



LITERACY POLICY

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Purpose

This policy is a working document which reflects the ethos and practice within the school in relation to the teaching of Literacy. It has been written with due regard to the requirements of the Primary Framework for Literacy and the National Curriculum and it will be monitored and evaluated according to changes within these documents as and when they arise.

The ethos of Scott Lower School is to provide every child with a happy, caring, learning environment in which he or she can develop their full potential - whatever their needs and irrespective of ability race or gender. We believe that it is fundamentally important to teach children to understand the power of reading, writing, speaking and listening. If children are equipped, at an early age, with the ability to confidently wield these skills, they will be able to use and apply them effectively within a literate world. Literacy unites these four important skills. We actively encourage children to speak, listen, read and write for a range of purposes, so using language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. Becoming literate enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively; they become enthusiastic and critical readers, writers and speakers, able to respond to a range of genre, including multimedia and visual texts on computer and in film.

Aims

The aims for our teaching and learning within Literacy are to enable children to:

- Foster an enthusiasm and love of literature through reading, writing and performing.
- Provide a rich and stimulating language environment, where speaking, listening, reading and writing are integrated and actively encouraged.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to become confident, competent, expressive and reflective users of language with a developing knowledge of how it works and the ability to analyse its features.
- Develop an awareness of purpose and audience for both written and oral language.
- Develop the fundamental skills of language as a means of communication, thus giving access to the rest of the curriculum and providing a vital key for future learning.

Teaching and Learning

Our curriculum planning is in two phases. To inform our planning we use the National Literacy Strategy and the Primary Framework for Literacy.

- **Long-term plans** identify the teaching units to be covered each term in literacy over the course of a year and enables meaningful cross curricular links to be made.
- **Short term weekly plans** should detail each stage of individual lessons within a unit of work. Over a number of weeks these will include an initial phase of reading analysis and investigation of an appropriate text/s followed by writing phase where children will be taught to use and apply the learning to their own writing. (This does not mean that reading and writing will not happen in the different phases) A unit can consist of anything from 2 to 4 (or more on rare occasions) weeks. These plans list the specific learning objectives for each lesson and give details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of appropriate differentiation and support for each group of children. These plans are kept in the class planning file and are available for the Literacy Leader to access and monitor.

We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our Literacy lessons, as recommended by the National Literacy Strategy and the Primary Framework. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in English. We do this through a daily lesson that has a mixture of whole-class and group teaching. During these lessons children should experience a whole-class shared reading or writing activity where the teacher provides opportunities for modelling and demonstrating strategies for learning. The children then complete a guided group, paired or independent activity which relates to the main teaching objectives from the shared session. The intended objectives for each session are reviewed at the end of the lesson and specific teaching points are gone

over to move the children on in their learning and enable the teacher to constantly assess progress.

Teachers will use their professional judgement to determine the activities, timing and organisation of each part of the lesson to suit its objectives. This will make for a varied and creative Literacy teaching programme. The children also have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and use a range of strategies and resources to support their work. These should include drama, speaking and listening work, use of multimedia and visual texts, discussion, reading and writing activities and ICT based work. Teaching activities should allow access to all children and adult or peer support should be assigned appropriately to enable pupils to attain their full potential.

Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work in school. Meeting the needs of individual children is of prime importance. When teaching Literacy we recognise the fact that there are children of differing abilities in all classes and we take into account the needs of all children, including the targets set for the children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities matched to the needs of all children including the very able, those with barriers to learning and participation and those with different cultural or linguistic origins. The SENCO and Literacy Leader work together to identify and meet the needs of individual pupils. We ensure that we achieve this by:

- setting tasks with a higher level of challenge for the more able children;
- grouping children by ability in the room and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity, matched to the ability of the child;
- using teaching assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children;
- using peer support.

There are a range of resources to support the planning and teaching of Literacy across the school both year groups specific and general. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts and displays to support learning. Individual and guided reading books are available along with big books, phonics resources and a range of media. Children use ICT in literacy lessons where it enhances their learning.

Parental involvement

We welcome and actively encourage the involvement of parents in their children's learning. Parent volunteers are welcomed to support readers in school and should be given relevant training. Parents are encouraged to support their children's literacy development at home through information evenings and booklets and Bug Club and through sharing their children's involvement in Book Weeks, to support their learning of spelling, handwriting and reading.

WRITING

It is important for pupils to develop as independent, enthusiastic and expressive writers, who are able to construct text in a meaningful way. They should be able to use a range of forms for a variety of purposes and audiences as well as being confident in their choice of genre and language style. Pupils should be given the confidence from an early age to regard themselves as writers and value their own work and that of others.

Our aims for teaching and learning within writing are to enable children to:

- develop as confident writers who enjoy writing for different purposes
- use writing as a means to communicate ideas and information to a reader.
- write in a grammatically accurate way.
- develop an increasingly wide vocabulary suited to the purpose and genre.
- write in a particular genre with a good understanding of the features of that genre.
- understand the conventions of written language.
- use teacher modelling as a means to understand the writing process.
- understand how writers can have an effect on the reader.
- incorporate ideas and skills of other authors into their own writing.
- collaborate with others during the writing process.
- draft and re-draft, making changes where appropriate.
- work collaboratively with other children to discuss their written work.
- use ICT as a tool for writing.
- use spelling and punctuation accurately and with confidence.

Teachers are responsible for providing children in Scott Lower School with a stimulating writing environment in which they offer encouragement and good quality modelling of writing. Teachers have clear expectations of writing and communicate these targets to the children. Teachers will have high expectations of the finished writing product and will encourage the children to maintain the same standards at all times.

A successful writing classroom should include:

- Clear expectations, targets and regular observation and assessment of progress towards the targets.
- A stimulating writing environment with
 - displayed and celebrated examples of children's own writing
 - opportunities for writing to be linked to activities **across** the curriculum
 - a specific writing area
 - a literacy working wall (with the children's targets clearly displayed on it).
- All adults (not just teachers) as role models who use writing explicitly in the classroom for a variety of purposes and demonstrate on a regular basis what they are doing.
- A wide experience of reading as the primary source of knowledge about how written language looks and sounds.
- The systematic, daily and direct teaching of phonics, spelling and grammar.
- Rich oral experience of Speaking and Listening opportunities and Drama as a preparation for writing.
- Regular shared writing sessions in order to teach and refine the skills of text composition.
- Opportunities for supported and independent writing linked to and developed from Shared Writing.

The Teaching of Writing

At Scott Lower School, we follow the New Primary Strategy for Literacy in addition to the National Literacy Strategy Framework and teach the specific objectives which are the most appropriate to our children's needs.

We aim to consolidate the following key features:

- To vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect
- To write with technical accuracy of syntax and punctuation in phrases, clauses and sentences
- To organise and present whole texts effectively, sequencing and structuring information, ideas and events
- To construct paragraphs and use cohesion within and between paragraphs
- To write imaginative, interesting and thoughtful texts
- To produce texts which are appropriate to task, reader and purpose
- To select appropriate and effective vocabulary
- To use correct spelling handwriting and presentation

In the early years emergent writing is encouraged through role play and children are encouraged to write in role using stimulus such as the home corner and story sacks. The local environment provides purposes for writing for example, shopping lists, signs, instructions and recounts. When children become more aware of phonics and letter formation they are encouraged to attempt a more focused form of writing using the initial, end and medial sounds in words.

Planning for Writing

Teachers will vary the order of units to take advantage of cross curricular links. By using the links, children are able to broaden and enhance their command of literacy by having different contexts in which to develop their writing.

Although writing should occur throughout a literacy unit, under the new framework, writing, using features studied through text-based work at the earlier stages of a unit becomes the main focus in the final week of that unit. This allows children meaningful time to carefully plan, write and edit their written work through carefully structured activities. The modelling of writing should be carefully planned by the teacher and activities structured to encourage the development of children's understanding of writing conventions appropriate to their age and ability.

Each teacher is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate writing objectives are delivered to their class. Literacy lessons should be as interactive and as challenging as possible and where appropriate use quality texts as a basis for writing. Often lessons include investigations, problem-solving, role-play and language play in order to encourage the children's interest in how language works and how it changes in different contexts.

Shared, Independent and Guided Writing

As part of a Literacy unit in any Year group, there will be opportunities for shared, independent and guided writing. At Scott children are inspired to write by firstly engaging in good quality texts which act as a model for what the children will be asked to write later in the unit.

Shared writing

Shared writing enables teachers to work with the whole class, to model, explore and discuss the choices writers make at the point of writing. It is also invaluable for making links between reading and writing by investigating how an author has used language to achieve a particular effect. Shared writing is also an opportunity to scaffold aspects of writing such as punctuation strategies, story openings or whatever the focus for that writing session will be.

Shared writing may take the form of one or a combination of the following teaching techniques:

- Teacher Demonstration - we demonstrate how to write a text or a particular feature of that text.
- Teacher Scribing- the pupils offer their contributions building upon the teacher's demonstration.
- Supported Composition- Children use white boards or draft books to write in pairs or individually a limited amount of the text to ensure understanding.

By using an appropriate combination of these techniques, it ensures that the children are fully engaged in the Teaching of Writing process.

Independent writing

Independent writing tasks can take many forms but must flow from Shared Writing and take the child on to the next step of becoming an independent writer. In the 'independent' part of the lesson, children will also have opportunities to work in pairs and groups on the writing process as this is an important way of sharing ideas and improving the quality of what the children produce.

Guided Writing

The group and the objective for guided writing are identified on the short term plan but guided writing will cover the following teaching points:

- To support children in planning and drafting their own work.
- To revise and edit work in progress.
- To provide differentiated support for particular groups.

Extended Writing Time

There is an extended or sustained writing time at least once a week throughout the school. This enables children to develop their writing to a more advanced stage and allow time for editing and peer assessment.

The Teaching of Grammar

Grammar is the means to an end and not an end in itself and must therefore, be strongly embedded in the teaching of shared reading and writing at both Key Stages.

The Use of ICT

We are fully committed to developing the use of ICT in Literacy lessons, particularly in the teaching of writing. The use of the interactive whiteboard, the internet and multimedia resources are a valuable tool in stimulating interest in writing. Having computers available for children to use can enhance the writing process at all stages although its use should have a specific purpose and learning objective not simply to 'type up your story'.

Reading

Pupils are encouraged to become confident, enthusiastic, critical and independent readers. They should be able to cope with print in a variety of forms and for a variety of purposes and read for enjoyment, information, and interest.

Our aims for teaching and learning within reading are to enable children to:

- understand the features of a book and how it works.
- have an interest in words and their meanings.
- use a range of strategies which will help them to read with meaning, fluency, accuracy and expression.
- use appropriate reading strategies to find and interpret information.
- reflect on their reading and offer a personal response to a wide range of texts.
- to understand how the format and language changes with different genre.
- to use inferential skills to find meaning beyond the literal.
- to appreciate the tools of the writer and the techniques used to involve the reader in the text
- to appreciate the work of individual authors, illustrators and publishers.
- to read for and with other children and adults in a variety of situations.
- to use a range of resources, including classroom materials, the school and public libraries for a range of reading materials.
- to use ICT based reference materials for information.

A **successful** reading classroom should include:

- Clear expectations, targets and regular observation and assessment of progress towards the targets.
- A stimulating reading environment with
 - Different types of writing available around the classroom for children to read
 - opportunities for reading to be linked to activities **across** the curriculum
 - a specific book corner where quiet reading can take place
 - a literacy working wall
- All adults (not just teachers) as role models who use reading explicitly in the classroom for a variety of purposes and demonstrate on a regular basis what they are doing.
- A wide experience of reading as the primary source of knowledge about how written language looks and sounds.
- Regular guided reading sessions in order to teach and refine the skills of textual understanding.
- Opportunities for supported and independent reading linked to and developed from guided reading.

Teaching of Reading

At Scott Lower School, we follow the New Primary Strategy for Literacy in addition to the National Literacy Strategy Framework and teach the specific objectives which are the most appropriate to our children's needs.

We aim to consolidate the key features of reading which are important:

- To use a range of strategies, including accurate decoding of text, to read for meaning
- To understand, describe, select or retrieve information, events or ideas from texts and use quotation and reference to text
- To deduce, infer or interpret information, events or ideas from texts
- To identify and comment on the structure and organisation of texts, including grammatical and presentational features at text level
- To explain and comment on writers' use of language, including grammatical and literary features at word and sentence level
- To identify and comment on writers' purposes and viewpoints, and the overall effect of the text on the reader
- To relate texts to their social, cultural and historical traditions

Planning reading

Reading forms the basis of most literacy units and the selection of quality texts at the planning stage is of prime importance in developing children's skills in reading and writing. Texts studied during literacy lessons should allow children to extend their breadth of reading beyond their own ability through shared reading and focussed tasks. It should also be planned to develop children's understanding of the authors craft and how texts of different genre are constructed, thus the use of whole texts is encouraged. Children should also recognise that reading is an important skill across the curriculum and reading skills should be taught and utilised in a range of different subjects.

Reading should occur throughout a literacy unit. Under the new framework, reading and text-based investigative work forms the main focus at the earlier stages of a unit leading into written tasks based

around the text/s used. The modelling of reading skills should be carefully planned by the teacher and activities structured to encourage the development of children's independent reading strategies such as reading around an unknown word for meaning and the use of inference and deduction.

Each teacher is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate reading objectives are delivered to their class and the individual. Literacy lessons should be as interactive and as challenging as possible and where appropriate use quality texts. Lessons include investigations, problem-solving, role-play and language play in order to encourage the children's interest in understanding texts.

Shared, independent and guided reading

Guided reading is taught separately in the timetable and a group session takes place on a daily basis. The objectives and targets for Guided and independent reading are taken from the APP framework. In the Foundation Stage we use the Guidance for the Foundation Stage working towards the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their range of vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore, enjoy, learn about and use words and text in a range of situations.

In the Nursery and Reception classes daily phonic sessions are taught using a combination of the Jolly Phonics and Letters and Sounds scheme. In the Nursery initial sounds are introduced to the children through song, rhymes and movement. In the Reception class once the children are ready they participate in one guided reading session a week. Planning and objectives for phonics and spelling comes from the Letters and Sounds scheme linked with the New Primary Framework for Literacy.

During Guided Reading sessions teachers and teaching assistants work with groups of children on their weekly text, while the rest of the class complete independent activities relating to Literacy objectives. In Reception, the children will experience, Language development as part of the Development Matters framework. Speaking and Listening skills are vitally important as they underpin all learning at this early stage. The Language Development strand of the Development Matters framework ensures that children build on the language skills they bring from home. Development of these skills is encouraged through activities such as listening to stories and poems, joining in with rhymes and songs, participating in drama and imaginative play, responding to simple instructions and talking to accompany play. Knowledge about books is developed through activities such as retelling a story in their own words, reading a big book with the teacher, re-reading favourite stories and listening to recorded stories.

When a child is ready to begin more formal reading activities she or he will embark upon the school's reading system of colour banded books. Pupils are encouraged to take home an appropriate level reading book to share with their parents and will read to an adult in school at least twice a week. Records of pupils' individual reading books are kept in the pupil's own reading diary and the class reading record. Children are given Individual targets for reading which are on their bookmarks. Then each time they read progress towards their bookmark targets is monitored.

Shared reading takes place as part of the daily literacy sessions. Children will work as a whole class to investigate a specific aspect of a written text honing their skills in reading and refining techniques to gather information from written texts as led by the teacher. This should allow some children to access texts that they may not be able to read at their own level and develop more advanced reading skills.

The use of ICT

We recognise that ICT plays a vital role in reading skills. Multimedia texts are becoming more integrated into our culture and the use of interactive and audio texts, film and the internet should form a part in the children's literacy education in order to give them vital skills for the future. The children are made fully aware of the different 'reading' materials that are available to them, including Bug Club. This can improve children's enthusiasm for reading and can overcome barriers, particularly for less confident or reluctant readers.

It is important to provide planned opportunities for a range of speaking and listening tasks. This encourages children to develop as fluent, confident and competent speakers who are also able to listen with interest and understanding for sustained periods. It also encourages children to work cooperatively with others and to listen to the views of others. Working collaboratively and sharing ideas is a valuable and supportive exercise which needs to be planned and developed within the classroom.

Speaking and listening

Our aims for teaching and learning within speaking and listening are to enable children to:

- use speech appropriately for different purposes.
- adopt appropriate vocabulary, tone, pace and style for a variety of audiences and in a variety of different situations.
- understand the effect of speech on the listener.
- use talk to develop and express ideas.
- communicate meaning effectively.
- listen attentively and derive meaning from what others say.
- follow verbal instructions accurately.
- understand the importance of good listening and how to respond during discussions, conversations and when information is given or asked for.
- develop the skills of turn taking, negotiation and reaching consensus.
- appreciate the role of a 'talk partner' and the way in which others can help in the learning process by sharing ideas and being supportive.

We believe that a **successful** speaking and listening classroom should include:

- A role play area linked to topic areas eg a shop, surgery, airport
- a listening area with audio player where children can listen to speaking/audio books, recordings that have made themselves.
- furniture organised to facilitate collaborative paired and group work
- a collection of props for story telling, eg puppets, small world, story sacks
- a carpet area where whole class discussion and story telling can take place
- a book collection that includes poetry and plays to perform
- interactive topic related displays with questions to stimulate talk and discussions.
- posters displaying rules for speaking and listening

It is our aim therefore, to provide these important factors within our classrooms in order to provide a supportive and stimulating speaking and listening environment.

Teaching of speaking and listening

At Scott Lower School, we follow the New Primary Strategy for Literacy in addition to the National Literacy Strategy Framework and teach the specific objectives which are the most appropriate to our children's needs.

In general, we aim to consolidate four key features of speaking and listening which are particularly important:

- Speaking
- Listening and responding
- Group discussion and interaction
- Drama

Planning speaking and listening

Speaking and listening should form an integral part of not only literacy lessons but of every aspect of the curriculum. It should be specifically planned into lessons through the use of class discussion, questioning, paired and group work and drama. A range of opportunities need to be carefully planned for to allow children to see the role of speaking and listening in a range of contexts. Children should be allowed to take up different roles in group work to enable them to develop a range of skills across the four strands.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

We assess children's work in Literacy on a daily basis against the learning objectives and success criteria for each lesson. Informal judgements are made during observations in lessons, the plenary, marking and use of AfL techniques. This allows teachers to adjust their daily plans.

Formal half-termly assessments of reading and writing are made which are used to track children's progress and inform planning (detailed in reading and writing sections of policy). This helps teachers to identify those groups of children who are not making the progress expected or who are exceeding it and to provide appropriate teaching to support their development in literacy. Progress is discussed and monitored in half-termly pupil progress meetings.

In May/June of each year, year 2 children sit their National SATs test in order to gain a National Curriculum Level in reading and writing. These levels are stored in to the school assessment database and analysed in order to set targets for the following year. They are also used to assess progress against the school and national targets. With the help of these assessments, teachers are able to set targets for the next school year and summarise the progress of each child before discussing it with the child's parents. Information gained from these assessments is also used to inform planning for the new school year. Final judgements are made using both end-of-year tests and teacher assessment based upon evidence gathered throughout the year, these final judgements are then reported to the parents.

In Year 1 the teacher makes an assessment of each individual's reading and writing level against recognised descriptors using evidence collected over the course of the year. All children in Year 1 undertake the National Phonics Screening Test and the results are shared with their parents.

In the Foundation Stage observations are collected during literacy sessions and child initiated play and these are used to inform their assessments for the Nursery Learning Record and the Foundation Stage Profile.

Children's writing will be assessed on a daily basis against the learning objective and success criteria for the lesson and this will be apparent in the children's work. Individuals will also be set one target for their own writing which will be discussed with them and recorded. Work will be marked against this target and children will be given feedback which allows them to improve their writing.

Every half-term, each child will complete an unaided writing assessment which is marked according to National Curriculum levels using the APP guidelines and moderated by the whole staff to ensure consistency across the school. Writing assessments over the year will cover different genre .

The assessments are then used to monitor individual's progress and to inform the selection of whole school curricular targets in writing. Groups of children will be set a curricular target which will be displayed in the classroom and referred to when written work is undertaken.

Each child's reading will be continually assessed through their guided and independent reading sessions. The APP format will be used to set targets for children and to monitor progress. Children will move up, and if deemed necessary, down through the colour banded books to ensure they are being given appropriate challenge in their reading material. The Literacy Leader will monitor progress through the reading bands on a termly basis and children's reading levels on the national curriculum each half term.

At the end of each term the class teacher will record a national curriculum level for speaking and listening for each child based on an assessment against the teaching objectives.

Management Support

The Literacy curriculum is monitored by the Leader and the Literacy Governor. Monitoring includes a planning scrutiny, book scrutiny, on-going assessment, and reviewing of pupils' work and attainment as well as in depth monitoring through lesson observations and discussions with pupils.

Staff are encouraged to attend training courses which are aimed at improving skills and creating liaison opportunities with other schools.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body should, in cooperation with the head teacher, determine the school's general policy and approach to literacy at Scott Lower School.

The Literacy Leader should advise the Headteacher, staff and Governors of the current and changing practice in writing at Scott Lower School and keep them up to date with new initiatives put forward by the Government and LA.

The Teaching Staff should in cooperation with the Headteacher and Literacy Leader, plan and deliver effective literacy lessons which reflect the school policy.

The SENCO should, in cooperation with the Headteacher, Literacy Leader and teaching staff provide support and additional literacy resources for children with Special Educational Needs.

Role of the subject leader

The subject leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning through monitoring;

- pupil progress
- provision of literacy (including Intervention and support programmes)
- the quality of the literacy environment
- purchasing and organising resources
- keeping up to date with recent Literacy developments and sharing them with colleagues.

Equal Opportunities

Scott Lower School is committed to working towards equality of opportunity for all children regardless of age, ability, gender, race and social circumstances. All pupils are of equal value and have the same right to take part in the varied activities and opportunities wherever possible. All opportunities for learning should be offered in a way which allows all children access and the ability to progress at their stage of understanding.

Disability Discrimination Act

Scott Lower School is committed to having due regard to the following

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 has been amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 so that it now places a duty on all public authorities, including schools, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life
- Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.