

# MILLTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL



# LANGUAGE AND LITERACY POLICY

June 2024

## MILLTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL

### LANGUAGE AND LITERACY POLICY

#### CONTEXT

Whilst this policy has been agreed by all staff to define our particular principles, practices and provision, it should be noted that our work lies within the wider context of the NI education system. The following are the main structures within which we operate:

- The stated vision of the Department of Education for Northern Ireland "to ensure that every learner fulfils his or her potential at each stage of his or her development." (DE 2010).
- The overall aim of the NI Curriculum "to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives." (DE 2008)
- The characteristics of effective practice, defined in "*Every School a Good School - a Policy for School Improvement*" (DE 2009), grouped under the following four headings:
  - **Child Centred Provision**
  - **High Quality Teaching and Learning**
  - **Effective Leadership**
  - **A School Connected to its Local Community**
- The prominence of Literacy and Numeracy within the NI Curriculum, emphasised in "Count, Read: Succeed - a Strategy to Improve Outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy" (DE 2011):

"Literacy and numeracy are at the very heart of the revised curriculum." (para.2.3)

"Developing literacy and numeracy therefore must be central elements of a school's delivery of the revised curriculum, and of the support and professional development for teachers in implementing the curriculum." (para. 2.5)

#### INTRODUCTION

This Policy has been produced to:

- Promote a high standard of excellence and consistency of approach amongst all staff
- Communicate the main features of the teaching and learning of Language and Literacy in our school
- Form a reference document for all staff members

Its intended audience is:

- Existing and newly appointed staff members
- Members of the Board of Governors
- Existing and prospective parents
- Any other stakeholders and educational partners

This policy will set out the agreed key principles and practices that guide the development of Literacy in our school, drawing on the indicators of effective provision from "Every School a Good School" using the four headings noted above.

At Milltown Primary School we believe that that pupils' literacy skills, i.e. their ability to talk, listen, read and write effectively, for purpose and audience, are the key to future educational success and to ensuring that each child has the opportunity to develop as an individual, as a contributor to society and as a contributor to the economy and environment.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The continuity and progression in our language planning will be underpinned by the learning intentions outlined in the Primary Language Framework.

At Milltown Primary School, we intend that, by the end of Key Stage 2, a child will be able to:

- speak confidently to a range of audiences with an awareness of purpose
- read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct
- have an interest in books and read for enjoyment
- have an interest in words and their meanings to develop a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms
- understand a range of text types and genres and be able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation
- develop imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness skills
- use a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their responses

## **STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the Northern Ireland Curriculum for English (CCEA, 2007) and include:

**In the Foundation Stage** children should be given opportunities to:

- talk and listen and represent ideas in their activities
- use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum
- become immersed in an environment where communication skills are enhanced.

**At Key Stage One (Years 3 and 4)**, children should:

- learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say
- begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm
- use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds

**At Key Stage Two (Years 5-7)**, children should:

- learn to change the way they talk and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences
- read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning within them
- explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts
- learn how the structure of language works

## CHILD CENTRED PROVISION

The following indicators from ESaGS will be reflected in the school's approaches:

- Decisions on planning, resources, curriculum and pastoral care reflect at all times the needs and aspirations of the pupils within the school.
- A clear commitment exists to promoting equality of opportunity, high quality learning, a concern for individual pupils and a respect for diversity.
- A school culture of achievement, improvement and ambition exists with clear expectations that all pupils can and will achieve to the very best of their ability.
- Effective interventions and support are in place to meet the additional education and other needs of pupils and to help them overcome barriers to learning.
- There is a commitment to involve young people in discussions and decisions on school life that directly affect them and to listen to their views.

## **PLANNING**

Teachers in Milltown Primary School have high expectations for all children and strive to provide learning experiences to enable all children to achieve to the best of their ability. To this end, teachers plan thoroughly, differentiating to meet the needs of all pupils.

- Planning for the Literacy curriculum consists of work in the following areas:
  - Talking and Listening
  - Reading
  - Writing
- Teaching and learning in each area is structured and follows a planned progression, building on what has gone before
- Whole-school planning is done collaboratively to ensure there are no gaps or unnecessary overlaps in that progression thus ensuring continuity as the children move through the school
- Planning is in place as follows:
  - Yearly and half-termly overviews of the content to be taught in each class are produced, allowing work in each area of Literacy to be taught
  - Teachers' daily planning in Literacy is differentiated so that children are working at a pace and level of challenge which matches their ability
- Assessment, both informal and formal, allows the teacher to accurately gauge the child's present level of understanding so as to allow appropriate future work to be planned.

## **INCLUSION**

We, in Milltown Primary School, aim to provide a sufficiently broad, balanced and flexible curriculum which is tailored to meet the needs of all children so that they reach their full potential in Language and Literacy according to their individual abilities. We identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving, those with special educational needs and

talented and gifted children in order to take necessary steps to improve their attainment in Language and Literacy.

It is recognised that not all children develop at the same rate. To ensure that pupils are taught at an appropriate level and to help them overcome barriers to learning, teachers:

- Identify pupils who are underachieving, based on professional judgement and appropriate relevant data, e.g. classroom observation, discussions with children, marking of work, children's self-evaluation, assessment (formal and informal) of pupils' outcomes and tracking of progress.
- Take account of parental concerns which have been made known to the school
- Communicate closely with previous teachers or external agencies who will have had contact with the child whilst at school or prior to coming to school
- Make a professional judgement as to what form of support is most appropriate, within the school's resources, to meet the specific needs of the individual child identified as having specific educational needs. This may be:
  - a) through differentiation in class
  - b) with support from other staff in the school e.g. Classroom Assistants, SEN Co-ordinator
- Keep parents informed and regularly liaise with them
- Involve young people in discussions and decisions on school life that directly affect them and listen to their views to enable better planning for the next steps.
- Identify and provide suitable learning challenges for gifted and talented pupils.

If, despite intervention by the school, a pupil is not making the desired progress, support may be sought from outside the school, through the SEN Code of Practice, with parental consent.

### **Newcomer Pupils**

To provide for Newcomer children, teachers make effective use of Intercultural Education Service ([www.eani.org.uk/ies](http://www.eani.org.uk/ies)) for advice and support in welcoming newcomer pupils, planning, curriculum access, overcoming specific language difficulties and monitoring progress.

### **Role of Classroom Assistants**

Classroom assistants provide valuable additional assistance to the teacher in supporting the development of Literacy within the school. This may involve, under the direction of the teacher:

- Preparation of materials and resources for lessons
- Supervision and support for particular children/groups thus allowing the teacher to work with other children/groups.
- Providing additional support both in the classroom setting for individual children who are experiencing difficulties.

There is regular effective communication with the class teacher regarding:

- Pupils' work and progress through set tasks
- Targets on pupils' Personal Learning Plans (PLPs)

- Review of targets on PLPs

All of the above support mechanisms are constantly reviewed during the school year.

### **Equal opportunities**

All pupils are provided with equal access to the Language and Literacy Curriculum and all staff will aim to treat every child as an individual, and will respect their individuality, regardless of gender, academic or physical ability or socio-economic background.

## **HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING**

The following indicators from ESaGS will be reflected in the school's approaches:

- A broad and relevant curriculum is provided for the pupils.
- An emphasis on literacy and numeracy exists across the curriculum.
- Teachers are committed and enthusiastic, enjoying a positive relationship with their pupils and with other school-based staff and dedicated to improving learning.
- Teachers use adaptable, flexible teaching strategies that respond to the diversity within the classroom.
- Assessment and other data is used to effectively inform teaching and learning across the school and in the classroom and to promote improvement.
- Rigorous self-evaluation is carried out by teachers and the whole school, using objective data and leading to sustained self-improvement.
- Teachers reflect on their own work and the outcomes of individual pupils.
- Education outcomes reflect positively on the school and compare well, when benchmarked measurement is undertaken, against the performance of similar schools.

### **Subject organisation**

Language and Literacy reflects the statutory curricular requirements (Northern Ireland Curriculum Primary 2007) and is supported by SELB Language Framework 2007.

We recognise that a sound underlying organisation and management of the classroom environment is crucial to support learning. The needs of all pupils will be identified and met through effective curricular programmes and support arrangements.

In the classroom situation, groups will vary according to the context, purpose and Learning Intentions of each activity, but will include grouping based on ability, gender and friendships within the class. Children will also experience learning in pairs, individually and as a whole class.

Attention will be given to the classroom layout, displays of children's own work, access to a diverse range of resources (fiction, non-fiction, ICT, media texts and the provision of library areas, writing areas and listening areas with appropriate equipment) in order to provide a stimulating environment in which to learn.

Children learn in different ways and at different rates, so a flexible approach which encourages children's active engagement in their learning through problem solving will extend the pupils' use of language and promote independence. Teachers will have realistically high

expectations and will ensure that all children understand what is expected of them by making children aware of the intended learning intentions and the success criteria.

The curriculum provides the context for literacy development, hence cross-curricular opportunities will be used to the best advantage to develop all aspects of talking, listening, reading, writing and thinking. In the Foundation Stage the learning experiences provided by Structured Play afford many and varied opportunities for language acquisition and development. Teachers will employ a range of teaching approaches which will meet the needs of individual pupils, groups, and whole classes.

### Talking and Listening

The strands of talking; listening; group discussion and interaction; and drama pervade the whole curriculum. Oral language should be recognised as the primary mode of language and hence should receive a central emphasis and focus in all areas of the curriculum and in the life of the school. Pupils are encouraged to listen attentively and to speak clearly, confidently, fluently and appropriately for a variety of different audiences and purposes. Spoken Language will be a focus across the curriculum and across the school day in a variety of settings.

#### **Aims**

We aim to make our classrooms language rich environments where children are encouraged to experiment with talking and listening and express themselves in a range of different situations. Class teachers facilitate oral communication and ensure that all contributions to class, small group and one to one discussions are valued. Children will appreciate that talk is work and opportunities for talk will be planned for in all areas of the curriculum.

The teacher will enable pupils to become more versatile language users by purposeful challenges and tasks to promote talk. Active Listening strategies are employed throughout the school.

The teacher response to talk will be to:

- Give confidence
- Encourage further contributions
- Demonstrate attentive listening
- Give value to every contribution made by the children
- Model speaking clearly using clear diction

#### **Entitlement**

Grouping children together for shared activities in an organised way will play an important role in their learning and development of language.

The composition of groups will vary, pupils may be organised in pairs or large groups or as a whole class.

In group situations children will:

- Assume responsibility
- Listen to the views and opinions of others
- Discriminate between conflicting arguments
- Make decisions
- Give and take instructions
- Discuss appropriate/inappropriate behaviours
- Promote social skills and 'rules' for talk
- Develop 'circle time' procedures

### **Teaching and Learning**

Children will be encouraged to speak in a range of contexts and, as they grow older, adapt their style of speech appropriately. Speaking and listening permeates all areas of the curriculum. The children learn from early on to plan their work, listen to the plans of others, recall and assess their work and to listen while others recall. It is only when speaking and listening skills have been developed that children can effectively work co-operatively and collaboratively.

### **Specific opportunities for Talking and Listening**

- drama activities
- circle time
- show and tell time
- oral dictations (spellings)
- shared and guided reading
- telling or reading a story to/with a class
- speeches and persuasive arguments/ discussions
- school productions and assemblies
- discussion forums including House Captain meetings, School Council and Eco Council meetings.

Many of these activities will be delivered as part of their Literacy lesson. However other opportunities are given throughout the day to encourage and facilitate speaking and listening. Teachers plan for all these strands using the Language Framework.

### **Reading**

In Milltown we aim to encourage children to become habitual readers, using books for pleasure and to seek out information. We understand the importance of reading in the modern world and our aim is to make children understand the value of written text. Books open up a world of new experiences and children should be encouraged to understand the meaning of different texts. The teacher's own attitude and enthusiasm for reading will be reflected in the pupils he or she teaches.



## **Aims**

To enable children to:

- develop positive attitudes towards reading so that it is a pleasurable and meaningful activity;
- use reading skills as an integral part of learning throughout the curriculum;
- read and respond to a variety of texts whilst gaining increased level of fluency, accuracy, independence and understanding;
- develop different strategies for approaching reading and be able to orchestrate the full range of comprehension strategies and inference skills.

## **Entitlement**

Pupils have access to a wide range of reading opportunities that include:

- modelled reading
- guided reading
- shared reading
- regular independent reading
- home/school reading
- hearing books read aloud on a regular basis
- selecting own choice of texts including ICT texts
- reading in other subjects including ICT texts

Time is set aside for independent reading, using the library, listening to whole class stories and research linked to other subjects.

## **Teaching and Learning**

- Teachers promote and value reading as an enjoyable activity and a life skill.
- An emphasis is placed on the importance of comprehension skills and strategies, which must be developed and encouraged from the beginning. Teachers plan for a range of comprehension strategies that allow pupils to engage with text in a variety of ways to suit different learning styles.
- In Shared Reading the teacher models the reading process to the whole class or small group as an expert reader. Learning Intentions are pre-planned and sessions are characterised by explicit teaching of specific reading strategies.
- Teachers plan for independent reading activities during sessions of Literacy teaching. Texts are selected so that pupils can access them without support. The focus for the reading is to provide practice and develop personal response to text.

Many other opportunities are provided for pupils to practise and extend reading in other subjects.

- Pupils select texts under the guidance of the teacher for independent and home/school reading. Teachers monitor independent reading and discuss progress with individual pupils on a regular basis.
- All teachers are responsible for providing a stimulating reading environment, promoting book ownership and recommending books to pupils.
- Classroom and central displays are language rich and special displays promote authors and books.

- The pleasure and enjoyment of reading should be fostered in the language lessons, across the curriculum and beyond the classroom.
- Reading at home is regarded as an important part of reading development. Parents are encouraged to hear their children read regularly.
- Accelerated Reading Programme - In this programme children from year 5 to year 7 take part in a computer based programme which tests reading comprehension.

## **Organising Reading**

Reading is organised as follows:

- Each teacher keeps a reading progress record
- Teachers make children aware of a sense of rhyme and syllabification
- Children are introduced to the concept of letters through modelled and shared work and the exploration of letter shapes, for example, magnetic letters
- Children learn to associate a symbol with each sound
- Teachers choose when it is appropriate to introduce letter names
- Pupils are introduced to more complex aspects of Literacy usage as they progress through the school
- Early reading material is book-banded
- A range of reading materials, both fiction and non-fiction, is available for guided reading in each classroom
- Teachers aim to provide reading material suitable to the interests of both boys and girls
- A range of strategies is employed to encourage and stimulate an enjoyment of reading such as homework investigations, newspaper articles
- Pupils are encouraged to make use of the school and classroom libraries, which are supplemented regularly from the Book Fair and the EA Mobile Library, and may choose from a wide range of genres including fiction, non-fiction, poetry and drama
- A Book Fair comes annually and there is a monthly book club

## **Writing**

In Milltown PS we believe it is important that children see the value of writing and develop the ability to express themselves, and to manage and communicate information effectively in writing, using traditional and digital resources.

### **Aims**

To enable children to:

- write in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences;
- be increasingly aware of the conventions of writing, including grammar, punctuation and spelling;
- plan draft and edit their writing to suit the purpose;
- use ICT as a literacy medium for presenting work and manipulating text;
- form letters correctly, leading to a fluent joined and legible handwriting style, giving increasing regard to presentation.

## **Entitlement**

Pupils have access to a wide range of writing opportunities that include:

- modelled writing
- shared writing
- guided writing
- independent writing
- writing different text types - non-fiction and narrative styles
- writing in different curriculum areas
- collaborative writing
- writing related to own experiences and enjoyment
- writing from a variety of stimuli
- planning, drafting, editing and presenting writing
- using ICT to compose pieces of writing

## **Teaching and Learning**

Teachers promote writing and seek ways to inspire and motivate, so that pupils they see themselves as 'writers'.

- Teachers establish the purpose and audience for writing and make teaching objectives explicit to pupils so they know why they are studying a particular text type, the kind of writing activities they need to undertake and what the expected outcome will be.
- Specific writing genres will be focussed on at particular times of the year.
- Links between writing styles and topics covered are encouraged.
- Pupils will experience narrative, recount, procedural report, explanation, persuasive styles and writing forms of poetry.

The writing process is broken into steps that are taught and practised regularly:

1. Planning
2. Drafting and Writing
3. Evaluating and Editing
4. Proof-Reading
5. Reading Aloud and Sharing

Subject-specific texts that link to work being undertaken in other areas should also be used in literacy lessons to support the wider curriculum. Teachers use shared writing to model the writing process. Shared reading and writing provide a context for discussion and demonstration of grammatical features at word level, sentence level and text level.

Emergent writing is encouraged and celebrated in Foundation stage. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils will be writing at Level 2 and, by the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils will be writing at Level 4.

The links between talking and writing should be recognised and developed, e.g. reading as a writer and writing as a reader.

## **Organisation and Management**

We adopt a structured approach to the process of teaching selected forms of writing, as follows:

- **Familiarisation** - (exposure to many samples of the genre)
- **Problem Solving**- (exploring text genre)
- **Agreeing Success Criteria** for the piece of writing
- **Modelled Writing**- (teacher writing for children)
- **Shared Writing** - (teacher writing with the children)
- **Guided Writing** - (teacher supporting children's writing)
- **Independent Writing**- (Children writing on their own)
- **Feedback to pupil against Success Criteria**
- **Peer assessment using the language of the form**

## **Opportunities for Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities in Literacy**

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to develop Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities and to make cross-curricular links. Pupils have the opportunity to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through language lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

Teachers are aware of and take account of:

- different learning styles (visual, auditory and kinaesthetic)
- a range of active learning strategies in the classroom, including drama strategies
- effective questioning by the teacher and pupils.

## **Handwriting**

It is paramount that children are rigorously taught correct letter formation from the very beginning of their time in school.

- In Foundation Stage children participate in a range of practical activities to stimulate gross and fine motor skills to prepare them for formal writing.
- As soon as the children are ready, they are taught to sit properly in order to have the correct posture for writing, hold a pencil in the correct tripod grip and develop a legible handwriting style.
- A mixture of whole class, small group and individual teaching is planned for and delivered.
- By the end of Key Stage 2, all children should be displaying an efficient, quick, neat and legible handwriting style that is effective in recording their ideas.

Each class has a range of materials to support the writing process. Writing materials are accessible and organised and pupils are encouraged to take care of the equipment and return it to where it belongs.

## **Spelling and Linguistic Phonics**

The development of spelling is necessary for children to be able to effectively record their ideas.

Children should be able to:

- Blend and segment sounds with ease

- Learn that segmenting words into their constituent phonemes for spelling is the reverse of blending phonemes into words for reading
- Spell words accurately by combining the use of grapheme-phoneme (letter-sound) correspondence as the main approach, and also morphological (study & description of the forms of words) knowledge and etymological information (history of origin of words)
- Use a range of approaches to learn and spell irregular words.

Pupils have access to a range of phonics opportunities at FS and KS1, that include:

- Whole class teaching of specific spelling patterns
- Daily phonics teaching
- Using phonics knowledge in real life contexts
- Applying skills in cross curricular contexts
- Formal spellings (differentiated) usually commence in Primary 2

Pupils have access to a range of phonics opportunities at KS2 that include:

- Whole class teaching of specific spelling conventions and rules
- Discrete phonics teaching, as part of an intervention group, where gaps in phonological knowledge have been identified
- Using phonological knowledge in real life contexts
- Applying skills in cross curricular contexts

### **Teaching and Learning**

Teachers provide a wide range of contexts for reinforcing spelling patterns and tricky words throughout the school day.

- All teachers use Linguistic Phonics as a basis for their planning for the teaching of spelling.
- It is recognised that children learn to spell in a variety of ways and for those children an alternative programme is provided.

Learning takes place in a variety of situations and group settings. These include;

- working independently to practise tricky words;
- using ICT;
- working collaboratively on an investigation;
- participating in short, focused whole class activities
- a focus on accurately spelling high frequency words.

### **Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities / Cross curricular Opportunities for Literacy Development**

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to develop Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities and to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through language lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

*The following aspects should be considered:*

- *use of a range of active learning strategies in the classroom, including drama strategies*
- *ensure effective questioning by the teacher and pupils.*

## **THE USE OF ICT**

To support the development of Literacy throughout the school, a range of suitable ICT resources is available in each classroom. ICT activities include:

- Whole class or group activities, often led by the teacher. These may involve the use of the Interactive Whiteboard as a direct teaching aid, used to demonstrate ideas and promote discussion and clear thinking.
- PCs, IWB and Apple TV are available in all classrooms. Laptops and iPads are available to share.
- Staff are made aware of relevant in-service courses and other ICT related projects.

We believe that effective and appropriate use of ICT in Literacy can:

- facilitate a differentiated pace and level of learning that takes account of individual pupil abilities, including those who are more able
- help provide appropriate support and scope for greater independence for children of all abilities
- facilitate access to sources of information
- increase motivation to learn
- provide a stimulating and non-threatening learning environment
- engage children more deeply in their learning

Resources include software available through the C2K Managed Service and via the Internet.

## **TARGET-SETTING, ASSESSMENT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Work will be assessed in line with the school's Assessment Policy. Progression and continuity between year groups will be developed using the SELB Language Framework. The children's progress and achievement is measured using a range of diagnostic, formative and summative assessment procedures, which both monitor progress and inform future planning.

These include:

- classroom observation
- individual assessment and teaching
- self and peer assessment
- screening and diagnostic tests
- running records
- PTE Standardised tests (P3-P6)
- CAT Verbal

Individual records of progress are kept by each class teacher and forwarded to the subsequent teacher. Progress reports are kept by the Principal. Progress is reported to parents verbally and in written form annually. Children will be encouraged to reflect upon and evaluate their own performance and that of their peers where appropriate (see Marking Policy). Their work will be marked positively and constructively in relation to their own previous performance.

## EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

The following ESaGS indicators will be reflected in our provision for Literacy:

- An effective Literacy action plan is in place, providing clear and realistic targets for improvement based on a sound vision for the school.
- School leaders demonstrate a commitment to providing professional development opportunities for staff, particularly teachers, and promote a readiness to share and learn from best practice.
- Teachers are given the opportunity to share in the leadership of the school.
- The resources at the disposal of the school are managed properly and effectively, with appropriate arrangements in place for financial management, attendance management, and working relationships
- School leaders monitor and evaluate effectively school outcomes, policies, practices and procedures and the School Development Plan itself.

### Role of the Literacy Coordinator

The Literacy Co-ordinator, and has responsibility to lead the development of literacy within the school and report to the Board of Governors.

These responsibilities include:

- In collaboration with the teaching staff, identifying priorities for Literacy development
- Contributing to the production of the School Development Plan, if it is to include Literacy Development
- Producing Action Plans to address identified issues
- Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Action Plans and achievement of their Success Criteria
- In conjunction with relevant teachers, producing annual targets for standards achieved in Statutory Assessment
- Monitoring and Evaluating pupil achievement, and producing whole school performance data from these results
- Updating the school's programme of study, and Literacy Policy, to keep in line with curriculum changes
- In conjunction with the whole staff, participating in a programme of self-evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of Literacy provision
- Liaising with EA support staff / other agencies, as appropriate
- Demonstrating a commitment to providing professional development opportunities for staff, particularly teachers
- Organising / leading school-based INSET and School Development Days
- Promoting a readiness to share and learn from best practice by facilitating the sharing of:
  - effective practice from within the school and
  - dissemination of information gained from external training

## **MONITORING and EVALUATION**

We believe that on-going monitoring and evaluation of our provision and outcomes for Literacy is an effective way of ensuring we provide high quality teaching and learning experiences for our children, and that all our children realise their full potential in Literacy.

- The Literacy Coordinator leads the monitoring and evaluation of whole-school literacy provision through:
  - Analysis of available data
  - Consultation with staff to identify areas for development
  - Drawing up a Literacy Action Plan
  - Monitoring the implementation of the Literacy Action Plan
  - Co-ordinating whole-school Self-Evaluation and sharing of good practice
  - Evaluating the achievement of Success Criteria contained within the Action Plan

The information gained through such evaluation feeds back into the development cycle to enable us to plan for future improvement and determine training and development needs.

### **SDP Targets / Action Plans**

To promote the continued development of Literacy within the school and improved children's attainment, targets for the School Development Plan are identified by analysis of the available data along with the professional judgement of teachers.

- Action Plans are then drawn up identifying appropriate tasks, success criteria and time bound actions for their achievement.

Outcomes from this provide information that feeds into the development cycle.

### **A SCHOOL CONNECTED TO ITS LOCAL COMMUNITY**

The following ESaGS indicators will be reflected in our provision for Literacy:

- Good relationships that facilitate engagement and communication between the school and its parents and the wider community that it serves
- The school and its teachers are held in respect by parents and the local community who in turn actively support the work of the school
- The school works closely with other relevant statutory and voluntary agencies whose work impacts on education, especially Health, Social Services, the Public Library Service

### **Links with parents**

We believe that parents have a vital role to play in ensuring their children make appropriate progress and realise their potential in Literacy. We actively seek strong partnerships with parents and work to ensure that parents feel involved in their child's education.

In Milltown PS parents will:

- Be able to discuss their child's progress in Literacy, or any areas of concern, at any time during the year by appointment with the class teacher



- Be invited to meet more formally with the class teacher twice per year at Parent-Teacher Interviews
- Receive one written report on their child's strengths, weaknesses and progress per year, usually in June
- Be encouraged to participate with their children in Literacy homework activities
- Be encouraged to participate in information/workshop sessions to assist in supporting their children's learning

### **Homework**

The nature of Literacy homework given will vary according to the topic, the age and level of progress of children, but will always be designed to complement current class work, to:

- Inform parents of the type of work their child is currently involved with
- Allow pupils to practice and improve skills introduced in class
- Give pupils the opportunity to improve their ability to work independently and organise themselves
- Give the teacher information on the extent to which children have achieved the current intended learning outcome(s)

In order to achieve these objectives, we request that parents would, as far as is possible:

- Provide a suitable quiet area for homework activities
- Discuss with their child what they are expected to do before they start
- Ensure their child starts homework early enough so they can complete it by a reasonable time

### **Links with the wider community**

The school makes use of expertise from members of the community (including parents) to support work in Literacy.

### **Links with other schools:**

Teachers:

- Receive and take account of educational information provided from pre-school / other schools when children enrol at the school;
- Provide relevant information when pupils transfer to secondary/other schools;
- Links are maintained with staff from post primary schools, prior to transfer to help manage transition for P7 pupils.
- The school uses its involvement in particular programmes, when appropriate, to link with nearby schools

### **Links with external education support agencies**

- Good relationships and clear lines of communication are in place between the school and the education agencies that support it
- To meet the needs of the children, teachers work with staff from a range of other relevant statutory and voluntary agencies, such as Educational Psychology Service, EA Special Needs Service, RISE team, Library Service, Health & Social Services etc. when required.

### **Opportunities to promote parental and community involvement include:**

- Information sessions (e.g. P1 intake, parent/teacher meetings, newsletters, curriculum evenings for parents);
- School events, e.g. Christmas show,
- Involvement in World Book Day and Book Fair;
- PTA
- Supporting homework, reading and talking to children at home;
- School trips;
- School website;
- Visits from storytellers, authors, drama groups;
- Links with pre and post-primary schools for transition;
- Connecting to local businesses, the local library, school nurse, dentist, the PSNI, Fire Service, etc; and
- Staff development/information sessions, e.g. by peripatetic services, Educational Service, Speech and Language.

### **Resources**

All teachers will aim to ensure full access to the Northern Ireland curriculum for all pupils. Materials will be provided which will be appropriate to the range of children's interests and abilities and differentiation may be by task and / or outcome. Extension materials will be available for more able pupils, while reinforcement of core skills and concepts may require appropriately designed resources for the less able. Resources will be stored, when possible, in ways which allow the children easy access thus ensuring the promotion of autonomy in the children's use of resources. The children will be trained in the use of resources (including audiovisual aids, hardware for information and communications technology and printed materials) to improve levels of independence and confidence.

The variety of resources available include:

- A wide range of book and non-book materials and tasks to suit pupils of differing abilities and interests;
- Commercially-produced guided reading scheme materials;
- Collins Literacy Big Books and pupil activity books;
- School-produced booklets, linguistic phonics materials and other phonological, key word and social sight word spelling and vocabulary lists;
- Interactive whiteboards, flipcharts, whiteboards, markers;
- Magnetic letters and boards;
- A range of ICT resources (see ICT policy);
- Audio-visual materials;
- An adequate stock of books, and other materials in the school library which reflect the interests and needs of all pupils;
- A variety of appropriate games and activities which will be integrated into teaching and learning;
- Dictionaries and thesaurus;
- Displays in classrooms, corridors and assembly hall.

## **CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES**

The content of the Literacy Policy is consistent with other school policies:

- Assessment
- Special Educational Needs
- Appropriate use of the Internet
- Marking and Feedback Policy
- Homework
- ICT
- Health and Safety

## **REVIEW of POLICY**

This Policy is designed to reflect current practice within the school environment. Although the overall aims for Literacy teaching and learning are likely to remain fairly constant, the practices evolve over time as the school progresses in its development of Literacy provision.

Accordingly, this Policy is under a process of constant review and will be updated as needed to ensure it continues reflect current practice and to achieve its designated purposes.