



English Curriculum Plan

This curriculum plan was developed by the staff to provide guidance for all teachers and to ensure whole-school collaboration and development of children's English skills.

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1. Introductory Statement

This revised curriculum plan for English was developed by staff members and is aligned with the new Primary Language Curriculum. It is to be read in conjunction with the Curriculum and also alongside related policies and plans including An Plean Curaclaim na Gaeilge, the Assessment Plan, the Handwriting Policy and the Additional Education Needs Policy. As a living, working document, it was updated extensively in 2024 in response to addressing the recommendations made in the English Curriculum Evaluation and other changes led by staff working groups.

2. Rationale

As an English-medium school, English is the vehicle for the delivery of the majority of the curriculum. It is one of the core subjects and has links with all curricular areas. Because English is the medium in which pupils and teachers engage in learning activities, it plays a central role in the school. The plan strives to ensure that students’ language development supports their achievement across the curriculum.

3. Vision

Recalling the school’s ethos that strives to develop the whole child, this English plan seeks to develop pupils’ language competencies by providing the necessary tools to use language effectively so that pupils:

- are able to communicate their needs, ideas and opinions with confidence;
- experience personal enjoyment and develop positive social relationships through language interaction;
- and are empowered to access information as part of a life-long-learning process.

4. Aims

- To ensure mastery of basic skills and strategies so that pupils are able to gather information from a variety of sources/genres.
- To align all teaching and learning with the Primary Language Curriculum.
- To provide early intervention, ensuring all children are given opportunities to experience success in literacy development.
- To develop equally the three strands: oral language (speaking and listening), reading and writing.
- To build on oral language development that is the foundation for later written work.
- To support the pupils’ confidence to express ideas, views and opinions through productive language processes.
- To present opportunities for imaginative, emotive and creative exploration with language.
- To expand pupils’ general knowledge by recognising the development of literacy across the curriculum.
- To ensure students are presented with a language-rich learning environment.

5. The Primary Language Curriculum: Elements, Strands and Learning Outcomes

This plan is based on the elements and learning outcomes described in the Primary Language Curriculum. The table below summarises three elements, three strands and learning outcomes that are addressed through the specific approaches, methodologies and content found in the next section. Teachers will use the detailed curriculum as well as lesson exemplars and support materials available in the [Primary Language Toolkit](#) on the NCCA website when planning for teaching and learning.

	Oral Language	Reading	Writing
Communicating	Engagement, listening and attention	Engagement	Engagement
	Motivation and choice	Motivation and choice	Motivation and choice
	Social conventions and awareness of others		
Understanding	Sentence structure and grammar	Conventions of print and sentence structure	Conventions of print and sentence structure

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	Vocabulary	Vocabulary	Vocabulary
	Demonstration of understanding	Phonics, word recognition and word study	Spelling and word study
Exploring and using	Requests, questions and interactions	Purpose, genre and voice	Purpose, genre and voice
	Categorisation	Comprehension	Writing process and creating text
	Retelling and elaboration	Response and author's intent	Response and author's intent
	Playful and creative use of language	Fluency and self-correction	Handwriting and presentation
	Information giving, explanation and justification		
	Description, prediction and reflection		

The structure of English lessons will generally follow this sequential model:

Oral Language

- Awaken interest
- Link to personal experience
- Elicit and develop key vocabulary



Pre-reading

- Structured introduction to specific target vocabulary drawn from a text
- Vocabulary study based on morphology, word composition (base word/prefixes/suffixes), context, spelling patterns and relationships to other words and languages



Reading

- Scaffolded reading practice using a mix of non-fiction and fiction texts and different text lengths and purposes
- Application of reading skills through targeted, guided practice



Comprehension

- Responding to texts by systematically applying reading skills
- Applying a range of assessment components including cloze procedure, open-ended questions, closed questions, oral responses, written responses and discussion



Aligned Writing and Oral Language Tasks

- Exploring different writing genres after considering structure and component and with links to the wider Primary School Curriculum objectives/learning outcomes.
- Applying new vocabulary and structure in creative and playful oral language tasks

6. Approaches, Methodologies and Content

The approaches and methodologies described in this section are aligned with the Primary Language Curriculum and are intended to raise children’s language awareness, both about English but also Irish and other languages spoken by pupils in the school regardless of their level of fluency. These activities will be used to help teachers and children recognise the similarities and differences in order to develop a broad and interconnected understanding of language.

6.1 Stages 1 and 2 (Junior Infants – Second Class)

6.1.1 Oral Language

Oral language skills are considered a precursor to reading and writing development. By endeavouring to provide multiple opportunities to practice oral language skills, both receptive and productive, students will be best positioned to acquire all literacy skills. Oral language skills are developed across the curriculum and are inextricably linked with all other parts of the Primary Curriculum. In addition to this diffused oral language development, discrete time is devoted to specific oral language lessons as part of the English programme and closely aligned with the curriculum objectives. Receptive and productive language skills are developed through discrete lessons as well as in various contexts throughout the school day. Phonological awareness is developed, particularly in the infant classes, with extensive and regular exercises and games that highlight the sounds in words and practicing segmentation as well as identifying onset and rhyme.

	Junior Infants and Senior Infants	1st Class and 2nd Class
Sample Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integration with SPHE, Learn Together and SESE - News sharing - Sequencing - Reciting poems and singing songs - Imaginative Play - Circle Time - Philosophical debates - Think-pair-share - Drama games and improvisation activities - Show and Tell (favourite books, toys, etc.) - Reciting poems - Creative dramatics - Sharing at Whole-School Assemblies - Phonological awareness games and exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integration with SPHE, Learn Together and SESE - Word games to develop vocabulary - Drama improvisation - Role play - Think-pair-share - Tasks requiring collaboration and negotiation - Re-telling stories - Reciting poems and singing songs - Acting out stories - Philosophical debates - Speaking about a given topic extemporaneously - Discussion linked to reading and writing - Sharing at Whole-school Assemblies - Consolidation of phonological awareness through games and exercises

6.1.2 Reading

Early literacy development will focus on developing awareness of letter sounds using the University of Florida Literacy Initiative (UFLI) in conjunction with the Jolly Phonics programme. In addition, the children in Junior Infants will be explicitly taught the following phonemic awareness skills using the Heggerty Phonological Awareness Programme in the beginning of Term 1. Those skills include Rhyme, Phoneme Isolation, Blending, Segmenting and Manipulation. All children will be exposed to a variety of authentic literature through a variety of means in order to develop their interest in reading, to help children experience full texts and to begin to develop higher-order thinking skills applied when comprehending a story or text. Use of picture books provides a foundation in the infant years. In first and second classes longer texts are introduced. As students develop emerging reading skills, independent reading is emphasised, guiding children towards selecting their own reading material. Once a year, children will take turns bringing in their favourite book that will be introduced

and then read, either by the teacher or the children themselves. Read-aloud will take place daily, and teachers are encouraged to consult the voice of children in choosing appropriate books. Each class chooses to do at least one poet study using one of the suggested poets below, reading and discussing 3-5 poems and learning about the poet’s life and context.

6.1.2.1 Shared and Guided Reading

Junior Infants	Senior Infants	1 st Class	2 nd Class
<p>UFLI Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared reading of whole decodable texts with a focus on word analysis and developing fluency <p>Heggerty Phonological Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Daily practice for first 8 weeks in Junior Infants. - Rhyme Recognition, Initial Phoneme Isolation, Blending Syllables, Phoneme Isolation: Final Sounds, Segmenting into Syllables, Adding Final Syllables, Deleting Final Syllables, Alphabet Knowledge, Language Awareness <p>Red Squirrel Decodable Readers (Level 1-3, 30 books)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emphasis on oral language discussion related to the books - Practice blending the sounds - Heart words/tricky word work - Shared reading with parents for homework 	<p>UFLI Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared reading of whole decodable texts with a focus on word analysis and developing fluency <p>Oxford Reading Tree Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children assigned a level (1+-8) and usually one book over two days and two books per week - Oral language discussion as well as decoding practice. - Reading record maintained by parents and teachers. <p>Phonics Levelled Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Peer reading in stations using PM readers. 	<p>UFLI Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared reading of whole decodable and graded texts with a focus on word analysis and developing fluency <p><i>Exercise Your English 1</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Structured passages to practice specific comprehension reading strategies <p>Oxford Reading Tree Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children assigned a level (1+-12) and short chapter books as appropriate - One book is read per night until levels 7-9 when it may be split - Reading record maintained by pupils and parents. <p>Phonics Levelled Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Peer reading in stations using PM readers. 	<p>Levelled Chapter Books</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading approximately 10 minutes each evening, either independently or with a parent. - Reading record maintained by pupils and parents. <p><i>Exercise Your English 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Structured passages to practice specific reading strategies

6.1.2.2 Class Novels and Authentic Literature

Junior Infants	Senior Infants	1 st Class	2 nd Class
<p><u>Picture Books</u></p> <p>Selection of picture books read by the teacher</p> <p><u>Class Library</u></p> <p>Informal exploration of the class library</p>	<p><u>Picture Books</u></p> <p>Selection of picture books read by the teacher</p> <p><u>Class Library</u></p> <p>Informal exploration of the class library</p> <p><u>Suggested Read-aloud Books:</u></p> <p>A range of picture books</p>	<p><u>Whole-class Novel:</u></p> <p><i>Flat Stanley</i> by Jeff Brown <i>Trouble for Tuffy</i> by Ann Bermingham</p> <p><u>Small-Group Novels:</u></p> <p><i>Amazing Grace</i> by Mary Hoffman <i>The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark</i> by Jill Tomlinson <i>Frog and Toad Together</i> by Arnold Sobel <i>The Hedgehog</i> by Dick King-Smith</p> <p><u>Suggested Read-aloud Books:</u></p> <p><i>James and the Giant Peach</i> by Roald Dahl <i>The Magic Finger</i> by Roald Dahl <i>The Giraffe the Pelly and Me</i> by Roald Dahl <i>George’s Marvellous Medicine</i> by Roald Dahl <i>Snug</i> by Michael Morpurgo</p>	<p><u>Whole-class Novels:</u></p> <p><i>The Sheep Pig</i> by Dick King-Smith <i>Stone Fox</i> by John Reynolds Gardiner <i>Fantastic Mr Fox</i> by Roald Dahl</p> <p><u>Small-group Novels:</u></p> <p><i>The Ice Palace</i> by Robert Swindells <i>The Iron Man</i> by Ted Hughes <i>The Battle of Bubble and Squeak</i> by Phillippa Pearce <i>Cat Tales</i> by Linda Newbury</p> <p><u>Suggested Read-aloud Books:</u></p> <p><i>Gangsta Granny</i> by David Walliams <i>The Invention of Hugo Cabret</i> by Brian Selznick <i>The Rover Adventures</i> by Roddy Doyle <i>The One and Only Ivan</i> by Katherine Applegate</p>

6.1.2.3 Story and Comprehension Exercises

Junior Infants	Senior Infants	1 st Class	2 nd Class
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oral comprehension checks based on story, poetry, class readers (Red Squirrel Decodables Books Level 1-3), - Learn Together, SPHE and SESE lessons. - Exercises based on specific oral language material - A selection of passages aligned with themes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oral comprehension exercises based on story, poetry, Learn Together, SPHE and SESE lessons. - Exercises based on specific oral language material. - Simple written comprehension exercises based on picture and short story prompts linked to sight words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Passages to practice targeted reading skills and vocabulary using <i>Exercise Your English</i> - Additional written comprehension exercises emphasising full-sentence answers and higher-order thinking skills. - Oral comprehension checks based on class reading books. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Passages to practice targeted reading skills and vocabulary using <i>Exercise Your English</i> - Additional written comprehension exercises emphasising full-sentence answers and higher-order thinking skills. - Oral and written comprehension checks linked to novels.

6.1.2.4 Poetry

Junior Infants	Senior Infants	1 st Class	2 nd Class
<p><u>Poem Study:</u> Nursery Rhymes <u>Poems from a selection of resources:</u> Reading Zone Oral Language Scheme <i>Here’s a Little Poem</i> Theme, season and festival poems</p>	<p><u>Poet Study:</u> Jack Prelutsky <u>Poems from a selection of resources:</u> Theme, season and festival poems <i>Something Beginning with P</i> <i>Here’s a Little Poem</i></p>	<p><u>Poet Study:</u> Robert Louis Stevenson <u>Poems from a selection of resources:</u> <i>Read Me First: Poems for Younger Readers</i> <i>I Wonder Does He Have the Book?</i> <i>The Works</i> series</p>	<p><u>Poet Study:</u> Nikki Grimes Ogden Nash <u>Poems from a selection of resources:</u> <i>Read Me First: Poems for Younger Readers</i> <i>The Works</i> series</p>

6.1.2.5 Phonics and Phonemic Awareness

Junior Infants	Senior Infants	1 st Class	2 nd Class
<p>UFLI Programme (Units 1-34)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Systematic introduction of a weekly sound explored through oral discussion, development of letter-sound correspondence, decoding words, dictation, heart words, identifying spellings patterns and reading decodable texts (see summary below) <p>Jolly Phonics Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce songs and stories following the UFLI sequence - Word-building and decoding <p>Sounds Like Phonics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CVC word families – at, it, in, on, en, as, is - Blending - Dictation - Onset and rhyme - Segmentation <p>Heggerty Phonological Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Daily practice for first 8 weeks in Junior Infants. - Rhyme Recognition, Initial Phoneme Isolation, Blending Syllables, Phoneme 	<p>UFLI Programme (Units 35-62)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Systematic introduction of a weekly sound explored through oral discussion, development of letter-sound correspondence, decoding words, identifying spellings patterns and reading decodable texts <p>Jolly Phonics Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review songs and stories following the UFLI sequence - Word-building and decoding <p>Sounds Like Phonics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CVC, CVCC and CCVCC word families - Blending - Dictation - Onset and rhyme - Segmentation 	<p>UFLI Programme (Units 42-106)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Systematic introduction of a weekly sound explored through oral discussion, development of letter-sound correspondence, decoding words, identifying spellings patterns and reading decodable texts - Focus on alternative spellings <p>Phonics development in <i>Exercise Your English 1</i> activities</p>	<p>Spelling Shed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Targeted weekly phonetic sound aligned with vocabulary development <p>Phonics development in <i>Exercise Your English 2</i> activities</p>

Isolation: Final Sounds, Segmenting into Syllables, Adding Final Syllables, Deleting Final Syllables, Alphabet Knowledge, Language Awareness	- Alternative spellings introduced		
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Scope & Sequence At-a-Glance: All Concepts (K-2)

<p>Alphabet</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a /ă/ 2. m /m/ 3. s /s/ 4. t /t/ 5. VC & CVC Words 6. p /p/ 7. f /f/ 8. i /i/ 9. n /n/ 10. CVC Practice (a, i) 11. Nasalized A (am, an) 12. o /ô/ 13. d /d/ 14. c /k/ 15. u /û/ 16. g /g/ 17. b /b/ 18. e /ê/ 19. VC & CVC Practice (all) 20. -s /s/ 21. -z /z/ 22. k /k/ 23. h /h/ 24. r /r/ Part 1 25. r /r/ Part 2 26. l /l/ Part 1 27. l /l/ Part 2, al 28. w /w/ 29. j /j/ 30. y /y/ 31. x /ks/ 32. qu /kw/ 33. v /v/ 34. z /z/ 	<p>Alphabet Review & Longer Words (incl. CVC, CCVC, CVCC, CCVCC, & CCCVC)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 35. Short A Review (incl. Nasalized A) 36. Short I Review 37. Short O Review 38. Short A, I, O Review 39. Short U Review 40. Short E Review 41. Short Vowels Review (all) <p>Digraphs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 42. FLSZ Spelling Rule (ff, ll, ss, zz) 43. -all, -oll, -ull 44. ck /k/ 45. sh /sh/ 46. Voiced th /th/ 47. Unvoiced th /th/ 48. ch /ch/ 49. Digraphs Review 1 50. wh /w/, ph /f/ 51. ng /n/ 52. nk/nk/ 53. Digraphs Review 2 (incl. CCCVC) <p>VCe</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 54. a_e /ă/ 55. i_e /î/ 56. o_e /ô/ 57. VCe Review 1, e_e /ê/ 58. u_e /û/, /yû/ 59. VCe Review 2 (all) 60. _ce /s/ 61. _ge /j/ 62. VCe Review 3, VCe Exceptions <p>Reading Longer Words</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 63. -es 64. -ed 65. -ing 66. Closed & Open Syllables 67. Closed/Closed 68. Open/Closed 	<p>Ending Spelling Patterns</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 69. tch /ch/ 70. dge /j/ 71. tch /ch/, dge /j/ Review 72. Long VCC (-ild, -old, -ind, -olt, -ost) 73. y /î/ 74. y /ê/ 75. -le 76. Ending Patterns Review <p>R-Controlled Vowels</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 77. ar /ar/ 78. or, ore /or/ 79. ar /ar/ & or, ore /or/ Review 80. er /er/ 81. ir, ur /er/ 82. Spelling /er/: er, ir, ur, w + or 83. R-Controlled Vowels Review <p>Long Vowel Teams</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 84. ai, ay /ă/ 85. ee, ea, ey /ê/ 86. oa, ow, oe /ô/ 87. ie, igh /î/ 88. Vowel Teams Review 1 <p>Other Vowel Teams</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 89. oo, u /oo/ 90. oo /û/ 91. ew, ui, ue /û/ 92. Vowel Teams Review 2 93. au, aw, augh /aw/ 94. ea /ê/, a /ô/ <p>Diphthongs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 95. oi, oy /oi/ 96. ou, ow /ow/ 97. Vowel Teams & Diphthongs Review <p>Silent Letters</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 98. kn /n/, wr /r/, mb /m/ 	<p>Suffixes & Prefixes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 99. -s/-es 100. -er/-est 101. -ly 102. -less, -ful 103. un- 104. pre-, re- 105. dis- 106. Affixes Review 1 <p>Suffix Spelling Changes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 107. Doubling Rule -ed, -ing 108. Doubling Rule -er, -est 109. Drop -e Rule 110. -y to i Rule <p>Low Frequency Spellings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 111. -ar, -or /er/ 112. air, are, ear /air/ 113. ear /ear/ 114. Alternate /ă/ (ei, ey, eigh, aigh, ea) 115. Alternate Long U (ew, eu, ue /yû/; ou /û/) 116. ough /aw/, /ô/ 117. Signal Vowels (c /s/, g /j/) 118. ch /sh/, /k/; gn /n/, gh /g/; silent t <p>Additional Affixes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 119. -sion, -tion 120. -ture 121. -er, -or, -ist 122. -ish 123. -y 124. -ness 125. -ment 126. -able, -ible 127. uni-, bi-, tri 128. Affixes Review 2
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6.1.3 Writing

From the very beginning, writing is explored both from a technical and an expressive point of view. In addition to developing fine motor skills and correct letter formation, children are given the opportunity to explore the creative aspects of written expression. Initially, this is largely explorative and then structures of specific genres are introduced gradually.

6.1.3.1 Genres and the Writing Process

Junior Infants	Senior Infants	1 st Class	2 nd Class
Exposure to a range of genres through read-aloud and oral activities. - Labelling during imaginative play activities - Freewriting - News writing	Introduce the following genres using a gradual release of responsibility approach, initially with the teacher acting as scribe (Read → Model → Collaborate → Independent Writing including 2-3 drafts) - <u>Recount</u> : summer event, a journey, school trips - <u>Narrative</u> : stories with beginning, middle and end	Writing genres continue to be introduced and graphic organisers are introduced for planning writing. Multiple drafts are completed. Writing models are given including sentence stems. - <u>Recount</u> : school trips - <u>Narrative</u> : imaginative stories - <u>Explanation</u> : fact books on hedgehogs, wild flowers, animals, space, facts on first class etc - <u>Description</u> : Picture prompts	The writing process is followed for several drafts, including the beginning of peer conferencing and editing. - <u>Recount</u> : school events, family events - <u>Narrative</u> : stories based on SESE themes - <u>Poetry</u> : simple rhyming poetry - <u>Explanation</u> : my favourite game - <u>Description</u> : Poster for lost or wanted item - <u>Procedure</u> : how to make toast, how to get dressed, etc.

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- <u>Procedural</u> : recipes	- <u>Procedural</u> : How to Make Lemonade, How to Wash a Woolly Mammoth	- <u>Persuasive</u> : the best pet, response to debates
- <u>Letter</u> : letter to former classmate(s)	- <u>Opinion Writing</u> - Ant project, The best thing about 1st class	- <u>Correspondence</u> : letter to penpals, email, thank-you cards
	- <u>Correspondence</u> : thank- you cards, letter to former teachers/pupils/penpals	

6.1.3.2 Grammar/Writing Mechanics/Spelling/Dictation

Infants	1 st Class	2 nd Class
Introduction to text format and orientation. Capital letters, ending punctuation and left-to-right orientation. Spacing: finger width between words. UFLI sounds sequence and development Dictation activities. Making words using magnetic alphabet letters and writing 3 to 5 words in copy, progressing to a short sentence or two in Term 3.	UFLI spelling patterns and dictation <i>Exercise Your English 1</i> - Skills addressed include capital letters, sentence structure, proper nouns, common nouns, alphabetical order, a or an, plurals, pronouns, verbs, conjugating verbs, past tense, future tense, present tense, adjectives, compound words, adverbs, plurals, antonyms, speech marks, questions.	Spelling Shed - Targeted phonetic patterns and vocabulary introduction <i>Exercise Your English 2</i> – Skills addressed include alphabetical order, sentence writing, speech marks, questions, commas in lists, exclamation marks, proper nouns, adjectives, plurals (s) and (es), possessive adjectives, homophone mix-ups, sentences and verbs, adverbs, verb ‘to be’ (present and past), regular and irregular past tense, using a dictionary, proofreading sentences, expanding a sentence, conjunctions, plurals (s) and (ies), word webs, proofreading a story, prefixes, apostrophe (s), contractions, prepositions, finding the meaning, suffixes (-ing, -er and -est), comparatives and superlatives, interesting words, commas in speech

6.1.3.3 Morning Message

Junior Infants	Senior Infants	1 st Class	2 nd Class
Morning Message written collaboratively on the easel at a class meeting basis Today is Monday. Inniu an Luan. It is cloudy. Tá sé scamallach. One sentence about the day Pupils write the morning message one to two times per week from the board independently beginning in May in project copies with illustrations.	Morning Message is written collaboratively during the class meeting on a daily basis with a similar format but two additional sentences are written. Children write about the day of the week and the weather in English and in September. From the third term, only words are written on the board and the children use them to construct their own sentences. Pupils write the morning message once or twice per week, eventually without prompts on the board and writing their own sentences in project copies with illustrations.	At the beginning of the year, on a weekly basis, follow a similar approach as senior infants. Later in the year, only write up first-word prompts Ex. Today... Inniu an... Weather (at least two descriptors) Yesterday... (writing multiple sentences) Follow-up activity (interdisciplinary)	Initially present prompts but quickly move to independent writing of morning message on a weekly basis. Vocabulary and date formats are extended. Events outside the school are mentioned and linked to current affairs. This is complemented by an oral daily round up.

6.1.3.4 Freewriting

Junior Infants	Senior Infants	1 st Class	2 nd Class
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As part of imaginative play, provide paper and pencil. Children write initial sounds and begin to use approximate spelling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing during imaginative play. - 15-minute freewriting sessions beginning in the last term. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A minimum of 15 minutes per week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At least 15 minutes once per week in a separate copy. - Genre and topic list is generated and revised at the beginning of each term. - Creative writing sessions also take place.
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6.1.3.5 Handwriting

Letterjoin is being introduced as the main handwriting programme beginning in the 2024-2025 academic year. It is recommended to read the revised Handwriting Policy in conjunction with this curriculum plan.

Junior Infants	Senior Infants	1 st Class	2 nd Class
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Letterjoin</i> exercises - Module 1 - Lower-case letters - Use of 1cm square copies for letter formation practice and whiteboards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Letterjoin</i> exercises - Module 1 (cont.) - Lower-case and capital letters - Use of B2 copies for letter formation practice and whiteboards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Letterjoin</i> exercises - Module 2 - Review of letter formation and introduction to joined writing - <i>Letterjoin</i> exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Letterjoin</i> exercises - Module 3 - Continuation of joined writing fundamentals

6.2 Stages 3 and 4 (Third – Sixth Classes)

6.2.1 Oral Language

While oral language exercises still provide support for other literacy tasks, the focus of oral language development shifts to include more advanced skills including the ability to articulate opinions and ideas, to formulate questions, to process information when listening and to organise ideas in a logical order. While oral language activities are used in every area of the Primary Curriculum, specific discrete time is allocated towards oral language lessons within the English programme in order to develop advanced receptive and productive skills. As much as possible, student “talking-time” will be maximised across the curriculum in order to provide the widest range of opportunities to practice and develop skills in context.

	3 rd Class	4 th Class	5 th Class	6 th Class
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sequencing Questioning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - literal, - inferential, evaluative and deductive News sharing Discussion in other subject areas Drama <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improvisational games Problem-based group activities One-minute meeting (extemporaneous speaking) Discussion in other subject areas Book Club discussions Debating Philosophy cards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questioning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - literal, - inferential, evaluative and deductive Circle Time Think Pair Share Discussion in other subject areas, e.g. History, Geography and SPHE Drama <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improvisational games Recitation of poetry Book Club discussions Oral presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary extension Word games – classification, word puzzles, jokes, word chains Discussion in other subject areas Sayings, idioms, proverbs and colloquialisms Drama <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improvisational games - Use of scripts Storytelling – pass the beanbag, opening sentences Hot Seat Debating Book Club (oral book reviews) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persuasive writing/speaking Discussion in other subject areas Retelling stories Role play Two-minute debates Poetry Discussion Public Speaking: Report Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss, create and dramatise phone conversations (EYE p. 10) Class Novel Discussions Demonstration: Oral performance related to writing project Lessons on projection and articulation

	Walking debates		
Resources	Newspaper articles, poetry/stories, class novel discussion questions, <i>Speaking and Listening: Cross-curricular Activities 7-9 and 9-11</i> , “Odyssey of the Mind” problems/tasks, board games, etc.		

6.2.2 Reading

Acknowledging the change from “learning to read” to “reading to learn”, the focus of reading activities becomes the ability to extract meaning from texts representing a range of genres. Therefore, reading skills are addressed across the curriculum. Within the English programme, strategies and skills for interacting with texts are practiced. As much as possible students will use authentic texts, specifically novels and non-fiction sources as well as articles from both print and online sources. Each child will read a minimum of 3 extended texts each year, which will form the core of reading activities in school, in addition to the personal reading children will do at home for the book sharing activities. The class novels, as the core of the reading programme, will be read in short time-frames to encourage a single focus on an extended story line. Between class novel units, additional reading comprehension exercises will be incorporated. Reading aloud to children will continue on a daily basis to be used as a way of developing comprehension strategies as well as expose students to a wider range of literature and more complex vocabulary, with further introduction of the Building Bridges to Comprehension programme to consolidate reading skills. In alignment with written work in various genres, the structure of text types will be discussed explicitly including the following five types:

- Description
- Chronological Order/Sequence
- Compare and Contrast
- Problem and Solution
- Cause and Effect

Poetry will feature regularly, with opportunities to learn off poems by heart as well as discuss the themes and literary devices. Each class has two assigned poets, and each class will complete at least one poet study where 3-5 poems will be considered and children will learn about the poet and the historical/cultural context. Throughout all reading activities, emphasis will be placed on developing children’s individual identities as readers, encouraging them to explore their interests and to develop an awareness of the importance of literacy development in their own lives.

6.2.2.1 Extended Texts

Teachers, taking into consideration the interests and ability in the class, may select from the following extended texts. In an effort to expand the types of texts children encounter, particularly non-fiction, scripts, autobiographies and graphic novels. Partial sets are to be used in book-club small group settings.

	3 rd Class	4 th Class	5 th Class	6 th Class
Extended texts	<p><u>Whole-Class Texts</u> <i>Danny the Champion of the World</i> by Roald Dahl <i>Mr Stink</i> by David Walliams <i>The Mozart Question</i> by Michael Morpurgo <i>Blue Planet II</i> by Lisa Stewart-Sharpe</p> <p><u>Small-Group Texts</u> <i>The Diary of a Killer Cat</i> by Anne Fine <i>The Legend of the Worst Boy in the World</i> by Eoin Colfer <i>Freckle Juice</i> by Judy Blume</p>	<p><u>Whole-Class Texts</u> <i>Frindle</i> by Andrew Clements <i>Word of Mouse</i> by James Patterson <i>Big Book of Ideas: An Introduction to Philosophy</i> by The School of Life <i>How Was That Built</i> by Roma Agrawal</p> <p><u>Small-Group Texts</u> <i>The Suitcase Kid</i> by Jacqueline Wilson <i>The Secret of Platform 13</i> by Eva Ibbotson <i>The Phantom Tollbooth</i> by Norton Juster</p>	<p><u>Whole-Class Texts</u> <i>Under the Hawthorn Tree</i> by Marita Conlon-McKenna <i>The Watsons Go to Birmingham</i> by Christopher Paul Curtis <i>A Story like the Wind</i> by Gill Lewis <i>Unstoppable Us</i> by Yuval Noah Harari</p> <p><u>Small-Group Texts</u> <i>Artemis Fowl</i> by Eoin Colfer (graphic novel) <i>The Wreck of the Zanzibar</i> by Michael Morpurgo</p>	<p><u>Whole-Class Texts</u> <i>There’s a Boy in the Girls’ Bathroom</i> by Louis Sachar <i>The Hobbit</i> by J.R.R. Tolkein <i>I am Malala</i> by Malala Yousefzai Abridged Shakespeare comedy (<i>As You Like It</i>, <i>A Midsummer Night’s Dream</i>, etc.) <i>Translations</i> by Brien Friel <i>What Makes Us Human</i> by Luke O’Neill</p>

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	<i>The Fish in Room 11</i> by Heather Dyer <i>Sideways Stories from a Wayside School</i> by Louise Sachar <i>Bill's New Frock</i> by Anne Fine <i>Officer Clawsome: Lobster Claw</i> by Brian Smith (graphic novel)	<i>Because of Winn Dixie</i> by Kate DiCamillo <i>El Deafo</i> by Cece Bell (graphic novel) <i>Hatchet</i> by Gary Paulsen <i>I Survived... The Sinking of the Titanic</i> by Lauren Tarshis <i>The Dragonsitter to the Rescue</i> by Josh Lacey <i>Eric and the Striped Horror</i> by Barbara Mitchell Hall <i>City of Dragons: The Awakening Storm</i> by Jaimal Yogis (graphic novel)	<i>The Boy at the Back of the Class</i> by Onjali Raúf <i>Holes</i> by Louis Sachar <i>Fox Friend</i> by Michael Morpurgo <i>Scurry</i> by Mac Smith (graphic novel) <i>World Burnt Down</i> by Steve Cole <i>Tin Boy</i> by Steve Cole	<u>Small-Group Texts</u> <i>How We Got to the Moon</i> by John Rocco <i>Sheets</i> by Brenna Thumler <i>The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind</i> by William Kamkwamba
Suggested Comprehension and Post-Reading Aligned Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher-created comprehension questions - Mime/dramatise - Vocab development using dictionary - Read aloud with expression - Illustrate/discuss cover/ illustrations - Asking and answering questions in small student-led groups - Summaries - Sequencing - Character profiles - Retell from a different character's viewpoint - Terminology around books - Book reports - Skim text for details or specific words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher resource packages or teacher-created comprehension questions. - VIPs (Very Important Parts) - Children in role as characters - Favourite part - Character development - Character's highs and lows - Write a conversation between characters - Write questions to ask a character in an interview - Book review - Debate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher resource packages or teacher-created comprehension questions. - Creative writing - Discussion - Character analysis - Summarising - Prediction - Letter writing - Newspaper report - Small-group discussion - Artistic response to text (drawing, painting) - Re-writing from another character's point of view - Writing reader's theatre scripts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher-created comprehension questions. - Word study - Crosswords - Comprehension activities, including literal, inferential, evaluative and analytical questions - Oral language questions for discussions - Chapter summary - Prediction exercises - Theme studies - Drawing activities - Rewriting in a different genre (poem, rap, song)

6.2.2.2 Suggested Read-aloud Novels

3 rd Class	4 th Class	5 th Class	6 th Class
<i>Varjak Paw</i> by S.F. Said <i>Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key</i> by Jack Gantos <i>Mother Tongue</i> by Patricia Forde <i>The Lizzie and Belle Mysteries: Drama and Danger</i> by JT Williams	<i>The Tale of Despereaux by Lafcadio, the Lion Who Shot Back</i> by Shel Silverstein <i>The Trumpet of the Swan</i> by E.B. White <i>The Morning I Met a Whale</i> by Michael Morpurgo	<i>Ninth Ward</i> by Jewell Parker Rhodes <i>The Giver</i> by Lois Lowry <i>Tall Story</i> by Candy Gourlay <i>Red, White and Whole</i> by Rajani LaRocca	<i>The Boy in the Striped Pajamas</i> by John Boyne <i>Unlocking the Universe</i> by Stephen and Lucy Hawking <i>Myths and Legends from around the World</i> by Sandy Shepard

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<i>The Giggler Treatment</i> by Roddy Doyle	<i>Break the Mould</i> by Sinéad Burke <i>Save Me a Seat</i> by Gita Varadarajan	<i>Darkmouth</i> by Shane Hegarty	<i>Long Walk to Freedom</i> by Nelson Mandela <i>Number Devil</i> by Hans Magnus Enzensberger
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6.2.2.3 Comprehension Exercises

Following pre-reading exercises targeting vocabulary development, the following approaches are used:

- Novel packs have comprehension sections (written and oral responses), including literal, inferential, evaluative and analytical questions.
- Comprehension and reading skills practice in the *Exercise Your English* series as well as other sources
- Cross-curricular exercises

6.2.2.4 Book-Sharing Activities

3 rd Class	4 th Class	5 th Class	6 th Class
Small-group Book Talks (teacher-led using support staff)		Book Talks (round-robin style in pairs) once a term	

6.2.2.5 Vocabulary

3 rd Class	4 th Class	5 th Class	6 th Class
New words studied in the context of the novel units and short reading passages across the curriculum as a precursor to reading. Exercises in <i>Spelling Shed - Stage 3</i> Word exploration activities from <i>Exercise Your English 3</i> including: - Classification, analogies - Synonyms and antonyms <u>Dictionary Skills:</u> - Definition structure - ABC order - Writing definitions - Links with <i>Frindle</i> (class novel)	New words studied in the context of the novel units and short reading passages across the curriculum as a precursor to reading. Exercises in <i>Spelling Shed - Stage 4</i> Activities from <i>Exercise Your English 4</i> including: - Onomatopoeia and idioms p. 22 - Brainstorming and puzzles p. 28 - Word hunt and context clues p. 46 - Memory game and adverbs p. 56 - Proverbs p. 80 - Dictionary skills p. 46, 92	New words studied in the context of the novel units and short reading passages across the curriculum as a precursor to reading. Exercises in <i>Spelling Shed - Stage 5</i> Activities from <i>Exercise Your English 5</i> including: - Classification and lexical groups p. 10 - Proverbs and colloquial language p. 22 - Puzzles p. 34 - Idioms p. 40 - Synonyms p. 68 Morphology (study of word origin) including Greek and Latin affixes	New words studied in the context of the novel units and short reading passages across the curriculum as a precursor to reading. Exercises in <i>Spelling Shed - Stage 6</i> Activities from <i>Exercise Your English 6</i> including: - Suffixes p. 35 - Idioms p. 50 - Root words P. 51 - Homophones p. 57 - Dictionary skills - Similes p. 85 Continue morphology study including Greek and Latin affixes and borrowed words

6.2.2.6 Poetry

3 rd Class	4 th Class	5 th Class	6 th Class
<u>Poet Study:</u> - Shel Silverstein - Christina Rossetti <u>Suggested Poems:</u> Poems in <i>Exercise Your English:</i> - ‘The Great Blue Whale’ p. 10	<u>Poet Study:</u> - Gabriel Fitzmaurice - Lewis Carroll <u>Suggested Poems:</u> Poems in <i>Exercise Your English 4:</i> - ‘Silly Old Baboon’ by Spike Milligan p. 16, 20	<u>Poet Study:</u> Spike Milligan Seamus Heaney <u>Suggested Poems:</u> Poems in <i>Exercise Your English 5</i> - ‘Txt U L8r’ by Aislinn O’Loughlin p. 4 - ‘Robot Kid’ by Patrick Chapman p. 14 - ‘Words are Such Silly Things’ by Brendan Kennelly p. 28	<u>Poet Study:</u> Langston Hughes Maya Angelou Shakespeare <u>Suggested Poems:</u> Poems outlined in <i>Exercise Your English 6</i> ‘Still I Rise’ by Maya Angelou Shakespearean Sonnets 18, 116 and 130 ‘The Eagle’ by Alfred Lord Tennyson

- 'I Keep My Snowman in the Freezer' p. 40 - 'Falling Asleep in Class' p. 80 - 'Weather' p. 78 - Haiku poems	- 'Night Mail' by W.H. Auden p. 19-20 - 'The Marróg' by R.C. Scriven p. 68 Limericks	- 'The Loner' by Julie Holder p. 56 'New Boy' by Gareth Owen 'Different' by Joan Poulson 'New Year's Resolutions' 'Rivers of Ireland'	'The Road Not Taken' by Robert Frost 'I Lost My Talk' by Rita Joe <i>Revolting Rhymes</i> by Roald Dahl 'The Highwayman' by Alfred Noyes 'And the Ghosts' by Graham Faust 'Fire and Ice' by Robert Frost
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6.2.3 Writing

As in the case of developing reading skills, writing increasingly becomes a primary vehicle for students to demonstrate their knowledge and learning across the curriculum. A special focus will be on developing students' awareness of various genres, both by reviewing examples and engaging in the creation of written compositions. The main resource for the classes is *Exercise Your English*. At each class level, at least ten major writing tasks, exploring multiple genres, will be completed using a writing process including brainstorming/planning, drafting, revising and editing, redrafting and publishing. In addition, freewriting will be an essential component of writing practice, giving children an opportunity to explore expressive aspects of writing. Specific writing skills and conventions will form a core component of the English programme, applying these skills both in authentic writing tasks as well as structured exercises. Spelling and handwriting will continue to be developed, helping students see the link between these skills and the ability to communicate clearly.

6.2.3.1 Suggested Genres and the Writing Process

3 rd Class	4 th Class	5 th Class	6 th Class
<u>Description/Report:</u> Character Study Country reports on Spain and Australia – research approach, note-taking, organising information <u>Procedure:</u> Writing Instructions EYE <u>Persuasive:</u> Critical Review: Book Review Letter writing and posters (complaint or concern) <u>Correspondence:</u> Thank-you letter (to parents) <u>Narrative:</u> Story: Fable Monster and its habitat <u>Poetry:</u> I am... (PowerPoint) Writing couplets Pyramid Poetry EYE Responding to Poetry, Responding to Art EYE	<u>Description/Report:</u> Description: Using similes Report Writing (EYE p. 26) Character Profiles (EYE p. 72) <u>Procedure:</u> Rules to a Game Creative Ideas EYE p. 44 Terrible Ticks EYE p. 54 <u>Persuasive:</u> Preparing/summarising views in a debate Letter writing (EYE p. 8) Restaurant review (EYE p. 38) Writing brochures (EYE p. 90) <u>Correspondence:</u> Postcard writing (EYE) Post card from a character <u>Narrative:</u> Short stories (Write-a-book) Graphic organisers for story planning Short stories related to themes	<u>Description/Report:</u> Report Writing EYE p. 20, 26 Country projects – UK and Italy <u>Procedure:</u> Directions from school/home to a place of interest Staying Safe EYE p. 72 Rules of Soccer EYE p. 84 Procedural task (given to parent who attempts task and then writes a comment for revision) <u>Persuasive:</u> Interesting Essays EYE p. 54 Five-paragraph essays (i.e. children should/should not have homework, invest in our mini-company, etc.) <u>Correspondence:</u> Emails (EYE p. 44) Letters to the BOM/principal Letters of gratitude <u>Narrative:</u> First half of "storybuilding" unit – character, setting, plot structure Short stories related to themes, including historical fiction <u>Poetry:</u>	<u>Report/Description:</u> Global Warming EYE p. 8 Holiday Guides EYE p. 20 Compare and Contrast – two animals or two places <u>Procedural Writing:</u> Recipes EYE p. 14 Challenge Your Chums EYE p. 44 Game: Using three random objects, create a game and write the procedure for playing. Prompts: How do you tie shoes? How do keep a friend? <u>Persuasive:</u> Critical Review – Movie review Election Manifesto (EYE p. 66) Essays (EYE p. 72) Five-paragraph essay: Listen to the speech 'Sunscreen', pick a quote and write a response. <u>Correspondence:</u> Blog entries Letters/emails of complaint <u>Narrative:</u> Second half of storybuilding unit – create a publishing house with a job for everyone - Stories EYE P. 78

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<p><u>Recount:</u> Autobiography (process writing) A Special Day Summaries of chapters of class novels</p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> Hypothesis and conclusions for science experiments Giving directions (EYE) Life cycles (EYE)</p> <p><u>Correspondence:</u> Letter to self (at the beginning of the year and/or at the end)</p>	<p><u>Poetry:</u> Free-verse (using activities from Scholastic poetry resource)</p> <p><u>Recount:</u> Exercises related to class novels Keeping a diary EYE p. 14 Writing accounts EYE p. 32</p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> Explain That! EYE p. 66</p>	<p>Rhyming poems – different rhyme schemes</p> <p><u>Recount:</u> Personal Recount – Anecdote Autobiographies EYE p. 32 Exercises related to class novels Writing about the Past EYE p. 78</p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> What Causes Earthquakes EYE p. 8 Hurricanes EYE p. 90 KWL charts Animal study – research paper and note-card folders, poster</p>	<p>Story from a different character’s point-of-view. Character Chats EYE p.32</p> <p><u>Poetry:</u> Sonnets Free verse poetry</p> <p><u>Recount:</u> Biography: Researching an inventor Exercises in activity packs for class novels. A Diary Study – read excerpts from famous diaries write your own journal for a time period.</p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> Recording explanations related to science observations.</p>
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6.2.3.2 Grammar/Writing Mechanics

Grammar and writing mechanics will be developed through practicing them in context in shared and personal writing tasks. In addition, discrete skills will be explored in lessons and drills.

3 rd Class	4 th Class	5 th Class	6 th Class
<i>Exercise Your English 3</i> - ABC order, addressing envelopes, capital letters, full stops and question marks, nouns, verbs, compound words, adjectives, verb tenses, plurals, antonyms and synonyms, sentences	<i>Exercise Your English 4</i> - Capital letters, punctuation, contractions, alphabetical order, nouns, verbs and tenses, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, plurals, sentences	<i>Exercise Your English 5</i> - Capital letters, commas, nouns, gender of noun, verbs, tenses, adverbs, pronouns, adjectives, prepositions, conjunctions, apostrophe, quotations marks and plurals	<i>Exercise Your English 6</i> - Capital letters, punctuation, review nouns, verbs, adjectives, prepositions and conjunctions, grammar revision, pronouns, adverbs, naming parts of speech, apostrophe, direct/indirect speech, extending sentences

6.2.3.3 Freewriting

3 rd Class and 4 th Class	5 th Class and 6 th Class
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At least 30 minutes once per week. - Genre and topic list is generated and revised at the beginning of each term. - Use the Busy Bee worksheet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A minimum of 30 minutes per week. - Use freewriting as a precursor to other writing. - Genre and topic list is generated and revised at the beginning of each term.

6.2.3.4 Phonics/Spellings/Dictation

Spelling Shed is used for Word Study. It is structured around phonetic themes, with a section on spelling patterns, morphology, etymology and usage for each weekly unit. The programme also has individualised online features.

3 rd Class	4 th Class	5 th Class	6 th Class
<i>Spelling Shed - Stage 3</i>	<i>Spelling Shed - Stage 4</i>	<i>Spelling Shed - Stage 5</i>	<i>Spelling Shed - Stage 6</i>

6.2.3.5 Handwriting

Letterjoin is being introduced as the main handwriting programme beginning in the 2024-2025 academic year. It is recommended to read the revised Handwriting Policy in conjunction with this curriculum plan.

3 rd Class	4 th Class	5 th Class	6 th Class
<i>Letterjoin exercises - Module 4</i> Transcribing print into joined writing	<i>Letterjoin exercises - Module 5</i>	<i>Letterjoin exercises - Module 6</i>	<i>Letterjoin exercises - Module 7</i>

Labelling/titling maps, charts and diagrams Joined writing expected on all tasks	Exploring different styles Begin using pen for some written work	Use of pen for written work on a regular basis	Developing a personal handwriting style
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7. Timetabling

Timetabling for literacy will follow the guidelines laid out in Circular 0056/2011. This stipulates that time spent on literacy (both English and Irish) is at least 6.5 hours per week in infant classes and 8.5 hours per week in all other classrooms. In addition to discrete time devoted to Irish and English lessons, it is acknowledged that literacy is developed throughout the curriculum, and the staff will look for opportunities for development of literacy skills across the curriculum. Time for reading aloud as well as discrete oral language lessons that address a variety of curricular areas are essential components of literacy teaching and including when determining the amount of time devoted to literacy teaching.

8. Homework

Discrete English homework is a regular feature in all classes, from learning letter sounds and sight words to reading for pleasure. Shared or independent reading is the most important part of homework. The learning of English spellings is also a consistent component. Typically, one written piece of homework per week is assigned that often has an interdisciplinary component.

9. IT

Acknowledging that IT has its own unique literacy to be developed, IT tools have the potential to help support the development of literacy across the curriculum. A variety of strategies are already being used in the school including the use of software to develop phonemic awareness and basic reading skills; the use of word-processing programmes for the drafting and redrafting of written work; whole-class revision of literacy skills using specific activities for IWBs; the use of software or online activities to support literacy development for children receiving learning support; the creation of blogs, movies, audio recordings, podcasts and PowerPoint presentations in various interdisciplinary projects; and the use of the internet for information gathering and research activities. Teachers regularly use the internet to source activities and lesson plans as well as research new texts and classroom resources.

10. Teachers’ Planning and Reporting

All teachers will develop yearly and fortnightly/weekly schemes that are based on the learning outcomes of the Primary Language Curriculum and this plan. These plans will not only indicate discrete English lessons and activities but also show the connections between English and the wider curriculum. They will clearly indicate the learning outcomes that are being targeted, and as appropriate, make reference to the Continuum of Assessment. Cuntaisí míosúla will also indicate the types of literacy work completed over the period within both the subject of English and across the curriculum. These cuntaisí will be reviewed by the principal and stored for a two-year period. Support and class teachers will develop support plans for children with additional education needs, and these will set out specific and targeted plans for how to develop children’s English literacy. At the end of the year, teachers will report to parents information on each child’s literacy development as well as standardised test results, as required under Circular 0018/2012.

11. Assessment

A variety of methods are used to assess English skills. At the heart of assessment, both formal and informal, is observation. This observation is multi-faceted and ongoing. It acts as both assessment for learning and assessment of learning. In addition, teacher-created and directed assessment is used to formally monitor students’ mastery of English skills. This ranges from one-to-one checks on letter sounds and sight words in infant classes to formal end-of-year term tests administered in senior classes.

A variety of oral language assessment tools are in use by different teachers, but a particular focus on oral language assessment on a whole-school level has been introduced. While all children will be observed and assessed on pupil profiles and reports regarding oral language, a whole school approach has been introduced that is aligned with the Progression Continua of the Primary Language Curriculum. After investigating and experimenting with different options, an agreed form has been created, and three learning outcomes will be the target of assessment for the 2024-2025 school year. The selected learning outcomes will be reviewed annually. Each class teacher will choose selected tracker children to assess at four time points over the year. This will be a formative assessment tool to assist teachers with planning for teaching and learning. A regular feature of staff meetings and individual planning will reference this assessment focus. In addition, class teachers and support teachers will select children deemed as having concerns related to oral language (particularly receptive but also productive language) to be assessed using the WellComm assessment tool.

Standardised testing is used to check progress and is reported to the DES, the Board of Management and parents as required in Circular 0018/2012. The following tests are administered:

Senior Infants – Drumcondra Early Literacy Test

1st Class – 6th Classes – Drumcondra Reading and Spelling Tests

Recognising that standardised testing provides partial though not a complete picture of students' ability in English, the staff is committed to gathering other forms of evidence to better understand the literacy development in the school. Teachers are committed to encouraging self-assessment through the maintenance of learning portfolios. In addition, students and teachers will complete formal reading logs/records, attitude assessments and other activities to understand children's reading habits and abilities from a broader perspective. To formalise observation as well as assist in the writing of reports, staff members may use the Drumcondra English Profiles to identify each child's strengths and areas for growth related to listening, speaking, reading and writing. More information is available in the school's Assessment Policy.

12. Equality of Participation/Access

We are committed to the provision of equal opportunities for all our pupils in the implementation of our English programme. Equal opportunities are provided to all pupils to participate in discussions, debates, reading and writing opportunities. We encourage gender awareness through promoting consideration of the roles associated with men and women in literature, the media and advertising as well as consideration of the language associated with such roles.

13. Children with Exceptional Ability

By using a range of novels and writing tasks, this plan is envisioned as suitable for differentiation in all tasks. At the discretion of class teachers, and with the support of the SEN team as appropriate, further differentiation beyond the plan is an option for stretching further the abilities of students with exceptional ability. Teachers will use a variety of assessment options to determine when extended differentiation would be appropriate, perhaps opting for extension novels or projects for individuals/groups who are in need of further challenges beyond the wide differentiation already inbuilt in the plan. Collaboration with parents will be encouraged, with teachers recommending additional literacy activities better matched to children with exceptional ability.

14. Children with Additional Education Needs

Children with additional education needs are helped to achieve their potential in the core skills of oral language, reading and writing. Assessment is ongoing and, as required, support plans are drawn up and co-ordinated by the support in conjunction with the parents, class teacher and Inclusion Support Assistants (ISAs). Specific short-term targets are agreed. Regular consultation also takes place with external professionals e.g. Speech Therapist, Occupational Therapist. The class teacher maintains the first line of responsibility for the welfare of the child. Suitable resources are provided to meet the learning needs of individual children. In-class support or team-teaching takes place in all classes and supports all pupils who are in need of additional support. The support

teacher may provide direct instruction to individuals or small groups of children regarding literacy development, sometimes withdrawn from the classroom but often through station teaching and other co-teaching models which are encouraged. Support teachers meet with class teachers to plan, teach, assess and review the learning of pupils on a regular basis. More information can be found in the Additional Education Needs Policy.

15. Children Learning English as an Additional Language (EAL)

The aims of our EAL provision are to maximise access to all areas of the curriculum and to bridge the gap between conversational and academic fluency for children for whom English is an additional language. Children’s language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing is assessed upon enrolment and at specified intervals thereafter. Junior and Senior Infants are assessed for listening/speaking only. The programme of work is tailored to each child’s assessed language level. Close collaboration between the class and support teachers ensures progression. Families are encouraged to continue to use the first language(s) at home as much as possible, and children are encouraged to use dictionaries and other first-language resources as well as to complete some tasks, as appropriate, using their first languages. IT tools that support translation and communication may be used to support communication and learning.

16. Continuing Professional Development

As an integral part of the Primary School Curriculum, English literacy will be addressed on a regular basis through staff meetings, other whole-staff professional development experiences and all curriculum planning exercises. Teachers are encouraged to seek out opportunities to improve their practice in literacy through their own personal continuing professional development, and all teachers are encouraged to consider connections between their annual personal professional development goals and literacy teaching/learning. Finally, as part of the national Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, the school will avail of special professional development opportunities, as much as is practical, related to English literacy.

17. Roles and Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for implementing, supporting and evaluating this English plan rests with the principal as supported by the In-school Management Team. In addition, all class teachers and SEN teachers are responsible for becoming familiar with and applying this plan when completing long- and short-term plans.

18. Review

The plan will be reviewed by the staff and amended as required, and it will be reviewed formally with the intention of developing a three-year improvement plan after sufficient assessment data is gathered.

19. Ratification and Communication

This revised English curriculum plan was ratified by the Board of Management as indicated below. The plan is distributed electronically to all teachers and also available on the school’s website.

Paul Adams, chairperson

Date of ratification: 16th September 2024