



School Policy – ENGLISH

Templederry N.S.

Introduction: Following curriculum in service and school planning days, the school plan for English was formulated by the staff of Templederry N.S. during the academic year 2017-18. It was reviewed on a number of occasions and most recently in May/June 2018 in relation to the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy School Self Evaluation and the new Primary Language Curriculum.

Rationale:

- New primary language curriculum states the following as rationale:
- Language shapes who we are
- Language learning is a developmental process
- Language learning is an integrated process
- To benefit teaching and learning of English in the Primary School Curriculum.
- To conform to principles of learning outlined in the Primary School Curriculum.
- To review the existing plan for English in light of changed emphases and new methodologies outlined in the Primary School Curriculum and National Strategy.
- To create and implement a core curriculum in the areas of reading, writing, oracy, grammar, spelling, phonics and handwriting.
- To provide a coherent structure for teaching of all aspects of teaching English within the school.



- To maintain continuity and familiarity from one classroom to the next.

Relationship to School Ethos:

In keeping with our school ethos “to develop the full potential of each individual” and “to develop each child’s self esteem and confidence”, we feel the effective teaching of English is very important.

It is our agreed belief that the better the child’s ability with language, the more effective he/she will learn. We realise it is important to integrate all aspects ie. listening, speaking, reading, writing. It is more than learning a language. It is learning through a language and other dimensions of the child’s personality and potential are cultivated and enriched. In preparation for life it is very important to assist children to express emotional and imaginative experiences and to be able to put feelings into language.

Vision:

Through providing each child with an education in a happy and caring environment and in endeavouring to develop the individual talents of each child, we strive to give the necessary communication skills to the children in our care to ensure they can participate in the wider community to the best of their abilities.

Aims:

The aims of Primary Language Curriculum are presented in three groups: focusing on children and their lives, children’s communications and connections with others, and children’s language learning and development.

We endorse the aims of the Primary School Curriculum for English



1. To promote positive attitudes and develop an appreciation of the value of language – spoken, read and written.
2. To create, foster and maintain the child’s interest in expression and communication.
3. To develop the child’s ability to engage appropriately in listener-speaker relationships.
4. To develop confidence and competence in listening, speaking, reading and writing.
5. To develop cognitive ability and the capacity to clarify thinking through oral language, writing and reading.
6. To enable the child to read and write independently.
7. To enhance emotional, imaginative and aesthetic development through oral, reading and writing experiences.
8. To enable international children to communicate effectively in the English language.
9. S.S.E. is used as a process to help guide our planning and delivery to help accurate delivery of the ever changing needs in schools new language curriculum.

Guiding Principles:

- The four interconnected components of the Primary Language Curriculum are
- Learning Outcomes
- Progression Continua
- Support Material for teachers
- Examples of children’s language learning and development.



- Real readers read to understand and we must expose our readers to a rich variety of genres, texts and materials
- Writing is a process; although we publish work, we must not over-emphasise the end product. We must teach children how to write.
- Reading, Writing and Oral language should be integrated with one another.
- Oral language has its own discreet time in our English Programme. We teach the 'what' and 'how' through the various contexts and give the children an opportunity to put their skills to meaningful use.
- Children learn language and language is a powerful learning tool ie. they learn 'through' language.

Curriculum Planning:

In Templederry N.S. English will be planned through the three strands

- Oral language
- Reading
- Writing
- The elements of language learning across each of the strands are:
 1. Developing
 2. communicative relationships through language
 3. Understanding the content and structure of language
 4. Exploring and using language

SSE: The whole school community has engaged in the SSE process. It has been seen as an invaluable tool for the process of curriculum evaluation. While the subject of English has now been covered by SSE, we continue to re-visit it on an ongoing basis.

School Engaged



- Oral Language
- Comprehension Skills
- Writing Genres
- Levelled Reading and Literacy Groups

ORAL LANGUAGE.

As there is huge diversity in the language ability children bring with them to school, we feel it is important to place great emphasis on the different aspects of oral language especially developing listener/speaker relationship and vocabulary extension.

Children will experience a variety of age appropriate strategies to develop conversational and oral language skills.

In line with new Primary Language Curriculum Oral language is allocated to each class level.

There will be a language aspect to all subject areas ex. P.E., Art.... Opportunities for language development, discussion, vocabulary etc. will be explored.

Objectives:

- To gain pleasure and fulfilment from the language experience.
- To develop the capacity to express feelings, impressions, ideas, reactions... through talk and discussion.
- To develop fluency, explicitness and confidence in communication.
- To develop listening skills, language conventions, vocabulary and language manipulation.



READING

The ability to read effectively is an essential requirement of the child is to benefit fully the educational process, to develop his/her potential and to participate appropriately as a citizen in society. This is a crucial element in the child's language learning. We aim to ensure that each child is given the opportunity to develop his/her literacy skills, thereby becoming an effective reader.

In our school plan for reading – emphasis is placed on the following areas:

- Children are encouraged to appreciate the usefulness and pleasures of reading.
- It is school policy to promote and encourage reading and there is a wide variety of reading material available.
- A reading culture is promoted in the school through activities such as Shared Reading, Book Fair, Book Week, DEAR, USSR.SQUIRT, silent reading.
- A paired reading scheme involving parents is in operation in term 2.
- There is appropriate print rich environment in every classroom.
- On occasions, writers, authors, poets are invited to the school.
- The school puts great emphasis on the role of parents to/with children.
- Children will experience a variety of age appropriate strategies.
- The school has fully engaged with SSE. Through this process we have decided upon a whole school approach to levelled reading through the use of graded novels and levelled readers. This has been rolled out throughout the school and has been a huge success. It is assessed and re-evaluated with groups being re-



drawn at the start of each year. Formal, informal assessment and teacher observation form the main part of this process.

READING RECOVERY

The early intervention programme Reading Recovery is used with children experiencing literacy difficulties in Senior Infants (ages 5 years 6 months to 6 years 9 months). The 20 week, one to one, daily intervention encourages active engagement in reading, writing and how words work.



STRATEGIES:



Basic Sight Volabulary:

This forms an important element of the language base the children need before beginning a structured reading programme.

Junior and Senior Infants – Tricky words (Jolly Phonics) x 72

First Class – up to 100 High Frequency words

Second class – up to 200 High Frequency words

Third & Fourth Class – Social Sight words, abbreviations

Frys Spelling List

Language Conventions 5th and 6th prefix, suffix, idioms, puns alliteration, metaphors etc.

Emergent Reading Approach:

Words will be acquired from a number of sources ex. Big books, language experience material, environmental print, rhymes etc.

Words must be in context.

Phonological Awareness:

The ability of children to hear, manipulate, segment and blend the constituent sounds of words (orally)

Three main elements –

- 1) Syllable awareness ex. Count, tap, clap, use body parts.....
- 2) Onset/rime – Up to Rang 2
- 3) Phonemic awareness:- the ability to manipulate the sound segments in words.
Ex. Nursery rhymes, reproducing rhymes, clapping rhymes, segments of sentences into individual words, segments of words into syllables.....



Middle and Senior classes continue to work on syllables – prefixes, suffixes, endings.. in the context of literacy.

Word Identification Strategies:

For speed, fluent recognition of words, children need to use information from a variety of sources.

- Semantic cue (context)
- Graphophonic (look at word/breakup)
- Syntactic cues (subtitle words/does it sound right?)

Reading Schemes:

Rainbow literacy programme (infants – 2nd)

Presently we are using Folens “Reading Zone” 3rd – 6th reading scheme. This will be reviewed as part of primary language curriculum roll out to the older classes.

Infants -> Second also use Oxford Reading tree + Jolly Readers and PM

Third -> Sixth – novels (borrowed from County Library), newspaper articles and a variety of text.

Support Teachers use PM readers and novels.

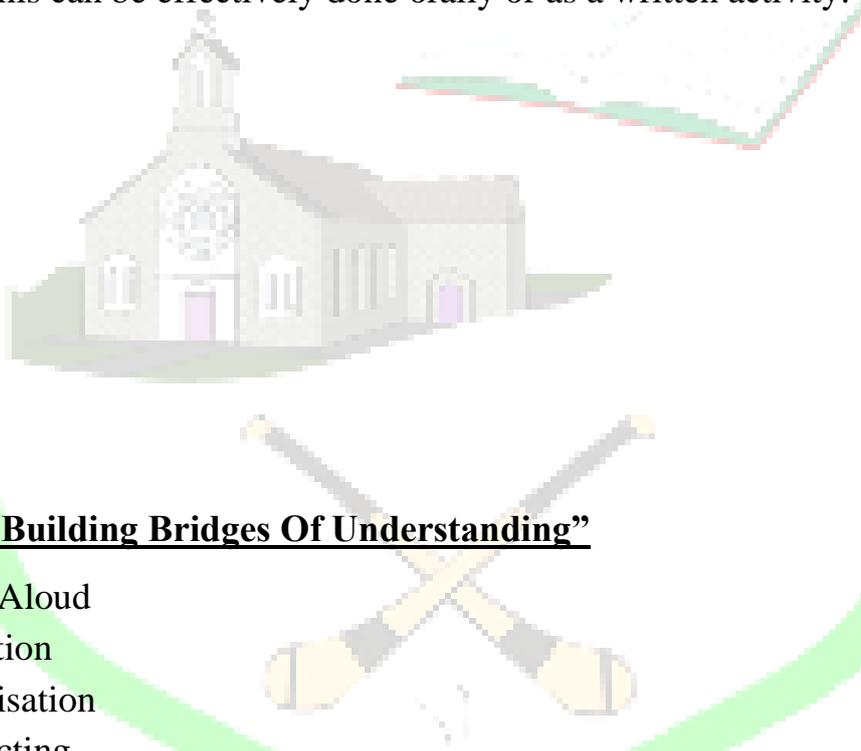
Alternative Reading Material:



Big books, parallel schemes, fact books, supplementary reading material, novels, graded material, library books, newspapers, reports, etc.

Comprehension:

Comprehension is at the heart of the reading process at all levels. In learning to extract meaning from text, it is important that children's higher comprehension are developed. This can be effectively done orally or as a written activity.



Strategies: “Building Bridges Of Understanding”

1. Think Aloud
2. Prediction
3. Visualisation
4. Connecting
5. Questioning
6. Clarification
7. Declunking
8. Determining importance
9. Inferring
10. Synthesis

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WRITING

The child's writing experience at school can contribute to his/her cognitive, emotional and imaginative development. Our aim would be that each child would be provided with the opportunity to develop skills that would enable him/her to write clearly, clarify concepts and express emotions through the writing process.

In our approach to writing, emphasis is placed on the following areas:

- **The Process of Writing:**

The importance of writing as a way of communication.....

Infants – drawing, scribbling, teacher as scribe, language experience, children writing their names, words, phrases, sentences to accompany pictures.

Older students – stimulus, discussion, brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing and publishing.

- **Importance of Oral Language**

Oral language is an integral part of the writing process – before, during and after all activities.

- **Different Audiences**

Children's written work will be read be/shared with classmates, parents, other classes, teachers and on occasions with the wider community ex. Magazines.



Genres of Writing:

It is our policy to focus on each genre for a set time of the year.

Infants }	{ Recount	-	Sept / October
	{ Report	-	Jan. / February
	Procedure	-	March / April
	Persuasive	-	April / May
	Narrative	-	Nov / December
	Explanation	-	June

Recount - retell of past experiences

Report - factual text

Procedural - listing a sequence of actions/steps to show the way to make/do something

Persuasive - evaluation of ideas involving argument, persuasion or debate.

Narrative - tell an imaginary story

Explanation - giving cause and effect. Reasons why.

A consistent approach to the process of “Writing, Editing & Redrafting” of work has been agreed.

The stages:



- 1) First Draft
- 2) Edit (using class checklist . These are compiled by class teacher.
- 3) Final Draft
- 4) Presentation (various ways)
- 5) Self correcting assessment

HANDWRITING

Infants:

In line with new language curriculum

- Cursive handwriting is introduced throughout the school
- In the Infant classroom children first use all forms of written expression (scribbles, drawings, lines, letters) and this eventually evolves to use of letters and words.
- Pre-writing activities ex. Threading, cutting, tearing, colouring
- Pattern work
- Children are introduced to writing through a print rich environment, language – experience materials, teacher modelling writing, teacher as scribe, copying letters and words informally
- Letter formation is taught as letters are learned (Jolly Phonics)
- Letters with ligature – lower case and capitals

Rang 1 & 2.

Children form patterns

Letters with ligature – lower case and capitals



Rang 3 & 4.

Rang 4 – further practice and perfection of letter formation.

Focus on height and spacing.

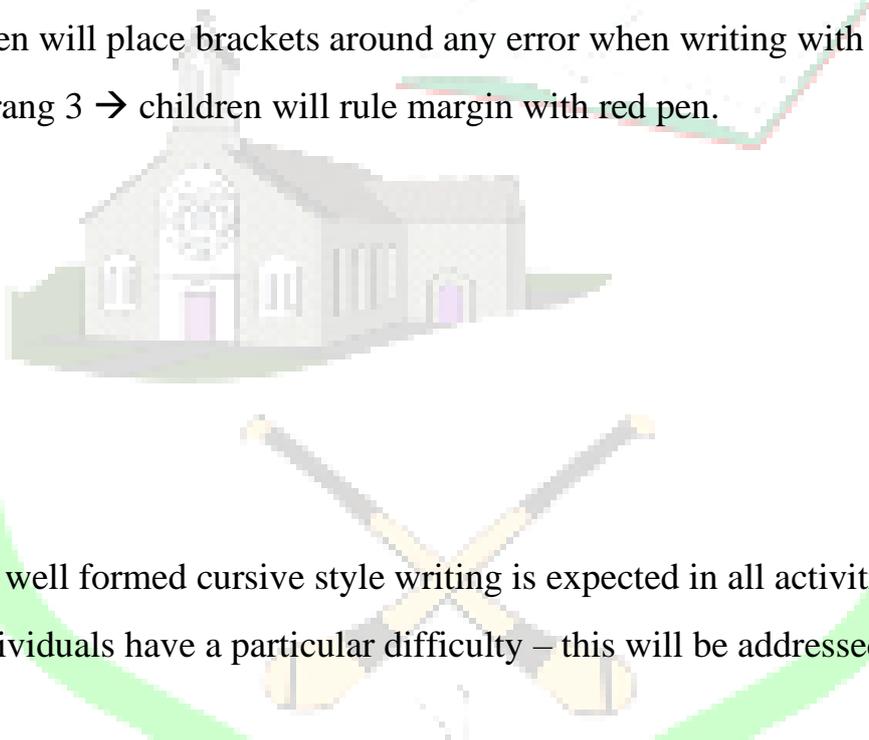
Pencils will be the handwriting tool – Rang 3.

Pens will be introduced – last term Rang 4.

Children writing with pencils are allowed to use eraser.

Children will place brackets around any error when writing with pen.

From rang 3 → children will rule margin with red pen.



Rang 5 & 6.

Clear, well formed cursive style writing is expected in all activities.

If individuals have a particular difficulty – this will be addressed one to one.

- Handwriting is taught formally 10-15 minutes per week (Rang 1 → 4). Practice in the infant classes is through letter and sentence formation.
- School approaches the correction of handwriting through formal correction during handwriting lessons and informally through reinforcement, reminding, encouraging, drawing attention to poor handwriting.
- Self correction and self improvement.
- Writing Scheme in use - Infants → Rang 6 (Just Write 1 – 6th) Folens.



- Provisions are made for left handed children by encouraging them to slant the page.

SPELLING

A staff decision was made to look more closely at the whole area of spelling and to try to develop a whole school plan for spelling success.

Spellings have always been given priority in our school.

However, there was some concern that although children learn spellings and may get spelling lists/tests correct – there still appeared to be spelling errors and inaccuracies when children progressed to write independently or attempt unfamiliar words.

All children need to attain mastery of conventional spelling. This we feel, is most likely to be achieved if spelling is taught systematically, using a whole-school multi-dimensional approach used consistently in each class.

Spellings seem to be easier for children who are visually aware, have a good memory, write well and have good verbal ability.

Preparatory work ie. Language development.

Visual/auditory discrimination, are very important and are areas needing special focus in every class and very particularly in Infants.

Children engage in pre spelling activities through phonological and phonemic awareness.

It is school policy to teach formal spelling from 1st class to 6th class. It is a skill which needs to be taught and not just tested and corrected.

Strategies : Look. Cover. Write. Check.



A decision was made to introduce a spelling scheme for structure and continuity.

Spellwell was selected because of the metacognitive approach. It teaches spelling in context with a wide range of activities, includes revision and helps make spellings fun. Dictionaries are used as an aid to remember spelling.

Other spellings – examples.....frequently used words / words from reader will also be taught.

Opportunities for dictations will be sought and used where possible

Staff agreed Brendan Culligan's approach and in particular the use of dictation should be used on occasions.

Spellings need to be written. It is a hand eye activity. The need for spelling is in written work. Hence the idea of writing spellings in a sentence/passage will be explored. Format of spelling tests will be varied.

It was decided that children should be encouraged to spell accurately in all written activities. However, when writing creatively credit should be given for the content and ideas. Emphasis should not be put on spelling errors and the enthusiasm of the writer should not be killed. Children should be encouraged to develop the confidence to use approximate spelling.

When a spelling is wrong, give credit for any part of the word that is correct.

Support Strategies.

- ❖ Familiar, important and regularly occurring words must be taught/learned
- ❖ Spell words based on the most common patterns
- ❖ Build word lists
- ❖ Picture charts
- ❖ Vocabulary rich environment



- ❖ Small words in big words
- ❖ Word shapes
- ❖ Common prefixes and suffixes
- ❖ Plurals
- ❖ Mnemonics
- ❖ Dictionaries
- ❖ Spelling rules.
- ❖ Free Writing Copies

Children experiencing difficulties need support.

- ❖ Encourage children to have a go and try an approximate spelling
- ❖ Encourage spelling
- ❖ Break up long words
- ❖ Analyse a word and pick out the hard part to focus on
- ❖ Words that rhyme
- ❖ A cloze passage
- ❖ Sentence building/word building
- ❖ Personal dictionaries
- ❖ Decorate/illustrate a word
- ❖ Word searches. Spelling games
- ❖ Multi sensory approach.

GRAMMAR.



The oral aspect of teaching grammar is very important and at all times teachers are conscious of and incidentally correct grammatical errors that arise – informally. grammar is also taught formally.

Infants: Naming words

Action words

Descriptive words

Connecting words to join sentences

Singular/Plural

1st & 2nd: As above

Introduce - Noun / Verb

3rds & 4th Children become more familiar with the functions of words.

Introduce grammatical terms –

Noun preposition

Verb singular/plural

Adjective masculine/feminine

Pronoun Alphabetical order

Adverb

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5th & 6th

Further extension to work done

Extend parts of speech to include

Conjunction

Article

Interjection

Properties of nouns – common, proper, gender

Verbs – case, tense, person ..

Become familiar with compound and complex sentences and understand the term “phrase” and “clause”.

PUNCTUATION

Children will be taught and made aware of:

Infants:

Lower case letters

Capitals

Full stops

1st & 2nd:

Lower case

Capital letters

Full stop

Question mark

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Speech marks

Commas

From Rang 3 – children expected to use a wider range of punctuation marks with greater accuracy.

3rd & 4th

as above +

Comma

Exclamation mark

Apostrophe

Inverted commas

Contractions

5th & 6th

as above +

Colon

Semi colon

PHONICS

Junior Infants:

- Initial sounds
- Mid sounds
- End sounds

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- Constant digraph ch sh th wh
- Vowel digraph ai, aa, ie, ee, oi, ue, oo, ou
- Word endings ue, er, or, ay, ng
- Consonant/ vowel / consonant

Senior Infants: Revise above

- Vowel digraphs ow, ay
- Joining vowel to consonant

1st Class: Revision

- Magic e
- Differentiate bdp
- Initial consonant blends
with -e, -i, -s
- Final consonant blends
-ng, -nk, -nd, -nt, -rt, -ft, -ct, -it, -mp, -pt, -tch
- -igh – word night, light, might, right, high
- Vowel digraphs au, aw, ew, oy
- Double consonants -ff, -ll

2nd class y sound – long ex. my

short ex. Mammy

Y at beginning



Soft g & c

Consonant digraphs spl. str. sch, spr.

Silent letters k. w. – mb l. gh – lk

3rd class

Revision.

Silent letters – rh -- sten -stle

u. (ex. guard) -dge

three letter blends shr- , thr- scr-

-ough.... though, bought

rough, tough

Word endings - tion, -sion, -tious, -cious

4th class

Word ending --cial, -tial, -sial

Consonant

‘ph’ sound

-que sound ex. cheque

-gue – ex. rogue

Syllabication

Suffixes

Prefixes

Multi syllabification

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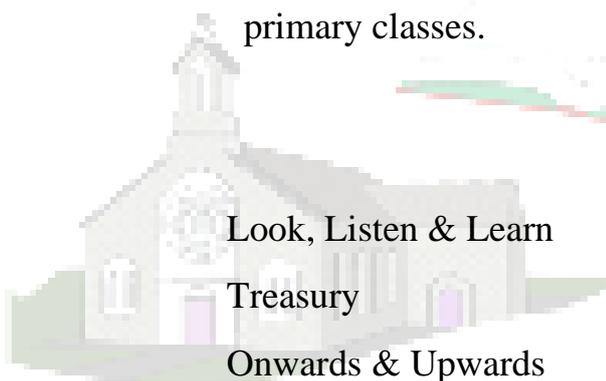


-le – family

Phonic Resources:

Jolly Phonics; Just Grammar; New Wave English;
Grammar Handbook; Jolly Grammar English
Skillsbook; Treasury; Toe by Toe;
P.A.T. S.N.I.P. Literacy. Grammar Workbook for senior
primary classes.

Rang 1 go 4:



Look, Listen & Learn
Treasury
Onwards & Upwards

Sounds At Work

Learning Support:

Toe by toe
P.A.T.

Assessment.

Assessment in English is an essential element of the teaching and learning process. It is ongoing and a cyclic process ie. learning, assessment, identifying individual needs, evaluating teaching strategies and planning for future learning.

Assessment will focus on each of the strands. It will be part of the teaching process and a great proportion of it will evolve less structural methods.



- ❖ Self evaluation
- ❖ Teacher observation
- ❖ Teacher designed tasks and tests
- ❖ Work samples, projects, etc
- ❖ Diagnostic tests
- ❖ Standardised tests – DTEL
- ❖ British Ability Scales word test – BAS 3
- ❖ Non Reading Intelligence Test
- ❖ MIST

Drumcondra English test * Rang 1 go 6

Drumcondra Spelling 1 - 6

Value of tests:

- To select children for support/early intervention.
- To share information with parents and other professional.s
- To direct future planning.

Differentiation:

Graded activities

Varied amounts

Individualised work

Work at varying pace

Use of I.C.T.

Work with parents

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Time:

An amount of English is taught informally and incidentally in the course of the school day and through other subject areas (integrated activities and cross curricular)

The actual time spent formally on English is – as advised

Extra discretionary curricular time is allocated as appropriate.

Homework:

- Homework is given in accordance with our homework policy.
- English homework is tailored to the needs and abilities of the class and special consideration is given to individuals.
- There is co-ordination between class teacher and support teacher.
- Every effort is made to have balance between oral, reading and written activities.

Library:

- Class libraries are used in our school.
- Each teacher looks after the stocking of books.
- There is a wide range of books available

Juniors – big books, books of graded levels,
books with wide range of interest,



Books based on film, T.V.....
Supplementary readers.

Seniors – factual, fiction, references, poetry,
Joke books, puzzle books,
books for different reading ages and interests.

- Each teacher organises library in own classroom.
- Library van visits three times a year and each class group has books on loan.
- Class Novels through library school supply

Resources

To facilitate the implementation of our English plan we have-

Folens Language Programme Ipad's

Ancillary materials from language schemes – ex. poster, C.D.
worksheets.

Jolly Phonics Programme

Reading Zone parallel readers

Jolly Grammar

P.A.T. P.L.A. Reading Fluency Resources

Well stocked Libraries

Selection of Big Books



Prim Ed resource books

Drama – masks, make-up....

Selection of toys

Digital cameras

Camcorder I.W.B.

CD player Computer / printer.

I.C.T. – some children may have Electronic Device to access curriculum

Infant Level: introduce children to the use of mouse and experiment with programme ex. Paint. Doing jigsaws etc. to develop co-ordination.

Write name using ex. Notepad.

Paint .

Use of suitable appropriate software – Jolly Phonics. Jolly Phonics

1st & 2nd: Extend work done at Infant level.

Write a few sentences. Paint.

Use of software.

3rd → 6th: Research Projects; e-stories. Further develop the use of Information technology.

Introduction to Word Processing. Saving a piece. Printing. Changing font, font size...

There is a good range of suitable size appropriate software in each classroom. See list.



Individual Teacher's Planning and Reporting:

- The whole school plan and the curriculum documents for English provide information and guidance to individual teachers for long and short term planning.
- The 'Cuntas' helps in reviewing and developing for the future.

Staff Development:

- The Principal provides information on in service/ staff development in the area of English.
- Board of Management will fund any courses.
- Staff meetings – share ideas, review and plan.

Equality:

- Equality of participation and access is ensured in the English Curriculum through:
 - Equal opportunities are given to boys and girls to participate in discussions, presentations etc.



- Equal opportunities are given to boys and girls to participate in reading activities.
 - Teachers are cognisant of developmental differences between boys and girls when starting to read.
 - Teachers are aware of gender differences in reading. They select reading material suitable for both genders.
 - Teachers are conscious of gender differences in writing readiness.
 - Equal opportunities are given to boys and girls to participate in writing activities.
 - Boys and girls have equal access to, and opportunities to use ICT.
- All children have access to services, facilities and amenities in the school environment
 - Provision is made for the following
 - Children experiencing any form of disadvantage.
 - Children with disabilities.
 - Families with literacy problems.
 - Families for whom English is not the first language.
 - Through providing supplementary teaching for pupils who qualify as laid out in the Learning support Guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Science.

Parents:

Parental Involvement

- Parents are made aware of the central importance of oral language in the learning process during the information meeting for new entrants, during parent –teacher meetings and other informal meetings during the year.



- Parents are encouraged to involve children in purposeful language activity, through chatting with children and to extend conversations through further questioning and prompting. Parents are also made aware of the importance of discussing pictures in readers.
- Parents can support their child's reading through paired reading, visiting local library, reading stories, reading environmental print, visiting books fairs, buying books as presents etc.
- Parents can assist in the development of their child's writing in the early years through pre-writing activities such as colouring, marla, cutting, threading etc. through practicing letter formation at home and encouraging the children to scribble, draw and write frequently. Parents can assist further up the school by encouraging neat presentation of their children's work and through showing an interest in, listening to and praising written efforts.
- Parents can be involved in using ICT to support language learning through using software which achieves this.
- Information can be shared with parents at parent teacher meetings, the school's information booklet, newsletter.
- If the school is aware that parents have literacy problems the principal can inform them of adult literacy programmes that are available to help them with their literacy skills and how to access them.

Success:

Success criteria: The following criteria will indicate success

- We will know that the plan has been implemented if:
 - Teachers' preparation is based on this plan.
 - Procedures outlined in this plan are consistently followed.
- The indicators of the plan achieving its aims are:
 - Feedback from teachers/parents/pupils/community.



- Inspectors' suggestions/report.
- Feedback from second level schools.
- The plan will have enhanced pupil learning if:
 - Children have a positive attitude and appreciation of the value of language – spoken, read and written.
 - Children have an interest in expression and communication.
 - Children have an ability to engage appropriately in listener-speaker relationships.
 - Children have confidence and competence in listening, speaking, reading and writing.
 - Children are engaging with a variety of genre in reading and writing.
 - A process approach is evident in writing.
 - Comprehension and higher order thinking skills are developed through oral language, reading and writing.
 - Children's emotional, imaginative and aesthetic development is enhanced through oral, reading and writing experiences.

Implementation:

The plan was implemented by the teaching staff, supported by the B.O.M. and parents.

The revised plan will be implemented from June 2018 with particular focus on the Literacy Strategies.

It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis. Aspects will be discussed during the year and every effort will be made to ensure optimum implementation of the English curriculum in the school.



Roles and Responsibilities:

Those involved in the review include:

- Teachers
- Parents through Board of Management
- Post holders
- BOM /DES

Summary / Main points:

- Reading, Writing and Oral language must be integrated.
- Children write for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- Children must be taught HOW to write in different genres. School to focus on each genre for set timeframe and cover all in the course of the year.
- Real readers read to *understand*.
- Children must be exposed to a variety of texts.
- We must consider the variables of Comprehension.
- Comprehension strategies to be taught. School to phase in “Building Bridges” strategies.
- Spellings must be *taught not caught* through a variety of approaches.
- Reading must be nurtured .
- Parents must be made aware of the importance / value of Shared Reading.
- Subject SSE completed review – Phase 2 of PL comes in formally.
- Primary language is in use in the school and will continue to be implemented in line with department guidelines.



Ratification:

This policy was ratified by the board of Management of Templederry N.S.

Signed: _____

Chairperson B.O.M.

Signed: _____

Principal

Date: _____

Date: _____

