

Clogheen KerryPike N.S



Whole school plan – English 2022

Introductory Statement

This whole school plan for English was initially formulated in consultation with teaching staff in Clogheen/ KerryPike N.S. at the end term two of the 2021/2022 school year and will be revised at end of term three in 2023.

Review

At the end of term 3 in 2022 teachers changed the reading and oral language programme to 'Starlight'. Staff agreed to focus on handwriting for school self-evaluation this was also recommended in the WSE carried out in February 2022 which highlighted the need for a whole school approach to handwriting in the school. Teachers felt that by adopting the 'Mrs Murphy's handwriting books that this would help achieve a more coordinated approach to handwriting in the school. Baseline data was gathered from parents, pupils and staff and a school improvement plan was put together.

Rationale

We prioritised this area of the curriculum because of the increasing importance placed on literacy because of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy 2011-2020 and in light of the implementation of the new Primary Language Curriculum which came on stream in September 2016 and was revised in September 2019. Staff have engaged in training days based on the new Primary Language Curriculum and will continue to engage in these. We believe that a consistent, structured and intensive oral language and phonics programme will improve learning and teaching in all areas of the curriculum. Therefore, we are using the Jolly Phonics programme to enhance the competence and confidence in phonics and blending, which will enable development in reading and writing. The '**Over the Moon**' oral language programme was introduced in 2019 from Junior Infants to fifth Class to enhance competence and confidence in speaking and listening.

In September 2023, the 'Starlight' programme for reading and oral language programme was adopted by the whole school to ensure continuity and to meet the needs of the children.

A thematic approach is used to teach Oral language, Reading and Writing. To further develop English comprehension we are using the '**Building Bridges of Understanding**' programme and each class has a set of books. In 2019 we introduced the PM online readers for the whole school, this proved to be invaluable as it provides all pupils with online access to graded readers tailored to each child's abilities and needs and especially with the school closures due to COVID 19.

Aims

We aim, through this plan, drawn up in accordance with the Primary Language Curriculum, to set out our approach to language teaching. This plan will form the basis for teachers' long and short-term planning. It will also inform new teachers of the approaches and methodologies used in our school.

We endorse the aims of the New Primary Language Curriculum, which are presented in 3 groups. The Primary Language Curriculum, and this whole-school plan, aims to support teachers to:

1. Children and their Lives

- enable children to build on prior knowledge and experience of language and language learning to enhance their language learning
- encourage children of different languages and cultures to be proud of and share their heritage
- recognise the wide variation in experience, ability and language style which children bring to language learning in school as a first step in enabling them to engage in relevant and meaningful communicative relationships.

2. Children's communications and connections with others

- embrace children's uniqueness by nurturing their appreciation of their home language, their understanding of language and diversity, and their ability to use different languages, gestures and tools to communicate with people in a variety of contexts and situations.
- encourage and enable children to communicate effectively in both the first and second language of the school and to communicate in their heritage language for a variety of purposes.
- enable children to fully engage with and enjoy a wide range of relevant and meaningful linguistic and communicative experiences with peers and adults.

3. Children's language learning and development

- promote a positive disposition towards communication and language by fostering within children a lifelong interest in and a love of language learning for personal enjoyment and enrichment
- broaden children's understanding of the world through a rich variety of language experiences and through fostering an awareness and appreciation of other languages and cultures in an enriching learning environment

Element 3 Exploring and using

Strand:	Learning outcome:
Oral language	Requests, questions and interactions Categorisation, Retelling and elaborating (narrative text and response) Playful and creative use of language (aesthetic dimension of language) Information giving, explanation and justification (expository text) Description, prediction and reflection
Reading	Purpose, genre and voice (awareness of author's purpose) Comprehension (comprehension, text organisational structure and fix-up strategies) Response and author's intent Fluency and self-correction (accuracy, fluency and meaning)
Writing	Purpose, genre and voice (sense of voice, aesthetic dimension of text) Writing process and creating text (using processes, structures and language register) Response and author's intent (author's purpose and responding) Handwriting and presentation (legibility)

Language Programme

Approaches in our School

1. Oral Language Learning Outcomes for Oral Language

- See pages 22 & 23 of the Primary Language Curriculum

Whole School Strategies for Oral Language

- Assemblies: Whole school assembly where appropriate and respectful language is modelled
Good listening and appropriate responses are encouraged
Common social functions are taught
Positive non-verbal behaviour is encouraged.
- Yard: Using words to communicate and solve problems
Self-Maintaining Language Model positive and respectful language.
- School Related Functions: Etiquette for children visiting classes.
- Aistear: Aistear activities in Junior and Senior Infants classes. We use a thematic approach for Aistear and ensure that an oral language/role play station is included in Aistear theme.
- Gill Education 'Over the Moon' Oral Language Programme taught in infant classes- fifth class currently

- Taking turns in speaking and listening (circle-time, news time)
- Showing tolerance for views of others (circle-time, debating)

Resources/Methodologies for Oral Language

- See each class level Teacher's planning for Oral Language

Teacher's planning for Oral Language

- Teacher's plan using Learning Outcomes
- English oral language is integrated thematically through Aistear and through teaching topics at the same time and discussing language.
- New vocabulary is displayed in the classrooms. Aistear words are displayed with pictorial clues (Infant classes) and word walls are displayed from 1st class upwards.
- Key vocabulary for pupils is identified for all subject areas and listed in teachers' short-term planning.

2. Reading Learning Outcomes for Reading

- See pages 26 and 27 of the Primary Language Curriculum

Aims for Reading

In the area of reading development we aim to:

- Promote positive attitudes and develop the appreciation of reading

- Reading groups
- Team Teaching focus on Reading Skills
- Guided Reading
- Paired reading with children in older classes.

Resources/Methodologies for Reading

- See each class level

Supplementary Resources for Reading

- Big Books ● School Library ● HollyHill Library ● Poetry Books ● Rhyme Books ● Story Books ● Fairy Tales ● Books of Myths and Legends ● Scrapbooks ● Posters ● CDs/Interactive whiteboard resources ● Games ● Activities

School Library

- Each class equipped with a fully stocked class library.
- Rhymes See Nursery Rhyme Scheme (Infant level)
- Poetry Children will learn poetry in each class and will be encouraged to perform it in the class and for the school.
- Guidelines and ideas for poetry are given at each class level Poetry integrated throughout *Over the Moon* Oral Language Programme. The children will explore the following types of story between Infants and Second class. 3rd to 6th class will explore a variety of fictional stories and texts. (See the Story Scheme at each class level) ■ Fairytales ■ Fables ■ Myths ■ Legends ■ Folk Tales

Phonological Awareness

Phonological Awareness & Phonics Phonological Awareness and Phonics is an integral part of the acquisition of the English language and a huge emphasis is placed on its importance in the early school years. The school uses the *Jolly Phonics, Sounds make words* (Folens) *Over the Moon* Phonics schemes.

Reading Comprehension

Strategies are taught using the Building Bridges of Understanding Programme. All Comprehension Strategies highlighted in yellow are new to this class level. All other Comprehension strategies have been taught previously

Introducing strategy

Using strategy

*denotes that the book is used to teach multiple strategies over the course of the year.

Class Level	Comprehension Strategy	Suggested Books
Junior Infants	Predicting	Dear Zoo
	Visualising	We are going on a bear hunt
	Connecting	Rainbow fish
Senior Infants	Predicting Visualising Connecting Questioning	

Fifth Class	Predicting Visualising Connecting Monitoring comprehension: Declunking Clarifying Determining importance Inferring Sythesising	
Sixth Class	Predicting Visualising Connecting Monitoring comprehension: Declunking Clarifying Determining importance Inferring Sythesising	

Writing Skills: First Steps Writing

Class Level:	New Genre:	Consolidation of Genre::
Junior Infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recount • Narrative 	N/A
Senior Infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recount • Narrative
First Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recount • Narrative • Procedure
Second Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recount • Narrative • Procedure • Report
Third Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persuasive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recount • Narrative • Procedure • Report • Explanation
Fourth Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persuasive - exposition focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recount • Narrative • Procedure • Report • Explanation
Fifth Class		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recount • Narrative • Report
Sixth Class		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative • Procedure • Explanation • Persuasive

Our Approach to the Teaching and Learning of Spelling

- As spelling is visual, learning to spell cannot follow a completely phonics-based programme. The pattern in words must be visual so that words that look alike are grouped together although they may not sound alike. e.g. caught, daughter, taught.
- Our focus is on letter patterns instead of just learning mat/hat, but/cut, we focus on 'at' patterns (letter strings), and therefore include ate, what, etc. It is important that we teach words which look the same irrespective of their sound, e.g. come, some, women...
- Children are taught to look at words, see words within words and compare letter strings regardless of sound .
- Spelling is taught with emphasis on the type of spelling errors rather than the number of errors.
- The use of mnemonics and other strategies are encouraged to help children who struggle with spelling.
- Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check Methodology (Look, Write & Check are all visual which emphasises the importance to spelling being a visual endeavour)
- Using Sound Letter Relationships
- Using Pattern ▪ Continuation from class to class
- Linking with onset and rime
- Print Rich Environment (ensuring balance between cursive displays and print displays)
- Class Based Incentives
- **'The Spelling for me' programme- Review**

In 2019 it was decided to trial the 'Spelling for me' programme in second class as it was felt the current practice of the list of spellings for all children to learn was no longer effective and that an individualised approach may prove more successful.

The 'spelling for me programme is a completely individualised programme for each child. During the first few weeks of the programme, time is spent online where the children complete spelling tests and progress through each level. There are 40 levels in total. The programme is not designed for any particular class level. Children get spelling lists suitable for them. Spellings for Me is based on ability not age or class level. Each student will be challenged at their individual level. Children log into their own profile and begin at level 1. For each spelling test the word is read out, followed by a sentence, the word again. Any words that the child gets wrong are stored in 'Learning Words'. Once the child gets 96 words wrong they are locked out of spelling tests. These 96 incorrect words goes to their 'Learning Words' bank. At the end of each test, the

Parents are encouraged to ensure that their children learn their spellings each night as part of their homework using a multisensory approach. This can be done by using the Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check Method and by practising sentence dictation. Parents will also be involved in the work book activities as they involve playing games with the children and

Grammar & Punctuation

Grammar and punctuation are introduced formally from first class through the Jolly Grammar Programme and the Over the Moon programme which is used from Juniors to Sixth. See each class level for resources.

Handwriting/Penmanship

As per the primary language curriculum, children will be encouraged to write legibly and fluently in a chosen script using a personal style, ensuring correct formation of lower and upper-case letters. As children have been taught to form letters in cursive script they will be encouraged to write in this script. The teachers survey conveyed teachers concern for the need to stream line the handwriting scheme throughout the school and that there was need for more of an emphasis on penmanship and that perhaps children could be rewarded for consistent or extra effort in handwriting as a Handwriting Hero or a sample of their handwriting could be displayed weekly on the Handwriting noticeboard. The pupils begin cursive script from second class and continue this style of writing through all classes. In Junior Infants, the pupils begin by learning one lower-case letter per week. As their fine-motor skills develop, the pupils continue learning 2 letters per week until the formation of all letters is taught. In Senior Infants they will learn how to form upper case letters.

The importance of precision and presentation is constantly reiterated and encouraged in copies, worksheets, free writing and otherwise. Children will present copies neatly always using a date, title and ruling margins where necessary. An emphasis will be placed on this from second class up.

Our Approach to Handwriting:

- The best way to ensure good handwriting is to learn it correctly from the beginning
- A good cursive style of handwriting will ultimately improve the speed and fluency of writing, which in turn will assist the child's written expression.
- Good penmanship also improves spelling since letter strings are connected when the child is writing a word.
- Good posture, pencil-grip and how the children form their letters are explicitly taught.
- Children with poor motor control or little stamina need a cursive model that makes minimum demands on their physical abilities – when the brain has a visual image of the word then the hand takes over.
- Pre-writing patterns are taught before separate letter formations at infant level.
- Children are encouraged to practise common letter strings after learning how to form an isolated letter, e.g. 'a' – ate, at, eat, etc....

Creative Writing

Children begin Creative Writing informally in the infant classes. This is stimulated and developed in many ways such as through Aistear and through the use of free drawing (Infant Classes) and free writing copies. Creative Writing is introduced formally in First Class and continues throughout the remainder of the children's years in the school.

Selecting Topics for Creative Writing

Sources of topics for children's writing include:

- Print-Rich Environment
- First Steps Writing- Narrative Genre
- Thematic Approach ▪ Personal Concerns
- Life at home and in school
- Stories
- Social Needs
- Personal Reading
- Poetry
- Drama
- Aistear
- Everyday personal experiences ▪ Use of home language

Strategies for Planning Creative Writing

- First Steps Writing- Narrative Genre strategies and ideas
- Oral Discussion: Whole Class, Teacher/Pupil, Pupil/Pupil
- Brainstorming / Webbing
- Story Board / Story Plans ▪/Story Templates

English activities will be differentiated in order to meet the needs of the children in a particular class. Children with special educational needs will receive support from our Special Education Teachers. We promote an active learning environment, with children working in groups at their level, where the class teacher is responsible for the learning in the classroom and is assisted by the SET team. Team teaching and Station teaching blocks are arranged throughout the year. Where a teacher recognises that a child displays a particular ability in English, this will be communicated to the parents, so that the child may have opportunity to take out of school lessons, circumstances permitting. Teachers will encourage such children to read and write for their classmates, so that the other children will have opportunities to listen and respond.

Equality of Participation and Access

Equal opportunities will be given to all children regardless of gender, ethnic background, socio-economic status across all strands and activities.

Homework

Teachers can assign English homework at their discretion in accordance with the guidelines of the homework policy and the Department of Education. As a core subject, English homework should be assigned daily. From first class spellings are assigned each day. Parents/carers are regularly reminded of the importance of oral language and reading homework, as well as written work.

Organisational Planning

The teaching of English will be conducted in line with the time allocation as set out by the DES and NCCA (ref: Circular 0056/2011), as follows:

Class level	Time Allocation for Language 1 (i.e. English):
Junior and Senior Infants	4 hours per week
First- sixth class	5 hours per week

Discretionary time may also be used for the teaching and learning of English.

The teaching of English will be organised on both a whole-class and team-teaching level. A team teaching approach will be taken to support the teaching and learning of English and will involve the input of the support staff in the classroom. Such will be organised based on the needs of each class and will focus on specific areas of the curriculum.

Resources and ICT

As a developing school, we endeavour to build on and develop the resources available for teaching and learning as the school grows. Teachers will be encouraged to maximise resources available to them. The school will ensure that teachers' resources for school-wide programmes will be available to all teachers, including Jolly Phonics, Gill Education 'Over the Moon' programme, PM Readers online, Building Bridges of Understanding. ICT will be used in classroom and support settings to further support the teaching and learning of English in the form of Interactive Whiteboards, iPads, online programmes etc.

- Children's feedback regarding their learning
- Suggestions and reports of DES Inspectorate
- Monthly records of teaching and learning.

The success of this plan will be measured by teacher observation of pupil enjoyment and participation in oral language, reading and writing activities. The success of the plan will also be measured by the achievement of pupils in standardised tests. Feedback and reflection will be used as an informal method of measuring the success of this whole-school plan.

Implementation and Review:

Roles and Responsibilities

- The plan will be implemented by all members of the teaching staff. The principal will play a role in overseeing its implementation. Guidance on particular aspects of the plan can be sought from Eleanor Grant (deputy principal)
- is plan will be reviewed in Term 3 2023

Ratification and Communication

The attention of all newly appointed staff will be drawn to this whole-school English plan upon their appointment to the school by the NQT mentor. This policy will be published on the school website, upon its development, and a copy of it will be provided to the Parent Teacher Association, when established. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department of Education and Skills and the Patron, if requested. Hard copies of this, and all school policies, are available at the school upon request.

Signed: Mary Mc Donney Chairperson of the B.O.M
John Horgan

Signed: 2-12-24 Principal