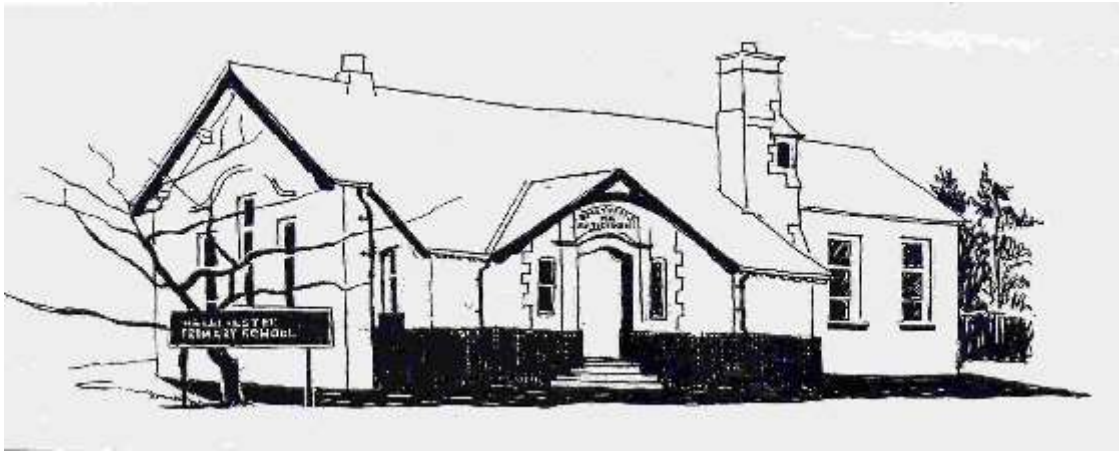


# Ballyvester Primary School



## Language and Literacy Policy

## **Introduction**

At Ballyvester Primary School we accept the fundamental principle that Literacy is the key to improving learning and raising standards to listen, speak, read and write. We aim to provide a supportive, stimulating and secure environment where pupils are encouraged to express themselves and where their contributions are valued and heard.

All teachers are responsible for the development of Literacy in their own classroom and the cross curricular teaching of Literacy through topic work.

Literacy is defined in '*Count, Read, Succeed*' as:

'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, listening, reading and writing skills across the curriculum;
- Knowledge that allows a speaker, writer and reader to use language appropriate to different social situations;
- Formal and informal language across all areas of social interaction and;
- The ability to read, understand and use information in multiple formats and platforms, including traditional print and on-screen material.

Throughout this policy the term Literacy is used in a wide and inclusive way. The appropriate application of the term will vary with context. It can include 'Language and Literacy' when considering the curriculum as well as the Cross Curricular Skill of COMMUNICATION.

***Put simply- at Ballyvester Primary School we view 'Language and Literacy' and 'Communication' as one and the same.***

## Aims

Communication is central to the whole curriculum.

Across the curriculum, at a level appropriate to their ability, pupils should be provided with opportunities to develop skills in Talking and Listening, Reading and Writing.

1. To give pupils the opportunity to experience many forms of writing appropriate to context, purpose and audience and reflecting **ALL AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM.**
2. To assist pupils' self-expression in reading, writing and conversation.
3. To offer pupils the opportunities to explore the differences between written and spoken language in the course of their work.
4. To help pupils analyse and express their reactions to experiences.
5. To encourage pupils to discuss and constructively criticise each other's work.
6. To encourage children to recognise and master the conventions of writing e.g. spelling and punctuation within the context of their work.
7. To help pupils develop an ability to make and shape text in order to communicate meaning in written language.
8. To encourage pupils to plan, compose, revise and redraft some of their writing in discussion with teachers and peers.
9. To assist pupils to communicate using non-verbal modes, using a range of techniques, forms and media to convey information and ideas creatively.

## **Roles and responsibilities:**

The class teacher:

- To facilitate the development of Literacy
- To promote the skills of reading, writing and talking and listening
- To identify the differing needs of each child
- To identify children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and create a Personal Learning Plan (PEP) or plan for classroom assistant intervention
- To differentiate the level of work for each group
- To monitor and assess children's progress regularly
- To keep parents informed of their child's progress
- To participate in staff development meetings and training

## **The Role of the Literacy Co-Ordinator**

The Literacy co-ordinator will co-ordinate the Area of Learning 'Language & Literacy' within the school, aiming to secure high quality learning and teaching, effective use of resources, and the highest standards of achievement for all pupils.

The Literacy Co-ordinator will:

- Lead the development of policy
- Keep up to date with recent Literacy developments
- Monitor, evaluate and record progress on the Literacy action plan
- Manage and analyse data
- Promote self-evaluation
- Audit and support colleagues in their Continued Professional Development (CPD)
- Organise school-based INSET as required
- Lead all internal standardisation of Communication
- Lead the compilation of CCEA Communication portfolio
- Co-ordinate the purchase and organisation of resources
- Maintain and encourage communication with all relevant outside agencies, including DENI, EA, CCEA, etc.
- Report to the Principal and Governors about the school's Literacy development.

## **TALKING AND LISTENING**

At Ballyvester Primary School we recognise that talking and listening are fundamental skills to the pupils' development. Pupils are offered a language rich environment where their opinions are sought and valued and opportunities are given to participate to talk in both formal and informal situations.

Shared reading takes place where pupils are encouraged to listen, discuss, re-enact and develop their own ideas. ICT equipment and media are used to extend and promote talking and listening skills in Literacy lessons. Role play situations are provided through play and Literacy sessions to develop confidence, self-esteem and provide an opportunity to express their ideas.

Staff are responsible for emphasising the importance of listening.

Assemblies, whole school productions, poetry recitals, newspaper articles, participation in church services and community events provide the opportunity for the children's efforts and skills to be acknowledged by a wider audience.

Teaching approaches:

- Good listening reminders are displayed within the classroom
- Activities are planned to provide a wide range of discussions throughout all areas of the curriculum
- Teachers will model oral language and will provide opportunities to develop language skills through:
  - Think, pair, share work
  - Small and large group work
  - Individual work

### **Foundation stage:**

The statutory requirements for Talking and Listening in the Foundation Stage are:

1. Attention and Listening skills
2. Phonological awareness
3. Social use of language
4. Language and thinking
5. An extended vocabulary

(The Northern Ireland Curriculum)

Planning, observation and the provision of talking and listening within play are vital to the development of these skills through:

1. Show and Tell
2. Think pair share
3. Hot seating

4. Circle time
5. Role play

**Key stage 1:**

“Children should be helped to speak clearly with clear pronunciation, intonation and use their language in imaginative ways.” (The Northern Ireland Curriculum)

**Key stage 2:**

“Children should be helped to develop the ability to listen and respond in a range of contexts...to speak coherently and confidently for a variety of purposes and audiences. (The Northern Ireland Curriculum)

**Assessment:**

This is continuous and informal and the pupils will be assessed upon their ability to:

1. Speak with confidence
2. Take turns in conversations
3. Take the views of others into account
4. Ask relevant questions
5. Spontaneous speech
6. Body language

## Phonics

### **Aim**

To teach children oral discrimination, phonemic awareness and rhyme awareness in order to encourage good communication skills.

Learning Outcomes:

- To develop phonological awareness.
- To learn the 40+ sounds of English.
- To blend and segment sounds to form words.
- To transfer these skills across the curriculum promoting independent reading and writing.

### **Teaching and Learning Styles**

Visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning styles will be catered for in line with our Learning and Teaching Policy. Our teaching at all levels should include:

- Teacher exposition
- Whole class, group and individual work
- Tricky word vocabulary

## Reading

### **Rationale**

‘Children should be helped to develop confidence in reading using a range of methods. They should be given opportunities to develop their confidence and independence through enjoyable reading experiences that will help them develop individual tastes and preferences and make sense of what they read.’ (NI Curriculum)

### **Aims**

We believe that our children will learn to read, will enjoy a wide variety of texts and will become independent, critical, life-long readers and learners. We believe that reading is a problem-solving activity.

We aim to:

- Develop a positive reading atmosphere in the school where pupils develop attitude leading to confidence, enjoyment of books and an enthusiasm for reading.
- Teach pupils to read with fluency, understanding and accuracy, using a wide variety of texts so that they can read for a variety of purposes and audiences.

### **Classroom environment**

We will provide a classroom environment where both girls and boys feel inspired to read. We will establish an attractive and well displayed reading area where appropriate reading material is available. Books of different genres will be displayed, taking account of the interests of both girls and boys. Fiction and non-fiction material, including big books, poetry, plays, magazines, leaflets and catalogues will be available. Environmental print e.g. charts, labels, lists and posters will be displayed. Children’s own work will be celebrated with displays of book reviews, class made books, topic books and samples of work.

### **Teaching approaches and organisation of learning**

The reading programme in the school will reflect the needs of the children and the requirements of the N.I. Curriculum. Our programme will include:

- Exposure to a wide range of reading materials, including print and digital media
- In Year 1 children will move from non-ability groups to emergent groups towards guided reading groups
- Books are banded from Foundation to Y4 to provide a breadth of reading
- Regular reading to children in all classes Y1 – Y7
- Developing phonological awareness
- Jolly phonics resources
- The use of key strategies of Modelled, Shared and Guided Reading moving towards Independent Reading



- Uninterrupted, sustained, silent reading;
- Visits to the library
- Group novels from Y4
- Reciprocal Reading
- Involvement of others e.g. Book Buddies

We recognise that our children will have varying needs and we will seek at all stages to provide appropriate, differentiated reading tasks to meet their needs and extend their understanding and increase their enjoyment of text.

### **Reading for information**

Reading for the purposes of study requires specific skills. It is linked to the skill of Managing Information (from the TS & PC framework) whereby children access, select, record and communicate information.

Through modelled, shared and guided reading we will develop the following skills:

- extracting information from books using the contents pages or index;
- classifying information by alphabetical order;
- Posing questions for their research
- using dictionaries
- using a search engine on the internet
- use skimming a text to get an impression of what it is about;
- scanning a text to search for specific information;
- making notes, selecting what is relevant and appropriate;
- distinguishing between fact and opinion in evaluating information reference materials such as encyclopaedias, atlases, directories, timetables.

## Writing

### **Rationale**

'Children should learn to communicate meaning through enjoyable writing activities, whereby they express themselves in writing both imaginatively and factually and including digital resources' (NI Curriculum).

Writing is an essential tool in the learning process. Children write to express their emotions, to convey their thoughts and opinions and to present evidence of research. By developing these skills, we can equip our children to use writing across the range of curricular activities in which they are involved.

### **Aims**

- To develop the ability to write effectively in various forms according to the purpose and audience.
- To help children to write to express their emotions, convey their thoughts and feelings and present evidence of research.
- To develop experiences and to equip the children to use writing across the range of curricular activities.
- To promote conventional spelling, punctuation, grammatical organisation and handwriting.

### **Classroom Environment**

We will create a stimulating classroom environment where children see the teacher writing and sharing the process leading to the final outcome.

They are encouraged to:

- Write for themselves
- Discuss writing with the teacher and each other
- Experiment with writing

We will provide an area with a variety of paper and writing utensils. Experimental or emergent writing areas for the Key Stages will include:

- Magnetic letters
- List of keywords
- Wall lists
- ICT Resources
- Word Books
- Reference material – dictionaries, thesauri, interactive whiteboard
- Display samples of writing in different genres and by favourite authors and poets

## Teaching approaches and organisation of learning

We adopt a structured approach to the process of teaching selected forms of writing, as follows:

- **Familiarisation** -(exposure to many samples of the genre)
- **Problem Solving-** (exploring text genre)
- **Agreeing Success Criteria** – (for the piece of writing)
- **Modelled Writing** (teacher writing for children)
- **Shared Writing** -(teacher writing with the children)
- **Guided Writing** -(teacher supporting children's writing)
- **Independent Writing-** (Children writing on their own)
- **Feedback to pupil against success criteria**
- **Peer assessment using the language of the form**

Modelled, shared, guided and independent writing sessions take place across all age groups and all genres of writing. We display various forms of writing so that children become familiar with the structure and language forms e.g. letters, diaries, lists, invitations, notes, menus, recipes, newspapers, reports. Stimuli for writing e.g. artefacts, drama, visitors, competitions, first-hand experience etc.

Children write for other curriculum areas, themselves, their peers, younger pupils, parents and other adults as well as for the wider community, e.g. letters, brochures and guiders, competitions, displays in shops, library etc.

Children write in various genres, for a variety of purposes e.g. to narrate, entertain, amuse, retell events, instruct and explain, classify and describe, inform and complain and persuade or argue.

Some writing is carried out completely for the individual and so no redraft is required. On other occasions writing will be completed when a draft is necessary. Children are encouraged to have a go and try to spell words for themselves. In actively exploring and developing a particular form of writing the children will be involved in Thinking, Problem-solving and Decision making, Being Creative and Working with Others.

We will try to help children to read each other's work and to comment constructively. Children will be encouraged to collaborate with each other as they develop their writing and during the refining of their work. This will help them to exchange ideas and will stimulate their thinking. We will work with pupils to set targets for improvement appropriate to their age and ability.

## **Handwriting**

'From the earliest mark-making, children are showing an understanding that messages can be recorded. As they realise that print carries a constant message, they recognise the need for more conventional forms of handwriting which other people can read.' (Handwriting in the Foundation Stage).

Children progress through a variety of developmental stages before they have the necessary hand eye co-ordination, fine motor skills and visual discrimination to produce a conventional handwriting style. At Ballyvester Primary School we aim to promote handwriting which develops from an early print to an individual writing style which is neat, swift and legible. Handwriting should demonstrate knowledge of lower and upper case letter formation, size and spacing.

The Nelson Handwriting scheme is followed throughout the school.

## **Parental and Community involvement**

We believe that the education of our pupils is a collaborative enterprise involving teachers, parents, pupils and the wider community. Regular and positive communications will be made between teachers and parents, on a formal and informal basis.

We aim to harness the support of the home and to stimulate greater support in order to enhance the pupils' Literacy development. Homework is seen as an integral and coordinated element of the school's practice. Parents are encouraged to share in Language and Literacy activities with their child following teacher guidance.

Opportunities to promote parental and community involvement include:

- Parent meetings - Throughout all Key-Stages
- School performances, e.g. Christmas show, assemblies, other events
- Visitors to the school, e.g. storytellers, visiting theatre groups, poets, authors, school nurse, dentist, fire service.

## **Assessment**

We employ formative, diagnostic, evaluative and summative tests throughout the school. We provide for formal and informal discussion and meetings e.g. Annual written report to parents, discussion with parents and discussions with parents during annual parent meetings. We make use of the following standardised and diagnostic tests to monitor, track and plan for future learning:

- Progress Test in English (Year 3 – Year 7 annually)
- YARC (York Assessment for Reading Comprehension)
- End of Key Stage Assessment (Year 4 and Year 7)
- CAT (Year 4 & Year 6)

Scores from the standardised tests are recorded in the SIMS Module, Assessment Manager. Data is used to track and monitor progress, to set individual targets and to inform future planning.

In addition we use the following class-based assessment tasks:

- Mid-Year tests / end of term assessments
- Teacher monitoring and observation
- Bi-annual parent interviews to discuss progress

**Assessment for Learning** involves the following key actions:

- Sharing learning intentions
- Sharing success criteria
- Giving feedback to pupils
- Effective questioning; and
- Encouraging pupils to assess and evaluate their own and others' work.

## **Identifying and Addressing underachievement**

In Ballyvester Primary School we consider it absolutely essential that each and every pupil fulfils their full potential as a learner. To this end, we aim to identify pupils who are under-achieving and to ensure that an appropriate remediation process is set in place, based on specific areas identified for improvement. Every pupil's current P.T.E. (Progress through English) standardised score is compared with their most recent C.A.T. (Verbal) standardised score. If a pupil's score is more than 10 points below their CATV, this is an indication that the pupil is under-achieving in Literacy. Withdrawal support will be offered to this pupil to address the underachievement and close the gap. This is monitored from bi-annually.

## **Curriculum Planning**

We operate a planning procedure agreed by the whole teaching staff, based upon the Northern Ireland Curriculum. Children have a variety of phonic activities within Literacy lessons.

## **Differentiation**

We aim to encourage all children to reach their full potential through the provision of varied opportunities. We recognise that our curriculum planning must allow pupils to gain a progressively deeper understanding and competency as they move through the school. Careful thought will be given to the provision of appropriately structured work for all children. When necessary, additional support will be provided through withdrawal lessons.

## **Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities**

Teachers will ensure that the activities which the pupils experience in Mathematics and Numeracy will enable them to develop the statutory Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities set out in the Northern Ireland Curriculum:

- Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision Making;
- Self-Management;
- Working with Others;
- Managing Information;
- Being Creative.

These opportunities are to be identified in each class' 6 weekly plans.

## **ICT**

We aim to make maximum use of ICT across the curriculum to promote the pupils' Literacy skills, as well as developing competence in ICT skills. This involves the use of computers, iPads, Interactive White Board and also the possibilities offered by the wide range of audio-visual materials, graphics, radio and television broadcasts available.

Pupils will have ample opportunities to gain confidence in the use of ICT, for example in using word processors for drafting, using spread sheets and databases, and using CD-ROM and the Internet to research and communicate, incorporating the 5 E's.

The range of ICT resources available include:

- Desktops and Laptops with access to C2K network
- Interactive Whiteboards
- iPads
- Internet access

ICT will be used to enhance Literacy skills, not just within the programme of study for Language and Literacy, but as an integral feature of all programmes of study.

## **Special Educational Needs**

The class teacher's role is central in meeting the special needs of each individual pupil. The following action will be taken to meet the needs of identified children:

- Early identification of problems reinforced by results of standardised tests
- Informing SENCO of concerns about a child's progress for consultation and possible placement on the Code of Practice and SEN Register
- Providing children with SEN access to a broad and balanced curriculum and ensuring that the provision is at an appropriate level to provide the child with some level of success through differentiated classroom tasks
- Liaising with SENCO in providing individual PLPs for all children with SEN in their class. The Education Plans should set clear, realistic targets, which indicate the special educational provision required to address the needs of the pupils on the register.
- Liaison with Education Authority (Educational Psychology, Cottown Outreach support)

## **Monitoring & Evaluation**

Monitoring and Evaluation of Language and Literacy within the school will include:

- Classroom observation
- Book Scoops
- Class and corridor displays
- Folders/portfolios of pupils' work

- Discussion and sharing of approaches at staff meetings
- Teachers' Planners
- Home-school reading records
- Pupil target setting
- Standardised tests e.g. PTE, Salford
- End of Key Stage data and Benchmarking data
- Running Records
- Long and Medium term planning (half termly)
- Pupils' self-assessment records/pupils' reading diaries
- Work samples of pupils' responses to reading
- Parent Questionnaires
- PLPs

### **Connected School Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Learning and Teaching Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Marking Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- ICT Policy

### **Policy Review**

This policy will be agreed with the Board of Governors and shared with teachers and parents. It will be reviewed every three years by the Literacy co-ordinator and uploaded to the school website.