



Literacy Policy

Rationale

In Gilnahirk Primary School we believe that Literacy is a fundamental life skill. We provide for the language development of children so that they can use language to communicate in relationships and learning. Children are encouraged to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers. Children are given opportunities to use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

Principles

At Gilnahirk Primary School

- We strive to ensure each child has the opportunity to reach their full potential
- All staff members have the responsibility for the development of Language and Literacy
- Language and Literacy is considered in a holistic way extending across all Areas of Learning.

Aims

- To raise the standards of Literacy
- To enable children to listen to others and to express themselves in spoken and written language considering audience, context and purpose
- To provide children with a range of text for enjoyment and learning
- To develop children as creative users of language
- To promote a wide range of ICT and media texts for the further development of language across the curriculum.

Role of the Teacher

In the teaching of Literacy, the teacher's role is to:

- Foster positive attitudes towards Literacy
- Provide a supportive and stimulating environment
- Organise purposeful activities and ensure work is differentiated so that children reach their full potential
- Provide a variety of resources and opportunities that encourage the development of skills in talking, listening, reading and writing
- Observe, monitor, evaluate and assess the development of skills in Literacy.



Talking and Listening

Talking and Listening are fundamental skills upon which the educational development of children depends. Through purposeful interaction with teachers, children will be provided with experiences that develop their skills and their thinking.

Classroom Environment

In Gilnahirk Primary we create a caring classroom atmosphere in which children feel motivated to interact and will provide useful talking and listening activities.

The teacher will share in the language experience of the children and will value all contributions.

Displays of items of interest, samples of children's work and topic resources will lead to discussion.

Opportunities to talk and listen will be provided for in all Areas of Learning.

Teaching Approaches and Organisation of Learning

The teacher response to talk will be to:

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|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Give confidence | Encourage further contributions |
| Give value to every contribution made | Demonstrate attentive listening |

Resources used to develop Talking and Listening will include:

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|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Books | Artefacts | ipad apps |
| Topic displays | Visitors and Visits | Computer software |
| Television programmes | | |

The grouping of children will encourage their development of language.

Children will be organised in pairs, small groups or as a whole class.

In these situations children will:

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| Assume responsibility | Make decisions |
| Listen to others views and opinions | Give/take instructions |
| Consider conflicting arguments | Promote social skills |
| Discuss appropriate/ inappropriate behaviours | |

Experiences and activities to promote talking and listening:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Using children's own experiences | Role play and Drama |
| Listen, discuss and respond to music | Active learning |
| Use of equipment in play based learning | Open ended questions |
| Circle Time to explore feelings and opinions | Show and tell activities |
| Active participation in school assemblies | Visitors |
| Cross-curricular discussions | School trips |
| Discussions about topical, class or school issues | Special occasions |
| Talk about their own work and that of others | Argue logically |
| Give reasons for opinions | |



Reading

Aims

At Gilnahirk Primary we aim to:

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

Classroom environment

We will provide a classroom environment where children feel inspired to read. We will create an attractive and well displayed reading area where appropriate reading material is available.

Books of different genre will be displayed. Fiction and non-fiction material, including big books, poetry, plays, magazines and leaflets will be available and a variety of ICT resources will be used by the children. Posters, charts, labels and lists 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 Gilnahirk primary 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 material, including print and digital media
- Books are banded from Foundation to P3 to provide a breadth of reading
- Regular reading to children by teachers in all classes P1-P7
- Developing phonological awareness
- Synthetic phonic approaches
- Key strategies of Modelled, Shared and Guided Reading
- Independent Reading, aloud to the teacher or silently
- Group novels from P3
- Involvement of others eg. Reading Partners, Literacy Support assistants

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

Reading for Information

Reading for the purposes of study requires specific skills. At Gilnahirk Primary we will provide opportunities to 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
- Using encyclopedias, atlases, timetables and other reference material
- Formulating questions which require a search for information
- Skimming and scanning texts
- Making notes
- Distinguishing between fact and opinion in evaluating information

Nov 2017



Writing

Rationale

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 express their emotions, convey their thoughts and feelings and present evidence of research in writing
- To develop experiences so that children can use writing across the curriculum
- To promote conventional spelling, punctuation, grammatical organisation and handwriting.

Classroom Environment

At Gilnahirk Primary we will create a stimulating classroom environment where the children see the teacher writing and sharing the process leading to the final outcome. Children are encouraged to write for themselves, discuss the writing with the teacher and each other and experiment with writing.

Resources provided to develop the children's writing will include:

- Magnetic letters
- Wordbanks of keywords
- Wall lists
- Word books
- ICT resources
- Reference material dictionaries, thesauri, interactive whiteboard
- Displays of samples of writing in different genres and by favourite authors and poets
- Children's own writing on display

Teaching Approaches and Organisation of Learning

We use a structured approach to the process of teaching selected forms of writing, which include:

- 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

The forms of writing are:

- Explanations (how/why things occur)
- Procedures (sequential procedures, the way to do things)
- Reports (objective accounts which classify and describe what took place)
- Expositions (argue or persuade from a particular point of view)
- Recount (sequential recounting of real or imaginary events and experiences)
- Narrative (imaginative stories entertain and engage)

Writing sessions will include time for discussion, planning and editing. Not all sessions will end with a written task. This may be with the teacher, whole class, small groups or independently.

Children are encouraged to have a go and attempt to spell words for themselves.

As is age appropriate, children engage in a range of problem solving activities to explore the structure and language features of the particular forms. At this stage they are involved in the setting of success criteria.

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.

Children have the opportunity to participate in guided writing groups. 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 to exchange ideas and will stimulate their thinking.

As is age and stage appropriate we will work with children to set targets for improvement.

Handwriting

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 Gilnahirk Primary 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.

Joined handwriting is introduced in P4 and is developed through to P7.

Spelling and Phonics

Rationale

At Gilnahirk we create an environment that allows children to develop the ability to learn spellings and to use them to produce an effective piece of writing.

Aims

- To ensure that children develop the key skills, knowledge and understanding of spelling
- To enable all children to be confident, accurate spellers
- To enrich and support learning through the use and application of spelling skills
- To ensure continuity and progression through a consistent whole school approach to the teaching of spelling across the school

Teaching Approach

P1 - P2: *Jolly Phonics* and *Linguistic Phonics*

P3 - P6: *Linguistic Phonics*

P7: Spelling lists

Planning

Children should become actively involved in their own spelling development. Children need to investigate and generate rules and patterns for themselves through planned activities. In investigating words for themselves children begin to construct patterns and generate rules.

We use Linguistic Phonics throughout the school.

(*Jolly Grammar* and *Fast Phonics* are used alongside the spellings scheme to give a structured approach to teaching grammar alongside spelling patterns.)

The activities in these schemes use a multi-sensory approach based on four key learning styles:

- Visual - remembering common patterns, writing down words to check if they look right, looking for words within words
- Aural and oral - hearing and pronouncing words, breaking words into syllables or phonemes
- Kinaesthetic - writing common patterns, tracing over words
- Cognitive - knowing rules, identifying word roots, suffixes and prefixes, using

knowledge of grammar and using mnemonics.



Resources

Jolly Phonics and Jolly Grammar teacher manuals
Prim Ed - My Spelling workbook
Fast Phonics
Dictionaries
Thesauruses

ICT Provision

When planning spelling related activities a consideration will be made to the ICT provision in school, developing resources and a shared common area for staff to share good practice.

The use of ICT will be incorporated into the teaching of spelling for specific spelling skills and activities, accommodating all ability levels.

Children will be encouraged to develop their accuracy in spelling in order to locate information from stored files and the Internet.

Assessment

It has long been accepted that to highlight every spelling error in a child's writing can be demoralising for the child. A marking focus is essential where teachers mark to the lesson objective rather than identifying all errors.

Spellings are assessed on a weekly basis in P3-P7.

P2-P7: PTE (Progress Tests in English) assessments completed in the Summer term.

P1-P7: Assessment tasks in Communication/Literacy ongoing throughout the year.