It demands thinking and imagination that go beyond the printed page.

Evaluate –

Make an evaluative judgement. Explain why a writer has chosen to use a specific word or phrase and the impact the word or phrase has on the reader.

Appreciative –

Be emotionally and aesthetically sensitive to the text. To relate the text to its social, cultural and historical traditions.

To achieve our aim at both Key Stages we need to:

- Expose the children to a stimulating range of books and texts, fiction / non-fiction/ poetry / play scripts.
- Provide a range of reading experiences, individual reading / shared reading / guided reading/ class reading / class stories and poetry / use of school and class libraries
- Involve parents as much as possible
- Ensure reading is structured and enjoyable
- Use record keeping and assessment to monitor progress
- Provide support for children with Special Educational Needs as appropriate
- Provide stimulating texts which are age related with appropriate graduated vocabulary
- Encourage independence through the development of a variety of skills

WRITING

Aim:

The children extend their experiences in writing to write in various ways for different purposes and audiences.

Fiction:

- Stories
- Diaries
- Play scripts
- Letters

Non-fiction

- Reports
- Recounts
- Explanations
- Instructions / Lists
- Arguments / Persuasive
- Letters

Having experienced these different types of writing we hope that children will:

- Derive an interest and pleasure from writing
- Express their feelings in writing
- Show logical thought in planning and editing
- Be able to direct and instruct through writing
- Write for a clear purpose
- Write for a variety of audiences
- Transmit information
- Write coherently
- Write imaginatively

To achieve this we need to:

- Provide a variety of stimuli including Real Writing
- Provide a range of examples of different types of writing
- Give feedback, support and encouragement
- Provide a variety of materials
- Ensure that necessary skills are in place
- Use record keeping and assessment to monitor progress and set targets
- Encourage independence and confidence through the development of skills and experiences
- Display children's written work around school

Handwriting

Aim

- ***To produce clear, well formed, legible writing that is consistent and neat in appearance***

Teachers have high expectations regarding the presentation of work in all areas of the curriculum. There should be a handwriting lesson once a week in Spelling and Handwriting books.

A teacher should demonstrate the correct letter formation and the children should practise it. The teacher should monitor the formation of the letters. As children master joining and correct formation, the focus should be on writing neatly, consistently and at a reasonable speed. Handwriting should be linked to spelling and topic words.

Children should begin to join in Year 2 and should join consistently from Year 3 onwards. This should be encouraged in all curriculum areas except Numeracy.

Handwriting intervention support can be advised by class teacher for those children who require further assistance. Once children master joined handwriting, they should use it in every piece of work.

Teaching Methods and Organisation

Teachers have undergone Big Write and Big Read training by Ros Wilson and employ the methods outlined in the National curriculum. Reading and writing strategies are explicitly modelled during the first part of the lesson. In shared and guided reading, pupils interact with a range of different text types. In shared writing, pupils work individually, in pairs or as a whole class to plan, draft, redraft, edit and present a range of writing genres.

Teachers aim to ensure a balance of sentence and word level work across the week.

ICT is used to support our teaching and to motivate children's learning. The interactive whiteboards are used for writing information and for sharing texts, pictures, other children's work and video clips. A variety of programmes we have available are also used to extend and reinforce children's learning. The use of video and digital cameras is also becoming very much part of our curriculum.

The plenary is used to reinforce and revisit objectives, to consolidate learning and for assessment.

Spelling is taught via a range of strategies:

- Open-ended investigations
- Teacher modelling
- Use of class/personal spelling dictionaries and thesauruses
- Target cards
- Mnemonics
- Framework high and medium frequency word lists
- Look-Cover-Write-Check
- Spelling games
- Letters and Sounds and Support for Spelling, which are used throughout the school

Assessment and Recording

Formative assessment, carried out by the class teacher, is used on a daily/weekly basis to inform future planning and to identify progress against teaching objectives and target.

Continuous assessments of reading, grammar, spelling and writing progress are made throughout the year. Summative Assessment is carried out twice a year through the use of Teacher Assessment.

Staff meetings are used to continually develop and improve in the subject of Literacy, to ensure consistency of approach, standards and expectations.

Reading records are used to record the progress of guided groups who are on a reading scheme.

Marking

All marking must have a clear purpose and take account of the targets set. Marking will make the child aware that the work is valued and will provide encouragement and clearly defined routes for improvement. The teacher will also use marking for diagnostic purposes.

House points and achievement awards are given for effort and achievement. There is a separate Homework Policy.

Inclusion/ SEN

At The Junior School we teach English to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs, English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our English teaching we provide learning opportunities for children of all abilities.

The needs of pupils are addressed by:

- Differentiated approaches in class teaching
- Suitably adapted independent activities
- Extra adult support (LSAs)
- Class teachers focusing on children's needs through group work and target setting
- Phonic/reading/writing intervention programme (Read, Write Inc.)

Where pupils are identified as having a particular difficulty in reading, writing or spelling, teachers refer parents, when necessary to outside agencies for further diagnostic assessment.

Resources

Literacy Resources include:

- Collins Primary Literacy scheme
- Collins Focus on Literacy scheme
- Collins Grammar and Punctuation scheme

- Rising Stars scheme
- National Literacy Strategy Spelling Bank
- Oxford Reading Tree Treetops for guided reading and comprehension
- Selected books from reading schemes such as Collins
- Nelson Handwriting

Equal Opportunities

All pupils have the right to access a quality education that addresses their individual needs. All children cover the statutory content of the programmes of study within the National Curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The curriculum leaders and head teacher is responsible for monitoring literacy across each Key Stage.

Links with Parents

We welcome parental support and volunteers to help within classes for Reading. Parents should support their children with activities sent home from the class teacher. Use of the Reading Record log as a home-school link is actively encouraged. Also advice and information about how to support reading at home is included inside the Reading Record log or speak to your child's teacher for additional guidance. Big Reading Trump Cards are available and include the big reading characters along with generic questions that can be used while listening to children read.

Continuing Professional Development

All staff are encouraged to participate in training courses, either daytime or after school, in order to benefit the school and to further their own professional development and expertise.

Monitoring and review

Monitoring the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching across the English curriculum is the responsibility of the subject leaders. The work of the subject leader also involves:

- Supporting colleagues in their teaching
- Being informed of current developments in the subject
- Providing a strategic lead and direction for English at the school
- Managing literacy budgets, providing appropriate resources
- Liaising with Leadership about strengths and weaknesses of school and teaching
- Indicating further areas of development

