Maryfield College

Literacy Plan 2012-2015

Mission Statement

We acknowledge that it is through our relationships with others that we grow to our full potential. Therefore we aspire to create an educational environment where pupils come to learn and to understand themselves, their abilities and their world. In this environment they learn to take responsibility for themselves and so can become independent adults.

The board of management, the management of the school, teachers, and all other staff, alongside parents and the wider school community, acknowledge that we have a responsibility to promote and raise literacy levels in our students as directed under the National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People, 2011-2020

All staff recognise and accept that they are teachers of literacy skills and are fully committed to raising literacy standards within their own subject areas or when an opportunity arises. Within each class students are encouraged to be actively involved in the learning process. Their needs are recognised and learning styles are considered whether visual, auditory or kinaesthetic. Their progress is also monitored and reviewed. A classroom environment is created that is safe, develops self-confidence, fosters motivation and promotes equality within the school community.

Rationale

Literacy includes the ability to read, understand and critically appreciate various forms of communication including spoken language, printed text, broadcast and digital media (LNLL, pg., 8). Improving literacy and learning can have an impact on students' self-esteem, on motivation, behaviour and academic achievement. It allows students to learn independently and develops the skills they will need to pursue further education, obtain meaningful employment and engage in the benefits of lifelong learning.

Aims: 2013-2015

1. Develop the library as a resource and encourage students to use the library.

2. Explicit teaching of subject-specific vocabulary by dedicating a portion of classroom lessons regularly to vocabulary instruction.

3. Develop students comprehension skills

This policy should be read in conjunction with Maryfield College Child Protection Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment Statement

Implementation

This plan will be implemented in September 2013, with the focus on incoming first year students. As no single method, material or strategy will consistently guarantee that students will improve their word knowledge or comprehension it would be advantageous for teachers to select a variety of approaches to promote the development of literacy skills within each class. The following box shows examples of strategies teachers may employ. This list is not exhaustive but rather serves as a guide for teachers to connect their classroom activities with departmental and whole school approach to literacy. Examples of these strategies are available in the literacy folder on the school server.

- Vocabulary boards in each classroom. - Use of dictionaries - Use of context clues - Find synonym or antonym - Active demonstration of meaning/concept - Matching activities - Sematic maps e.g. Frayer model - Peer teaching of semantic maps - Graphic Organisers	- Use of fix it up strategies - Activate prior learning e.g. KWL, brainstorm - Anticipation exercise – give each students a list of statements about something they are about to read. They should indicate whether the statements are true or false before reading. After reading they can check if their guesses were correct. - Setting a purpose for reading. - Focus on the key 'W' words (who, what, where, when, how, which & why).

Special Educational Needs (Reference EPSEN Act 2004)

Everyone has a responsibility to include students with Special Educational Needs (SENs) and provide a learning programme to build on their strengths which will enable them to advance and affirm their ability to learn. Like all other teachers, the Learning Support teacher has a key role in the inclusion of students with SENs. A variety of resources and teaching materials are made available to all teachers by either liaising with the Learning Support teacher directly or accessing the Special Educational Support Services (SESS) on line resource library.

The Learning Support teacher provides additional support to students with SENs. This support is appropriate to their abilities and needs. Refer to the appendix for examples of the type of supports given.

Monitor/Review/Evaluation

Assessment plays an essential part in education generally and in learning and teaching particularly. Assessment 'is the process of firstly gathering evidence, and secondly interpreting that evidence in the light of some defined criterion in order to form a judgement'[1]. Teachers and schools are expected to assess students' learning for a range of purposes and for a range of audiences.

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[1] Harlen, 1994, as cited in Broadfoot, 2007, p.4, An Introduction to Assessment, published by Continuum

Assessment primarily carried out to help pupils to learn is usually called formative assessment or assessment for learning. Formative assessment is intended to contribute directly to the learning process through providing feedback which models success and guides future efforts, as well as giving encouragement. Assessment which is primarily for other purposes is often called summative assessment or assessment of learning[2]. This is a point in time measure. It is for 'checking up' or 'summing up' what an individual learner has achieved. It is often associated with reporting, certification and selection[3].

This plan will be implemented in September 2013, with the focus on incoming first year students. The following methods will be used to gather information on students' literacy levels:

- STEN results
- Entrance Exam
- Group reading Tests

In addition, teachers may elect to monitor literacy standards through other methods such as;

- Student questionnaires / profiles
- Student oral presentations
- Teacher observation of participation in group work
- Student copy books / homework
- Student self- assessment
- Teacher observation
- Student summaries of a piece of text
- Liaising with the Learning Support Teacher in relation to a student's progress
- NCCA templates
- DES approved tests

All of the above methods will form part of the whole school analysis of literacy.

Review

The Whole School Literacy Plan will be reviewed by 2015.

Evaluation

Elements of the Whole School Literacy Plan will be evaluated through School Self Evaluation (SSE).

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[2] Assessment & Learning Pocketbook by Ian Smith, p.8 published by, Teachers' Pocketbook.
[3] Harlen, 1994, as cited in Broadfoot, 2007, p.4, An Introduction to Assessment, published by Continuum

Appendix

Examples of supports which may be given to students with Special Educational Needs, depending on their abilities and needs.

- Visit the school library
- Encourage reading for pleasure
- Student has control of book choice to increase interest and confidence
- Discussion of themes/characters before starting a book to promote interest.
- Provision on high interest/low reading age books (use of appropriate reading material).
- Engagement in short book reviews.
- Encourage process of drafting/proofreading.
- Develop critical reasoning skills.
- Sounding out difficult words.
- Stories made available on CD.
- Newspapers.
- Paired reading to increase continuity and fluency.
- Plurals/syllabification/prefixes/suffixes/silent letters/word families/homophones.
- Employ a multi-sensory approach (look-say-trace-write-cover-check).
- Correct spellings positively, highlight important errors.
- Scrabble.
- Crosswords.
- Word search.
- Use of flash cards to develop word recognition.
- Definition of words.

- Build personal bank of words/blends causing difficulty.
- Spelling rules
- Develop oral comprehension.
- Recognise story sequencing.
- Question and discuss retrieval of facts/draw conclusions/make predictions.
- Scan and summarize.
- Re-Tell.
- Use of visual cues.
- Highlight/use different colours.
- Write notes in margin.
- Rewrite facts on large poster for visual review.
- Become active – underline and say keywords.
- Encourage self-correction.
- Amend worksheets (multi choice questions/ cloze)
- Mind maps.
- Identify theme/characters/emotions.
- Use flow charts.
- Study Skills
- Computer software.
- Social Skills, e.g. social sight vocabulary or social stories.