**St John’s Primary Hamilton**

**Literacy Policy**

**Introduction**

Curriculum for Excellence defines literacy as:

“the set of skills which allows an individual to engage fully in society and in learning, through the different forms of language and the range of texts, which society values and finds useful”

Curriculum for Excellence: Literacy and English: principals and practice, Scottish Government, 2009

**Our Vision**

In our school community we will work together as a team to develop our children as successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens by providing a safe, friendly and inclusive environment for motivating and challenging learning experiences.

Our vision is achieved by clearly focusing upon teaching children about Rights. As a Rights Respecting School we encourage all children to learn and use their knowledge to support them to become effective members of society. In literacy we particularly focus on Rights 12,14,15,17,23 and especially 28 and 29. We aim to provide high quality learning and teaching in all areas of Literacy.

**Rationale**

At St John’s Primary we strive to ensure that every child should become a competent and confident user of the English language: able to live, work and succeed in a literate world where they have the ability and skills to be all they can be. In the 21st Century this means being able to communicate effectively, expressing ideas and opinions both orally and through various media. Children will develop the skills which will enable them to understand and make informed decisions by interpreting and analysing information using various critical literacy skills. They will have the skills, knowledge and understanding to be creative, self-reflective, solve problems, collaborate and build positive relationships.

**Aims**

• Provide an effective framework for the delivery of high quality learning and teaching in literacy

• Increase staff skills and confidence in teaching literacy and ensure that the whole school community understands its role in developing literacy

• Ensure all learners are provided with maximum opportunities to acquire knowledge and understanding in the use of literacy skills and can apply these skills effectively and with confidence across the curriculum

• Promote progression and continuity at all stages and across areas of transition to ensure a seamless, coherent and relevant literacy curriculum for all

• Raise levels of achievement and attainment in literacy among all learners

**Planning**

Teachers plan for 3 teaching terms each session and use the Progression framework based on the Curriculum for Excellence Experiences and Outcomes, focuses on subject knowledge and skills development and embraces the seven principles of curriculum design: challenge and enjoyment, breadth, progression, depth, personalisation and choice, coherence, relevance.

• Active learning opportunities and multi-sensory teaching approaches are planned for to provide Challenge and Enjoyment.

• Term 2 and 3 plans are devised to track and plan for Breadth of learning to ensure all children experience all experiences and outcomes at each level. Coverage of Experiences and Outcomes is tracked using literacy outcome tracking sheet. Experiences and outcomes are organised into three main areas: listening and talking, reading, and writing. They are further sub-divided into the following sections:

o Enjoyment and Choice

o Tools

o Finding and using information

o Understanding, analysing and evaluating

o Creating texts

• Planning builds on prior knowledge and experience to ensure Progression. Teachers track and evaluate pupils’ progress using daily observations, group and class assessments and formal reading and writing assessments.

• Pupils are given frequent opportunities to revisit topics and apply previously learned knowledge and skills in new and unfamiliar contexts, hence promoting Depth of understanding.

• At all stages differentiation is provided through success criteria, choice of resources and organisation structures such as cooperative learning, flexible ability groups depending on the task; and additional input, support and challenge. This helps to ensure Personalisation of learning. We also provide Personalisation and Choice of learning in P1-7 by supporting all children to set individual learning targets in literacy and record these in their Learning Target sheets when appropriate.

• Clear links are promoted between literacy and other subject areas to draw different strands of learning together and provide Coherence. This is identified in Social Studies topics and cross cutting themes.

• Every opportunity is taken to link learning in literacy to real contexts. This helps pupils to see the Relevance of literacy to their daily lives.

Teachers meet termly with SMT to discuss plans and evaluate pupil progress and set targets.

**Learning and Teaching Strategies**

Learning and teaching activities draw upon a skilful mix of approaches in all primary stages including:

• Cooperative and independent learning

• Revisiting previous learning to ascertain skills and knowledge to build on

• Direct interactive teaching.

• Active learning with opportunities to discuss, observe, explore, investigate, experiment and play; ensuring that all children are appropriately challenged at their stage of learning

• Regular opportunities to discuss, communicate, explain and extend thinking; including the development of higher order thinking skills, for example novel studies and the introduction of SRA.

• Contextualised learning linked to real life context or a context that is familiar to pupils’ experiences, for example listening, talking and writing linked to Social Studies topics.

• Appropriate and effective use of technology.

• Opportunities to communicate in a wide range of contexts, for relevant purposes and for real audiences, for example school shows and class assemblies

• Assessment is for Learning approaches including effective questioning, sharing of outcomes, self, teacher and peer assessment to identify success and plan next steps

We develop the core areas of literacy as follows:

**Reading:**

• develop early reading skills within the infants by introducing children to environmental print, a variety of texts, oral storytelling and delivering a multi-sensory phonics programme using active literacy teaching strategies.

• teach the mechanics of reading and build, consolidate and extend reading fluency and understanding using Collins Big Cat Readers, skinny novels and recommended texts for each level.

• as the children’s reading skills develop, introduce novels and more extended texts, which will build on and develop higher order reading skills including questioning and forming opinions about texts and authors.

• encourage children to choose visual, digital media and printed texts through the school library, the internet and home and school environment to develop the ability to explain why they have chosen a certain type of text or genre

• promote and encourage a love of reading individually and collectively to develop skills that will allow children to share, interpret, analyse, evaluate and enjoy different types of texts. Classes timetabled for school library.

• provide regular opportunities to encourage all pupils to become confident individuals when reading aloud, demonstrating self-awareness by observing and reflecting on audience feedback

**Writing:**

• at early years develop early writing skills by encouraging children to experience writing as an integral part of their learning through mark making, watching adults recording their thoughts and play contexts

• continue to develop their skills and understanding of writing through various play contexts so they become secure and can transfer and apply their skills and understanding in different contexts

• continue to extend writing skills, knowledge and understanding through relevant contexts including topic work and other curricular areas e.g. science, H&WB, RME so that children can present their written work in a variety of means using various forms of media

• teach grammar and punctuation consistently and progressively across all stages to enable children to understand the structure of language and produce creative written texts which will engage others

• teach phonics and spelling consistently and progressively across all stages to enable children to communicate confidently and effectively with a sound knowledge of the conventions of spelling

**Listening and Talking:**

Cooperative learning, keys to literacy, discussion, debating and listening activities through all curricular areas and contexts are used to:

• provide opportunities to participate in discussions through listening and sharing ideas

• develop skills in listening and talking to others, clarifying their ideas and understanding

• develop the skills, knowledge and understanding to create and develop arguments, opinions and viewpoints linked to a wide variety of texts and situations

• develop the skills which will allow them to listen attentively, talk clearly and coherently and respond appropriately in different contexts and situations

**Through all areas of literacy**

The children will be given opportunities to:

• set and evaluate their own personal targets in ongoing class work and in Learning Logs.

• Work in cooperative, collaborative, active and individual contexts to achieve these targets

• link their learning across the curriculum and transfer their skills to ensure depth and breadth of knowledge

• enrich their experience of language recognising the diversity of Scotland’s culture and identity

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

SMT will monitor the progress in literacy and the delivery of the curriculum by:

* having planning discussion meetings every term to discuss planned learning, coverage of the curriculum and observe and discuss progress of pupils by discussing evaluations of pupil attainment.
* Demonstrating and moderating collegiately areas of literacy teaching and judgements made.
* monitoring literacy jotters/workbooks/Learning Logs /homework jotters, and discussing learning and teaching with selected focus groups of pupils
* formal observations of literacy lessons
* informal visits to each class during a literacy lesson
* carrying out regular audits to review school’s progress against national standards.
* Meeting with teachers to project attainment for each term and end of session.

**Equal Opportunities**

St John’s Primary School aims to provide equal opportunities for all pupils irrespective of ability, gender and cultural background. We strive to enable each child to maximise his/her potential.

Literacy policy January 2019

Review date January 2021.