Lismore Comprehensive School

"Caring and Learning Together"

LITERACY

POLICY

Literacy Policy 2014

Context

The School Improvement policy document, ***Every School a Good School (ESaGS)*** (DE 2009) has outlined characteristics of what will be recognised as effective performance under four headings:

o   child centred provision;

o   high quality teaching and learning;

o   effective leadership; and

o   a school connected to its local community.

In March 2011 DE published ***Count, Read: Succeed – A Strategy to Improve Outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy*** which states:

o   *'Literacy and Numeracy are at the very heart of the revised curriculum' (paragraph 2.3);*

o   *'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' (2.5); and*

o   *'Schools should have a literacy and numeracy policy, linked to the School Development Plan and annual targets' (5.7**)*

Definition of Literacy

Count, Read: Succeed (paragraph 1.7) defines literacy as:
'The ability to read and use written information and to write appropriately and legibly, taking account of different purposes, contexts, conventions and audiences. It involves the development of:

a) *an integrated approach to the acquisition of talking, listening , reading and writing skills across the curriculum;*

b) *knowledge that allows a speaker, writer and reader to use language appropriate to different social situations;*

c) *formal and informal language across all area of social interaction; and*

d) *the ability to read, understand and use information in multiple formats and platforms, including traditional print and on-screen material'.*

Rationale

The Lismore literacy policy reflects the school's provision in line with the four characteristics of effectiveness as set out in **ESaGS** and the requirements of **Count, Read: Succeed.** We aim to provide a supportive, stimulating and secure environment where children are encouraged to express themselves and where their contributions are valued. We will provide for the language development of pupils and will develop their ability to use language to think, to explore and to recognise and communicate their ideas.

Aims

- To set out the school's principles and practices for the promotion and development of literacy/communication both across the curriculum and within the area of English.

- To clarify the responsibilities for all stakeholders in ensuring the support and development of literacy skills.

- To reflect classroom practice in relation to the statutory learning experiences within the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

1. Child Centred Provision

Every School a Good School offers indicators for child-centred provision. At Lismore we strive to reflect these in the provision for literacy. Planning and practice ensure that the child is at the centre of our provision through:

- The range and effectiveness of curricular planning – e.g. the school ensures that the curriculum we offer is appropriate and relevant to the learners in our school.

- An expectation from all staff that all children will achieve to the best of their ability;

- Planned intervention to support *all* learners – e.g. Literacy support programme; SEN provision; differentiation in teaching and learning; provision for gifted and talented pupils.

- The involvement of pupils in school life – both curricular and extra-curricular.

2.   High Quality Teaching and Learning

At Lismore we know that high quality teaching and learning are at the heart of success so we have various procedures in place to address underachievement as set out in paragraph 5.1 of *Count, Read: Succeed* – i.e. we aim to:

(i)   Provide high-quality teaching for all pupils e.g. teaching and learning time protected, PRSD, variety of resources which are suitable and measured.

(ii)   Address underachievement as soon as it emerges – e.g. through baseline testing

(ii)   Address continuing underachievement with support from other staff in the school – e.g. Signature Project support programme; through consultation amongst all staff, Head of English and SENCO

(iv)   Address continuing underachievement with support from outside the school – e.g. through SENCO and outside agencies such as educational psychologist;

(v)   Meet the needs of pupils after a non-statutory assessment through the SEN framework.

At Lismore our provision for literacy ensures:
o   A clear understanding that skills acquired in English classrooms should be developed across all subject areas. *"…every teacher, regardless of the subject they teach, must promote and model high standards of literacy." (**Count, Read: Succeed** paragraph 4.29).*

o   A broad and relevant curriculum promoting all three interdependent modes of language i.e. Speaking & Listening, Reading and Writing;

- A variety of teaching approaches which meet the requirements in paragraph 5.3 of **Count, Read: Succeed** *'Teachers, drawing on their professional expertise, will use a variety of teaching strategies including whole-class teaching, co-operative small group work and individual work, differentiated where appropriate'*;

- The use of the three key strategies (modelled, shared and guided) for developing language and literacy;

- Effective use of all data, including qualitative and quantitative to inform teaching and learning;

- Rigorous self-evaluation to promote improvement;

- Effective use of digital technology to support learning;

- Infusion of Assessment for Learning strategies, Thinking Skills & Personal Capabilities, activity-based learning strategies and collaborative working.

3. Effective Leadership

Page 16 of *Every School a Good School* and Chapters 4 and 5 of *Count, Read: Succeed* outline indicators for effective leadership. At Lismore we strive to use these to clarify the role of the Literacy Co-ordinator. This includes:

o Adhering to the guidelines provided by the school development plan and using it to inform action planning for literacy;

o Availing of professional development opportunities to co-ordinate literacy in the school effectively and to share and learn from good practice;

o Giving teachers in the school the opportunity to share in the promotion of literacy;

o Manage literacy resources available in the school properly and effectively;

o Monitor and evaluate effectively the school outcomes, policies, practices and procedures in place for literacy, in line with the school development plan (see Literacy action plans and SDP).

The individual leadership roles of the following people support the development of literacy:

o Board of Governors
o Principal
o Senior Leadership Team
o Head of English
o Literacy Co-ordinator
o Heads of other departments
o SENCO
o All teachers

These various leadership roles contribute to the development of literacy through:

- o   The School Development Planning process;

- o   Planning for literacy development within other subject areas;

- o   Promotion of Cross-Curricular Skills;

- o   The setting of annual targets for improvement, in consultation with the Literacy Co-ordinator/Head of English;

- o   The management and analysis of all data;

- o   Tracking pupils' progress;

- o   Supporting staff within the school to address continuing underachievement (*Count, Read: Succeed* paragraphs 5.16 – 5.18);

- o   Professional development opportunities of all staff;

- o   Sharing and learning from best practice;

- o   Monitoring and evaluation;

- o   Ensuring that channels of communication are open and active (internal and external).

4. A School Connected to its Local Community

Page 16 of *Every School a Good School* and paragraphs 4.29 – 4.32 of *Count, Read: Succeed* offer indicators for best practice in ensuring our school is connected to its local community. At Lismore we strive to reflect these in our provision for literacy. We strive to develop and maintain partnerships with parents and the wider community through:

- o **Links with parents** –Lismore have systems in place for informing and reporting to parents, for example: the school website; interim reports; annual reports; parents' information sessions for all year groups; Parent Forum and the Parent Learning Facility

- o **Links with other schools/colleges** – links within our Area Learning Community; clusters for staff development; visits to other schools to observe good practice; joint productions; links with primary schools, other post-primary schools, FE colleges and universities;

- o **Links with the community** – local library; local competitions, challenges; school trips; visits to school by local people/businesses; neighbourhood renewal group projects;

- o **Links with bodies in the workforce** – businesses which facilitate work experience; story tellers, authors, local reporters, bank officials, engineers. accountants; other business people;

- o **Links with external agencies** – staff development/information sessions, for example EAL service, peripatetic services, Educational Psychology Service.

(See also *Count, Read: Succeed* paragraphs 2.21 – 2.24)

Monitoring and Evaluation of policy

The literacy policy will be:

o   regularly reviewed and updated in consultation with staff, particularly the Senior Leadership Team

o   presented to the Board of Governors regularly;

o   shared with parents;

o   in line with whole school development plan

Monitoring and Evaluation of policy