

# **RSD WHOLE SCHOOL LITERACY POLICY**

## **RATIONALE**

Literacy is the ability to read and use written information and to write appropriately and legibly, taking account of different purposes, contexts, conventions and audiences. It involves the development of an integrated approach to the acquisition of talking, reading and writing skills across the curriculum; knowledge that allows a speaker, writer and reader to use language appropriate to different social situations; use of formal and informal language across areas of social interaction; the ability to read, understand and use information in multiple formats and platforms, including traditional print and on-screen material.

*Count, Read: Succeed* (DENI 2010)

## **PURPOSE**

Literacy is a whole school responsibility. At Royal School Dungannon we are all teachers of Literacy. All members of the school community are expected to support and promote the drive to raise the standards of literacy within the school by employing consistent approaches and expectations across the school. We believe in the fundamental principle that Literacy is the key to improving learning and raising standards; it enables pupils to access all subjects, to read for information and pleasure, to communicate confidently and effectively and to prepare for the adult world, future studies and employment. High quality literacy is, ultimately, empowering.

The School Improvement policy document *Every School a Good School* (DENI 2009) has outlined indicators of what will be recognised as effective performance under four main areas:

- Child Centred Provision
- High Quality Teaching and Learning
- Effective Leadership
- A school connected to its local community

RSD recognises the importance of these areas and this policy has been developed to take account of them. This document is underpinned by the learning intentions outlined in the Language Framework and also references the Levels of Progression for Communication.

## **CHILD CENTRED PROVISION**

### **Inclusion**

We aim to provide for all pupils so that they reach their full potential in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils

are underachieving and those with SEN in order to take steps to improve their attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

- Pupils will take CAT ability tests in the Christmas term of years 8 and 11
- Year 8 pupils will sit GL Assessment's *Progress in English* tests in the summer term to provide a standardised baseline score and to identify potential underachieving pupils.
- Common assessment tasks will be used to monitor pupils' progress.
- Pupils exhibiting a disparity between written and oral literacy can be flagged up by concerned staff and tested for SpLD
- Classroom assistants will be utilized to provide additional support for pupils with a statement of SEN
- The importance of parental support in the child's learning is recognised and as such, parents will be kept fully aware of any aberration in their child's progress. It is expected that parents keep abreast of their child's homework requirements and endorse the pupil's homework diary on a weekly basis.
- Gifted pupils will be set extension tasks to allow them to further develop and expand their learning and encourage independent thinking.
- Pupils with SpLD in literacy will be offered electronic spell checks, voice recorders or laptops when appropriate.

### **Intervention Programmes**

Working in conjunction with SEP, underachieving pupils can be provided with withdrawal from class for individual or paired literacy tuition. Pupils are selected based upon exam performance, school reports and common assessment in literacy based areas. The Head of English, Head of Year and Head of Keystage are instrumental in pupil selection.

A Writing Partnership programme will be provided in conjunction with St Patrick's Academy to provide 1:2 writing with KS3 pupils and KS5 mentors. The mentors will be trained and their lessons planned and checked. This programme is currently available to year 9 pupils.

In future, PIE and/or CAT data will be used to identify pupils in year 8 who may benefit from support.

Where appropriate, ELB specialists will become involved to offer help and support e.g. AAIS, Hearing Support Services etc

### **Equal Opportunities**

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability or home background.

## **HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING**

### **STRATEGIES**

#### **Reading**

Across the whole curriculum teachers will provide activities for pupils to:

- Read a range of texts for information, ideas and enjoyment and show engagement through identifying, summarising and synthesising information and details
- read to explore meaning and to develop understanding
- learn how to use a range of reading strategies to read with increasing independence including skimming, scanning, sifting and selecting
- read to take notes from a text
- learn how to use a range of contextual clues to establish meaning including indexes, illustrations, fonts, headings, colour etc.
- learn how to select from written material, reformulate, question and challenge what they read in books, encyclopaedias, and newspapers or from ICT sources
- where appropriate, attention will be paid to developing higher order reading skills, e.g. awareness of bias, inconsistency and the articulation of alternative interpretations of what has been read
- Teachers will provide reading material of high quality, which is up to date, relevant and appropriate for the ages and abilities of pupils.
- Opportunities may be created for teachers to refer to pupils' use of reading in assessments and reports for all curriculum areas.
- The library will continue to provide opportunities to encourage the idea that reading is a worthwhile, valuable and enjoyable activity through the development of its fiction collections across all key stages.

#### **Writing**

Across the whole curriculum teachers will provide activities for pupils to:

- plan, draft, discuss and reflect on their writing, using ICT where appropriate
- write for a range of purposes and audiences
- make notes in a variety of formats, e.g. spider diagrams, thought-showers, bullet

points

- Teachers will set writing tasks that have clear purposes, are objective driven, which are appropriate for the age and ability of the pupils concerned and which challenge pupils.
- Teachers will model for pupils how to structure their writing using a variety of sentence structures, paragraphs and a wide range of punctuation, including higher order punctuation e.g. semi- colons, colons, ellipsis and brackets.
- Where pupils are asked to write in a particular genre, teachers will ensure that pupils are familiar with the appropriate style and conventions.
- Teachers will correct errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling and demand carefully presented and well-organised work at all times. A common marking scheme has been provided in Appendix A to offer one possible template for the marking of continuous prose. It is recognised that this may not be universally suitable but the inclusion, where possible, of some elements of the common marking system within Departmental marking policies is encouraged. A specific mark for literacy elements in common assessment and examinations should also to be promoted whenever possible.
- Teachers will display key words and meanings in the classroom and will teach subject- specific vocabulary and spelling.
- Dictionaries and thesauri will be provided and pupils will be taught how to use them

### **Talking and Listening**

Across the whole curriculum teachers will provide activities for pupils to:

- listen and carry out instructions
- listen to others and respond appropriately
- listen for a specific purpose
- explore and develop ideas with others, through their talk
- use oral work as a precursor to written work
- participate orally in pairs, groups and the whole class
- ask questions to challenge others' ideas, showing sensitivity
- make distinctive contributions in different roles

- use language precisely and coherently; exploit language techniques for effect and use Standard English in appropriate contexts
- identify the main points to arise from a discussion
- evaluate the effectiveness of spoken contributions in class and in other contexts

### **ICT and Literacy**

Students use ICT in lessons to enhance their learning, such as drafting their work, using multimedia to study how words and images are used, reading multi-modal texts and giving presentations about their subjects.

Video cameras, digital cameras and editing software are available to allow pupils to create and edit their own multimedia presentations.

RSD's Virtual Learning Environment is currently in development and will provide continuing support for pupils both inside and outside school hours.

### **Cross-curricular opportunities for literacy development**

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to develop Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities and to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through language lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

The following will be considered:

- Awareness of the various styles of pupil learning i.e. visual, auditory, kinaesthetic and the encouragement for pupils to use and develop a range of styles
- Use of a range of active learning strategies in the classroom, including drama
- Ensure effective questioning by the teachers and pupils

### **Assessment for Learning**

Pupils should be given feedback on their reading, writing, listening and speaking which helps them understand the progress they are making and helps them know what and how they need to improve.

## **EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP**

### **Senior Leaders**

Senior Leaders should:

- lead and give a high profile to Literacy
- accept overall responsibility for the delivery of the school's Literacy Policy
- provide opportunities for staff training on Literacy
- support the school's implementation of Literacy initiatives
- monitor departments' implementation of the Literacy Policy
- monitor exam and assessment outcomes to ensure that no group is disadvantaged with respect to race, ethnicity or gender
- provide a dedicated literacy budget

### **The Literacy Co-ordinator**

The Literacy Co-ordinator should:

- support departments in the implementation of the school's Literacy Policy
- support departments in the implementation of literacy strategies
- encourage departments to learn from each other's practice by sharing ideas
- work with the SLT to develop and raise whole school literacy
- work with the Head of English to co-ordinate KS3 literacy initiatives
- liaise with the Head of EAL for EAL pupils
- liaise with the Librarian to develop whole school literacy
- write a whole school Literacy Development Plan and ensure actions on the plan are carried out
- devise a whole school literacy audit
- work with SELB's literacy advisers

- help to monitor the impact of the Literacy Policy on standards of literacy
- provide Literacy INSET for staff
- provide information to staff on Levels of Progression in Communication descriptors to enable staff to plan their lessons and understand students' literacy skills better
- provide strategies in order to support staff with the planning and teaching of reading, writing, speaking and listening
- provide information for parents enabling them to support their child's developing literacy

### **The Librarian**

The school Librarian should:

- provide appropriate resources to support the curriculum
- provide appropriate resources to support homework and other curriculum tasks
- support staff in teaching pupils how to research independently from a range of sources
- establish and promote KS3 and KS4 reading clubs
- participate in the delivery of literacy programmes to those disappplied from a modern language
- promote reading for pleasure and provide reading material appropriate to this
- provide a safe and supportive environment to encourage reading for pleasure
- promote Literacy and the pleasure in the written word by arranging author visits, displays and developing the school ethos and culture by celebrating World Book Day, National Poetry Day, Remembrance Day etc

### **The Head of Department**

The Head of Department should:

- ensure that 'subject specific literacy' is clearly identified in schemes of work, and that there is obvious progression through the key stages
- seek to find opportunities to liaise with the Whole School Literacy Co-ordinator

and the English Department to provide continuity

- monitor the work of the department with regard to the inclusion of subject specific literacy strategies in lesson planning
- encourage good practice e.g. modelling and close collaboration between colleagues in order to promote literacy developments
- use available assessment data to identify appropriate literacy strategies
- establish displays within their curriculum area that contain standard English and support whole school Literacy

### **The SENCO**

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator should:

- liaise with the Literacy Co-ordinator about pupils who exhibit difficulties in literacy
- communicate with all subject staff about those pupils who have literacy difficulties and give advice on what staff can do to help these pupils in their subject
- monitor pupils with literacy difficulties through IEPs and review meetings
- provide Specialist Teacher assessment to screen for SPLD e.g. dyslexia
- liaise with the Examinations Officer to secure appropriate access arrangements in public examinations
- liaise with SELB's peripatetic services and make use of provision provided.

### **The EAL coordinator**

The EAL coordinator should:

- liaise with the Literacy Co-ordinator about EAL pupils and their progress
- liaise with the Head of English to ensure convergence of Programmes of Study and EAL.
- liaise with the Literacy Co-ordinator and the Heads of Departments so that EAL pupils develop a more secure understanding of the various question stems common to particular subjects and so become more secure in the written responses that they give.

- liaise with the school Librarian to ensure bilingual and multicultural resources are available in the Library, to ensure multicultural reading programmes in the library and to raise the literacy level of bilingual learners.
- Develop and review Alternative Pathways for repeat English pupils.

### **All staff**

All staff should:

- ensure that they are familiar with the specific literacy demands of their subject and ensure sufficient coverage of these skills in their lesson planning
- be able to identify a pupil's literacy strengths and weaknesses and know how to build upon these in order to promote pupil progress
- ensure that pupils take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs and making improvements
- have literacy displays in their classroom, such as word walls, guidelines to support literacy across the curriculum and literacy for their specific subject, such as key words.
- share good practice by exhibiting or exemplifying pupils' work

## **A SCHOOL CONNECTED TO ITS LOCAL COMMUNITY**

### **Parents**

Parents can support their children by:

- Attendance at parents' nights or information sessions
- Encouraging reading and discussing topical issues with their children at home
- Supporting homework by checking and signing the pupil's homework diary, encouraging high standards of accuracy and presentation
- Encourage use of public library services

**DEPARTMENTS CONTRIBUTING TO THE ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING OF COMMUNICATION**

Cross Curricular Skill	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Communication	History	RE/Science	English

In Year 9 RE reports on the writing strand while Science reports on reading and talking and listening.

**KS3 LEVELS FOR YEAR 10 PUPILS IN COMMUNICATION**

			SAT	SAT		
KS3 %	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	Av
Eng L5	7.1	29	27.4	11	12	17.3
Eng L6+	87.8	62.4	71.6	88	83.7	78.7

**LEVELS FOR YEAR 10 PUPILS IN COMMUNICATION IN 2013**

	Communication	Targets for 2014
% Level 4	1.9	
% Level 5	24.8	
% Level 6	60.0	
% Level 7	12.4	
Cum % Level 4	1.9	
Cum % Level 5	26.7	
Cum % Level 6	86.7	
Cum % Level 7	99.0	

**KEY STAGE 4 ENGLISH LANGUAGE GCSE**

GCSE %	Actual 2009	Actual 2010	Actual 2011	Actual 2012	Actual 2013	Average 2009 - 2013	Target 2014
Grades A*-C	93.75%	91.3%	90%	88.4%	94%	91.49%	95%

## Appendix A

### Draft Marking Policy

#### Marginalia

Good point = ✓

Very good point = ✓✓

(Use ticks to indicate points you've rewarded; don't use them to simply delineate sections you have read)

Spelling error = **sp**

Wrong word e.g. *where* and not *were* = **ww**

New paragraph = //

Mistakes in syntax = underline error + *syntax* in margin

Tense error = underline error + *tense* in margin

Punctuation = mark as appropriate

Irrelevance = **ΛΛΛΛΛΛΛΛ**

Point needs further development = **develop**

Omission = **^**

Lacking clarity = **??** (two question marks distinguish from a punctuation error)

#### Summative Commentary

- 1- Good sense of negative aspects of Jan's character
- 2- Well chosen rhetorical qs
- 3- Effective use of short sentences to indicate panic

#### To improve...

- 1- More carefully chosen adjectives in your description of John would help e.g. "ferocious" instead of "scary"
- 2 - Careless presentation

My new words were... (pupils highlight new words included for effect in their writing)

Spelling corrections x 3