

# **St Columba's Primary School Straw**



**Joint Literacy and  
Numeracy Policy  
'Count, Read:  
Succeed'.**

# September 2015

## Part 1: Introduction

In St Columba's Primary School Straw we strive 'To ensure that every learner fulfils his or her potential at each stage of his or her development.' (DE 2010). This is in line with the vision of the Department of Education for N Ireland (DENI). This is also reflected in the overall aim of the N Ireland Curriculum (DE 2008), which states, 'The N Ireland Curriculum aims to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives.'

The School Improvement policy document, '*Every School a Good School*,' (DE 2009) has outlined characteristics of what will be recognised as effective performance. This is reiterated in the key messages of the departments 'Count, Read: Succeed' Document, which focuses on improving Literacy and Numeracy through the following strands:

- Child centred provision with Literacy and Numeracy at its core
- High quality teaching and learning which supports raising pupil attainment in Literacy and Numeracy
- Revised assessment arrangements that compliment the curriculum and attach priority to progression in Literacy and Numeracy
- Effective early intervention to address under achievement
- A school connected to its local community by engaging parents, families and communities
- Effectively sharing good practice

One other requirement is that the school has a written policy making clear that the development and promotion of Literacy and Numeracy are whole school priorities. It is in this context that this policy is set.

## **Part 2: Purpose**

This document will support the teachers in addressing the requirements of the revised curriculum in Literacy and Numeracy. It will also outline how we in St Columba's address underachievement and to ensure that all children develop their potential. There will be a consistency of practice from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 2.

## **Part 3: Practices**

(a) *All the staff have high expectations of all pupils -*

In St Columba's we have a progressive Numeracy scheme in place. The Literacy scheme is currently being reviewed and rewritten in line with the Revised Curriculum. Differentiated teaching is used in classrooms and in set home work tasks. Effective record keeping is in place and is passed from one teacher to the next. Standardized testing is used to assess, monitor and evaluate pupils' progress in both areas. Data is discussed at whole school level and alongside teacher professional judgement is used to inform planning and teaching. Targets are set for the next academic year and children are involved in personal target setting.

(b) *There is a culture of accountability for Literacy and Numeracy outcomes at senior management team level and throughout the school -*

Literacy and Numeracy action plans are in place. Action plans are reviewed annually and adjustments made if necessary to ensure targets are being met. All teachers are accountable for the progress of all children in their class. Board of Governors are informed of Literacy and Numeracy targets and are given end of year reviews.

- (c) The School Development Plan has baseline positions, clear outcomes, annual SMART targets for Literacy and Numeracy, linked to action plans setting out the strategies that will deliver the intended improvements*

Whole school meetings are held to evaluate previous School Development Plan targets and to set new Literacy and Numeracy targets. The School Development Plan is evaluated annually. Clear action plans for Literacy and Numeracy are devised and evaluated annually and shared with all teachers and Board of Governors. Action plan targets are linked to PRSD.

- (d) Every teacher has annually reviewed development objectives linked to the school development plan -*

PRSD objectives are linked to School Development Plan and are specific to Literacy and Numeracy.

- (e) Teachers undertake robust tracking and monitoring of pupil's work with particular focus on Literacy and Numeracy, using statutory and other assessment tools alongside their own professional judgement.*

Assessment tests are administered and analysed annually. Teachers input data onto assessment manager. This data is then collated by the Assessment Coordinator. Analysis of this data informs the teacher about low achievers, underachievers and high achievers using the traffic light

system. Non statutory progression is used in foundation stage to track progress in Literacy and Numeracy. These observations are recorded in the class observation books. Reflective evaluations of planners are written by all staff and these are used to inform the next teaching cycle. IEPs are drawn up by all teachers and reviewed regularly. The SENCO, Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators and the class teacher work collaboratively for the good of the child. Assessment folders including diagnostic, formative and summative assessment data is passed on to the next teacher at the end of the academic year to ensure a seamless transition.

*(f) In conjunction with the Literacy and Numeracy co-ordinators, there are opportunities for teachers to share and learn from good practice.*

There is a supportive ethos in St Columba's school. Teachers plan together and share resources and ideas. Dissemination of information as a follow on from attendance at a course is common practice in our school.

*(g) Arrangements, including for pastoral support and special educational needs, are in place to provide support as early as possible to pupils that need additional help.*

An information session is held for all P1 parents detailing the Literacy and Numeracy practices used in our school and also to inform parents about the support that they can give their child. The SENCO supports the teacher in drawing up IEPs and devising a programme of work for intervention as soon as children are identified. IEPs are detailed and reviewed with parents as appropriate. Links with all support agencies eg LTSS, ASD, MASTS, and Educational Psychology are made when necessary.

*(h) The school develops effective links with the families and community it serves.*

Parent/ teacher meetings are held once annually to discuss progress. IEPs are discussed, reviewed and signed, and further meetings are held if necessary. Information sessions are organised for parents e.g. Speech and language, behaviour management. School events are promoted in local press and through local bulletins. The school has a website in place and the school calendar of events can be accessed here. Children take part in planned workshops related to Literacy and Numeracy e.g. Mathamagic workshop.

*(i) In St Columba's PS, there is a systematic programme of high quality phonics in place.*

A phonological awareness programmes is in place for all P1 children. The Jolly Phonic/Grammar programme is used from P1 -P7. Effective assessments are used to track progress in phonic development. Children are encouraged to apply their phonic knowledge in reading and in independent writing.

*(j) Features of Quality Teaching and Learning:*

In St Columba's, the Northern Ireland Curriculum Primary document is used to guide the teaching and learning of Literacy and Numeracy. This includes using:

- Assessment for Learning strategies
- Thinking Skills
- Active Learning

Assessment for Learning Strategies

This involves sharing learning intentions with children and including them in the writing of success criteria. Effective questioning, peer and self-assessment, plenaries and reflections are all key strategies used to gauge understanding.

#### Thinking Skills

Thinking Skills are highlighted in planners and permeate all curriculum areas.

#### Active Learning

A range of organisational approaches, including group work, individual work, collaborative work and whole class teaching are used to ensure that all needs and learning styles are properly addressed. Differentiated tasks and materials are planned and are evident in half-termly planners. The pace of work is planned so that all children will learn effectively and achieve success. High achievers are given challenging work to help them reach their full potential.

The key strategies of modelled, shared and guided teaching are used to develop Language and Literacy. The use of practical materials, language development, symbolic representation and application all help develop mathematical concepts.

Literacy and Numeracy tasks are included in Play Based and Activity based learning in Foundation and Key Stage 1 to promote active learning.

#### (k) *Addressing underachievement as soon as it emerges*

Through teacher professional judgement and use of Summative assessment data, underachievement is quickly identified and addressed within St Columba's. When underachievement is identified, diagnostic assessments are used to pinpoint a child's difficulties. An intervention programme is put in place to address these needs. This intervention will take the form of small group work and one-to-one support if necessary.

(l) *Addressing continued underachievement*

Teachers are supported by the Literacy, Numeracy Coordinators and SENCO to plan appropriately for children who continue to have barriers to their learning. This is addressed at whole school staff meetings. We ensure that all pupils follow an educational pathway which is appropriate to them and help is sought from outside agencies e.g. MASTs , if required, in line with the Code of Practice.

**Part 4: Monitoring of the policy**

The Literacy and Numeracy policy will be reviewed bi-annually (September 2017) and updated in consultation with all staff members. The Literacy and Numeracy Co-ordinators will evaluate action plans on an annual basis.

Signed (Principal):

..... Date:  
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Signed (Chairperson):

..... Date:  
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Review date: September 2017



