



Language & Literacy Policy

# TOWERVIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

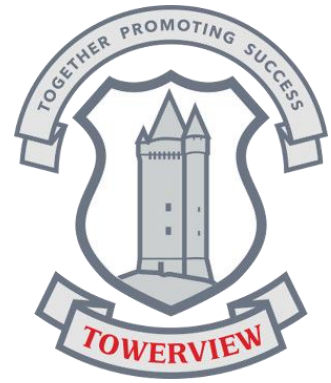


## Language & Literacy Policy

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[www.towerviewps.co.uk](http://www.towerviewps.co.uk)





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## **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY** **Policy Statement**

This is a policy statement for Towerview Primary School. It is a collaborative document compiled with the support of teaching staff and is regularly under review.

### **Rationale**

We believe that the fundamentals of literacy are imperative to the achievement of a rich and fulfilling life. By nurturing the language skills necessary to communicate effectively with others and to make sense of the world around us, we are setting up our pupils for the best chance at success. Confidence in spoken and written language skills enhances and enriches the learning in all subjects. In Towerview Primary School we want to guarantee high quality literacy opportunities in every classroom, every day, for every student.

### **Aims**

In Towerview Primary School we aim to provide a supportive, stimulating and secure environment where children are encouraged to develop skills and knowledge in all four modes of language: talking, listening, reading and writing. We will strive to establish strong foundations in language and communication skills in every pupil, equipping them with the literacy skills they need to become independent learners and confident individuals whilst fostering a love of language and literature.



## Specific Aims

### Talking and Listening

Our aim is to develop each child's ability to:

- listen and take part in discussions, explanations, role plays and presentations
- contribute comments, ask questions and respond to others' points of view
- communicate information, ideas, opinions feelings and imaginings, using an expanding vocabulary
- adapt ways of speaking to audience and situation
- use non-verbal methods to express ideas and engage with the listener

We will provide a range of contexts for the development of talking and listening throughout the school day.

### Reading

Our aim is to:

- Develop an intrinsic motivation to read, where students see reading as a rewarding and valuable activity
- develop the children's independence in reading at increasing levels of difficulty
- develop the children's efficiency in the use of books and other sources of information, in order to retrieve information

To these ends, we aim to:

- provide a wide range of stimulating reading material
- develop decoding skills
- develop comprehension skills
- develop skills in finding and using different sources of information
- develop an appreciation of the use of language
- provide different contexts for reading~ sustained, silent, aloud to another individual or group.



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### Approaches to Teaching Reading will include:

- Regular reading to children in all classes
- Developing phonological awareness through rhyme
- Regular phonics exploration opportunities, including use of differentiated weekly set-spelling lists
- Building up sight vocabulary
- Language Experience, combining writing and reading
- Modelled/Shared reading with Big Books/enlarged texts/extracts/ IWB
- Guided Reading
- Independent Reading
- Paired reading
- ERIC (Everyone Reading in Class) time for each year group.
- Group novels, stories, poems, plays, reference materials, children's own work, local authors, Home Reads
- Access to the Accelerated Reading program (from Primary 3 onwards), used to monitor reading practice and progress.
- Fostering an enjoyment of reading through 'Time to Read' and 'Reader's Circle' initiatives, giving older pupils and volunteers opportunities to read with younger readers in school

## Writing

Our aim is to:

- Develop each child's ability to write to communicate understanding
- develop the children's interest and competence in writing as a form of communication
- develop their awareness of the audience and context for which they are writing
- develop their skills in a range of forms of writing and for a variety of purposes
- use written language effectively, making and shaping text appropriately according to audience
- To enable pupils to achieve their potential using all available resources in an accepting stimulating and enjoyable atmosphere and to see themselves succeeding as writers.

To these ends, we aim to:

- increase independence in writing
- develop the ability to plan, organise and structure their writing
- develop a critical attitude to their own writing, which leads to the ability to edit, redraft and refine their writing



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- develop an awareness of different forms, styles and language appropriate in different contexts and audience
- ensure pupils' handwriting which is well formed, swift and legible
- to increase vocabulary and improve spelling
- Develop ability to correctly use grammatical conventions
- Enhance digital literacy, encompassing the broader skills of finding, evaluating, creating, and communicating information using technology.

### **Forward Planning:**

Writing will be planned following cross curricular themes and will include

- The 6 types of writing and Poetry
- A variety of purposes
- Different audiences

### **Approaches to the teaching of writing will include:**

- Modelled writing
- Shared writing
- Group collaborative writing
- Emergent writing
- Independent writing
- Spelling and handwriting schemes
- Appropriate marking (see marking policy)
- Homework (see homework policy)

## **Environment**

The school seeks to provide an environment where literacy skills are positively promoted and developed by providing

- opportunities to communicate formally and informally in a range of scenarios to teachers, visitors, peers or adjudicators at a Speech Festival
- opportunities to listen to and interact with a range of media
- opportunities to engage with good stimulating reading materials both in class and around the school
- opportunities to write in a range of styles for different purposes, audiences and for formal and informal 'publication'
- literacy noticeboards around the school premises, for pupils/classes to showcase their literacy achievements
- regular opportunities for Key Stage 2 children to read to younger pupils (Foundation and Key Stage 1) at breaktimes



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- regular updates via school dojo page, highlighting individual achievements in literacy tasks (including pupils becoming AR millionaires, taking part in writing competitions etc).

## Role of the Teacher

In the teaching of literacy, the teacher fulfils several roles in all modes of language:

- 1) **model:** as a skilled user of language, the teacher's role is the central element in fostering positive attitudes towards literacy.
- 2) **facilitator:** the teacher provides a supportive and stimulating environment, organising purposeful activities and enabling the child to develop literary skills.
- 3) **initiator:** the teacher provides a variety of resources and opportunities for a range of balanced activities to encourage the development of skills in talking, listening, reading and writing.
- 4) **monitor:** observing and recording the development of skills in literacy.



## Organisation

### Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

- Literacy is a core subject in The Northern Ireland Primary Curriculum. We use the framework as laid down in The Northern Ireland Curriculum document as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for Language and Literacy.
- Each teacher plans for Literacy to cover a period of approximately 6 weeks.
- A planning sheet is completed, which shows the planned programme for the following areas: Talking & Listening, Reading, Writing, Grammar & Punctuation, Phonics/spelling, highlighting the Cross-Curricular Links where appropriate.



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- The planning sheets are submitted to the Principal, Literacy co-ordinator and Head of Key Stage for monitoring for progression through the Key Stages.
- At the end of each planning period an evaluation takes place and issues raised are addressed in the subsequent planning period.

## Assessment

The aim of assessment (teacher/peer/self) is to monitor the progress of each pupil and to inform future learning programmes. In this way, individual achievements and weaknesses can be identified and differentiated teaching resources provided by the class teachers or SENCO.

Assessment may be formal or informal. Informal assessment takes place on a daily basis through teacher observation of children's talking and listening, reading and writing. Teachers may also use reading data generated through the Accelerated Reading Scheme to assess pupils' progress.

Spelling tests are used throughout the school (from Key Stage 1) at the beginning of each term, to inform groups and planning.

Formal assessment will take place on a yearly basis in each class from P3-P7 using PTE tests. At the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 assessment takes the form of end of key stage assessments.

Salford reading tests are used in Primary 3-7 to help identify those weaker readers in the class who may benefit from taking part in initiatives to develop reading fluency, including 'Time to Read' and 'Reading Partnership'. The Reading Partnership Programme provides additional 1:1 reading practice with an adult within the school setting for a short period of time (usually 10 weeks). Time to Read allows pupils to read to (or be read to by) an external adult volunteer once a week, for a term.

At Foundation Stage assessment takes the form of teacher observation and some more formal testing at the end of each year.

For some children a more formal diagnostic test will be carried out by the Special Needs Teacher (see SEN policy).

## Special Educational Needs

### **Role of the Class Teacher in Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

The class teacher plays a pivotal role in addressing the individual needs of pupils with special educational needs. To ensure effective support, the following actions will be undertaken:



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- **Early Identification:** Teachers will identify potential learning difficulties at the earliest opportunity, supported by the outcomes of individual observations and assessments.
- **Referral to SENCO:** Any concerns regarding a pupil's progress will be communicated to the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) for further consultation. Teachers will share their findings from assessments and observations taken over a six week period. This may lead to the pupil being placed on the SEN Register in accordance with the Code of Practice.
- **Curriculum Access and Differentiation:** Pupils with SEN will be provided access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Teaching will be appropriately differentiated to ensure tasks are accessible and achievable, promoting a sense of success and engagement.
- **Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs):** Teachers will collaborate with the SENCO to develop and implement individual PLPs for pupils on the SEN Register. These plans will include clear, achievable targets and outline the specific educational provision required to meet each pupil's needs.
- **External Liaison:** Teachers will maintain communication with relevant external agencies, including the Education Authority, Educational Psychology Services, and outreach support such as Cottown, to ensure coordinated and comprehensive support for pupils. Referrals may also be made, with parental consent, to Speech and Language Therapy.

The main responsibility for teaching pupils with special educational needs lies with the class teacher who incorporates differentiation into his/her planning and teaching.

### Gifted Children

Through classroom evaluations, observations and assessments children who are recognised as being very capable will be brought to the attention of the SENCO and relevant action plans drawn up.





## Role and Responsibilities

### The Class Teacher

- to facilitate the development of Literacy
- to **promote the skills** of reading, writing, talking and listening at every opportunity
- to identify **different needs** of different children
- to identify children with **special needs** and inform the SENCO
- to **differentiate** the level of work to suit different needs
- to **monitor and assess** progress
- to keep parents informed, formally and informally
- to participate in meetings and training on Literacy

### The Literacy Co-ordinator

- to promote Literacy throughout the school
- to ensure provision of appropriate resources and materials
- to ensure **continuity and progress** in planning
- to ensure effective evaluation takes place and is important in subsequent planning
- to identify training needs among staff and to ensure that these needs are responded to
- to meet with teachers to give guidance and support, to answer questions and deal with issues
- to keep staff informed of developments which will affect Literacy
- to support and guide teachers during assessment

### Cross Curricular Issues

Literacy is relevant throughout all the primary subjects. Opportunities to develop the skills of talking, listening, reading and writing are availed of on a formal and informal basis. We will therefore develop literacy through the context of:

- Mathematics and Numeracy
- The Arts
- The World Around Us
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding
- Physical Education



## **ICT**

Children are encouraged to develop their literacy skills through the use of ICT. All classes are timetabled to use the computer suite and a class set of Chromebooks are available for classes to use periodically. Reading and writing skills are developed through the completion of ICT tasks each term, use of educational packages and through the closely supervised use of the internet.

## **Equal Opportunities**

Towerview Primary School has a policy of equal opportunities for all its pupils, irrespective of colour, race, class, gender, ability or disability. We ensure that teaching methods and materials are non-biased and reflect a range of backgrounds and interests. We provide activities and materials that are motivating and stimulating to children of different genders and abilities.

## **Parental Involvement**

We seek to involve parents actively in the promotion of literacy skills. In every year group, there are parents' curricular meetings in September/October to inform parents on the curriculum, class work and homework for their child in each year group.

In November and March, there are one-one meetings with parents to inform parents of their child's progress.

Parents are contacted if there is cause for concern over their child's development. They are closely involved in discussions about special provision which may be made for their child.

In all cases parents are asked to promote Literacy Skills at home, including making use of the local library, and in monitoring their children's reading.

We have links with the local community through school concerts, visits to the local library, book fairs, visits by writers and dramatists and charity work.



## The Role of Homework

The purpose of homework is to support teaching and learning in the classroom. Homework is set Monday to Thursday.

P1- P2 use Story Sacks, learning packs and reading tasks.

P3-7 There is normally a reading element, writing element and spellings.

Parents are asked to be involved and are encouraged to monitor homework closely and to sign completed work. They are asked to be positive and supportive, to praise what the children can do, to expect mistakes and to help the children learn from them. A guide to supporting children in a positive way is given to parents of P1 and P2 children at the open afternoons and P3-P7 at curricular meetings.

Teachers ensure that the homework is set appropriately and is marked. Homework set is a reinforcement of classroom learning. (See Homework Policy)

## Record Keeping

All teachers keep records of children's marks, scores and progress. At present, examples of children's work are passed on with assessment sheets.

Reading record cards, standardised test scores, copies of reports and brief progress notes on each child, are passed from one teacher to the next year teacher at the end of June.

## Resources

A wide variety of resources are provided within the school and are easily accessible to both teachers and pupils.

Records of resources available within the school, IT equipment and software, radio and DVD recordings etc. are constantly being updated.

All children participate in out-of-school visits e.g. to Theatres, Museums, Historical sites, etc.



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Outside resources, e.g. Professional Organisations, Teachers' Centres, Board Advisory and Support Services, Colleagues in other schools, people in the community and Theatre Groups are used both on a staff and an individual basis.

## **BUILDINGS AND FURNITURE**

The setting of the school (adjacent to open farmland and with a dedicated outdoor classroom in the Forest School area) and the use of attractive displays throughout the school ensures that the environment in which the children work is one that is conducive to language development.

Flexible use of activity areas, ICT suite and Assembly Hall ensure that pupils participate in a wide variety of activities.

Materials are stored on an individual as well as on a shared basis.



## **Review of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or earlier depending on changes in approaches, standards in the school, a change in Department of Education's approach, durability or updating of resources.