

Literacy Plan 2019-2021

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 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: 2019-2021

1. Develop the library as a resource and encourage students to use the library.
2. Encourage verbal and written peer assessment.
3. Include a written personal reflection note as part of homework assignments.

Implementation

This policy will be implemented for the remainder of the academic year 2018-2019 and will remain in place until 2021. It will focus primarily, though not exclusively, on first, second and third-year students preparing for the Junior Cycle and the challenge of class-based assessments. All year groups will be encouraged to use the library.

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 to form a judgment'¹. Teachers and schools are expected to assess students' learning for a range of purposes and for a range of audiences.

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 learning². 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 selection³

The following methods are used to gather information on first-year students' literacy levels:

- STEN results
- Entrance Exam
- Group reading tests

Also, 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 about 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

A review of the Literacy Plan 2012-2015 was carried out in March 2019. It was noted that the first aim set out in 2012(Develop the library as a resource and encourage students to use the library) had not been satisfactorily achieved and following consultation with staff and management it was decided to retain and address this aim as a matter of priority.

On the whole, teachers were satisfied through classroom interaction and homework assignments that students' grasp of subject-specific vocabulary and comprehension skills continue to improve.

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

Two new aims were added:

- Encourage verbal and written peer assessment.
- Include a written personal reflection note as part of homework assignments.

These aims were seen as an integral part of the preparation of students for the Junior Cycle.

Evaluation

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

Appendix

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Study Skills • Computer software. • Encourage self-correction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Amend worksheets (multi choice questions/ cloze) • Mind maps. • Identify theme/characters/emotions. • Use flow charts. • Social Skills, e.g. social sight vocabulary or social stories.
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