Literacy

Policy

2017-2018

CONTEXT:

The stated vision of the Department of Education for Northern Ireland (DENI) is 'To ensure that every learner fulfils his or her potential at each stage of his or her development.' (DENI 2010).

This has been enunciated in the overall aim of the Northern Ireland Curriculum (DE 2008), which says, 'The N Ireland Curriculum aims to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives.'

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 headings:

- **Child centred provision**
- **High quality teaching and learning**
- **Effective leadership**
- **A school connected to its local community.**

INTRODUCTION:

At Tullygally Primary School, we believe that pupils' literacy skills, ie. their ability to talk, listen, read and write effectively, for purpose and audience, is the key to educational progress, to social integration and to personal development and happiness.

This policy document will outline the strategies and approaches we will support and develop in order to ensure that each child becomes equipped with the necessary language knowledge, understanding and skills.

The continuity and progression in our language planning will be underpinned by the learning intentions outlined in the Primary Language Framework.

At Tullygally P.S. we intend that, by the end of Key Stage 2, a child will be able to:

- speak confidently to a range of audiences with an awareness of purpose

- read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding, orchestrating a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct
- have an interest in books and read for enjoyment
- have an interest in words, their meanings, developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms
- understand a range of text types and genres and be able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation
- develop the powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness
- use a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their responses.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the N Ireland Curriculum for English (CCEA, 2007) and include:

In the Foundation Stage children should be given opportunities to:

- talk and listen and represent ideas in their activities;
- use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum;
- become immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

At Key Stage One (Years 3 and 4), children should learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They should begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They should use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

At Key Stage Two (Years 5-7), children should learn to change the way they talk and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They should read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They should explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

CHILD CENTRED PROVISION:

The following indicators from ESaGS will be reflected in the school's approaches:

- Decisions on planning, resources, curriculum and pastoral care reflect at all times the needs and aspirations of the pupils within the school.
- A clear commitment exists to promoting equality of opportunity, high quality learning, a concern for individual pupils and a respect for diversity.
- A school culture of achievement, improvement and ambition exists with clear expectations that all pupils can and will achieve to the very best of their ability.
- Effective interventions and support are in place to meet the additional education and other needs of pupils and to help them overcome barriers to learning.
- There is a commitment to involve young people in discussions and decisions on school life that directly affect them and to listen to their views.

Inclusion:

We aim to provide for all children so that they reach their full potential in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and those with special educational needs in order to take steps to improve their attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

In line with Count Read: Succeed – A Strategy to Improve Outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy (2011) we will adhere to the recommended 5 step approach to raising standards.

1. Provide high-quality teaching for all pupils (through the use of modelled, shared and guided teaching strategies);
2. Address underachievement as soon as it emerges (through focused guided/independent work and individual target setting);

3. Address continuing underachievement with support from other staff in the school. This will include:
Reading Partnership
Extended Schools Literacy focus groups
Paired Reading (parents)
4. Address continuing underachievement with support from outside the school;
5. Meet the needs of pupils after a non-statutory assessment through the SEN framework.

Underachieving children are identified using the following assessments:
- Progress Tests in English (PTiE)
- Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT)
- NFER Group Reading
- Early Literacy Tests
- Salford Reading Tests

The classroom assistant will work with some of these children under the guidance of the class teacher.

Intervention programmes

- **Reading Partnership programme**

  The Reading Partnership programme is a structured approach to supporting individual children in a one-to-one situation as they read. Parent volunteers or Classroom Assistants are trained in the approach and work within a clearly defined framework for 15 minutes three times per week with three children over a ten week period. The children are assessed before and after the programme using a standardised norm-referenced reading test (Salford). The children benefit from having this additional practice in reading with an adult and from the trained adult knowing how to encourage the child to use specific reading strategies. The programme is targeted at underachieving children.

In this school we target Year 2/3 children in October. Year 2 and children are identified for the programme using Salford Reading Test.

- **Accelerated Reading Programme**
  In this programme children from year 4 to year 7 take part in a computer based programme which tests reading comprehension. Pupils select books based on their current reading level, read independently and then take an independent comprehension test on the computer. Each book is worth a certain number of points based on its length and reading level. Pupils who receive a certain percentage of correct answers receive a reward sticker to add to their card. When the card is complete, pupils receive a reward. The program tracks the pupils' progress over the course of the school year. Pupils are selected either from PTiE data or from teacher feedback.

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

HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING:

The following indicators from ESaGS will be reflected in the school's approaches:

- A broad and relevant curriculum is provided for the pupils.
- An emphasis on literacy and numeracy exists across the curriculum.
- Teachers are committed and enthusiastic, enjoying a positive relationship with their pupils and with other school-based staff and dedicated to improving learning.
- Teachers use adaptable, flexible teaching strategies that respond to the diversity within the classroom.
- Assessment and other data is used to effectively inform teaching and learning across the school and in the classroom and to promote improvement.
- Rigorous self-evaluation is carried out by teachers and the whole school, using objective data and leading to sustained self-improvement.
- Teachers reflect on their own work and the outcomes of individual pupils.
- Education outcomes reflect positively on the school and compare well, when benchmarked measurement is undertaken, against the performance of similar schools.

Subject organisation

The English Curriculum is delivered using the requirements in the Northern Ireland Curriculum for Language and Literacy.

We recognise that a sound underlying organisation and management of the classroom environment is crucial to support learning. Organisation will vary to suit the purpose, context and children involved. The needs of all pupils will be identified and met through effective curricular programmes and support arrangements.

Classes are organised as follows:

Class	Teacher
Nursery	Mrs McIlroy and Mrs Haughian
Year 1	Mrs Andrews, Miss Slevin and Miss Dorrity
Year 2	Miss Guiney
Year3	Miss Johnston
Year 4	Mrs Devlin
Year 5	Miss Dunlop
Year 6	Mr Guy
Year 7	Mr Bustard

The following range of organisational strategies will be employed:

- whole class teaching
- small group teaching (size, flexibility and composition of the groups will be given consideration – e.g. peer, ability, mixed ability, friendship groups, etc.)
- paired work – similar ability or less experienced pupil working with more experienced pupil
- individual – one-to-one tuition by Teacher and/or support by Classroom Assistant
- independent work

Attention will be given to classroom layout, wall displays, access to a diverse range of resources (fiction, non-fiction, ICT, media texts, and the provision of library areas, writing areas and listening areas with appropriate equipment).

Progress is enhanced when teachers are sensitive to differences in learning styles. Since children learn in different ways and at different rates, a flexible approach which encourages children's active engagement in their learning through problem solving will extend the pupils' use of language and promote independence. Teachers will have realistically high expectations and will ensure that all children understand what is expected of them by making children aware of the intended learning intentions and the success criteria. This may be supported by a learning board.

The curriculum provides the context for literacy development, hence cross-curricular opportunities will be used to the best advantage to

develop all aspects of talking, listening, reading, writing and thinking. Children will have opportunities to develop talking and listening skills through a range of oral and practical activities, including drama and role play. Teachers will employ a range of teaching approaches which will meet the needs of individual pupils, groups and whole classes.

Planning for Literacy

Whole school planning makes effective use of the potential contribution of other curricular areas and ensures continuity and progression between year groups, classes and Key Stages. Regular communication takes place between staff at all levels of planning.

Progression and continuity between year groups will be developed using the SELB Language Framework. Planning will be done within Key Stages and will outline both medium and short term goals. These targets can then be finely tuned by teacher's who write Individual Education Plans (I.E.P's) where necessary. Each teacher has responsibility for planning and will monitor progress through monthly planning, which will identify specific learning intentions (see Appendix A).

Approaches to Talking and Listening

The strands of talking, listening, group discussion and interaction and drama pervade the whole curriculum. Oral language should be recognised as the primary mode of language and hence should receive a central emphasis and focus in all areas of the curriculum and in the life of the school. Pupils are encouraged to listen attentively and to speak clearly, confidently, fluently and appropriately for a variety of different audiences and purposes.

Throughout Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Key Stage 2 (KS2), children will be given opportunities to express their ideas in speech, to describe their own ideas, to make plans and to take part in discussions. They will learn the conventions of conversation, taking turns, allowing others to speak, responding appropriately to what has been said and valuing the opinions of others.

All members of staff at Tullygally P.S. have the responsibility to ensure that all children are empowered to speak and express their ideas.

Children will be encouraged to speak in a range of contexts and, as they grow older, adapt their style of speech appropriately. Speaking and listening permeates all areas of the curriculum. The children learn from early on to plan their work, listen to the plans of others, recall and assess their work and to listen while others recall. It is only when speaking and listening skills have been developed that children can effectively work co-operatively and collaboratively.

Structured Activities to Promote Talking and Listening

- drama activities

- circle time

- show and share/tell time

- oral dictations (spellings)

- shared and guided reading

- telling or reading a story to/with a class

- speeches and persuasive arguments/discussions

- play scripts

- school productions and assemblies

Many of these activities will be delivered as part of their Literacy lesson. However other opportunities are given throughout the day to encourage and facilitate speaking and listening.

Teachers plan for all these strands using the Language Framework.

Approaches to Reading

Reading is a thoughtful process which requires the reader to contribute his or her own experiences and thoughts to the comprehension of the written word. The ability to read is fundamental to many aspects of life, and is central to developing understanding in a wide range of areas of the curriculum. As print occurs all around, it is important to think of reading in a wider context than only books.

In this school teachers plan for the teaching of reading through modelled, shared, guided, silent, paired and independent reading sessions. Emphasis is placed on the importance of comprehension skills and strategies, which must be developed and encouraged from Year 1. Enjoyment of reading is fostered in the language lessons, across the curriculum and beyond the classroom. Involvement of parents is recognised and considered critical in this context.

We aim for the children at Tullygally to:
- become fluent, confident, readers.
- read with enjoyment.
- read and respond to a wide range of different types of literature.
- understand the layout and how to use different types of books.
- understand the sound and spelling system, and use this to decode words with increasing accuracy.
- read aloud with expression and clarity.

We aim to develop, through our teaching of reading, the following attitudes:
- Curiosity and interest
- Pleasure and sensitivity
- Critical appraisal
- Independence
- Confidence
- Perseverance
- Respect for other views and cultures
- Reflection

The teaching and learning of reading will run across the entire curriculum. We aim to provide a rich reading environment to develop the children's skills in reading. Teaching strategies aim to enhance children's motivation and involvement in reading and to develop their skills.

Each teacher will:

- ensure that the teaching of reading is incorporated into medium and short term planning
- ensure that the teaching of reading is delivered in the ways outlined in this policy
- inform the Literacy Coordinator of any related issues
- ensure children with specific reading difficulties are identified and supported in school and seek external support where necessary.

In Tullygally P.S. children begin Year 1 with the development of phonological awareness skills and are introduced to the school's phonics programme. When appropriate, children move to guided reading sessions where they begin the process of independent reading. To facilitate this books are colour banded in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and are stored centrally, giving all teachers access to a full range of texts. Running Records are taken regularly in FS/KS1 to ensure all children are reading at an appropriate level. Running records are only taken in KS2 if a child is displaying particular difficulties in reading. These records are kept by class teachers as evidence of progress being made by children.

Parents are informed of the school's homework policy with regard to daily reading. Parent–teacher meetings are held at the beginning of Term 1 to facilitate this. Each child will have their own reading record diary and parents are encouraged to sign this daily. The Paired Reading programme for parents has been introduced and is being offered to all parents of children in years 3-7.

The school library is available for pupils to borrow books on a regular basis. Each class teacher is responsible for this. Children are encouraged to become members of the local library at Brownlow and/or Lurgan

Approaches to Writing

At Tullygally P.S. we believe that the ability to write with confidence and accuracy is an essential life skill. Writing is a complex process that draws upon more than handwriting and spelling. It is the ability to construct and convey meaning in written language. Successful writers understand the social function of writing in order to use different genres appropriately, matching it to audience and purpose. Writing also requires the writer to understand and apply accurately the conventions of syntax, spelling and punctuation whilst presenting narrative in a legible form. Teachers plan carefully to provide writing opportunities that develop successful, effective writers. This involves differentiated planning suited to the ability of the writer, levelling writing using the CCEA levels of progression, discussion with colleagues and scrutiny of work within the year group and throughout the school.

Aims and Objectives

- Writing is seen as purposeful.

- Children will have a clear understanding of the structure and language features associated with different genres of writing.

- Teachers will have sound subject knowledge and high expectations of what children can achieve.

- Teaching is well paced and engaging based on a clear understanding of the objectives.

- The links between reading and writing are made explicit – we read as writers and we write as readers.

- There is a clear progression in the teaching of writing which includes the familiarisation of the text type through reading, the identification of structure and language features, modelled writing, shared writing, guided writing and independent writing.

Opportunities for writing and teaching writing skills will be integrated into all aspects of the curriculum. By utilising cross curricular links we

can give writing a purpose and audience. Children are helped to see links between different areas of the curriculum and to appreciate how their knowledge, skills and understanding in one area can inform learning in others.

ICT

This is a vital means of developing language in the context of the modern world. Pupils will:

- have opportunities to compose text directly on screen.
- be taught how to use word processing techniques to develop writing skills
- check their composition for written accuracy using grammar and spell check facilities.

Special Educational Needs
Any child whose writing ability is significantly below the expected level for their age will be discussed with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and the Literacy Co-ordinator in order to determine the way forward.

Able Pupils
We ensure that children who have a particular writing aptitude are challenged and given the opportunity to excel. This may be through additional targeted support, differentiation within class and extended homework tasks.

Resources
Teachers draw upon a variety of resources to support writing. Teachers use the 'Cornerstones for Writing' and Collins Literacy Scheme resources relevant to their year group. Each scheme is divided into the different genres taught in each term.
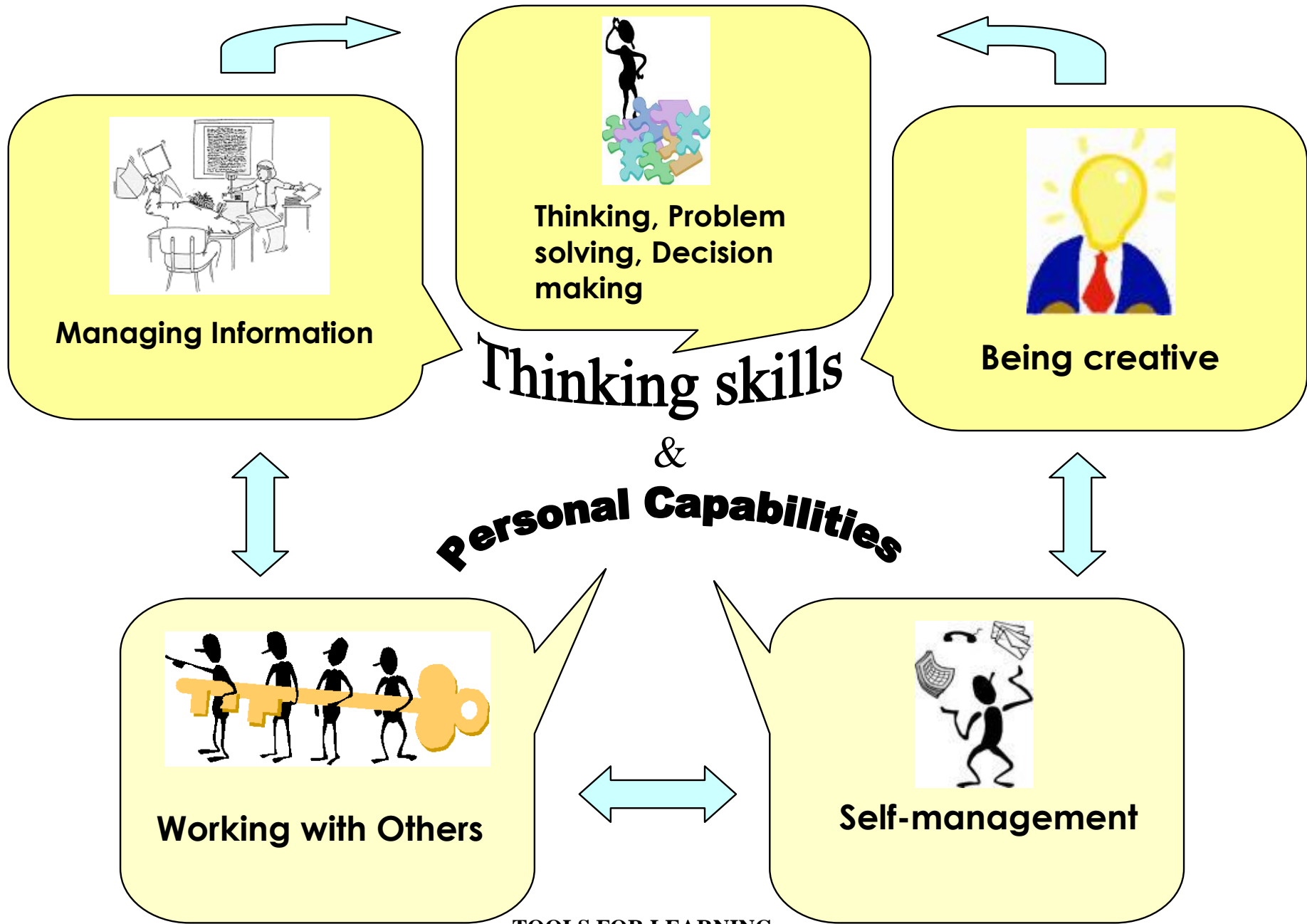
Monitoring and evaluation
This is achieved in a variety of ways including the Literacy Coordinator reviewing planning, having discussions with staff and pupils, observing lessons and providing appropriate and high quality resources. Responsibility for the quality of teaching and learning of writing rests with the class teacher.

Staff Development

We are committed to ensuring that all staff develop and maintain their skills in the teaching of writing. Staff are encouraged to identify areas in which they feel they may benefit from further training. Training needs may also be identified by the Literacy Coordinator. Training may be provided in a number of ways including in school provision and attendance at courses.

TS and PCs/Cross curricular opportunities for literacy development

At the heart of the Northern Ireland Curriculum lies an explicit emphasis on the development of skills and capabilities for lifelong learning and for operating effectively in society. Thinking skills are tools that help children go beyond the acquisition of knowledge to search for meaning, apply ideas, analyse patterns and relationships, create and design something new and monitor and evaluate their progress. Language and thinking are mutually interdependent. The quality of a child's language will have an effect on his thinking abilities and vice versa. In Tullygally P.S. we will endeavour to help children develop thinking skills and personal capabilities through the enhancement of their communication skills using the TS&PC framework detailed below:

Managing Information

Thinking, Problem solving, Decision making

Being creative

Thinking skills

&

Personal Capabilities

Working with Others

Self-management

TOOLS FOR LEARNING

Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities

Managing Information	**Thinking, Problem Solving, Decision Making**	**Being Creative**
Asking, accessing, selecting, recording, integrating, communicating	*Activating learning, deepening understanding, coping with challenges*	*Imagining, generating, inventing, taking risks*
* Ask focused questions	* Sequence, order, classify, make comparisons	* Seek out questions to explore and problems to solve
* Plan and set goals, break task into sub-tasks	* Make predictions, examine evidence, distinguish fact from opinion	* Experiment with ideas and questions
* Use own and others' ideas to locate sources of information	* Make links between cause and effect	* Make new connections between ideas/ information
* Select, classify, compare and evaluate information	* Justify methods, opinions and conclusions	* Learn from and value other people's ideas
* Select most appropriate method for a task	* Generate possible solutions, try out alternative approaches, evaluate outcomes	* Make ideas real by experimenting with different designs, actions, outcomes
* Use a range of methods for collating, recording and representing information	* Examine options, weigh up pros and cons	* Challenge the routine method
* Communicate with a sense of audience and purpose	* Use different types of questions	* Value the unexpected or surprising
	* Make connections between learning in different contexts	* See opportunities in mistakes and failures
		* Take risks for learning

Thinking Skills

Working with Others	Self Management	
Being collaborative, being sensitive to others' feelings, being fair and responsible	**Knowing strengths and weaknesses, setting goals and targets, managing and regulating self**	*Personal Capabilities*
* Listen actively and share opinions	* Be aware of personal strengths, limitations and interests	
* Develop routines of turn-taking, sharing and cooperating	* Set personal targets and review them	
* Give and respond to feedback	* Manage behaviour in a range of situations	
* Understand how actions and words effect others	* Organise and plan how to go about a task	
* Adapt behaviour and language to suit different people and situations	* Focus, sustain attention and persist with tasks	
* Take personal responsibility for work with others and evaluate own contribution to the group	* Review learning and some aspect that might be improved	
* Be fair	* Learn ways to manage own time	
* Respect the views and opinions of others, reaching agreements using negotiation and compromise	* Seek advice when necessary	
* Suggest ways of improving their approach to working collaboratively	* Compare own approach with others and in different contexts	

The Role of ICT in Supporting and Developing Literacy and Language

Opportunities to use ICT to support teaching and learning in Literacy will be planned for and used as appropriate. We aim to make maximum use of ICT across the curriculum to promote the pupils' literacy and language skills, as well as developing competence in ICT skills. All pupils will have the opportunity to access computers. There are many software packages that encourage reading and discussion, as well as C2K software titles that support reading schemes. The Internet opens up a whole new world to our pupils, and it can be used to develop and foster skills such as reading, listening, thinking, writing and researching.

The Range of ICT Resources available include:
Collins Literacy Scheme
Word processors
Interactive Whiteboards
C2K (with Internet access)
Other suitable software

For further details see ICT Policy
Assessment and target-setting

Work will be assessed in line with the school's Assessment Policy. Progression and continuity between year groups will be developed using the SELB Language Framework. The children's progress and achievement is measured using a range of diagnostic, formative and summative assessment procedures, which both monitor progress and inform future planning.

 These include:
➢ classroom observation
➢ individual assessment and teaching
➢ screening and diagnostic tests
➢ end of Key Stage Assessment

Individual records of progress are kept by each class teacher and forwarded to the subsequent teacher. Progress reports are kept by the Principal. Progress is reported to parents verbally and in written form annually. Children will be encouraged to assess and evaluate their own performance throughout the school. Their work will be marked positively and constructively in relation to their own previous performance.

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP:

The following indicators from ESaGS will be reflected in the school's approaches:

- An effective school development plan is in place, providing clear and realistic targets for improvement based on a sound vision for the school.
- Governors understand their responsibilities and provide clear strategic direction as well as support and challenge to the Principal in carrying forward the process of improvement.
- School leaders demonstrate a commitment to providing professional development opportunities for staff, particularly teachers, and promote a readiness to share and learn from best practice.
- Teachers are given the opportunity to share in the leadership of the school.
- The resources at the disposal of the school are managed properly and effectively, with appropriate arrangements in place for financial management, attendance management, and working relationships
- School leaders monitor and evaluate effectively school outcomes, policies, practices and procedures and the School Development Plan itself.

Role of the Literacy Co-Ordinator

The Literacy Co-Ordinator is responsible, in consultation with the Principal, teachers and parents, for improving the standards of teaching and learning in Literacy through:

Monitoring and evaluating:-

- pupil progress
- management and analysis of relevant data
- provision of Literacy (including Intervention and Support programmes)
- the quality of the Learning Environment;
- the deployment and provision of support staff
- auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- taking the lead in policy development
- purchasing and organising resources
- keeping up to date with recent Literacy developments

- maintaining contact with all stake holders: Principal, Senior Management in the school, teachers, other staff, parents, and pupils
- ensuring channels of communication are open and active with all relevant outside agencies, including DENI, the SELB, CCMS, RTU, CCEA, etc.

The Board of Governors

Regular reports are made to the governors on the progress of English provision and on the standards being achieved by the school.

A SCHOOL CONNECTED TO ITS LOCAL COMMUNITY:

The following indicators from ESaGS will be reflected in the school's approaches:

- Good relationships that facilitate engagement and communication between the school and its parents and the wider community that it serves.
- The school and its teachers are held in respect by parents and the local community who in turn actively support the work of the school.
- The school uses its involvement in particular programmes (for example Extended Schools or Specialist Schools) effectively in meeting the needs of the community and nearby schools.
- Good relationships and clear channels of communication are in place between the school and the education agencies that support it.
- The school works closely with other relevant statutory and voluntary agencies whose work impacts on education, especially Health, Social Services, the Public Library Service and, where appropriate, local Neighbourhood Renewal groups.

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 parents/carers and to stimulate greater support in order to enhance the pupils' literacy development. Homework is seen

as an integral and co-ordinated element of the school's assessment policy and practice *(see Homework Policy for details)*.

Opportunities to promote parental and community involvement include:

- Information/ workshop sessions
- School performances, e.g. Christmas show, assemblies, other religious or cultural events
- Sports events
- Open days/coffee morning
- Prize Giving/Celebration Event
- Book fairs/World book day
- Visitors to the school, e.g. storytellers, visiting theatre groups, poets, writers, school nurse, dentist, fire service, etc.
- School trips
- Visits to local library and involvement in library programmes
- Celebration of learning
- PSNI welfare programmes
- PSNI Be Safe programme
- NI Fire Service
- Extended schools links with post primary schools

CONCLUSION:

This policy should be in line with other school polices, including:

- Teaching and Learning Policy

- Assessment and Record Keeping

- Responding to pupils' work / Feedback / Marking policy

- Special Educational Needs' Policy

- ICT Policy

- Health and Safety Policy

REVIEW OF POLICY:

This policy will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis.