Abernyte's vision for Literacy

Literacy is fundamental to all areas of learning, as it unlocks access to the wider curriculum. Being literate increases opportunities for the individual in all aspects of life, lays the foundations for lifelong learning and work and contributes strongly to the development of all four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence

(Education Scotland Professional Learning Resource January 2014)

Children’s education should develop each child’s personality, talents and abilities to the fullest

(Article 29 United Nations Convention on The Rights of the Child)

Ambition, Honest, Kindness, Respect- (Abernyte’s School rules)

**Rationale**

Language is at the core of thinking. We reflect, communicate and develop our ideas through language. Literacy offers an essential passport to learning, helping young people to be ready for active involvement in society and work. Literature opens up new horizons, and a love of reading can be an important starting point for lifelong learning. As we communicate, increasingly through digital technologies, we need to be able to interpret and convey information in new ways and to apply discernment.

(Building the Curriculum 1)

Curriculum for Excellence ensures that all children and young people develop high levels of literacy and language skills through experiences and outcomes. Within the language framework, some statements of experiences and outcomes are also identified as statements of experiences and outcomes in literacy.

These form an important part of the languages education of all children as they include many of the critical skills required by each of us to function effectively and successfully in everyday life.

The Literacy Principles and Practice paper describes being literate 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.*

(Literacy: Principles and Practice)

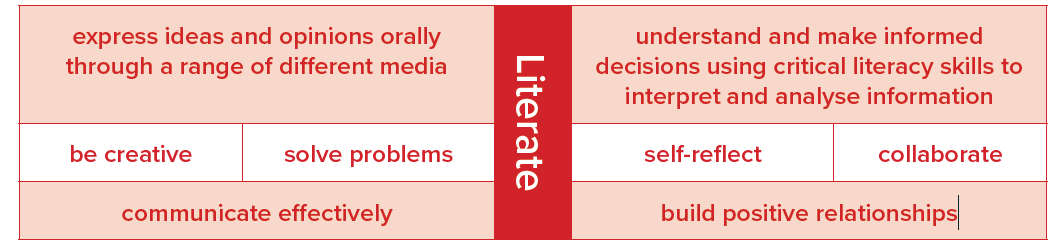
**A Definition of Literacy**

Within Curriculum for Excellence, literacy is defined 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.”*

(Literacy and English Principles and Practice Papers)

In other words, being literate in the 21st century means more than just basic decoding and writing. It means being able to:



It is widely recognised that the key to unlocking potential in learners is to provide them with the skills and confidence in reading, writing, talking and listening which will enable them to access and make choices in all areas of learning, life and work. Perth and Kinross supports The Scottish Government’s ambition to expand and improve language learning by 2021, so that our young people are equipped with the skills and competencies they need in our increasingly globalised world. We recognise the value Scots language and literature brings to the curriculum.

**Objectives**

The following key principles for effective learning and teaching in developing literacy skills underpin the aspirations of Perth & Kinross Council:

* effective direct and interactive teaching
* frequent opportunities to communicate in a wide range of contexts, for relevant purposes and for real audiences
* the use of relevant, real-life and enjoyable contexts which build upon learner’s own experiences
* collaborative working and independent thinking and learning
* a balance of spontaneous play and planned activities
* harnessing the motivational benefits of following learner’s interests
* making meaningful links for learners across different curriculum areas
* building on the principles of Assessment for Learning
* the development of problem-solving skills and approaches
* the appropriate and effective use of ICT using contemporary methods

Building the Curriculum 1

To provide a rich language curriculum that fosters all four interdependent strands of language reading, writing, listening and talking. Children develop and extend their literacy skills when they have opportunities to:

* communicate, collaborate and build relationships
* reflect on and explain their literacy and thinking skills, using feedback to help them improve and sensitively provide useful feedback for others
* engage with and create a wide range of texts in different media, taking advantage of the opportunities offered by ICT
* develop their understanding of what is special, vibrant and valuable about their own and other cultures and their languages
* explore the richness and diversity of language, how it can affect them and the wide range of ways in which they and others can be creative
* extend and enrich their vocabulary through listening, talking, watching and reading
* engage with a wide range of texts and develop an appreciation of the richness and breadth of Scotland’s literary and linguistic heritage
* enjoy exploring and discussing word patterns and text structures

Language and literacy are of personal, social and economic importance. Our ability to use language lies at the centre of the development and expression of our emotions, our thinking, our learning and our sense of personal identity. Language is itself a key aspect of our culture. Through language, children and young people can gain access to the literary heritage of humanity and develop their appreciation of the richness and breadth of Scotland’s literary heritage. Children and young people encounter, enjoy and learn from the diversity of language used in their homes, their communities, by the media and by their peers.

**In Curriculum for Excellence Publications Literacy and language experience and outcomes are organised under three main headings**:

* listening and talking
* reading
* writing.

Within these organisers there are subdivisions.

**Enjoyment and choice**experiences and outcomes highlight the importance of providing opportunities for young people to make increasingly sophisticated choices.

The **tools**sections include important skills and knowledge: for example, in reading it includes such important matters as reading strategies, spelling and grammar.

The sections on **finding and using information i**nclude, in reading, critical literacy skills; while the **understanding, analysing and evaluating**statements encourage progression in understanding of texts, developing not only literal understanding but also the higher order skills.

Finally, the **creating texts experiences** and outcomes describe the kind of opportunities which will help children and young people to develop their ability to communicate effectively, for example, by writing clear, well-structured explanations.

We recognise that effective learning and teaching in literacy and English will involve a skilful mix of appropriate approaches including:

* the use of relevant, real-life and enjoyable contexts which build upon children and young people’s own experiences
* effective direct and interactive teaching
* a balance of spontaneous play and planned activities
* harnessing the motivational benefits of following children and young people’s interests through responsive planning
* collaborative working and independent thinking and learning
* making meaningful links for learners across different curriculum areas
* building on the principles of Assessment is for Learning
* frequent opportunities to communicate in a wide range of contexts, for relevant purposes and for real audiences within and beyond places of learning
* the development of problem-solving skills and approaches
* the appropriate and effective use of ICT

Progression within and across levels will take place in a range of ways, including:

* continuing development and consolidation of the range of skills
* increasing independence in applying these skills, and the ability to use them across a widening range of contexts in learning and life
* gradually decreasing levels of support used by the learner (for example from teachers, classroom assistants, parents or peers), and reduced reliance upon techniques such as wordlists or writing frames
* the ability to mediate discussions without teacher intervention
* in reading, the increasing length and complexity of text (for example the text’s ideas, structure and vocabulary)
* in talking and writing, the increasing length, complexity and accuracy of response
* increasing awareness of how to apply language rules effectively.
* developing skills to analysis texts critically including knowing how author’s seek to influence readers

**What is meant by ‘texts’?**

The definition of ‘texts’ needs to be broad and future proof: therefore within *Curriculum for Excellence,*

*A text is the medium through which ideas, experiences, opinions and information can be communicated.*

Reading and responding to literature and other texts play a central role in the development of learners’ knowledge and understanding. Texts not only include those presented in traditional written or print form, but also orally, electronically or on film. Texts can be in continuous form, including traditional formal prose, or non-continuous, for example charts and graphs. The literacy and English framework reflects the increased use of multimodal texts, digital communication, social networking and the other forms of electronic communication encountered by children and young people in their daily lives. It recognises that the skills which children and young people need to learn to read these texts differ from the skills they need for reading continuous prose. Examples are given below.

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| --- |
| **Examples of texts** |
| Jokes, rhymes and songs  novels, short stories, plays, poems  reference texts  the spoken word  charts, maps, graphs and timetables  advertisements, promotional leaflets  comics, newspapers and magazines  CVs, letters and emails  films, games and TV programmes  labels, signs and posters  recipes, manuals and instructions  reports and reviews  text messages, blogs and social networking sites |

In planning for learning in any curriculum area it is important for practitioners to ensure that children and young people encounter a wide range of different types of text in different media. As they progress in their learning, children and young people will encounter texts of increasing complexity in terms of length, structure, vocabulary, ideas and concepts.

**Planning our literacy programme**

In planning our literacy programme we must take account of the principles of curriculum planning and ensure that children experience challenge and enjoyment through study and investigation of interesting stimulating text from a wide genre and different sources including for example; novels, non-fiction, text- recipes, instructions, moving image, poetry and plays.

The programme must ensure progression at an appropriate pace from the earliest stages of learning how to decode written text to making our young people literate citizens who can apply their skills, knowledge and understanding with increasing confidence.

Encouraging an enthusiasm for learning through personalisation and choice are key principles of planning in literacy-engaging children in planning the direction and focus of investigations. Assessment approaches must promote personal targets to improve the development of literate citizens.

All children at all times must have access to a book of their own choice and be reading for pleasure.

We need to plan learning experiences which take account of the definition of literacy in a modern world. To support this aim we have a framework which shows the range of contexts in which literacy skills are developed to ensure that learning is broad, coherent and relevant to literacy in a modern world.

**The Four Aspects of the Curriculum**

Core skills such as spelling, grammar, comprehension and handwriting are taught weekly to ensure continuity and progression. We use the Literacy programme Read Write Inc. Phonics for our 4 to 9-year olds that create fluent readers, confident speakers and willing writers. It integrates phonics with comprehension, writing, grammar, spelling and handwriting using engaging partner work and drama Children from 9-13 years who are still learning to read continue the Ruth Miskin programme and move forward onto Fresh Start. These lively stories and non-fiction texts are both age appropriate and closely matched to children’s increasing knowledge of phonics and ‘tricky’ words. Once children are assessed and off the RWI programme they move forward onto the Nelson English Skills collection. We use Nelson Spelling which introduces spelling rules, structures and patterns in small steps, offering three levels of differentiation with plenty of writing practice and a clear record of progress for every child. Alongside this active learning approaches are using in all stages of spelling learning including homework taks. We use Nelson Handwriting is designed to help all children develop a confident, legible and personal handwriting style including pattern practice and motor skills work as well as fun activities to bring handwriting to life. Nelson Comprehension uses a clear layout with colour-coded questions covering literal comprehension, vocabulary, and higher-order skills such as inference and deduction, there is again differentiated support enabling extra challenge as children progress. Nelson Grammar and Punctuation builds children’s confidence in their every-day work by meeting all abilities with varying complexity. For writing we use Big Write Adventureswhich are based on the proven Big Writing approach focusing on talk and vocabulary development. Children are assessed with the Oxford Writing Criterion Scale to ensure progression and identification of next steps. Through our writing lessons we focus on four features of writing that can be applied to all genres of writing—these are:

* **Vocabulary-** Our work on vocabulary encourages children to search for ambitious and imaginative vocabulary (ambitious means a word not usually used by a child at this age or stage of development). We may refer to these words as WOW words! We spot WOW words in all lessons and all subjects. We may ‘steal’ words from texts, ask children which word they would steal and why. We have WOW word walls on our displays. Children can copy WOW words onto the Post-Its and add them to the wall. Children can then ‘pinch’ these words and use them in their own work.
* **Connectives**- Our work on connectives encourages children to join sentences and ideas using a variety of different connectives (joining words). Once again, the children become familiar with which connectives are appropriate to their level of writing. Children are of course, encouraged to use higher level connectives if they wish to. We focus on encouraging children to start their sentences in different ways in order to make their writing more varied and interesting.
* **Openers-** We work towards encouraging children to use the three different types of POWER OPENERS:
* ‘ing’ words e.g. Walking down the road, I saw a butterfly.
* ‘ly’ words e.g. Quickly I ran to the door.
* Connectives e.g. Because the alarm clock didn’t go off, I was late.
* **Punctuation-** During Big Writing, we familiarise the children with the punctuation pyramid. This clearly sets out which pieces of punctuation we expect the children to use for their level of writing.

At times the learning is linked to other areas of the curriculum and supports interdisciplinary learning –such as studying novels or developing children’s understanding of how non-fiction texts are organised by using books which are useful to science. Scottish texts are a particular focus during January when we have a Scottish focus.

Literacy skills are integral to success in all areas and can be introduced, reinforced and consolidated in the opportunities we provide for wider achievement in school and beyond.

Applying literacy skills is very much part of the ethos and life of our school-representing our school on elected pupil focus groups, producing newsletters for the school twitter feed and parents and in all our learning and interactions.

**Breadth Challenge and Application of Learning in Literacy and English**

Well-planned learning, teaching and assessment provides opportunities for learners to experience breadth, challenge and application across all aspects of Literacy and English.

**Breadth**

Learners will have opportunities to achieve in the benchmarks of learning in Literacy and English when they:

* Communicate and collaborate across learning, in listening, talking, reading and writing
* Engage with and create a broad range of texts, fiction and non-fiction, printed and multimedia, spoken and written, including Scottish texts
* Extend and enrich their use of vocabulary, including Scots
* Explore, discuss and use a wide variety of word patterns and text structures
* Develop critical literacy in a wide range of contexts

**Challenge**

Learners will demonstrate their achievement through meeting challenges in terms of increasing:

* Independence and reduced level of support, including peer/ teacher support and support from resources such as writing frames, wordlists and dictionaries.
* Length and complexity of text and task
* Use of higher order questions and critical skills
* Confidence in taking the initiative [including asking for help] and sustaining communication.

**Challenge** in Literacy and English will involve engaging with a wide range of more complex texts which are suitable to the reading age of each learner. When learning to read learners should be given the opportunity to read for pleasure and challenge themselves with more advanced texts. It is also important that learners engage with digital text from an early age and foster critical skills. Challenge involves using a wider range of language, engaging in critical, analytical and evaluative activities and answering and answering higher order open-ended questions. Learners should be encouraged to produce work which is appropriate to purpose/audience and maintains a high level of technical accuracy.

**Application**

Learners should be able to apply skills and understanding in a wide range of new and unfamiliar situations in all curriculum areas. This can provide teachers with good opportunities to assess how well children have understood and are able to transfer learning. Our Literacy Framework supports learners and teachers to know when skills have been introduced in order that we can build on prior learning to ensure that children have opportunities to consolidate and apply their knowledge and skills.

**Broad features of assessment in Literacy and English**

Assessment in literacy and English will focus on the responses of children and young people to the language and to the ideas and information that they find in texts, and on the development and application of their skills in listening and talking, reading and writing.

We will see evidence of their progress through children and young people’s growing skills in communicating their thinking and using language appropriately for different purposes and audiences. Much of the evidence will be gathered as part of day-to-day learning. The use of specific assessment tasks is also important to provide evidence of progress, particularly at transitions.

Assessment of progress in literacy and English will focus on judgements about the success of children and young people in developing key literacy and English language skills and applying their skills in their learning, in their daily lives and in preparing for the world of work. For example:

* How well are they communicating with confidence to suit their purpose and audience and showing increasing awareness of others in interactions?
* How does their confidence in listening and talking help their personal development, social skills and ability to solve problems?
* To what extent are they exploring and enjoying fiction and non-fiction texts of increasing depth, complexity and variety and making increasingly sophisticated personal responses?
* How well do they engage with challenging issues raised in texts?

Whole school approaches to developing skills, knowledge and understanding in listening and talking

**Ethos and Expectations**

Ensuring that there is a respectful supportive ethos throughout the school- good listening skills are modelled and rules of turn taking are made clear and expected at all times. Careful questioning which encourages deeper more detailed responses as well as explanation of ideas and justification of thoughts and opinions. Use of learning partners to encourage contribution of all and give pupils time for consideration and reflection. An ethos which encourages pupil voice through elected representation-house system, pupil council, eco and health committees and in how the curriculum is organised –identifying key questions and encouraging an element of choice in investigations.

**Planned opportunities to develop skills in listening and talking**

* At the earliest stages children’s thoughts, ideas and opinions are recorded and valued through KWL grids.
* Group tasks with clearly defined roles and responsibilities using the co-operative skills framework develops effective group work, questioning leadership and learning skills using the Perth and Kinross Skills Framework in order that pupils can understand and use literal, evaluative and inferential questions.
* Opportunities to present their learning individually, in groups and as part of their class.- success criteria should be agreed.
* Prepared talks on topics related to the curriculum.
* Interview opportunities –as interviewer people with information relevant to context for learning for example and interviewee –in the context of enterprise, world of work, school responsibilities and skills for life.
* Activities such as listening skills exercises- following instructions
* Planned opportunities to develop note taking skills from discussions.
* Developing the skills and vocabulary to enable children to find and summarise key ideas
* Debating skills
* Role play and hot seating
* Drama activities in all curricular areas
* Circle time activities.
* Opportunities to perform in school shows and at events in and beyond school and reading in Church.

**Assessment of progress in listening and talking**

Young people need to know what is expected of them and be given feedback as to how to improve and develop skills in listening and talking. What success looks and sounds like must be clear. Assessment information should include observations on children’s’ ability to engage respectfully with other, respond, question and contribute appropriately.

Assessment of prepared talks, self-reflection, peer and teacher assessed.

The use of rubrics to can be very helpful in defining expectations, progress and what excellence looks like.

Reflections in learning logs

**Additional support**

Some pupils may benefit from intervention by Speech and language services. If this is the case referral can be made after discussion with parents and the HT. Support needs can range from developing clear articulation to support in word finding or word retrieval and use of words or how to communicate in social situations.

Whole school approaches to developing skills, knowledge and understanding in reading

**Ethos and Expectations**

Ensuring that children have access to a wide range of interesting materials and are encouraged to develop a love of reading is crucial. Modelling good practice in reading aloud by all staff at all stages is of high priority. As part of our commitment to help our young people achieve their academic and personal potential we must prepare them to have the skills be literate in a modern world. This means that the opportunities we offer them should be engaging, at an appropriate pace and challenge for their needs and take full account of the wide definition of text contained in the introduction to this vision.

**Planned opportunities to develop skills in reading**

* Children from the earliest stages have access to a wide range of texts and are encouraged to make the link between text and the information, ideas, feelings etc. that it represents
* Language activities are made fun and engaging by encouragement to know and use rhyme, rhythm, songs and jokes in daily interactions.
* Children are encouraged to see the relevance of text all around them –in street and shop signs, car names, and in signs in and around school
* Children learn from the earliest stages the range and purpose of text and about how they are organised
* They are familiar with terms such as author and illustrator and the conventions of text-reading left to right and from front to back
* Books from home are encouraged and good use is made of online text
* Children are given opportunities to borrow books from the school library and also from the mobile library service
* A combination of strategies and approaches aim to accommodate different learning styles is used.
* Phonic knowledge is developed using Read Write Inc.
* Reading skills are broadened with the introduction of short novels and non-fiction books as soon as is possible for children.

**Key Resources**

Read Write Inc. books along with home books are available, Fresh Start anthologies are available to children 9+ still learning to read and ORT Greatest Stories and Chucklers are available for guided reading sessions with children who are now off the RWI programme.

**Assessment of Progress in Reading**

Listening to reading and working with pupils ensures that they have timely feedback to develop skills. Teachers need to ensure that resources and activities are tailored to pupil’s needs and take prompt action to ensure text is at the correct level of challenge. Whilst children are still developing decoding skills they should read text at an instructional level- that is they should be able to read 90-95% of the text on a page when they first see the book.

Children are tested in P1, P4 &P7 using SNSA’s and also yearly using NGRT. We monitor the individual journey against the PCK tracking and monitoring tool and use the range of statistics available to through the PKC Attainment Suite to support self-evaluation.

Whole school approaches to developing skills, knowledge and understanding in writing

**Ethos and expectations**

Opportunities to write for a range of purposes are valued from the earliest stages. As children progress they will be expected to create a wide range of increasingly complex text in a variety of formats taking account

of purpose and audience. They will be expected to become more adept at organising and structuring ideas, employing a range of language for effect and writing with technical accuracy. All written work is valued and respectfully displayed.

**Planned opportunities to develop skills in writing**

* Pre-writing opportunities and making writing part of play from the earliest stages.
* A range of activities to develop fine motor skills are in place- drawing, painting, cutting, making and modelling as well manipulating a variety of textures, materials and toys
* Correct formation of letters are taught and then expected in all writing
* Regular focused handwriting lessons support correct formation and neat linked script for all children
* Cross-curricular opportunities to develop and apply writing skills are well planned for and evident in plans
* Core writing lessons develop writing skills focusing for example on setting for stories, developing characters, good openings or use of adjectives
* Skills to support extended writing are taught- note taking, planning, setting out of reports,
* VCOP strategies are used to support writing
* Supports such as word books, dictionaries, word lists and pyramids are available to pupils and used effectively
* All writing activities have clear learning intentions and success criteria which are agreed and shared with pupils Opportunities to focus on success criteria and evaluate progress are used throughout lessons with the use of learning partners and reference to the success criteria.
* Range of writing – Children must be given opportunities to write in a wide variety of genre for various audiences and with a clear purpose. For example [and there will be more]
* Imaginative, adventures, tales and story writing
* Writing in a style such as Viking sagas
* Poetry and plays
* Recounts of trips and activities
* Reports –newspaper, scientific explanations
* Recipes
* Poster to advertise or persuade
* Letters of invite or protest
* Articles for the newspapers or website
* Script writing
* Producing videos
* Games design-electronic and paper based

Some of these writing activities will be in the context of another curricular area and some will be developing skills as a discrete aspect of literacy development

**Resources**

As a school we access a wide range of resources and use lots of stimuli to support the development of writing with our main resource being Big Writing Adventures.

**Assessment of writing**

All writing lessons should start with agreed Learning intentions and success criteria and progress should be measured against these. Good quality feedback based on success criteria should be included and opportunities to peer and self-assess should be planned for as part of each lesson. Quality feedback using two stars and a wish/ target or more detailed feedback should be used regularly to inform next steps.

Writing is assessed against the Oxford Criteria which incorporated CfE benchmarks.

**Assessment**

Individual learners assess their own progress and evaluate their learning against their success criteria for a lesson, or series of lessons. Staff work in conjunction with learners through formative dialogue and written comments to highlight strengths and plan for next steps. Learners record evidence of their progress in their Learning Journey. This is shared with parents on a termly basis, in addition to a Pupil Progress meeting in December and End of Session report in June. We use Big Writing assessments on a termly basis from P2 – P7. The Primary One Literacy Assessment and Action Resource (POLAAR) is used to support learners in the Early Level.

**Principles and Practices**

Literacy is taught in the following ways:

* Daily literacy lesson
* Guided reading and independent reading
* Guided writing
* Daily phonics teaching with RWI/Fresh Start
* Handwriting
* Opportunities for talk throughout the curriculum
* Reading aloud to the class
* Use of the school library
* Use of the library van
* Reading schemes (Oxford Reading Tree)
* Visiting professionals – e.g. poets, authors, story tellers.
* Other, unplanned opportunities

**Homework and the Role of Parents**

We see parents as important partners in the process of developing children’s literacy skills.

* They have an important influence on children’s language before they come to school
* They provide valuable support at home in helping children to become readers and writers
* They offer a useful audience for children in their development as speakers and listeners, readers and writers as the children move through the school (e.g. phonics, reading)

We therefore encourage parents to play their full part in their children’s education by:

* Involving parents in the school’s reading programme from the moment their child starts school
* Updating the guidance for parents as their children move through school so that they can continue to offer appropriate support
* Give parents termly outlines of the curriculum areas in Literacy that each year group will be studying
* Welcoming offers of help from parents to assist in school by listening to children read

Sending spelling homework home and encouraging parental support

**Whole School Priorities 2020-21**

All teachers will focus their contribution on different aspects of the following whole school priority areas for the development of reading, writing, listening and talking skills according to according to curriculum content:

* Improving writing skills in use of appropriate and adventurous vocabulary, sentence and paragraph construction and accuracy of spelling and punctuation
* Encouraging pupils to become more independent as learners through reading as research, using text books, library books, newspapers and the Internet
* Encouraging pupils to become more effective readers by setting appropriate reading tasks and promoting reading for pleasure
* Encouraging all pupils to take an active role in listening and talking activities by supporting and rewarding participation
* Ensuring regular and sustained participation by using focused questioning
* Encourage all pupils to use spelling rules accurately and phonics to support their spelling
* Delivery of L2 (French) to all P1-7 as a minimum and L3 (Spanish) to P5 as a minimum