

Taunagh NS

Whole School English Plan

Roll: 13196R

Introductory Statement

The plan was prepared by the staff of Taunagh NS during the 2023/2024 school year following on from the publication and implementation of new Primary Language Curriculum. A collaborative approach was adopted when writing this plan to ensure that all staff share a sense of ownership in the planning process. It is hoped that this school plan will be a useful tool for teachers, providing them with clear guidelines in the teaching of English, as well as ensuring consistency and continuity in practice throughout the school.

Rationale

In Taunagh NS we are committed to the holistic development of all pupils and language is key to the development of the child as a person. In developing this whole-school plan for literacy, we aim to:

- To provide an overview of the English curriculum throughout the school.
- To benefit teaching and learning in our school.
- To provide a framework in which more specific planning can take place.
- To conform to principles of learning outlined in the Primary Language Curriculum.

Our Vision

In Taunagh NS, we are committed to the holistic development of all pupils in order to assist them to contribute and play a fulfilling role in their own community. We see the development of their language skills as being central to this process. We believe that the ability of our pupils to communicate fluently, confidently, and effectively will contribute greatly to the development of their self-esteem and their personal growth. It is our belief that their academic progress depends to a large extent on their ability to communicate orally and through written word. In this school, we attach great

importance to giving pupils a command of the English language. We see the teaching of English as something which underpins all other subjects across the primary curriculum. We believe that language learning is a tool for lifelong learning.

Aims and Objectives of Primary Language Curriculum

1. Children and their lives:

- Enable children to build on prior knowledge and experience of language and language learning to enhance their language learning.
- Encourage children of different languages and cultures to be proud of and to share their heritage
- Recognise the wide variation in experience, ability and language style, which children bring to language learning in school as a first step in enabling them to engage in relevant and meaningful communicative relationships.

2. Children's communications and connections with others

- Embrace children's uniqueness by nurturing their appreciation of their home language, their understanding of language and diversity, and their ability to use different language, gestures and tools to communicate with people in a variety of contexts and situation.
- Enable children to fully engage with and enjoy a wide range of relevant and meaningful linguistic and communicative experiences with peers and adults.
- Encourage and enable children to communicate effectively in both the first and second language of the school and to communicate in their heritage language for a variety of purposes.

3. Children's language learning

- Broaden children's understanding of the world through a rich variety of language experiences and through fostering an awareness and appreciation of other languages and cultures in an enriching learning environment
- Encourage children to engage personally with and think critically about a broad range of spoken, gesticulated, written and multimodal texts.
- Nurture within children an awareness of language, allowing them to appreciate and understand the content and structure of languages and acquire a basic understanding of the history of languages and other cultures
- Promote a positive disposition towards communication and language by fostering within children a lifelong interest in and a love of language learning for personal enjoyment and enrichment
- Support children to develop their literacy skills and enable them to progress at their own learning pace in oral language, reading and writing.

In teaching language, we aim to:

- Promote positive attitudes and develop an appreciation of the value of language: spoken, read and written.
- Create, foster and maintain the child's interest in expression and communication.
- Develop the child's ability to engage appropriately in listener-speaker-relationships.
- Develop confidence and competence in listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- Develop cognitive ability and the capacity to clarify thinking through oral language, writing and reading.
- Enable the child to read and write independently.
- Enhance emotional, imaginative and aesthetic development through oral, reading and writing experiences.

Curricular planning

The whole school plan and the Primary Language Curriculum will seek to provide information and guidance to individual teachers for their long and short term planning.

Class teachers will be required to produce:

- Yearly/termly plans
- Fortnightly plans in conjunction with the New Primary Language Curriculum.

The Cuntas Míósúil will be used to measure the success of the English plan and will inform teachers' preparation for the following month.

Circular 0056/2011 suggests schools increase the time spent on literacy to 6.5 hours in infants and 8.5 hours to seniors with *priority to the first language of the school*. Time spent on English is 4 hours per week for Infant classes with a shorter day and 5 hours for Senior classes for students with a full day. This is approx. 48 minutes per day for infants and 60 minutes per day for other classes. These time allocations may change with the arrival of the new primary curriculum framework.

The process of language learning is naturally developed through integrated activities and through a thematic/cross-curricular approach.

Strands and elements

Across the strands of oral language, reading and writing, the elements describe essential language learning. Each element has a set of Learning Outcomes, which describe important language learning in terms of concepts, dispositions and skills.

*The **elements** of language learning across each of the strands are:*

1. Developing communicative relationships through language.
2. Understanding the content and structure of language.
3. Exploring and using language.

ORAL LANGUAGE

Language Needs Within Our School:

Within the context of Taunagh National School, we are aware that there is a huge diversity in the oral language skills of children entering our school. Therefore, the pivotal role that oral language plays as an integrating factor in all aspects of the English program is recognised. Children need to work in a range of situations – developing the ability to question, explain and present ideas; give and understand instructions; plan, discuss, tell stories and take part in collaborative and exploratory play. They will learn to develop confidence, precision and competence in reasoning, predicting, re-calling and expressing feelings. They should develop sensitivity to audience-encourage tolerance of views and ideas.

Broad Objectives

The aim of this plan is to provide a structured sequential programme for teachers to enable children to:

1. Gain pleasure and fulfilment from language activities.
2. Develop the capacity to express intuitions, feelings, impressions, ideas and reactions in response to real and imaginary situations through talk and discussion and the development of ideas.
3. Develop fluency, explicitness and confidence in communication.
4. Develop listening skills, language conventions, vocabulary, aesthetic response and language manipulation.

For the learner outcomes for oral language for each stage please refer to the Primary Curriculum at the following link:

<https://www.curriculumonline.ie/primary/curriculum-areas/primary-language/>

	Junior and Senior Infants	1 st and 2 nd Class	3 rd and 4 th Class	5 th and 6 th Class
Programmes Used/Interventions used to implement these outcomes	Aistear Vocabulary development through Picture books My News Discrete oral language lessons Folens Starlight Oral Language Programme Station teaching <u>Phonics programme:</u> Jolly phonics in junior and Senior infants Just Phonics Workbook <u>Phonemic Awareness:</u> Station teaching for junior and	Station teaching My News Folens Starlight Oral Language Programme Discrete oral language lessons <u>Phonics programme:</u> Jolly Phonics <u>Phonemic Awareness:</u> Spell It	Oral reports and presentations (Both individual and collaborative). Literacy groups Guided reading Selection of oral language games (Word association, I went to the shop and bought ... etc) Rainbow Oral Language Programme DEAR time Spell It Building Bridges	Oral reports and presentations. (Both individual and collaborative). Literacy groups Guided reading Selection of oral language games (Word association, I went to the shop and bought ... etc) Rainbow Oral Language Programme DEAR time Spell It Building Bridges

	senior infants	DEAR time		
	DEAR time in senior infants	Building Bridges		
	Building Bridges			

Oral Language Methodologies

Approach to Oral Language:

While oral language exercises still provide support for other literacy tasks, the focus of oral language development shifts to include more advanced skills including the ability to articulate opinions and ideas, to formulate questions, to process information when listening and to organise ideas in logical order. While oral language activities are used in every area of the Primary Curriculum, specific discrete time is allocated towards oral language lessons within the English programme in order to develop advanced receptive and productive skills. As much as possible, student “talking-time” will be maximised across the curriculum in order to provide the widest range of opportunities to practice and develop skills in context.

The schools approach to Oral Language will draw on three areas of content:

1. Discrete Oral Language

Form, structure, use of language and grammar are addressed during Discrete Oral Language time. Some of the discretionary curriculum time may be used for this. Children are encouraged and taught to use correct pronunciation, grammar etc. when speaking. Discrete oral language will be addressed using curriculum objectives as guidelines e.g.

- introducing oneself and others;
- greeting others and saying goodbyes;
- giving and receiving messages;
- discussing world news,
- using the telephone;
- making requests for information;

- giving directions;
- expressing appreciation;
- welcoming visitors;
- making a complaint;
- expressing sympathy, etc.

2. Integrating Oral language through the Reading (Starlight & Rainbow Reading Programme) and Writing Process

The following oral language activities and skills will be developed through the teaching of reading and writing –

- language development through guided reading
- comprehension strategies e.g. think aloud – building bridges programme
- language experience approach,
- brainstorming at the pre-writing stage,
- peer-conferencing and conferencing with teacher,
- children in author's chair,
- use of novel,
- use of real-life scenarios
- writing process, etc.

3. Integrating Oral language across the Curriculum

The following oral language skills will be targeted in an integrated way e.g.

- describing skills in Visual Arts
- listening skills in Music and PE
- turn taking
- expressing opinions
- Circle time in SPHE

There is an emphasis on classroom organisation and methodologies that provide children with an opportunity to learn the form and structure of language and to use language discursively through questioning and for coherent expression. Teachers will incorporate a variety of organisational settings into the teaching and learning for development of Oral Language such as pair work, group work, whole class discussion, formal and informal debates and circle time. This plan reflects the use of

methodologies as described in the Primary Language Curriculum. There are some methodologies that are followed at whole school level and others that are more relevant to a particular stage of development. Listed below are a sample of methodologies employed in our school. This list is not exhaustive.

These methodologies include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Active Learning ● Book discussion groups ● Collaborative/co-operative learning ● Direct teaching ● Free exploration of materials ● Free writing ● Guided discovery/enquiry ● Guided reading ● Station teaching ● Guided writing ● Improvisational drama ● Independent reading ● Independent writing ● Language experience ● Learning through play ● Library usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Modelled reading genre ● Modelled writing ● Modelling language ● Oral familiarisation ● Interview ● Paired reading/buddy/peer reading ● Play and games ● Presentation to audience ● Problem solving ● Reading ● Reading for purpose ● Reading to children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shared reading ● Shared writing skills through content ● Story ● Talk and discussion ● Use of ICT and multi-media ● Use of poetry and rhyme ● Sayings ● Song ● Drama ● Using the environment ● Yard games
--	--	---

Oral Language Strategies

Oral language is used as a basis for reading and writing. All lessons are introduced with an oral language activity and the development of oral language skills takes place across all subjects and throughout the whole school day. Sometimes teachers use oral language as an alternative to written exercises in developing children's comprehension skills. In order to further develop higher order thinking skills, the teachers use questions:

- To gain maximum information
- To discuss different possible solutions to problems
- To seek and give explanations

- To argue a point of view
- To examine fact, fiction, bias and objectivity
- To persuade others
- To develop critical thinking

In planning for oral language across the strands, the following contexts are utilised:

- Talk and discussion
- Play and games
- Story
- Improvisational Drama
- Poetry and Rhyme

Resources that are currently being used in our school include the following: **Folens Starlight Programme** and **Aistear** (Junior Classes), **Rainbow English Programme** (Senior Classes)

Aistear

The Primary Language Curriculum builds upon the principles of Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework. These principles highlight the importance of adult-child relationships and playful and meaningful experiences for children's learning and development. In nurturing the development of children as competent and confident communicators, the Primary Language Curriculum spotlights the importance of developing dispositions alongside concepts and skills.

Aistear defines dispositions as enduring habits of mind and action and states that 'a disposition is the tendency to respond to situations in characteristic ways' (NCCA, 2009, p.54), including independence, curiosity, playfulness, perseverance, confidence, resilience and resourcefulness. The Aistear framework is used to deliver the curriculum in Junior and Senior Infants, and promotes playful learning across all subject areas, especially literacy. Resources are available to assist with the teaching of the Aistear themes and are updated regularly. (Please see appendix for a list of suggested Aistear Themes for Junior and Senior Infants.

Starlight Oral Language Programme:

The Starlight Oral Language Programme is used to promote Oral Language Development in the Junior Room. Starlight's oral language programme features 16 posters per class.

Oral Language Themes Junior Infants – 2nd Class

<u>Oral Language Themes</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>June</u>
Junior Infants	Myself	The World Around Us	Work	Shopping	Shopping	Animals	School	Food	Food/Holidays	Holidays
Senior Infants	Myself	The World Around Us	Work	Shopping	Shopping	Animals	School	Food	Food/Holidays	Holidays
1st Class	Myself	The World Around Us	Work	Special Occasions	Special Occasions/ School	Animals	School	Food	Food/Holidays	Holidays
2nd Class	Myself	The World Around Us	Work	Special Occasions	Special Occasions/ School	Animals	School	Food	Food/Holidays	Holidays

READING

Broad Objectives:

The aim of this plan is to provide a structured and sequential programme for teachers to enable children to:

1. Develop print awareness, phonemic awareness, word identification strategies and sight vocabulary.
2. Develop their comprehension and analytical strategies.

3. Expand their understanding and usage of grammar, syntax and punctuation.
4. Develop their appreciation of the richness and diversity of reading material.
5. Experience the pleasure and fulfilment to be gained from reading- DEAR time, paired reading, etc.
6. Develop skills to become fluent, confident and independent readers.

For the learner outcomes for reading for each stage please refer to the Primary Curriculum at the following link :

<https://www.curriculumonline.ie/primary/curriculum-areas/primary-language/>

	Junior and Senior Infants	1 st and 2 nd Class	3 rd and 4 th Class	5 th and 6 th Class
Programmes/ Interventions	Station Teaching with SER Teacher & SNA Small Groups/individual – SET Forward Together programme (Senior Infants)	Station Teaching – Small groups/Individual - SET The PM readers Access to library	The Rainbow Reading Programme stage 3 Read at Home 3&4 Building Bridges Spell It TTRS - Target Groups Station Teaching Guided Reading DEAR Shared Reading/Buddy Reading	Rainbow Reading Programme stage 4 Read at Home 5& 6 Building Bridges Spell It TTRS - Target Groups Station Teaching Guided Reading DEAR Shared Reading/Buddy Reading

Approaches to Reading

In this school, we consider the following components when planning for the teaching of reading:

- The children's general language development and sight vocabulary
- The central role of phonological and phonemic awareness
- The discrete teaching of reading skills and comprehension strategies
- The use of appropriate reading material
- The understanding that motivation and enjoyment are key aspects of the reading process

These approaches will be recognised at all stages of children's acquisition of reading i.e. from the emergent reader, to the instructional reader and to the independent reader.

Pre-Reading and Early Reading Experiences – Infant Classes

The emphasis in Infant classes is on the development of pre-reading skills and shared reading experiences. This is characterized by activities that expose the children to the pleasure of reading and develop the skills, strategies and confidence required to negotiate and understand the features of print.

Our Starlight Literacy Program, Big Books, nursery rhymes, poems, songs, picture books and library books are used to give the children opportunities to hear reading, talk about reading, handle books. appreciate and enjoy reading as well as begin to understand the conventions of text – left to right orientation, and the terminology of books.

Language Development and Sight Vocabulary

A level of language acquisition and a basic sight vocabulary are important components the child needs before embarking on structured reading. In this school we aim to develop four types of vocabulary

- Listening vocabulary- the words we need to know to understand what we hear
- Speaking vocabulary- the words we use when we speak
- Reading vocabulary- the words we need to understand what we read
- Writing Vocabulary- the words we use in writing.

Basic Sight Vocabulary

Basic sight vocabulary is an important component of the language base the child needs before embarking on a structured reading programme. It will be acquired from a number of sources, such as language experience material, large-format books and a print rich environment. Sight vocabulary will be developed through the teaching of common words, core words i.e. Dolch lists, high interest words and social sight vocabulary and sight vocabulary from the Starlight reading scheme.

Phonological Awareness

The starting point for reading is the ability to recognise speech sounds. To support future reading, children must become aware that the words in their oral language are composed of small segments of sound in order to comprehend the way that language is represented by print. Therefore, before we expose children to print, we want to ensure that they have strong phonological awareness skills. Phonological awareness is considered an umbrella term that encompasses a range of subskills. These subskills include **word awareness, syllable awareness, onset–rime awareness and, crucially, phonemic awareness.**

Children will develop these skills using decodable readers e.g. Oxford Reading Tree and Songbirds before progressing to the Starlight Reading Scheme Junior Infants to 2nd class and Rainbow Reading Scheme in 3rd to 6th class. Children also move on to PM levelled readers towards the end of Junior infants/beginning of Senior Infants, 1st class, 2nd class. The child's level is based on their instructional reading level. This level is assessed by SET at the beginning of the teaching block.

Phonemic Awareness activities begin for Junior Infants in the 1st week of school. The following early literacy skills will be developed, using playful learning opportunities and the Jolly Phonics Programme, – This programme is used in Junior Infants to 2nd class. The teacher also uses the book - Phonological Awareness Skills from Prim-Ed.

- Listening
- Word Awareness
- Syllable Awareness
- Onset Rime Awareness
- Phonemes Identity: Initial Sounds
- Phonemes Identity: Final Sounds
- Phonemes Identity: Medial Sounds
- Phoneme Blending
- Phoneme Segmentation

Phonics Chart:

<p>Junior Infants</p>	<p>Junior Infant children are systematically introduced to the 26 letters/sounds of the alphabet, from October onwards, using the Jolly Phonics programme (with 2 sounds a week). Each unit introduces six or seven letters. These groups of letters have been carefully chosen based on frequency of use, as well as to enable pupils to naturally begin blending and forming words.</p> <p>Children also learn the vowel digraphs: (ai, oa, ie, ee, or)</p>
<p>Senior Infants</p>	<p>Using Jolly Phonics: Senior Infant children revise the 26 letters/sounds of the alphabet, before learning the consonant digraphs (sh, ch, th, wh, ph), vowel digraphs (-ai-, -oa-, -ie-, ee, -or, -ue-,), consonant blends (bl, br, cl, cr, fl, tr, fr, dr, gl, gr, pl, pr, sl, sm, sc, sk, sn, sm, sl, sw, sp, st) and long vowel sounds. Extra digraphs covered: ou, oi, ow, aw, ay, er, ar, oo.</p> <p>Word Families: -all, -ash, -ump, -ink, -ank</p> <p>Twin Letters: ss, ll, zz, ff.</p>
<p>1st class</p>	<p>Revising work completed in junior and senior infants. Children will also cover the following digraphs: ay, igh, y, ew, ue, oo, ee, ea, oi, ar, or, oy, al, er, nk, ir, ur, er, au and magic e.</p> <p>Spell It! 1</p> <p>Starlight Reading Programme</p>
<p>2nd class</p>	<p>The Spell It! 2</p> <p>Homophones</p> <p>Plurals</p> <p>Hard c, soft c, hard g, soft g,</p> <p>Silent k,l,w</p> <p>Magic e.</p> <p>Starlight Reading Programme</p>
<p>3rd class</p>	<p>Spell It</p> <p>Rainbow Reading Programme:</p> <p>Long a,e,i,o,u sound, st blend, thesaurus work - ch and sh words, silent letters, syllables, compound words, hard c and soft c, hard g and soft g, au and aw sounds, rhyming sounds, homonyms, suffixes - tion and - sion and ph sound.</p>

<p>4th class</p>	<p>Spell It</p> <p>Rainbow Reading Programme</p> <p>Long a,e,i,o,u sound</p> <p>st blend</p> <p>thesaurus work</p> <p>ch and sh words</p> <p>silent letters, syllables, compound words, rhyming sounds, homonyms, homographs, homophones</p> <p>hard c and soft c, hard g and soft g</p> <p>au and aw sounds,</p> <p>suffixes – tion -sion –ic –ick –able –ous, -ee and –ful</p> <p>prefixes dis- un- sur- ei or ie</p> <p>digraphs gh, ph</p>
<p>5th class</p>	<p>Spell It</p> <p>Rainbow Reading Programme:</p> <p>Suffixes, -ant, - ent, -tion, - able, - ible, - ous, - ious, - er, - ar, - or, -ic and- ick, - ough, - sion, - ery, - ory, - ary, - ture, - ence, - ance, - le, - el, - il, - al, - ful, - some, - ment, - ness, - ace, - ade, - ate, - age, -are.</p> <p>Prefixes: un-, dis-, ex-,</p> <p>Silent letters</p> <p>Sounds - ie or ei</p> <p>Homophones</p> <p>Root words</p> <p>Rhyming words.</p>
<p>6th class</p>	<p>Spell It</p>

<p>Rainbow Programme:</p> <p>Suffixes: -ies, -s, -cial, -tial, -able, -ible, -cy, -ist, -less, -ness, -ment, -th, -ht, -ful, -ward, -ture, -ous, -ious</p> <p>Prefixes: dis-, de-, ex-, en-, extra-, re-, pro-, en-, in-, inter-, un-, uni-, up-</p> <p>Silent letters, Root words, Rhyming words, Homophones</p> <p>Long e /u sound</p> <p>The /f/ sound spelled with 'ph'</p> <p>Consonant digraph ch, th</p> <p>Diphthongs /ou/ and/ow/</p> <p>Sounds - ie or ei</p>

Using a multi-sensory approach each letter sound is introduced with fun actions, stories and songs. Word families are introduced as well as alternative spelling patterns and sound exception work.

Children can begin reading activities after the first group of letters have been taught. The progress of the pace of this scheme will be determined by the teacher as they see suitable.

1. **Learning letter formation:**

This is taught alongside the introduction of each letter sound. Typically, children will learn how to form and write the letters down during the course of the lesson.

2. **Blending**

Once the first few letter sounds are learnt, children begin blending the sounds together to help them read and write new words.

3. **Segmenting:**

When children start reading words, they also need to start identifying the phonic components that make the word sound the way it does. By teaching blending and segmenting at the same time children become familiar with assembling and breaking down the sounds within words.

Children will develop these skills using decodable readers e.g. Songbirds, PM Readers, Oxford Reading Tree before progressing to the Starlight Reading Scheme in Junior Infants and Rainbow Reading Scheme in 3rd to 6th class. The child's level is based on their instructional reading level. This level is assessed by SET at the beginning of the teaching block.

Station Teaching

In this school we use Station Teaching as an instructional approach to the teaching of reading and comprehension skills as well as oral language development. It allows for differentiated teaching to occur in small-groups.

Children are introduced to Station Teaching in junior infants when they have developed some early literacy skills, have a bank of sight vocabulary, have mastered some letter-sound relationships and understand that the ultimate goal of reading is comprehension of the text. Station Teaching allows the teacher to explicitly teach vocabulary, fluency, word identification, comprehension strategies and writing skills, to observe children's application of strategies as they are engaged in the act of reading and to scaffold their efforts on the spot.

Comprehension Strategies

Teachers explicitly teach specific strategies in each class that relate to both factual texts and fictional texts by modelling the language and process for children. Comprehension skills are developed through oral, reading and written work with an emphasis on discussion.

Comprehension Strategies taught in this school

	Junior & Senior Infants	1 st & 2 nd class	3 rd & 4 th class	5 th & 6 th class
Sept	Predication	Prediction	Prediction	Predication
Oct	Prediction	Predication	Visualisation	Visualisation
Nov	Prediction	Visualisation	Making Connections	Making Connections
Dec	Prediction	Visualisation	Making Connections	Questioning

Jan	Visualisation	Making Connections	Questioning	Clarifying
Feb	Visualisation	Making Connections	Questioning	De-clunking
Mar	Visualisation	Making Connections	Clarifying	Determining Importance
Apr	Making Connections	Questioning	Clarifying	Determining Importance
May	Making Connections	Questioning	De-clunking	Inference & Synthesis
June	Making Connections	Questioning	De-clunking	Inference & Synthesis

Don't forget the other Reading Strategies too!

- **Summarising (Junior Infants – 6th class)**
- **Re-reading (Junior Infants – 6th class)**
- **Skimming & Scanning (1st – 6th class)**
- Reading on
- Adjusting Reading Rate
- Sounding out
- Using Analogy
- Consulting a Reference

Paired Reading

Shared Reading is co-ordinated by the class teachers (Junior and Senior infants and 5th & 6th class) fortnightly, where possible.

Picture Books

Picture books are used on a regular basis to consolidate themes taught throughout the year. There are a large number of picture books in the library to support teaching and learning in the junior classes.

Class Novels

There is a range of class novels available for teachers to use. These novels cover a range of genres and assist with differentiated learning. Where possible there are audio versions available to assist with teaching and learning. Class novels can also be block booked through the local Libraries. The class novel can be used as reading material in a number of ways:

- Individualised reading
- Group reading
- Whole class reading
- Teacher reading aloud: modelling and demonstrating

Library

Both classrooms have a class library. The class library has a wide range of books, which are available and suitable for all learning abilities.

Class teachers will be encouraged to visit local libraries with their class and will be encouraged to invite authors/mystery reader to the school. Visits to the library will be arranged, subject to transport.

Poetry – Poetry will be taught in the context of oral language, reading and writing.

- Through the use of poetry, we will expose the pupils to the experience of sounds of words, rhymes and rhythms, syllabication, wordplay and poetic licence.
- We will ensure that the pupils will develop an enjoyment for poetry through hearing and reciting poetry which will deal with topics of interest to the pupils
- Pupils will compose their own poems throughout the school year which will provide for the experience of this writing genre.
- Poetry will be integrated with other areas of the curriculum – Drama, SPHE, special occasions and Music.

In each class pupils will:

- learn poems and rhymes off by heart
- enjoy poetry
- discuss poetry

- respond to poetry - through discussions, drama, art, movement etc.
- self-expression through the medium of poetry - compose poems

Use of Dictionaries

Dictionaries are used from 1st/2nd Class up. Formal time is devoted to teaching the children how to use a dictionary correctly. Pupils also have access to online dictionaries and thesauruses using the Ipads.

WRITING

Broad objectives:

This plan aims to provide a structured and sequential programme for teachers to enable children to:

1. Write clearly and fluently with the correct letter formation.
2. Use a wide range of vocabulary.
3. Use grammar and punctuation appropriately.
4. Write in a wide variety of genres encompassing differing styles, purposes, audiences and level of formality.
5. Experience opportunities to develop presentation, editing and publishing skills with the aid of free writing copies.
6. Engage in collaborative writing experiences.
7. Develop a high standard of penmanship using print writing.

For the learner outcomes for writing for each stage please refer to the Primary Curriculum at the following link:

<https://www.curriculumonline.ie/primary/curriculum-areas/primary-language/>

	Junior and Senior Infants	1 st and 2 nd Class	3 rd and 4 th Class	5 th and 6 th Class
Programmes Used/ Interventions	Aistear Free Writing Copies Jolly Phonics Genre writing Plan Shared writing Mrs. Murphy's Handwriting, Station Teaching	Free Writing Copies Project Work and Presentations Genre writing plan Mrs. Murphy's Handwriting	Free Writing Copies Project Work and Presentations Genre writing plan ICT – laptops and Ipads Mrs. Murphy's Handwriting Activities from the Rainbow Reading Programme Guided Reading English in Practice Class Novels	Free Writing Copies Project Work and Presentations Genre writing plan ICT – laptops and Ipads Mrs. Murphy's Handwriting Activities from the Rainbow Reading Programme Guided Reading English in Practice Class Novels

Approach to Writing

At the earliest stages, writing is explored both from a technical and an expressive point of view. In addition to developing fine motor skills and correct letter formation, children are given the opportunity to explore the creative aspects of written expression. Initially, this is largely explorative and then structures of specific genres are introduced gradually.

As in the case of developing reading skills, writing increasingly becomes a primary vehicle for students to demonstrate their knowledge and learning across the curriculum. A special focus will be on developing students' awareness of various genres, both by reviewing examples and engaging in the creation of written compositions. The main resource for the classes is Starlight English Programme (Junior Infants to 2nd class), The Rainbow Reading Programme (3rd-6th), the genre writing plan. At each class level, writing tasks exploring multiple genres, will be completed using a writing process including brainstorming/planning, drafting, revising and editing, redrafting and publishing. In addition, freewriting will be an essential component of

writing practice, giving children an opportunity to explore expressive aspects of writing. Specific writing skills and conventions will form a core component of the English programme, applying these skills both in authentic writing tasks as well as structured exercises. Spelling and handwriting will continue to be developed, helping students see the link between these skills and the ability to communicate clearly.

Writing Genres

As part of the whole school plan, each class focuses on a particular genre each month. By the time a child has reached Fifth/Sixth Class, they will have experienced multiple different writing genres. The children will experience the different genres of writing through reading/being read to, teacher-modelled writing, shared writing, guided writing, all leading to independent writing.

The genres of writing: Narrative, Recount, Procedural, Report, Persuasive and Explanation

Plan to expose and teach the genres

E = Expose T = Teach

Writing Genres	Junior Infants	Senior Infants	1 st Class	2 nd Class	3 rd – 6 th Class
Recount	E	E T	E T	E T	E T
Procedure	E	E	E T	E T	E T
Narrative	E	E	E T	E T	E T

Report	E	E T	E T	E T	E T
Explanation	E	E	E	E	E T
Persuasive	E	E	E	E	E T

Timetable for Writing Genres Year 1 and Year 2

Month	Year 1	Year 2
	2024/2025	2025/2026
September & October	Recount	Recount
November & December	Procedure	Explanation
January	Revise: Recount and Report <i>POETRY</i>	Revise: Recount and Explanation <i>POETRY</i>
February/March/April	Narrative/Recount	Narrative

May	Report/Procedure	Persuasive (Exposition)
June	Revise: Narrative and Procedure <i>POETRY</i>	Revise: Narrative and Persuasive <i>POETRY</i>

Grammar & Mechanics of Writing

Junior Infants	Senior Infants	1st class	2nd class
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction to text format and orientation. ● Capital letters ● Ending punctuation ● left-to right orientation. ● Spacing: finger width between words. 		Capital letters, sentence structure, proper nouns, common nouns, alphabetical order, definite & indefinite articles (the, a or an), plurals, pronouns, verbs, conjugating verbs, past tense, future tense, present tense, adjectives, compound words, adverbs, plurals, antonyms, speech marks, questions, parsing	Alphabetical order, sentence writing, speech marks, questions, proper nouns, adjectives, plurals (s) and (es), possessive adjectives, homophone mix-ups, sentences and verbs, adverbs, verb 'to be' (present and past), regular and irregular past tense, using a dictionary, proofreading sentences, expanding a sentence, conjunctions, plurals (s) and (ies), word webs, proofreading a story, prefixes, contractions, finding the meaning, suffixes (-ing, -er and -est) , interesting words,
3rd class	4th class	5th class	6th class
ABC order, addressing envelopes, capital letters, full stops and	Capital letters, full stops, masculine & feminine,	Capital letters, commas, nouns, gender of noun, verbs, tenses, adverbs, pronouns,	Capital letters, punctuation, review nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, prepositions and conjunctions,

question marks, nouns, verbs, compound words, adjectives, verb tenses, plurals, antonyms and synonyms, sentences, syllables, homophones, adverbs, apostrophes, prefixes, suffixes, contractions, homonyms, conjunctions, prepositions, exclamation mark, apostrophe	question marks, common noun, singular & plural, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, commas, prepositions, apostrophes, The past tense – irregular words, contractions, common mistakes, conjunctions, ordinal numbers, quotation marks, adverbs.	adjectives, prepositions, conjunctions, apostrophe, quotations marks and plurals, compound words, similes, metaphors, contractions, idioms, abbreviations, indirect speech	grammar revision, pronouns, adverbs, naming parts of speech, apostrophe, direct/indirect speech, extending sentences, homophones, homonyms, homographs, synonyms and antonyms, personal pronouns, interrogative/demonstrative pronouns, abbreviations, compound words, suffixes
---	---	--	---

Free Writing

All children will use free writing activities throughout the school. They will regularly work on their free writing and this will provide a record of progression throughout the school year. Children are told beforehand that it will not be marked, corrected or criticised. Children may be given an opportunity to read what they have written to the teacher. The children can choose the topic although they may need some guidance in the beginning. There is no pressure on children to “produce” an amount of writing. Spelling is not the focus of the work as it is about the child getting his/her message down. The reluctant writer may use picture to convey a message.

Junior Infants	Senior Infants	1 st class	2 nd class
As part of imaginative play, provide whiteboards and markers. In September, they start pre-writing activities. Letter formation starts after Christmas, using formation	Writing during imaginative play. – 10-15 minute freewriting sessions beginning in the last term.	A minimum of 15 minutes per week in a separate copy.	At least 15 minutes once per week in a separate copy.

rhymes.			
3rd class	4th class	5th class	6th class
At least 30 minutes once per week in a separate copy, usually 2 sessions.		At least 30 minutes once per week in a separate copy, usually 2 sessions	

Handwriting

Good habits in handwriting are developed at an early stage e.g. posture, paper position, pencil grip. In Junior Infants children will write with thick pencils and crayons, senior infants to 2nd class use standard pencils, pen licenses are given to children in 3rd class. Children in 4th/5th/6th classes use pens. Children will be introduced to print writing in Junior Infants and print writing will be the style of writing used throughout the school. A print handwriting alphabet will be displayed in each classroom. Teachers will endeavour to display samples of the children's handwriting in their classrooms. Cursive writing will be introduced from 1st class using Mrs Murphy handwriting scheme. Children will be encouraged to obtain a pen licence in the last term of 3rd class onwards. Occasionally, incentives such as 'Writer of the Week' will be used throughout the school to encourage good writing practice.

Identifying handwriting challenges early: Significant faults will mainly be diagnosed by watching children write. Faulty pencil grip, reversals and incorrect letter formation should be identified as early as possible and interventions put in place to correct them.

Left-handed writers

All children need to feel comfortable and relaxed when writing. They should be encouraged to sit up straight with the body slightly inclined towards the table and the elbows just to the side of the body. The left-handed pupil may need to turn slightly to allow the left hand more freedom of movement. The paper should be placed to the left of the centre of the body and it is helpful to tilt the paper slightly to the right.

Spelling

In this school, phonological awareness is introduced in the first week of Junior Infants. From this point the children engage in a systematic phonic programme developing both phonemic and phonological awareness, building the blocks for spelling work from 1st class onwards.

While the school's structured phonics plan plays a core part in the development of children's spelling ability, phonics alone cannot be used to teach spelling and a multi-disciplinary approach is required to ensure children do not rely solely on phonics when spelling.

We are cognisant of varying abilities and the need for pupils to experience success therefore individual class teachers will discuss the need to vary spellings for children receiving support in consultation with the SET and parents.

- In Junior and Senior Infants, Jolly Phonics and Dolce List is used.
- The *Spell It* programme is used from 1st to 6th classes for the teaching of spelling strategies. The children complete the activities based on the unit in class or for homework depending on the teacher's preference/pupil's needs. We have spelling tests on Fridays. Dictation takes place in small groups organized by SET teacher depending on pupils' needs. This is informed by Brendan Culligan's *Spelling and Handwriting*

The convention of spelling will be achieved progressively through a multidimensional approach. This will include:

- Linking spelling with the development of phonological and phonemic awareness.
- Linking it with onset and rime.
- Building up a bank of heart words.
- Having rich experience of environmental print.
- Compiling word walls and personal word banks, e.g. personal names, local place names, seasonal words.
- Using dictionaries and thesauruses.
- Using strategies such as:
 1. Predict, look, say, cover, write, check
 2. Music
 3. ICT
 4. Mnemonics
 5. Rhythm and rhyme
 6. Creation of word searches
 7. Spelling buddies
 8. Breaking words into syllables
 9. Exaggeration of the word
 10. Learn and locate 'word strings'/chunks in words to spell successfully. Making and breaking words using magnetic letters.
 11. Be provided with prompts to hear the words in context.
 12. The ability to self-correct.

- Becoming familiar with common spelling rules
- Accepting approximate spelling in creative writing

Literacy Support for pupils with additional needs.

Children with learning difficulties and special educational needs are helped to achieve their potential and access the Primary Language Curriculum in the core skills of oral language, reading and writing. Differentiation is outlined in our Cuntas Míosúil to enable the teacher reflect how effectively and successfully they have differentiated for children with differing needs in this subject Area.

Assessment is ongoing and a school support plan/school support plus plan is drawn up and co-ordinated by the SET in conjunction with the parents, class teacher and Special Needs Assistant (SNA) where applicable. Specific short term targets are agreed. Regular consultation also takes place with external professionals e.g. NEPS psychologist, NCSE advisors, Speech & Language Therapist, Occupational Therapists etc. The class teacher maintains first line of responsibility for the welfare of the child. Suitable resources are provided to meet the learning needs of individual children. The SET may provide direct instruction to individuals or small groups of children regarding literacy development, sometimes withdrawing from the classroom or through station teaching in the classroom and other co-teaching models, whichever is deemed most appropriate to meet the needs of the child/children. SET's meet with class teachers to plan, teach, assess and review the learning of pupils on a regular basis. More information can be found in the Special Education Policy.

A multi-sensory approach to teaching is provided to scaffold our students with additional needs. These include visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, and tactile activities to enhance learning and memory.

While methods of organisation are subject to change, the underlying principle is always that the children experiencing the greatest difficulty will get the most support in an inclusive whole-school framework.

E.A.L. Provision

The Department of Education (DE) provides additional educational resources for pupils who are learning English as an additional language (EAL) in primary schools. The English language needs of each child in our school will be assessed and support will be provided when necessary. EAL teachers work in a withdrawal and in-class support capacity, dependent on the needs of individual students.

Assessment

Assessment is seen as an essential element of the teaching and learning process. The school has set up and will continue to use an effective system of monitoring, recording and reporting children's progress through formal and informal assessment tests and standardised attainment tests as appropriate.

We identify pupils who achieve at or below the 10th percentile on standardised tests in the Micra T English standardized test. The Drumcondra Spelling standardised test can be used when teachers are concerned about spelling ability. We also identify children with special educational needs based on the opinion and observation of the class teacher and with input from other professional e.g. Speech and Language Therapist, OT, Medical Consultant and Psychologist etc. Where the needs of those children are being met, the school has the flexibility to provide for children above the 10th percentile.

As a school, we engage in:

- Assessment of Learning
- Assessment for Learning

A variety of methods are used to assess English skills. Standardised testing is used as a measure of Assessment of Learning. It is also reported to the DES, the Board of Management and parents as required in Circular 0018/2012. The following tests are administered in term 3 of each year:

- ✓ Junior Infants – BIAP (Belfield Infant Assessment Profile) From September 2024
- ✓ Senior Infants – MIST (Middle Infants Screening Test)
- ✓ 1st Class – 6th Class – Micra T Reading test
- ✓ English Language Proficiency Benchmarks (A grid for assessing language proficiency) - (EAL students)
https://ncca.ie/media/2064/english_language_proficiency_benchmarks.pdf
- ✓ Primary School Assessment Kit (NCCA) <https://ncca.ie/media/2172/primary-school-assessment-kit.pdf> (EAL students)

We engage in the following tests, which informs our Assessment for Learning:

- ✓ Teacher Designed Tasks
- ✓ Teacher Observation
- ✓ Running Records
- ✓ Letter, Name and Sound Test
- ✓ NRIT
- ✓ The Dolch Sight Vocabulary list

✓ WIAT III (Irish Exemption purposes/ concerns over child's attainment)

These tests will be interpreted as needed by the class teacher and SET's. Parent's consultation will be sought at this stage to refer the child for further intervention where appropriate e.g. psychologist, speech and language therapist etc.

Assessment for Learning Strategies used in classrooms will include the following.

Self-assessment	Two stars and a wish	W.A.L.T/W.I.L.F
Peer assessment	Think, pair, share	Simple rubrics/checklists
Thumbs up/down	Questioning	KWL Charts
Writing Portfolios	Teacher observation	Peer and self-assessment through feedback on oral and written presentations
Reading Log	Teacher comments	Teacher designed tasks and tests Questioning - open ended

Conferencing

Teacher and parent

Teacher and pupil

Teacher and teacher

Teacher, parent and pupil

Questioning

- Cloze Test Questions

- Correcting responses
- Free-response questions
- Matching
- Multiple-choice questions
- Open questions
- Pupil questions
- Questioning
- True/false questions

Teacher Designed Tasks and Tests

- Group assignments
- Individual assignments
- Oral tests
- Teacher designed tasks and tests
- Written tests

Teacher Observation

Anecdotal Observation- personal observation on a casual basis

Work Samples

Target pupil observation

Self-Assessment

- Checklists
- Know, want to know, Learned (KWL)
- Ladders
- Rubrics
- Self-assessment
- Talk Partners/Buddies

- o Traffic Lights
- o Webs

Timetable and organisation planning

A significant emphasis is placed on the provision of discrete time for oral language in the Junior to Middle classes, with a greater focus on integrated oral language time in Middle to Senior classes. The process of language learning is naturally developed through integrated activities and through a thematic/cross-curricular approach.

Circular 0056/2011 suggests schools increase the time spent on literacy to 6.5 hours in infants and 8.5 hours to seniors with *priority to the first language of the school*. Time spent on English is 4 hours per week for Infant classes with a shorter day and 5 hours for Senior classes for students with a full day. This is approx. 48 minutes per day for infants and 60 minutes per day for other classes.

The whole school plan and the Primary Language Curriculum will seek to provide information and guidance to individual teachers for their long and short term planning.

Class teachers will be required to produce:

- Yearly/ Termly plans
- Fortnightly plans in conjunction with the New Primary Language Curriculum.

The Cuntas Míosúil will be used to measure the success of the English plan and will inform teachers' preparation for the following month.

Literacy and ICT

Acknowledging that ICT has its own unique literacy to be developed, ICT tools have the potential to help support the development of literacy across the curriculum. A variety of strategies are already being used in the school including the use of online programmes to develop phonemic awareness and basic reading skills as well as comprehension skills; the use of word-processing programmes for the drafting and redrafting of written work; whole-class revision of literacy skills using specific activities for IWBs; the creation of blogs, movies, audio recordings, podcasts and PowerPoint

presentations in various interdisciplinary projects; and the use of the internet for information gathering and research activities. Teachers regularly use the internet to source activities and lesson plans as well as research new texts and classroom resources.

- We have some ipads for use throughout the school. Pupils have access to these tablets to assist with literacy activities. Each tablet is equipped with numerous Literacy and Phonics Apps to assist with the teaching of Literacy in the school.
- use Microsoft Teams and Microsoft Apps to assist them in presenting oral reports, organise presentations, work collaboratively and foster better communication.
- E-Books are available for teachers to use to assist with differentiated learning through online programmes.
- Portfolios will be used from 3rd to 6th to monitor progress.
- T.T.R.S. (Touch, Type, Read, Spell) Programme

Homework

Discrete English homework is a regular feature in all classes, from learning letter sounds and sight words to reading for pleasure. The learning of English spellings is also a consistent component. Typically, one written piece of homework is assigned that often has an interdisciplinary component. Please refer to our school Homework Policy.

Parental Involvement

Parents are encouraged to support their child's development of literacy skills by:

- Written communications via the child's Homework diary
- Written communications e.g. the school Newsletter or website
- Attending parent/teacher meetings.
- Taking part in Whole School Literacy initiatives throughout the year.
- Enrolling their child in the local library and encouraging reading for pleasure. (Information on initiatives and opening hours in local libraries are made available to parents through the school app.)
- Supporting the work of the school by participating with their child in collaborative activities.
- Implementing suggested home-based activities in their child's classroom or school support plan and discussing the outcomes with the child's teachers.

- Book sharing/ reading stories.
- Storytelling e.g.as part of the bedtime routine.
- Paired reading (listening to and giving supportive feedback on oral reading)
- Having discussions about school and other activities to build vocabulary and thinking skills.
- Writing lists and short accounts about children’s experience.
- Using simple computer software and apps to support learning in English.
- Taking children on trips to the library, museum, zoo and other places of educational interest.

Community Links

- Children are encouraged to register with their local Library.
- Authors are invited to take part in writer’s workshops with senior classes.
- World Book Day is celebrated annually.
- Pupils participate in projects organized by Tidy Towns Committee

Continuing Professional Development

As an integral part of the Primary School Curriculum, English literacy will be addressed on a regular basis through staff meetings, other whole-staff professional development experiences and all curriculum planning exercises. Teachers are encouraged to seek out opportunities to improve their practice in literacy through their own personal continuing professional development, and all teachers are encouraged to consider connections between their annual personal professional development goals and literacy teaching/learning. Details of courses and training days relevant to the English programme will be emailed to staff. Finally,the school will avail of special professional development opportunities, as much as is practical, related to English literacy.

Equality of Participation/Access

We are committed to the provision of equal opportunities for all our pupils in the implementation of our English programme. Equal opportunities are provided to all pupils to participate in discussions, debates, reading and writing opportunities. We encourage gender awareness through promoting consideration of the roles associated with men and women in literature, the media and advertising as well as consideration of the language associated with such roles.

Success Criteria

The success of this school plan will be assessed based on the following criteria:

● Teacher/parent/pupil/community feedback ● Children’s feedback regarding their learning ● Suggestions and reports of DES Inspectorate ● Monthly records of teaching and learning

IMPLEMENTATION

Roles and Responsibilities:

ISM are responsible for:

- Lead the teaching and learning of Literacy throughout the school.
- Lead the school in a continuous process of self-evaluation in the area of Literacy.
- In consultation with other staff members, develop, promote and review school policy in relation to Literacy.
- Disseminate information about new ideas in the teaching and learning of Literacy.
- Encourage the implementation of Whole School strategies to improve areas of Literacy.

Class teachers are responsible for:

- The implementation of the English programme for their own classes.
- Differentiating the Primary Language Curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils within the class.

Timeframe:

This policy will be implemented following ratification from the Board of Management. It will be reviewed on a regular basis particularly in regards to developments and training within the New Primary Language Curriculum Framework.

Ratification and Communication

On ratification of this plan by the staff and Board of Management this plan will be communicated to all teachers through distribution and will become part of the School Plan. This policy was ratified on 14th May 2024.

Signed _____ Date _____
Principal

Signed _____ Date _____
Chairperson

Appendix 1

Suggested Themes/ Topics for Oral Language Development

Sept: Myself, My family, Autumn, The Enormous Turnip

Oct: Autumn. Halloween, Fire Safety, Animals that hibernate

Nov: Winter, Hibernation, Food, Polar Areas, Doctor/Hospital, Gingerbread Man

Dec: Toys/Games, Shopping, Christmas, Hansel and Gretel, Post Office

Jan: Weather, Space and Exploration, Goldilocks

Feb: Spring, St. Brigid, St. Valentine, Pets,

March: St. Patrick, Lent/Pancake Tuesday, Myths and Legends, Vets, Jack and the Beanstalk

April: Easter, Food, The Farm

May: Summer, Restaurant,

June: Summer, The Ocean, The Beach, Travel, Travel Agents, Transport, Jungle,

Picture Books -Suggested list to correlate with Oral Language Themes

Sept:

The Kissing Hand, I am Too Absolutely Small for School, Starting School, The Pigeon Has To Go To School, I Want My Mum, All Are Welcome, The Dot, Brown Bear, Brown Bear, After the Fall, We're Going on a Leaf Hunt, Johnny Magory in the Magical Wild, The Enormous Turnip

Oct:

The Scarecrow's Wedding, Room on The Broom, Leaf Man, Little Acorn, Stuck, The Book with No Pictures, The DaytThe Crayons Quit, The Day the Crayons Came Home, Where The Wild Things Are, The Gruffalo, Nothing Stopped Sophie, Zog, The Name Jar, Fairy Science, Ada Twist Scientist, Winnie The Witch, Spinderella, Cinderella, Farmer Duck, The Pig in the Pond, Red Leaf, Yellow Leaf, Apple Trouble

Nov:

A Bad Case of the Stripes, Zog and The Flying Doctors, The Hospital Dog, The Invisible String, The Gruffalo's Child, Owl Babies The Emperor's Egg, Lost and Found, Up and Down, Freddy and The Fairy, The Pigeon Finds a Hot Dog, Dirty Bertie, Going to the Doctor, If I were a Doctor, Rapunzel, Johnny Magory and the Game of Rounders, The Gingerbread Man

Dec:

Stickman, Not a Stick, Ruby's Worry, The Jolly Christmas Postman, The Wonky Donkey, The Snowy Day, Dear Zoo, Postman Bear, The Jolly Postman, Dear Santa, 'Twas the Night Before Christmas, Hansel and Gretel

Jan:

Chicka Chicka Boom Boom, Alien's Love Underpants, Good Night Moon, Little Snowflake, Noah's Ark, How To Catch a Star, Dinosaurs Love Underpants, Something Else, Rosie Revere Engineer, Going on a Bear Hunt, Weather and Climate, Goldilocks and the Three Bears

Feb:

Click, Clack,Moo, Cows that Type, Oi Dog!, What per should I get? Dr. Seuss

Jacob O'Reilly Wants a Pet, My Pet wants a Pet, Ruby's Worry, The President's Glasses, Guess How Much I Love You, The Smartest Giant in Town, Elmer, Little Red Riding Hood

March:

What The Ladybird Heard, The Bad Tempered Ladybird, Mad About Minibeasts, Superworm, Charlie Cook's Favourite Book, Detective Dog, Monkey Puzzle, The Lion Within, Giraffe's Can't Dance, Are You my Mother?, Rosie's Walk, Johnny Magory Joins the Irish Legends, The President's Glasses, Jack and The Beanstalk

April:

Little Chick, The Velveteen Rabbit, Farmer Duck, The Pig in the Pond, The Snail and The Whale, The Tree, The Koala Who Could, The Wide Mouthed Frog, A Squash and a Squeeze, Each Peach Pear Plum, Snow White, The Three Little Pigs

May:

Commotion in the Ocean, Rainbow Fish, Tiddler, The Water Princess, Little Raindrop, Watch Out For Muddy Puddles, Billy's Bucket, A Drop Around the World, Seaside Nature, Why Should I Save Water?, The Drop Goes Plop, Fortunately, The Little Red Hen

June:

The Train Ride, Johnny Magory, Five Minutes Peace, Rumble in the Jungle, The Ugly Five, The Highway Rat, Don't Let The Pigeon Drive The Bus, Oh The Places You'll Go, Handa's Surprise, Tom Thumb

Appendix 2

Aistear Theme Yearly Plan - Junior & Senior Infants

<u>Month</u>	<u>Theme</u>	<u>Thematic Picture Books (See Above)</u>
September	School/The Creche	The Pigeon has to Go to School Laama Laama Misses Mama The Kissing Hand, I am Too Absolutely Small for School, Starting School, The Pigeon Has To Go To School, I Want My Mum, All Are Welcome
October	Autumn/The Farm Shop Halloween	The Pig in the Pond Farmer Duck Red Leaf, Yellow Leaf Squirrel's Fall Search Apple Trouble
November	The Doctor	Doctor Duck The Hospital Dog Miss Polly Doctor Foster
December	Post Office/ Santa's Workshop	The Jolly Postman, The Jolly Christmas Postman The Gingerbread Man

	(I alternate between the Christmas Post Office and Santa's Workshop)	Stickman Postman Bear Postman Pat Series Owl's Winter Rescue Selection of Christmas Stories
January	Shopping/Special Occasions	Alien's Love Underpants, Good Night Moon, Little Snowflake, Noah's Ark, How To Catch a Star, Dinosaurs Love Underpants, Something Else, Rosie Revere Engineer, Going on a Bear Hunt, Weather and Climate, Goldilocks and the Three Bears
February	The Pet Shop	What per should I get? Dr. Seuss Jacob O'Reilly Wants a Pet Dear Zoo The Perfect Pet The Rainbow Fish Hairy Maclary's Rumpus at the Vet Peppa Pig – Peppa's first pet. How to look after your small pets
March	Post Office	Postman Bear Postman Pat Series The Jolly Postman
April	Food/The Farm	The Pig in the Pond, Farmer Duck, The Tiger who Came to Tea

		<p>The Lighthouse Keepers Lunch</p> <p>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</p>
May	<p>The Restaurant</p> <p>The Garden Centre</p>	<p>There's a Giraffe in my Soup</p> <p>Dragons love Tacos</p> <p>Green Eggs and Ham</p> <p>If you give a Mouse a Cookie, If you give a cat a Cookie</p> <p>I Will Never, Not Ever Eat a Tomato</p> <p>The Tiny Seed</p> <p>The Bad Seed</p> <p>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</p> <p>Lola Plants a Garden</p> <p>The Bad Tempered Ladybird</p> <p>Octopus Garden (Beatles Song)</p> <p>Planting a Rainbow</p>
June	<p>The Airport</p> <p>The Seaside</p>	<p>Oh the Places You'll Go</p> <p>Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus</p> <p>Commotion in the Ocean, Rainbow Fish, Tiddler, The Water Princess</p>

A selection of non-fiction informative texts too.

Appendix 3

Phonics Chart

<p>Junior Infants</p>	<p>Junior Infant children are systematically introduced to the 26 letters/sounds of the alphabet, from October onwards, using the Jolly Phonics programme (with 2 sounds a week).</p> <p>Children also learn the vowel digraphs: (ai, oa, ie, ee, or)</p>
<p>Senior Infants</p>	<p>Using Jolly Phonics: Senior Infant children revise the 26 letters/sounds of the alphabet, before learning the consonant digraphs (sh, ch, th, wh, ph), vowel digraphs (-ai-, -oa-, -ie-, ee, -or, -ue-,), consonant blends (bl, br, cl, cr, fl, tr, fr, dr, gl, gr, pl, pr, sl, sm, sc, sk, sn, sm, sl, sw, sp, st) and long vowel sounds. Extra digraphs covered: ou, oi, ow, aw, ay, er, ar, oo.</p> <p>Word Families: -all, -ash, -ump, -ink, -ank</p> <p>Twin Letters: ss, ll, zz, ff.</p>
<p>1st class</p>	<p>Revising work completed in junior and senior infants. Children will also cover the following digraphs: ay, igh, y, ew, ue, oo, ee, ea, oi, ar, or, oy, al, er, nk, ir, ur, er, au and magic e.</p> <p>Spell It! 1</p> <p>Starlight Reading Programme</p>
<p>2nd class</p>	<p>The Spell It! 2</p> <p>Homophones</p> <p>Plurals</p> <p>Hard c, soft c, hard g, soft g,</p> <p>Silent k,l,w</p> <p>Magic e.</p> <p>Starlight Reading Programme</p>

<p>3rd class</p>	<p>Spell It</p> <p>Rainbows Reading Progamme:</p> <p>Long a,e,i,o,u sound, st blend, thesaurus work - ch and sh words, silent letters, syllables, compound words, hard c and soft c, hard g and soft g, au and aw sounds, rhyming sounds, homonyms, suffixes - tion and - sion and ph sound.</p>
<p>4th class</p>	<p>Spell It</p> <p>Rainbow Reading Progamme</p> <p>Long a,e,i,o,u sound</p> <p>st blend</p> <p>thesaurus work</p> <p>ch and sh words</p> <p>silent letters, syllables, compound words, rhyming sounds, homonyms, homographs, homophones</p> <p>hard c and soft c, hard g and soft g</p> <p>au and aw sounds,</p> <p>suffixes – tion -sion –ic –ick –able –ous, -ee and –ful</p> <p>prefixes dis- un- sur- ei or ie</p> <p>digraphs gh, ph</p>
<p>5th class</p>	<p>Spell It</p> <p>Rainbow Reading Progamme:</p> <p>Suffixes, -ant, - ent, -tion, - able, - ible, - ous, - ious, - er, - ar, - or, -ic and- ick, - ough, - sion, - ery, - ory, - ary, - ture, - ence, - ance, - le, - el, - il, - al, - ful, - some, - ment, - ness, - ace, - ade, - ate, - age, -are.</p> <p>Prefixes: un-, dis-, ex-,</p> <p>Silent letters</p> <p>Sounds - ie or ei</p>

	<p>Homophones</p> <p>Root words</p> <p>Rhyming words</p>
6th class	<p>Spell It</p> <p>Rainbow Programme:</p> <p>Suffixes: -ies, -s, -cial, -tial, -able, -ible, -cy, -ist, -less, -ness, -ment, -th, -ht, -ful, -ward, -ture, -ous, -ious</p> <p>Prefixes: dis-, de-, ex-, en-, extra-, re-, pro-, en-, in-, inter-, un-, uni-, up-</p> <p>Silent letters, Root words, Rhyming words, Homophones</p> <p>Long e /u sound</p> <p>The /f/ sound spelled with 'ph'</p> <p>Consonant digraph ch, th</p> <p>Diphthongs /ou/ and /ow/</p> <p>Sounds - ie or ei</p>

Appendix 4

Class Novels for children in 1st class - 6th class

Suggested class novels for use throughout the school for whole-class reading, differentiated work and supporting children with additional needs.

1st & 2nd Class - Big Book/Barry's New Bed, Danny's Sick Trick, Fireman Sinead, Care of Henry, The Twits, Bill's New Frock,

3rd & 4th Class - Fantastic Mr. Fox - Roald Dahl, The Butterfly Lion - Michael Morpurgo, Brush A Tale of Two Foxes- Pierce Feiritear, There's a Boy in the Girls' Bathroom- Louis Sachar

5th & 6th Class – Private Peaceful - Michael Morpurgo, The Guns Of Easter - Gerard Whelan, Goodnight Mister Tom- Michelle Magorian, Under The Hawthorn Tree- Marita Conlon McKenna, Tom's Midnight Garden -Philippa Pearce

There are also multiple copies of alternative novels in the Library that can be used at the discretion of the teacher for group work and differentiated learning.

Appendix 5

All 220 Dolch words by grade in frequency order

Pre-Primer		Primer		First Grade		Second Grade		Third Grade	
the	one	he	now	of	take	would	write	if	full
to	my	was	no	his	every	very	always	long	done
and	me	that	came	had	old	your	made	about	light
a	big	she	ride	him	by	its	gave	got	pick
I	come	on	into	her	after	around	us	six	hurt
you	blue	they	good	some	think	don't	buy	never	cut
it	red	but	want	as	let	right	those	seven	kind
in	where	at	too	then	going	green	use	eight	fall
said	jump	with	pretty	could	walk	their	fast	today	carry
for	away	all	four	when	again	call	pull	myself	small
up	here	there	saw	were	may	sleep	both	much	own
look	help	out	well	them	stop	five	sit	keep	show
is	make	be	ran	ask	fly	wash	which	try	hot
go	yellow	have	brown	an	round	or	read	start	far
we	two	am	eat	over	give	before	why	ten	draw
little	play	do	who	just	once	been	found	bring	clean
down	run	did	new	from	open	off	because	drink	grow
can	find	what	must	any	has	cold	best	only	together
see	three	so	black	how	live	tell	upon	better	shall
not	funny	get	white	know	thank	work	these	hold	laugh
		like	soon	put		first	sing	warm	
		this	our			does	wish		
		will	ate			goes	many		
		yes	say						
		went	under						
		are	please						

List 1

the	i	was	for
to	you	said	on
and	it	his	they
he	of	that	but
a	in	she	had

List 2

at	look	out	we
him	is	as	am
with	her	be	then
up	there	have	little
all	some	go	down

do	what	get	my
can	so	them	would
could	see	like	me
when	not	one	will
did	were	this	yes

List 4

big	now	very	ride
went	long	an	into
are	no	over	just
come	came	your	blue
if	ask	its	red

Appendix 6

Approaches to the Teaching of Genre

Step 1 – Familiarisation

Familiarising is a collective term. It describes the ways in which teachers raise children's awareness and activate their prior knowledge. Also known as immersing or exposing. It involves students Reading, discussing, listening to or viewing samples of the new form

1. **Sample displays**
2. **Reading to and Reading with Students**
3. **Other Literacy activities:** - Jigsaw activities- Highlighting specific language features- Innovating on a text form

Sample Displays-Provide opportunities to read and view a variety of recount/report/persuasive texts, discuss and compare texts, build an awareness of the common features of recounts/reports/expositions by:

- Talking about the purpose
- Identifying the possible intended audience
- Drawing attention to the text organisation
- Highlighting the type of language used

Step 2 - Modelled Writing

Modelled Writing is a strategy for teaching a range of forms, conventions and procedures of writing. It involves the writer 'thinking aloud' as s/he writes for an audience.

Teachers Role

- Several demonstrations
- Clear focus - Prepare /content /focus /form
- Choices decisions /thinking /background knowledge
- Bringing subconscious thinking to the conscious

Children's Role

- Prepare them
- I'm going to let you hear what I'm thinking-pupil's voice

- Children advisory role only
- Active listeners
- Max 10 min (age +3mins)
- Set up ground rules
- Practice almost immediately in pairs / shared
- Recap / Reinforce
- Flexible seating arrangements
- Visual – overhead/ markers/flipchart/colour

Modelled writing involves “the teacher composing texts in front of the class, thinking aloud about what is being done and explaining decisions” (Evans 1991). Decisions such as what content to include/omit, what language to use and so on.

It is very important that at this stage, and in all the stages to follow, a **purpose** is created for generating the text.

Teacher explains to the children that they should listen only. It is useful to use a red marker as a signal to children that they do not have to contribute. To ensure optimum engagement by the children it should be short and sharp - probably no more than 5 minutes. Teacher can lead immediately into Shared by changing to a blue marker.

Step 3 – Shared Writing

Teacher has the pen. Teacher continues to ‘think aloud’, but consults the children for ideas.

Shared writing is an effective and non-threatening way to support children’s writing and involves the teacher and the children writing together. Children volunteer parts of the story and the teacher writes it down on a flip chart or white board, thus modelling the writing conventions.

Teacher reads and re-reads the text to highlight the importance of events impinging on one another – as aspect of writing that young children find hard to master. Changing the colour of marker on the flip-chart to a blue marker perhaps acts as a signal to the children that they can contribute to this part of the lesson.

Shared writing provides the teacher with an opportunity to encourage/introduce language features of the text such as language of conviction in persuasive writing and because children are focusing on the thinking–composing process without the additional task of transcribing, shared writing frees their imagination and helps them gain confidence in writing independently. Shared writing engages the children in talking, writing and reading within a particular genre, demonstrating that reading and writing are interdependent and support each other (Hornsby 2000)

Step 4 – Guided Writing

Children plan their writing in **pairs/groups** using their framework. In guided writing, the student does the actual writing, and the teacher facilitates guides, suggests, and encourages. This is a very worthwhile step before students are asked to write independently. Indeed all that is learned in shared writing is incorporated by students (with teacher guidance) in guided writing.

Although the holding of the pen or pencil has been switched from teacher to student, collaboration remains a part of the process as long as the student needs it. Yet, the ownership of the writing is always the student’s. The teacher’s role is to help young writers discover their own abilities by providing opportunities for

choice and peer response. During guided writing the teacher demonstrates and conducts mini lessons, where appropriate, that help the students learn to draft, revise, and edit their writing.

Children compose with a partner or in a small group so that there is peer support as they write using the framework demonstrated by the teacher. The teacher's role is to guide and encourage students by giving explicit feedback that refers to the structural or language features required in the text form.

Supporting Students at Guiding Stage

- Allow students to work with others to compose a text
- Provide planning formats
- Break the task into manageable parts
- Provide practice on specific elements relevant to the form
- Provide assistance at key points
- Create opportunities to practice different forms across the curriculum

Step 5 – Independent Writing

- Children plan and write their own procedural text.
- They may consult a partner or the group and/or the teacher at the planning stage.
- They write a first draft (framework) and proof read and check it with partner.
- Final draft is written for an audience.

As with all language learning, the role of guidance in writing is to lead the learner toward independence (Murray, 1989).

The ultimate goal is for students to use what they have learned in shared and guided writing and choose to write, taking the responsibility of the writing process, thus becoming an independent writer. The purpose of independent writing—like that of independent reading—is to build fluency; establish the writing habit; make personal connections; explore meanings; promote critical thinking; and use writing as a natural, pleasurable, self chosen activity (Routman, 1994).

As with most abilities, children reach the independent stage of writing at different times. In independent writing, the student takes responsibility for the writing without teacher intervention or evaluation. The student often initiates the writing, while the teacher provides the time or opportunity. Independent writing experiences may include journals, response logs, and reflections, as well as free-writing, which is uninterrupted writing of the student's choice.

Step 6 – Presentation to an Audience

- class/teacher/principal
- display
- family/friends
- publish on website
- Writing to firms/organisations
- ICT
- visitor

It is extremely important that children write for a real purpose at all stages and that they also write for a real audience. The Primary School Curriculum states that as children mature their audience should expand accordingly.

- Familiarisation – Children are exposed to examples of the genre being taught to allow the child to become familiar with the genre and its common features.
- Discovery – Children discover/ construct their own framework, i.e. children are given a text and must give a heading or label to each section.
- Modelled writing – Teacher models how to write in the genre.
- Shared writing – Teacher owns the pen but asks the children for suggestions.
- Guided writing – Children write in groups or pairs.
- Independent writing – Children plan and write their own work. Children will be prompted and steered into writing about their own experiences. Children can be introduced to blogs and create classroom blogs linking with IT.
- Presentation to audience/ Author's Chair/ Book review
- Writing to socialize will be done regularly throughout the year and for special occasions such as school events, festive holidays.