

**Dalserf Primary School**  
**Position Statement for Literacy**

**Rationale**

Dalserf Primary School endorses the Principles and Practice ideals outlined within Curriculum for Excellence, where Literacy is defined as:

‘... the set of skills which allows individuals to engage fully in society and in learning, through the different forms of language, and the range of texts, which society values and finds useful’.

A strong desire to ensure that all pupils develop literacy skills that go beyond basic literacy, and help ensure that our pupils’ experiences allow them to function effectively in a rapidly changing society, means that Dalserf Primary School fully endorses the guiding principle of Curriculum for Excellence that the development of children’s literacy is the responsibility of all.

**Our aims of Dalserf Primary School for the development of our learners’**

**Literacy –**

- To provide high quality teaching, learning and assessment experiences for all learners.
- To provide a visually stimulating, text rich teaching and learning environment for all learners.
- To provide challenge, enjoyment, progression, breadth, depth, relevance, coherence, personalisation and choice in all aspects of literacy.
- To make meaningful links between literacy skills and the application of these in all curricular areas / aspects of school life.
- To provide high standards in the acquisition, and use of all, literacy skills.
- To improve standards of comprehension and higher order literacy skills, moving beyond basic literacy.
- To provide opportunities for learners to collaborate throughout the curriculum to develop and extend their literacy skills.
- To engage parents in supporting their children’s literacy development.
- To work collaboratively with partner agencies and other establishments to help ensure best possible provision and sharing of best practice.

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Consulted: All teaching staff

- To provide high quality CPD opportunities to ensure that the teaching of literacy is maintained at the highest level.

### **Aims into Action**

Whilst it is important that pupils are taught core Literacy and English skills, this should never be exclusive to only literacy lessons. Discrete Literacy lessons aim to develop skills and knowledge before learning to apply them in other contexts. Literacy Across Learning means the development of literacy across and throughout the curriculum.

In many lessons there will be overlap between the core areas of Reading, Writing, Listening & Talking. Teaching staff are encouraged to use their professional judgment to ensure there is suitable time allocation to the teaching of Literacy.

### **Writing**

In line with Curriculum for Excellence, teachers ensure that enjoyment and choice, tools for writing, organising and using information and creating texts experiences and outcomes are routinely taught. Children will experience a weekly taught writing lesson during which they will be explicitly taught using the features of genres as detailed in CfE

Early story writing is based on the foundations of talking and drawing and by the end of the early stage children are writing their own two or three part stories. Beyond this level, staff teach a range of both fiction and non-fiction genres throughout the year, with each genre taught for a block period to allow the development of skills.

Learning intentions and success criteria for each genre are created and shared with pupils, along with a list of core targets across all genres which are included in children's writing jotters. Children are encouraged to make use of their skills in writing across all areas of the curriculum.

Teachers are afforded opportunities to use resources of their own choosing, in addition to school resources and to adapt these, as the needs of their learners dictate. Teachers are encouraged to create writing lessons inspired by children's interests or current affairs. Learners are provided with opportunities to collaborate with their peers to develop their ideas for writing.

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Grammar and handwriting are encompassed within Literacy lessons and will feature as discrete areas when required.

High Standards in writing, including spelling, technical skills and handwriting, is encouraged in all curricular areas. Opportunities to provide useful feedback to move children's learning about writing forward, is picked up on in a variety of contexts.

### **Phonics and Spelling**

An active Literacy Approach to the teaching of phonics and spelling is adopted. This provides a coherent and progressive programme for teaching and learning. In primaries one to three, spelling and phonics are both taught.

In phonics, children are taught the single phonemes (initial sounds) before moving on to digraphs (two letter phonemes). These are taught using a variety of strategies including songs, actions, rhymes and use of magnetic letters and boards.

Pupils are quickly encouraged to blend their taught phonemes together to make words. Using magnetic boards children are encouraged to say, make/break, blend, read and write words using their magnetic letters. At primary two and three the children are encouraged to cover the word before they write it.

Pupils are introduced to the common words appropriate for their stage and are encouraged to read and write these words correctly through focused lessons and in writing activities.

At primary two and three spelling will also involve words linked to the learned phoneme and activities may include dictation. In primaries four to seven, spelling and phonics are more combined. Children will receive regular input on specific spelling patterns, rules and strategies and use a variety of activities on a daily basis to reinforce these.

### **Listening and Talking**

In line with the Curriculum for Excellence it is essential that enjoyment and choice, tools for listening and talking, finding and using information understanding, analysing and evaluating and creating texts experiences and outcomes are taught as discrete skills with the opportunity to apply these skills within every curricular area.

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Listening and talking is at the heart of all our learning and takes place daily throughout the whole curriculum. Discrete, skills-based, lessons on listening and talking are taught as well as opportunities to put skills into practice across the curriculum. All children are given the opportunity to build upon previously learned skills thus encouraging continuity and progression. Children are given the opportunity to talk in pairs, trios and groups and to the whole class for a variety of purposes including discussion of a particular topic, presenting ideas to others, class talks and school presentations.

## **Reading**

In line with Curriculum for Excellence, it is essential that enjoyment and choice, tools for reading, finding and using information and understanding, analysing and evaluating experiences and outcomes are all taught. Learners are provided with opportunities to revisit knowledge, understanding and skills and to enhance their reading aptitudes through plentiful opportunities to apply learning in a variety of contexts.

Teachers ensure full and effective use is made of school resources to support the teaching of reading. In the infants, core resources are banded reading books (both fiction and non-fiction) from Bug Club Readers and Rigby Star books. Active approaches, which have clear links to collaboration, listening, talking and writing opportunities that promote higher order thinking and meaning, are utilised in all classes.

In primaries four to seven children are offered a rich and varied reading experience with texts that offer stimulation and motivation using Bug Club fiction and non-fiction books and the novel study approach. Novels are carefully selected, from a moderated list, to provide quality and challenge and are mostly all books that children would find in any bookshop.

Children progress from the banded books to novels when they demonstrate good levels of comprehension, fluency and independence, (This is most often when children reach the end of the white level of banded books, usually during primary three, when they will progress onto the 'skinny' novels found at white and lime bands). At this point the children are encouraged to talk about the text in order to search for meaning and show a clear understanding. Developing fluency shifts from reading aloud to being encouraged to read for longer periods of time to develop reading stamina either independently or with a partner, or a group, as part of reciprocal reading.

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Word attack strategies are the same for all children from primaries one to seven. In addition to the teaching of fiction using novels, pupils are provided the opportunities to read a wide range of non-fiction texts. Teachers select appropriate texts to match the children's ability, books are sourced to provide challenge, variety and choice and have also taken into account pupil interests.

Children are encouraged to participate in paired reading activities with a peer, older child or adult and are given daily opportunities to read independently for enjoyment. Class libraries in the infants are banded so that children can choose a book which they can read independently for enjoyment. Teachers also read aloud to pupils daily from a selected list of age/stage appropriate texts compiled by Pie Corbett.

### **Assessment**

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. In Dalsersf Primary we strive to uphold the assertion made in Curriculum for Excellence Literacy Across Learning Principles and Practice (p.3) that:

'Assessment in Literacy will focus on children and young people's progress in developing and applying essential skills in listening and talking, reading and writing.'

AifL strategies are common practice in classes. All learners experience the sharing of criteria for success in literacy lessons, they are questioned throughout literacy lessons in a way that promotes higher order thinking, they are provided with useful feedback that helps move their learning forward and are provided with opportunities to engage in self and peer assessment. The quality of the dialogue that learners engage in with their teacher and each other cannot be underestimated. Self and peer assessment, in addition to quality dialogue between teacher and pupil, should allow for the setting of the next steps, where possible.

Teachers utilise a range of well-known reading and spelling summative assessments and combine this with their own teacher judgement when reporting about a child's progress. The application of skills and knowledge across the curriculum forms part of this judgement. Pupils are assessed in a variety of contexts and evidence in support of children's attainment and achievements is gathered from a range of sources (Building the Curriculum 5).

Writing is assessed against criteria, which have been created by staff, using the benchmarks.

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## **Use of digital literacy**

A variety of technology is used within Literacy to enhance, consolidate and support learning. It can be beneficial for pupil engagement, and can make the curriculum accessible to pupils of differing abilities, while inspiring children by linking teaching and learning with real-world platforms. Use of technology features in most lessons for periods of time, the number of devices can mean a rotation or shared approach is often adopted.

## **Role of Support Staff**

Our school seeks to ensure that the needs of all our learners are met through our established assessment, evaluation, monitoring and staged intervention processes. Where appropriate, Support Staff are allocated to support the learning that takes places. Staff support children in developing and applying their literacy skills, in line with the class teacher's requests. In some cases, Support Staff will deliver one-to-one support interventions for pupils identified through the staged intervention process. Any such Support Staff member will have received additional training on the use of the intervention.

## **Role of the Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher ensures that all staff are fully supported in the delivery of high-quality teaching and learning of Literacy and English through regular professional dialogue, monitoring, evaluation and quality feedback (forward plans, classroom and jotter monitoring). The Head Teacher, through discussion(s) with staff, ensures that resources are kept under review and that these are added to, where possible, in order to promote learners' enjoyment and level of challenge.

The Head Teacher keeps staff informed of quality continuous learning opportunities. Staff are provided with opportunities to collaborate meaningfully to enhance literacy provision, to be innovative in their teaching of literacy and to share good practice, within and out with our establishment. The Head Teacher and Literacy Coach provide support to ensure that relevant and up-to-date advice and resources are made available.

While each class teacher is directly responsible for the attainment and achievement of pupils in each class, it is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to ensure that effective, rigorous tracking and monitoring takes place to ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential. This occurs in conjunction with school's staged intervention system.

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## **Parental Involvement.**

Dalserf Primary School is committed to involving parents and families in the work of the school and in supporting the development of children's literacy. Dalserf is committed to achieving this through purposeful parents' meetings, newsletters and information leaflets. The school operates an open-door policy, whereby parents are welcome to contact us to discuss any questions or queries at any time.

## **Whole School Events and Enjoyment**

Dalserf prides itself on the strong, positive ethos that the team of staff, pupils and parents working together provides. We believe that the extent to which our learners enjoy and are motivated by their experiences has a huge impact on their literacy development. We are eager to promote lifelong learning and a love of literacy in all learners. As such, we seek to actively promote the culture of reading through daily silent reading time, daily opportunities to listen to an adult or older peer reading and the use of whole school literacy events (e.g. Roald Dahl week, participation in World Book Day). This year we have a Reading Rocks Pupil Leadership Team who are planning more frequent whole school reading events and activities.

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