

"At Hilltop Infant School, everyone will work together in a nurturing environment to provide each child with challenging opportunities that encourage a desire for life-long learning."



Hilltop Infant School
Literacy Policy

Ratified by the Governing Body Spring Term 2011

Signature John Young

Chair of Governors

LITERACY POLICY 2010

INTRODUCTION

This policy document is a statement of the school's agreed approach to the Literacy curriculum. It is to inform teachers, support staff, governors, parents/carers and the wider community.

PHILOSOPHY

Literacy is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We believe that language is the art of communication and the key to thought processes. We believe that speaking and listening, reading and writing are not only inseparable from each other but that they form the foundation of all learning processes.

GENERAL AIMS

At Hilltop infant school we aim to develop pupils' abilities within an integrated programme of Speaking & Listening, Reading & Writing. Children will be given opportunities to interrelate the requirements of Literacy within a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of Literacy across the curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught literacy skills.

Early Years Foundation Stage

We relate the Literacy aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Communication, Language and Literacy section of the Curriculum Guidance for Early Years Foundation Stage, which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged nought to five. In the foundation years the emphasis on the teaching and learning of Literacy is often based on children's first hand experiences. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore words and texts, to enjoy them, to learn about them, and to use them in various situations.

Key Stage One

We use a range of approaches, including the Primary Framework Document for Literacy (2006) as the recommended guidance for implementing the statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of Literacy. By the end of Key Stage 1 we aim for most children to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They should begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm and confidence.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

- To enable children to speak clearly and audibly, confidently communicating their needs and ideas, taking into account different audiences and a wide range of contexts.
- To work co-operatively and collaboratively in small groups or pairs and show they are able to take turns to listen and respond appropriately to the ideas of others.
- To encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard and respond appropriately.
- To enable children to become confident, independent and reflective readers.
- To encourage children to become enthusiastic readers who have a desire to read for enjoyment and information.
- To foster the enjoyment of writing, to have an interest in words and their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms.
- To enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction.
- To increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.
- To encourage children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively.

APPROACHES TO TEACHING AND LEARNING

Subject Organisation

The Literacy Curriculum is delivered using a variety of teaching and learning styles. The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is followed to ensure continuity and progression from Pre-School into Key Stage 1. At the beginning of Year 1, the assessments from the Early Years Foundation Stage will enable the planned work to follow a smooth transition. Throughout the school, literacy is taught and enriched through carefully planned cross-curricular themes and interactive activities and also includes discrete literacy sessions. Teachers plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through literacy lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

Differentiation

Pupil provision is related to attainment, not age. We recognise that children extend and realise their potential when they participate in a curriculum that offers challenge, learning experiences and support matched to individual needs. It is our aim to maximise each child's potential by providing appropriate resources, including the use of I.C.T. and a variety of teaching approaches, thereby personalising learning. We plan tasks in Literacy that take into account individual strengths and weaknesses by offering a curriculum that allows our children to work at their own level. Children work in a variety of groupings dependent upon the nature of the activity. These include whole class, group, paired and individual work. Teachers plan visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities in order to appeal to all pupils' learning.

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All children are provided with equal access to the Literacy curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress regardless of gender, ethnic background, E.A.L. (English as an Additional Language) or learning ability, disability, religion or belief.

We select books and other resources that will appeal to both genders and represent a range of cultures and disabilities. Oral discussion helps the children to begin to accept other points of view, beliefs and customs and can be used to challenge stereotypes in a sensitive manner.

THE USE OF I.C.T.

The use of Information and Communication Technology, with clear learning objectives, will promote, enhance and support the teaching and learning in Literacy. ICT is an integral part of literacy and is used at whole-class, group and independent level. The screen projection of text enables it to be read and shared. The projection of a word processor permits the writing process to be modelled effectively. A range of hardware and software is used to develop skills. Using digital cameras, software and other equipment pupils can make their own newspapers, magazines and films which can have text attached to them.

INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES

We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

- Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels. When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Intervention through School Action, School Action Plus or the Statementing process will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP involves additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively and may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to Literacy
- Extra Literacy Support (E.L.S.) is in place to facilitate basic literacy skills for targeted groups of children relevant to their learning needs. This will involve small groups of children in Year 1 during the autumn term.
- Wave 3 is a programme implemented in year 1 for children who are unable to access E.L.S. or who have participated in E.L.S. but have not made significant progress. This involves individual daily sessions with a teaching assistant, working on an alternate focus of writing and reading.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

Work will be assessed in line with the Assessment Policy.

In addition to this other Formative and Summative methods will include:

- Levels are recorded and progress assessed between Sept and July, with a target provided for adding value to an individual's attainment.
- Children will undertake statutory assessment in Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening in Year 2 to help inform teacher assessment levels which are reported to parents at the end of KS 1.
- Children's achievements are shared with parents/carers through consultations and in a written end of year overall report on the child's progress to date in the July of each academic year. Parents will have the opportunity to discuss their children's progress as required.
- Half-termly assessments of independent writing samples using A.P.P. grids
- Guided reading weekly records.
- Self and peer assessment where children are encouraged to evaluate their own achievements in line with success criteria.

During foundation years ongoing assessment takes place as part of the Foundation Stage profile for each child, via observations and dialogue with each child.

Termly writing samples are kept.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Literacy Leader works in conjunction with the S.L.T. monitoring of the standards of the children's work and the quality of teaching.

The role of the subject leader involves:

- keeping informed about developments and new initiatives to support the teaching of language and literacy and ensure staff are informed
- modelling good practice
- supporting teachers in planning and using resources
- being responsible for the upgrading and ordering of resources and arranging for their storage
- organisation and upkeep of the school library and its resources
- organising an annual school book week and book fairs
- updating the school policy annually

APPENDIX A

APPROACHES TO SPEAKING AND LISTENING

The Four Strands of Speaking and Listening: Speaking; Listening; Group Discussion and Interaction, and Drama permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

We aim for children to be able to speak clearly, fluently and coherently, to be able to listen attentively with understanding, pleasure and empathy, and contribute to group discussion effectively.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Giving our children confidence in themselves as speakers and listeners, by showing them that we value their conversations and opinions and encouraging a respect for the views of others.
- Being aware that we provide a model of speakers and listeners in our day-to-day interactions with them and with other adults in our school.
- Helping them to articulate their ideas and provide purposes and audiences for talk within a range of formal and informal situations and in individual, partner, group and class contexts
- By providing opportunities to perform to a larger audience, in assemblies and productions, where children's efforts and skills are acknowledged by staff, parents, carers, visitors and peers.
- By providing a range of experiences where children can work collaboratively and give them opportunities to reflect on talk and explore real and imagined situations through role play, hot-seating, drama and discussions.
- By developing the child's ability to listen with attention and understanding in all areas of the curriculum and where necessary, asking and responding to questions appropriately.

APPENDIX B

APPROACHES TO READING

Early years

Children are taught a wide range of reading strategies, including context, picture cues, and sound/letter correspondence. The school has a variety of pre-readers and reading scheme books used by early readers. Children in the Foundation Stage select books to take home to share with their families as often as they wish. Guided reading books and key words are also taken home to share.

- Links with playgroups are arranged to discuss early approaches to literacy.
- Induction programmes for both parents and pre-school children are organised.
- Parents of pre-school children are invited to a meeting where the school's approaches to literacy are discussed.

To develop our pupils as readers we

- Build on the children's knowledge and experience of print that they bring to school and involve parents from the beginning.
- Provide a stimulating environment, where books and other reading materials are presented in an attractive and inviting way, so that children can see we value books and reading, and will enjoy reading for pleasure and information, and develop an awareness of the importance of reading in their everyday life.
- Ensure that the children are given extensive experience and access to a quality selection of a range of genre, and plan for them to have time to browse and read for pleasure as well as using books as a tool for learning.
- Provide opportunities for children to read aloud, on their own, with their peers, reading partners and with their teachers and also regular opportunities to enjoy stories being read aloud to the class.
- Give opportunities to respond by talking appreciatively and critically about what they have read, discussing authors, themes, characters, settings and plots.
- Encourage children to write their own stories or poems, making books or contributing to class books so that they have opportunities to become authors.

Phonics

The teaching of phonic skills begins on entry to the school with up to 3 daily lessons of E.R.P. (Essex Reading Programme) Each session comprises of "word-level" work, focussing on oral and aural phonological skills, sight vocabulary, and phonics. In each session children are also explicitly shown how to apply their developing skills to text.

Guided reading

Children read a variety of texts in small groups to their teacher or nominated adult in school on a weekly basis. Children are grouped for reading according to ability and read at an appropriate level. They are assessed regularly and groupings and colour bands are adjusted when necessary. Guided-reading records are kept for each reading group, in which a learning focus and progress notes are noted.

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Shared reading

Regular shared reading takes place where pupils are encouraged to listen, discuss, re-enact and develop their own ideas in co-operation with others.

Individual reading

In Key Stage 1, each child chooses a colour coded book from the classroom book trolley to share at home. In this way children are encouraged to develop skills of selection and have some autonomy within a framework, to choose the book they want to read. Each child has a reading diary, where dates, titles of books read are recorded and parents are encouraged to add comments. The reading diary acts as a contact between all who hear the child read, and is an important link with home.

Parental Involvement

- Reading with a supportive adult is the centre of our reading instruction and reading can be best learned with the support of both school and parents. Therefore we actively encourage parents to participate and share in their child's reading.
- All children are encouraged to take home books to read daily. Parents and teachers can communicate in the child's personal reading diary/home-school booklet, on a regular basis.
- Comments and activities from guided reading sessions during the literacy hour are also recorded at the back of these diaries, so that parents can focus on these aspects with their child.

The School Library

- Our library has an important role to play, in providing a quiet, comfortable and attractive area for browsing, reading, carrying out research and selecting materials for classroom use.
- Care of the library is everyone's responsibility and all pupils should be encouraged to replace books carefully in their appropriate places.
- Reference books are catalogued and arranged by a basic Dewey system.
- Fiction books are arranged in book boxes and on shelves alphabetically by author.
- There is an extensive range of "big books" organised into curriculum areas.
- Each class has an allocated time when the children often share books with parent helpers and are encouraged to select a book that they may take home on weekly basis.

Book Promotion

- The school runs its own book shop which is held on a fortnightly basis. Children have the opportunity to purchase savings stamps towards the cost of a book.
- We hold an annual Book Week in school to promote reading and enjoyment in books.
- We run a Christmas and Spring Book Fair in school.
- We also encourage joining the local library and participation in regular summer "Book Trails."

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APPENDIX C

APPROACHES TO WRITING

To develop our children as writers we

- Treat children as writers, from the earliest stage, who will have something they will want to communicate, by building on their writing skills they have acquired and their knowledge of print from the environment.
- Provide experiences where the child can acquire confidence and a positive attitude to writing.
- Develop and sustain writing skills by providing opportunities for children to write for a range of purposes and audiences.
- Use guided writing sessions to model writing skills, teaching children how to compose, amend and revise their writing.
- Teach children to become critical readers of their own writing by using self - evaluation and checking their work independently for sense, accuracy and meaning.
- Teach grammar and punctuation in the context of children's own writing, as well as exercises and word games and by modelling examples.
- Encourage children's ability to organise and present imaginative factual writing and poetry in different ways.
- Teach strategies for spelling to enable children to become confident and competent spellers.

HANDWRITING

Handwriting begins in the E. Y. F. S. with mark-making and patterns. All pupils are given access to a wide range of writing tools and mediums to practise the early fine motor skills. Pupils are given opportunities to trace and follow writing patterns until they are confident of writing independently. Pupils are encouraged to develop fluent lines of correctly orientated letters from an early age and emergent writing is encouraged. We believe that discrete handwriting sessions where children's formation and pencil grip can be readily overseen should take place at least weekly basis and more frequently in the Foundation year. Correct posture and positioning of paper or books are also emphasized during these sessions. The needs of left handed children are also taken into consideration.

Letter formation and handwriting is taught and modelled using the Nelson style. Individual letters are taught with flicks that lead onto a cursive script. Children will begin to join their letters from year 1 and encouraged to join their writing regularly in year 2. Children are encouraged to think carefully about the presentation of their work and to develop clear, legible and fluent hand-writing.

SPELLING

Spelling is an integral part of the writing process; children who spell with ease are able to concentrate on the content of their writing. Spelling strategies are taught explicitly and important links between spelling and handwriting are made. Our approach in school is based on the N.L.S. and Early Reading Programme. We gradually build children's spelling vocabulary by introducing them to familiar letter strings and conventions and continue to practise those already introduced. We investigate and learn how to use common spelling patterns and frequently used prefixes and suffixes. Children will also learn to spell a number of common sight words and high frequency words. Children are taught the LOOK, SAY, REMEMBER, COVER, and WRITE, CHECK strategy for learning and checking their spellings. The use of classroom resources including displays, word banks, wordbooks and dictionaries to support spelling is actively encouraged

CONCLUSION

This policy also needs to be in line with other school policies and therefore should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

Early Years policy

Assessment and Record Keeping

Marking policy

Homework policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

Gifted and talented policy

ICT Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Member of staff responsible: Ms J. Harvey

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