

English Policy 2024
Darley N.S.

Introduction Statement and Rationale.
Darley N.S. is a five mainstream teacher school with two special classes. The majority of pupils attending the school are from the rural hinterlands of Cootehill. English has a unique position and function in the curriculum and in Darley N.S., because it is the first language of the majority of children in our school and is linked inextricably with all areas of the curriculum. The child meets ideas and concepts through listening and reading and expresses understanding and recounts experiences, through speaking and writing.

The better the child's ability with language, the more effectively the child will learn. The English program in our school, is linked with our school's ethos and values. It is designed to nurture the child in all dimensions of his/her life - spiritual, moral, cognitive, emotional, imaginative, aesthetic, social and physical development.

It endeavours to equip children with the knowledge and skills that will serve them not only in their lives as children, but later as adults; it is concerned to develop their capacity for creative expression and response; and it promotes their emotional and physical development.

Vision and Aims

The Primary Language Curriculum sets out an image of children as communicators, readers, writers, and thinkers, and a vision and understanding of primary classrooms as places where children are enabled to progress at their own pace in environments and relationships which are supportive, engaging and inclusive. In keeping with this vision set out in the new Primary Language Curriculum, our intention at Darley National School is to develop our student's abilities in relation to the areas of communication, reading, writing and thinking. In seeking to do this we will strive to deliver teaching which enables our students to progress at their own pace in environments and through relationships that are supportive, engaging and inclusive. (Primary Language Curriculum p. 12)

(b) **Aims**
This plan has been drawn up in accordance with the Primary Language Curriculum with the intention of setting out our approach to language learning in Darley National School. We endorse the aims of the New Primary Language Curriculum, which are presented in three groups: focusing on children and their lives, children's communications and connections with others and children's language learning and development.

The more specific aims outlined within these groups, which we will strive to fulfil at Darley National School are as follows:

Children and their lives
Through engagement with the Primary Language Curriculum we at Darley National School aim to:

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

Children's communications and connections with others
Through engagement with the Primary Language Curriculum we at Darley National School aim to:

- Embrace children's uniqueness by nurturing their appreciation of their home language, their understanding of language and diversity, and their ability to use different languages, gestures and tools to communicate with people in a variety of contexts and situations.
- 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.
- Enable children to fully engage with and enjoy a wide range of relevant and meaningful linguistic and communicative experiences with peers and adults.

Children's language learning and development
Through engagement with the Primary Language Curriculum we at Darley National School aim to:

- 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.
- 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.
- Enable children to use language imaginatively and creatively and to appreciate its aesthetic aspects.
- Encourage children to engage personally with and think critically about a broad range of spoken, gesticulated, written and multimodal texts.
- Support children to develop their literacy skills and enable them to progress at their own learning pace in oral language, reading and writing.
- Nurture within children an awareness of language, allowing them to appreciate and understand the content and structure of languages.
- *(Primary Language Curriculum, p.12/13)*

Oral Language

Element = Communicating		
1. Engagement, Listening & Attention	2. Motivation and Choice	3. Social Conventions and awareness of others
Element = Understanding		
4. Sentence Structure & Grammar	5. Vocabulary	6. Demonstration of Understanding
Element = Exploring & Using		
7. Requests, Questions & Interactions	8. Categorisation	9. Retelling & Elaboration
10. Playful and Creative Use of language	11. Information Giving, Explanation & Justification	12. Description, Prediction & Reflection.

The following are the broad objectives for the three strands of oral Language, reading and writing and the methodologies being used to meet these objectives.

Oral Language Objectives
The aim of this plan is to provide a structured, sequential programme for teachers which will enable children to:

- Gain pleasure and fulfilment from language activities e.g. Aistear themed language
- 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.
- Develop fluency, explicitness and confidence in communication.
- Develop listening skills, language conventions, vocabulary, aesthetic response and language manipulation abilities.

Oral Language Methodologies -Approach to Oral Language:
The schools agreed approach to Oral Language will draw on three areas of content:

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.
Bearing in mind the context of the school, most children tend to be confident with the use of language. The extension of their language capabilities is a priority and the provision of challenges is of paramount importance. However new entrants who come

from different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds often require additional assistance. SET withdrawal maybe required to assist the child in meeting set targets.

Integrating Oral language through the Reading and Writing Process
The following oral language activities and skills will be developed through the teaching of reading and writing - comprehension strategies, language experience approach, brainstorming at the pre-writing stage, peer-conferencing and conferencing with teacher, use of novel, writing process, etc.

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, describing procedures and steps in mathematics and SESE and across the strands of the SPHE curriculum. Planning oral language across the three strands ensures that these three areas of content are adequately addressed.

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

- Teacher designed oral work sheets
- Talk and discussion
- Play and games
- Story planning & writing
- Listening to stories
- Improvisational Drama
- Poetry and Rhyme

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, presentations & the Aistear Programme. While no commercial oral language programme is used in the school, teachers have devised their own oral work scheme.

Reading

Element = Communicating			
1. Engagement		2. Motivation and Choice	
Element = Understanding			
3. Conventions of Print & Sentence Structure	4 Phonological & Phonemic Awareness	5. Phonics, Word Recognition & Word Study	6. Vocabulary
Element = Exploring & Using			
7. Purpose, Genre & Voice	8. Response & Author's Intent	9. Comprehension	10. Fluency & Self-Correction

Reading Objectives

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

A) Develop reading fluency through print awareness, phonemic awareness, word identification strategies, and sight vocabulary.

B) Develop their comprehension and analytical strategies

C) Expand their understanding and usage of grammar, syntax and punctuation.

D) Develop their appreciation of the richness and diversity of reading material.

E) Experience the pleasure and fulfilment to be gained from reading.

Reading – Methodologies

Approach to Reading:

In our approach to reading, we consider the following:

- The children's general language development
- The central role of phonological and phonemic awareness
- The planning of a book related event such as a book fair.
- The involvement of parents in children's reading
- Visit from an author (Library or visit to school)
- Visits to the library.

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.

Print-Rich Environment

We are very conscious of the importance of a print-rich environment throughout all classes and a variety of examples of a print-rich environment are evident in our school including big books in a range of genres, picture books, independent reading books, poems, songs and rhymes, labels and directions, name charts, written work produced by the children, jobs chart, timetables, word charts, notice board, charts of days, months, seasons and festivals, calendars, theme charts, environment print in the neighbourhood, etc.

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, environmental print, labelling, flash cards, notice boards, maths language Display and art display labels. Sight vocabulary will be developed through selecting common words, core words, and words from the reader, high interest words, Dolch list, Jolly Phonics tricky words and social sight vocabulary.

Junior Infants Read aloud / story time
Picture books, big books etc. are used so that children are given many opportunities to hear reading, talk about reading, appreciate the usefulness of reading, to help them understand the conventions of text and the terminology of books (letter, word, sentence, page number, reading from left to right etc.)

Throughout Junior Infants, there will be a focus on developing pre-reading skills such as developing left-right orientation and developing visual discrimination skills. In the teaching of reading, a synthetic phonics approach, namely, 'The Jolly Phonics programme' is used in conjunction with the 'Look & Say' approach. The latter method is used when teaching irregular/tricky words.

Jolly readers are introduced in term 2/3 in Junior Infants. Ancillary library books / supplementary readers (which reflect individual ability) are read in school and at home from senior infants onwards. Children progress at their own pace with this reading material. Each child will have their own book of rhymes & jingles to help teach onset & rime and phonemic awareness.

Throughout the year children will be encouraged to read

- Environmental print in the classroom
- Pieces of writing about their experiences e.g. news
- Vocabulary introduced through oral language topics which will be displayed on flashcards.
- Personally made books
- Vocabulary introduced through the Jolly Phonics programme

Children who are able to read on arrival to Junior Infants in Darley N.S. will be encouraged to continue reading at their level and suitable reading material will be made available for them in the classroom.

Ancillary Readers:

Jolly Phonics readers; Ginn 360; Oxford Reading Tree, PM Readers

1st/2nd classes:

Jolly Phonics readers are used in conjunction with ancillary/supplementary readers & novels. Jolly readers are used for Oral Language, Comprehension, Word attack strategies, Grammar/Phonics, writing activities and reinforcement of key words, using an integrated reading approach and the modelling of good reading. Genres include fiction & non fiction.

3rd – 6th classes:

The Read at Home scheme in conjunction with class novels are used in classes 3rd to 6th. Reading skills, word attack skills and dictionary skills will be taught using the class reader

Reading Fluency
Fluency is the ability to read aloud with expression to demonstrate an understanding of the author's message. The three components of reading fluency are:

Accurate word recognition: In order to improve reading fluency pupils should be reading at their instructional reading level i.e. 90% - 95% accuracy).

Automaticity: This is the ability to read words without conscious decoding. Here your reading allows you to read words fluently so that you can concentrate on comprehending text.

Rhythm and intonation: concerns the ability to read with some sort of inflection. This is helped through exposure to modelled fluent reading patterns; provision of opportunities to practise the fluent reading behaviours; opportunities to focus on and practice reading with expression.

Organisation of reading in the classroom.
Teachers use a variety of organisational settings when teaching reading including whole class reading (using readers graded throughout the school); DEAR; group reading; independent reading; individualized reading; teacher reading aloud; silent reading etc. Round Robin Reading where individual children are asked to read unprepared text one after the other in front of the whole class group is not used in Darley N.S. for a number of reasons namely:

- Readers give their worst performance
- Provides listeners with several examples of poor reading. Children may provide poor models for each other in this model.

- Good readers are reduced to the speed of the slowest reader. The amount of material covered is also artificially restricted.
- Poor readers publicly demonstrate their inability
- Children dread doing it and are bored listening to it
- No planning is involved. Designated readers deal with limited portions of text.

The class reader, using an integrated reading approach.
The Jolly Phonics Readers are used from junior to second class and the Read at Home Scheme is used from 3rd– 6th classes. The class reader is gauged towards the average child. In 3rd – 6th classes the skills of reading are taught in an integrated fashion using picture cues, word attack skills, phonics, dictionary work, comprehension, information retrieval skills, automaticity, rhythm and intonation etc. and using a variety of strategies from those listed above. Teachers cater for the different needs in the classroom by asking questions gauged at different levels of ability.

Class novels (Curriculum Statement 39, 51, Teacher Guidelines 66 – 68)
The novel is used from 2nd class up to give children the experience of using real books. Competent readers are introduced to novels in 1st class, when appropriate. Novels can be read independently or used in a group or class setting. Carefully selected class novels help to encourage children to read and draw the child's attention to descriptive text, development of characters, plot etc. It is expected that class teachers have read and are very familiar with novels before using them for class discussion. Real books are also used from Junior Infants.

Outside the set novels listed teachers use their own discretion in using novels in the classroom to develop skills in English.

Name of Novel	Class level
The Owl who was Afraid of the Dark **Fantastic Mr Fox**	2nd
The Terrible Thing That Happened to Barnaby Brocket	3rd/4th
Stanley	3rd/ 4th
Goodnight Mr. Tom **Wonder**	5th/6th
The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas **War Horse** **Under the Hawthorn Tree**	5th/ 6th

Supplementary/ancillary/parallel readers are used to give children the opportunity to read at their level. At an early age children become aware of their different abilities. In Darley NS teachers make every effort to instil confidence in children, and help them to identify and use their talents. It is very important that children with difficulties in reading are affirmed, encouraged and supported in taking the next step. Every child needs to taste success regularly in some area of school life. Parents have a very important role in encouraging their children to read. Time the children spend reading together with parents should be a pleasurable experience where the parent and child use an age appropriate book set at the child's level of ability. Parents are given advice in November at parent/teacher meetings as to how they can best support their children with reading (paired reading) and how they can reinforce what is done in the classroom.

Reading programmes used in special classes
Edmark
Ginn 360
Comprehension Box
PM Readers

Library
Each class room has a rich supply of age appropriate reading material. This, coupled with visits to the local library, provides and encourages pupils to read a varied range of genres and texts. Financial support from our Parents' Association and Book Fair proceeds has been the primary source of funding for these materials.

Phonological and phonemic awareness
Children's ability to apply the alphabetical principle in the process of word recognition is greatly enhanced by effective systematic instruction in phonological awareness training, phonic knowledge and engaging in meaningful emergent writing and reading activities in the infant classrooms (2013, Gleeson, Supporting Children's Literacy Development in Primary School). Phonological Awareness is an umbrella term which includes phonemic awareness (focused on sounds of letters and letter blends), an awareness of words within a sentence, syllabification (focused on breaking words into syllables) and onset and rime (focused on rhyme). The Jolly Phonics programme is used in the school infants- 2nd classes.

Junior & Senior Infants phonics:

1. s, a, t, i, p, n
2. c k, e, h, r, m, d
3. g, o, u, l, f, b
4. ai, j, oa, ie, ee, or
5. z, w, ng, v, oo, oo
6. y, x, ch, sh, th, th
7. qu, ou, oi, ue, er, ar

Senior Infants

Short vowels

ff/ll/ss/zz/ck

Initial constant blends: sp, st, sc, sk, sn, sm, sl, sw, bl, br, fl,fr

First & Second classes- Phonics

In 1st & 2nd all of the above will be reinforced as well as extending the children's phonemic knowledge. Children in 1st & 2nd learn the following:

Recognise sh / ch / th / ng / qu / ar /

short vowels / ff // ll / ss / zz / ck /

y at end / vowels / a_e / i_e / o_e /

u_e / wh / ay / ea / igh / y / ow / ew /

ou / ow / oi / oy / or / al / nk / er / ir /

ur / au / aw / & their sounds & know when to apply them when spelling a word.

Long vowels & blends.

Special Classes Grammar

Specific phonological awareness programmes- Sounds Make Words

Jolly Grammar

Word identification strategies

Daily, children are encouraged to look at the shape of the word, look for small words, breaking the word into syllables etc. Children are also encouraged to use syllabification and contextual clues.

Junior Infants	Senior Infants	First Class	Second Class
Predicting	Predicting	Predicting	Predicting
Connecting	Connecting	Connecting	Connecting
Creating Images	Creating Images	Creating Images	Creating Images
Self Questioning	Self Questioning	Self Questioning	Self Questioning

Third Class	Fourth Class	Fifth Class	Sixth Class
Predicting	Predicting	Predicting	Predicting
Connecting	Connecting	Connecting	Connecting
Creating Images	Creating Images	Creating Images	Creating Images
Self Questioning	Self Questioning	Self Questioning	Self Questioning
Skimming	Skimming	Skimming	Skimming
Scanning	Scanning	Scanning	Scanning
Determine Importance	Determine Importance	Determine Importance	Determine Importance
Comparing	Comparing	Comparing	Comparing
	Summarising and Paraphrasing	Summarising and Paraphrasing	Summarising and Paraphrasing
	Inferring	Inferring	Inferring
		Synthesising	Synthesising
			Monitoring Comprehension

Comprehension Strategies (School Self Evaluation)
During the school's SSE process, comprehension was agreed to be the focus element during the years 2015-2018. The strategies taught in the following classes were:

Building Bridges of Understanding by Martin Gleeson, is now embedded practice in the school since the SSE focus in 2015-2018.

Gradual Release of Responsibility

Comprehension strategies will be taught using the *Gradual Release of Responsibility* model as follows:

First, the teacher explicitly describes the comprehension strategy about to be taught and states why good readers use this strategy when reading.

The teacher explicitly models the strategy by demonstrating and thinking aloud while the children observe the strategy in action.

Following this, the teacher continues to model the strategy and invites the children to contribute their ideas.

Next, the children engage in collaborative use of the strategy through guided practice where the teacher gradually releases responsibility for the strategy to the children through scaffolding instruction and facilitation.

Finally, the children engage in independent use of the strategy in subsequent lessons.

In a whole class situation during an oral language lesson teachers cater for all abilities through clever use of well thought out questions. Teachers use a variety of organisational settings when striving to develop the pupils' comprehension skills: sometimes children working individually, in pairs, in groups or with the whole class. Comprehension skills are developed through oral and written work with an emphasis on discussion. Workbooks and class readers are used selectively and judiciously by teachers as a tool to develop the pupils' comprehension skills. Comprehension skills are developed across the curriculum in all subject areas.

Parental involvement
Teachers recognise that the parent's support is crucial and parents support teachers primarily by showing an interest in their child's learning: listening/talking with their children, talking about pictures in books, listening to their children reading, asking them questions on what they have read, checking spellings, encouraging them to become members of the local library etc. Parents are asked to sign their children's homework diaries. Some class teachers may ask parents to sign reading logs. If parents are concerned about their child's progress they should discuss this with the class teacher at the earliest opportunity.

Role of the SEN team of teachers:
See school policy on SEN.

Book related events
Book Fair: A Book Fair is held every one/ two years for one week. It is run by a book company. At the end of the week a percentage of money spent during the fair is given

to the school to choose books for the school. The company voucher is divided equally between all teachers to select books for their classes.

Book week: Activities are held to highlight this week every year.The children visit the local library on occasions to hear books read and to choose appropriate reading material and to partake in visits by visiting authors and poets.

Writing

Element = Communicating			
1. Engagement, Listening & Attention		2. Motivation and Choice	
Element = Understanding			
3. Conventions of Print & Sentence Structure	4. Spelling and Word Study	5. Vocabulary	
Element = Exploring & Using			
6. Purpose, Genre & Voice	7. Writing Process & Creating Text	8. Response & Author's Intent	9. Handwriting & Presentation

Writing Objectives

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

- Write clearly, correctly and fluently.
- Use a wide range of vocabulary.
- Use grammar and punctuation appropriately.
- Write in a variety of genres encompassing differing styles, purposes, audiences and levels of formality.
- Experience opportunities to develop presentation, editing and publishing skills.
- Engage in collaborative writing experiences.
- Edit and redraft writing. Edit self-correct and peer correct work.
- Develop a high standard of penmanship.

Writing - Methodologies

The Process of Writing

The school's approach to writing concentrates on the writing process in order to develop the child's expressive and communicative abilities. Through the process of writing, children will explore a selection of independently-chosen topics, through a

variety of genres for different audiences within a whole school that values children's writing.

Fostering the Process of Writing
The school will provide opportunities for children to write for real purposes and real audiences, recognising that drafting, editing and redrafting are at the heart of the writing process. Free writing will be used to enable the children to become independent writers.

Genres of Writing
The purpose of the writing and the audience for whom it is written will determine the genre. We teach genres appropriate to each class level from senior infants onwards. In Darley National School we place emphasis upon the following genres:

- Recount Writing – e.g. school trip
- Report Writing – e.g. factual life cycle of a butterfly or book review
- Explanatory Writing – e.g. how a volcano is formed
- Procedural Writing – e.g. rules, directions and recipes
- Persuasive Writing – e.g. debate
- Narrative writing – e.g. writing a book or story
- Letter Writing
- Writing to Socialise

In teaching the genres of writing, the children will encounter the genres through reading/being read to, teacher modelled writing, shared writing, guided writing, leading to independent writing. Great emphasis is placed on linking the oral tasks and written tasks.

Effective Oral Feedback
In order to provide pupils with constructive, effective oral feedback to enhance pupils' oral and written work, a whole school approach and project was undertaken by the principal and deputy principal. The results proved positive and this process in now embedded practice in the school.

Reasons for selecting this area of development:

1. The evidence provided by Prof. John West Burnham that effective feedback may provide pupils with a +9 month educational gain, in one year.
2. Whole staff discussion on the area of providing feedback and the ineffectiveness of comments written in class work copies/ homework diaries/reading record cards or provided at parent teacher meetings.
3. To have a common school approach when providing feedback.

Methodology

- Keep feedback as specific as possible- what exactly was done well and what may still be needed.
- Use the feedback sandwich method- compliment, correct, compliment.
- Feedback is most effective when given as early as possible.
- Address the leader's advancement towards a goal. Information should help them progress towards a final goal.
- Present feedback carefully, being sensitive toward the individual needs of each pupil.
- Involve the learners in the process. In mastering a skill, pupils need to know what strategies they are doing correctly and what methodologies they require to develop the skill further.

Poetry

In order to develop the child emotionally and imaginatively, we will encourage children to write a variety of poetry. Children will be given the opportunity to work as a whole class, in groups and pairs as well as individually when writing poetry and the writing of different types of poems will be modelled e.g. Limericks, acrostics, Cinquain, riddle poems, rhyming poems, pyramid poems. However this list is to be added to during the year by each class teacher in order to cater for children's needs and interests.

Handwriting: Pre cursive writing is taught from Junior Infants to second class. Cursive script is encouraged from 3rd class upwards. Children are taught from the beginning of Junior Infants how to hold a pencil, crayon properly, using the 'tripod grip'. Triangular pencils are encouraged for use. Grips on the pencil, maybe used to indicate where children should place their fingers and thumb when gripping a pencil. Children are also taught how to form their letters properly. A consistent approach is used throughout the school.

Spelling

In the Darley School the teaching of spelling is an important aspect of the children's written work. We understand that mastering spelling is a developmental process and when children attempt to master the complexities of English spelling they go through a number of overlapping developmental stages:

- Using sound-letter relationships
- Using pattern
- Using meaning

We also believe that spelling must never be a barrier to children's writing. While we do not want to dampen a child's enthusiasm to write, we will endeavour to promote accurate spelling. To this end we are very conscious of the value of invented/approximate spelling as it allows children to self-correct their attempts as they move through the different

stages. "However direct instruction can be of benefit to those who fail to spell accurately, particularly children who find it difficult to develop literacy. Direct instruction in spelling should be undertaken in the context of reading and writing and should be guided by information derived from the children's approximate spelling." (TG. P85, 1999 English Primary Curriculum)

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 spelling with onset and rhyme
- Building up a bank of commonly used words
- Having a rich experience of environmental print
- Compiling word walls and personal word banks e.g. personal names, local place names, seasonal words etc.
- Using dictionaries and thesauruses
- Becoming familiar with common spelling rules
- Accepting approximate spelling in creative writing.

Using strategies such as:

1. Look, say, cover, write, check
2. Mnemonics
3. Rhythm and rhyme
4. Creation of word searches
5. Memory hooks
6. Spelling buddies
7. Breaking words into syllables
8. Exaggeration of the word

Use of Dictionaries

Dictionaries will be used from First Class (Jolly Phonics Dictionaries). Formal time will be devoted to teaching the children how to use a dictionary correctly. For this purpose, a child friendly dictionary will be selected and provided by the school. From 3rd to 6th class copies of a more sophisticated dictionary/thesaurus are used.

Assessment of Spelling

Teachers in the school use a variety of approaches.

- Teachers teach spelling and give spelling tests daily. Spelling is monitored and children with difficulties identified.
- Spelling tests will occur each Friday with students in 1st – 6th class. These tests will be based upon the spelling programmes currently being used in our school, namely Jolly Phonics spelling & Fallon's Spelling Programme. The SNIP programme is used in the special class setting.
- Differentiation is taken into account and the number and difficultly of spellings maybe altered to suit children's individual ability.

- Schonell/Drumcondra spelling test.

Formal Grammar

1st & 2nd classes: *Jolly Grammar*

3rd & 4th classes: Master Your Grammar (Fallon)

5th & 6th classes Starlight- Combined Reading & Skills

Special classes- Jolly Grammar & Sounds Make Words

SI	1st Class	2nd Class	3rd Class
Full stops Capital letters	Capital letters Sentences Common nouns Proper Nouns Questions Initial blends Verbs Alphabetical Order Doubling rule 'a' or 'an' Adjectives Plurals Final blends Compound words Antonyms Speech marks Contractions Exclamation marks	Alphabetical order Speech marks Question marks Commas in lists Exclamation marks Proper nouns Adjectives Plural 's' or 'es' Homophones Adverbs Verb 'to be' in a simple tense Regular and irregular past tense Conjunctions Plurals 's' or 'ies' Prepositions Contractions Suffix - 'ing' ending Suffixes – 'er' – 'est'	Capital letters, Full stops, Alphabetical Order Common Nouns Proper nouns 'a' or 'an' Verbs Syllables Singular and plural nouns Personal pronouns Adjectives Compound words Adverbs Apostrophe showing possession (singular) Quotation marks

4th Class	5th Class	6th Class
Capital letters, Full stops, Alphabetical Order Common Nouns Proper nouns Adjectives 'a' or 'an' Masculine and feminine nouns Verbs past tense Prepositions	Titles Abbreviations Spelling rules Apostrophes Direct speech Prefixes Nouns Suffixes Pronouns Similes Adjectives Metaphors	Nouns Adjectives Conjunctions Verbs Silent letters Adverbs Synonyms Opposites Adjectives Prepositions Homophones Dictionary skills

Apostrophe showing possession Contractions Compound words Homophones Homonyms Commas Direct speech and indirect speech Synonyms Antonyms Syllables Singular and plural nouns Personal pronouns Adjectives Compound words Adverbs	Verbs Adverbs Paragraphs Tenses Nouns-masc & fem Capital letters Commas Full stops	Punctuation Anagrams

Curricular Planning

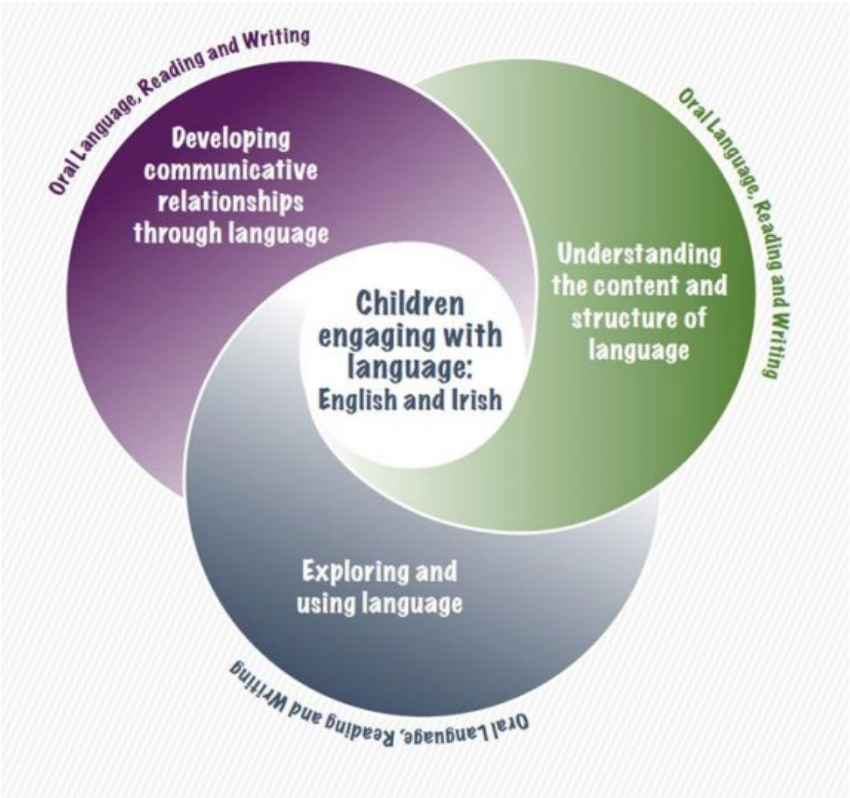
Language

The two fundamental principles of the English language curriculum are:
Children learn language and learn through language (Curriculum p. 3)

Language learning is an integrated process in which it is difficult to separate the functions of oral language, reading and writing. For example a lesson in oral language may have related activities in reading and writing and may also address a number of strands e.g. competence and confidence in using language and developing cognitive abilities through language (Curriculum p.2)
The three strands of Oral language, Reading and Writing, as outlined in English: Additional Support Material (2005), remain unchanged as do all of the content objectives. The content objectives for each strand are represented under two categories: development and skills.

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



Elements	Oral language	Reading	Writing
Communicating	Engagement, listening and attention (intentionality, verbal memory) Social conventions and awareness of others (relevance, turn-taking, extra and paralinguistic skills)	Engagement (intentionality) Motivation and choice (relevance)	Engagement (intentionality) Motivation and choice (relevance, purpose, audience)
Understanding	Sentence structure and grammar (syntax, morphology) Acquisition and use of oral vocabulary (semantics, verbal memory, articulation skills) Demonstration of understanding (semantics)	Conventions of print (meaning and interpretation of text/illustration) Phonological and phonemic awareness Phonics and word recognition (alphabetic principle, word identification strategies) Reading vocabulary (semantics)	Conventions of print and sentence structure (syntax) Spelling Vocabulary (semantics)
Exploring & Using	Requests and questions Categorisation Retelling and elaborating (narrative text and response) Playful and creative use of language (aesthetic dimension of language) Information giving, explanation and justification (expository text) Description, prediction and reflection	Purpose, genre and voice (awareness of author's purpose) Comprehension (comprehension, text organisational structure and fix-up strategies Fluency and self-correction (accuracy, fluency and meaning)	Purpose, genre and voice (sense of voice, aesthetic dimension of text) Writing process (using processes, structures and language register) Response and author's intent author's purpose and responding) Handwriting (legibility)

Planning, Teaching and Assessing for Learning

The Primary Language Curriculum helps teachers to support children's language learning and development through the process of planning, teaching and assessing for learning in English.

Four parts (components) of the Primary Language Curriculum work together to support teachers' planning, teaching and assessment for language learning: Learning Outcomes, Progression Continua. Examples of children's learning and development and Support

Material for teachers. Together, the Learning Outcomes and the Progression Continua provide important reference points for teachers to plan for, and make judgements about, children's language learning. Record assessment sheets are used by the teacher during oral language lessons to note & record set criteria set at the start of a lesson by the class teacher.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment is integral to the teaching and learning process. We consider all the different assessment tools we use very valuable:

- Teacher observation
- Teacher designed tasks and tests
- Peer & personal assessment
- Free Writing
- Work samples, reports and portfolios
- Diagnostic Tests e.g. Early Literacy, Neale Analysis of Reading, Schonell Reading Test, Drumcondra Spelling test, YARC, NNRIT & NDCS for grammar.
- Standardised Tests

Junior Infants – Belfield Test (used for individual children only)
Teacher designed Jolly Phonics assessment.

Senior Infants – MIST (Middle Infant Screening Test) administered in Term 5.
Two Peas Phonological Awareness assessment.

1st - 6th Classes - Micra – Reading Test is administered in May.

The Schonell Spelling Test is administered by the class teacher and/or SEN teacher from 1st – 6th in November & May of each academic year.

Each of these has a contribution to make in helping to monitor individual children's rates of progress and levels of attainment as they engage with the language curriculum and by using the information provided in them, we can build up a profile of each child as they progress through the school. An analysis of the results of the Micra is conducted each year. Results of this test are also given in the summer reports. Scores are discussed and explained to parents at the formal Parent/Teacher Meetings in November.

Assessment *of* Learning as evidenced in test results will inform Assessment *for* Learning, thus ensuring that areas of weakness are given priority. Results are analysed on an individual, class and whole school basis. They are also discussed at staff and Board of Management meetings. Results of all standardised tests are kept on file by the Principal and the S.E.T. Coordinator.

Children with Different Needs

- All mainstream teachers are aware of the need to differentiate within their classes.
- Teachers work in collaboration with the S.E.T. team to ensure the needs of each child is met.
- For those children who have a psychological/educational assessment report every effort is made, where feasible, to ensure the class teacher works to recommendations given.
- Where a child is allocated access to an S.N.A., great attention is given to ensure integration into the classroom/school environment both socially and academically. Pupils from our special classes will be pre and post taught language required to participate in the integrated lesson.
- A collaborative approach is taken in drawing up of School Support Plans.
- E.A.L. students are supported by the S.E.T., using visual cues and online resources where appropriate.
- Parental participation in school life.
- Stimulation for Exceptionally Able Pupils to provide for extended and new learning opportunities. Such pupils are supported by S.E.T. team

Equality of Participation and Access

All pupils are given the opportunity to:

- Participate in class discussion, presentations, projects and activities relating to competitions.
- Participate in all reading activities, have access to the library and avail of all books in the school which are deemed age appropriate and non-sexist.
- Avail of, and use all resources in the school related to literacy, including ICT.
- Participate in all writing activities.
- Have access to services, facilities and amenities in the school environment.
- We encourage gender awareness through promoting consideration of the roles associated with men and women in literature, the media, advertising, elections etc. as well as consideration of the language associated with such roles.

Organisational Planning

Timetable

- Curriculum allocation hours to language
- In the infant classes, 5.5 hours per week are allocated to language. Discrete oral language permeates the entire school day.
- In 1st-6th classes, 7.5 hours per week are allocated to language. Particular attention is paid to specific language related to each individual subject.

- The process of language development is also supported through integrated activities, cross curricular approach and thematic topic work.

Resources and ICT

- Each classroom is equipped with an interactive whiteboard
- Teachers also have access to, iPads, chromebooks, DVDs and resources books. Audio books, from Cootehill Library, are sourced for children with reading difficulties.
- S.E.T. resources are located in a central location in the school.
- We are aware of the value of ICT in the teaching and learning of English by contributing to the print-rich environment, in supporting the development of word identification, spelling and other reading skills through online games/resources. We are very aware of the value of content-free software e.g. Microsoft Word/Google Slides/Google Docs, in enhancing the process writing approach advocated in the curriculum and children in our school are encouraged to publish their work using ICT in order to enhance the standard of presentation of their work, giving them added pride in the final product.

Individual Teachers Planning and Reporting

- Each teacher follows the guidelines of the whole school English Plan.
- Weekly or Fortnightly/Termly/Yearly plans are prepared by each teacher.
- A cúntas míosúil is submitted to the Principal where it is kept on file.
- In planning teachers have developed individual planning templates, suitable for their individual needs, all of which outline the strands, elements & learning outcomes of the PLC

Staff Development

- Teachers are encouraged to attend courses available online and in Monaghan Education Centre.
- Teachers are encouraged to share their expertise gained at such courses. A strong collaborative ethos exists among the staff.

Parental Involvement - Home School Links

The school recognises that parents are the primary educators and that they play a crucial role in the language development of their children. This plan and the Curriculum documents are available for parents to inform them of the programme for English and the new PLC.

- Children are encouraged to discuss the content of their homework.
- Parents are made aware of the central importance of oral language in the learning process.
- Parents are made aware of the importance of involving children in purposeful language activity. Parents could assist their child's oral language development by

discussing the school day with their child, taking an interest in what they are learning and talking with their child on a nightly basis.

- Parents can support their child's reading e.g. paired reading, shared reading, storytelling, reading environmental print, ICT Programmes, homework – hearing reading and talking about reading, involvement with the school library, local library, book fairs, World Book Day etc.
- The school can support parents in accessing suitable reading materials by giving them information about the local library and suitable authors/books etc..
- Information will be shared with parents through the introduction to Junior Infants information evening, general meetings, discussion at parent teacher meetings, the school's newsletter and school website.

Community Links

- The following members of the community can become involved in supporting the schools language programme: eg. Nurse, Doctor, Garda Síochana, Fireman, Local Coaches, vet as well local musicians, writers etc. (where possible).
- Link with library, weekly class visits, throughout the year.
- Visits from drama companies and story tellers who put on performances for the children in the school.

Success Criteria

The success of this Whole School English Plan is one which needs to be evaluated over a period of several years. Among the items which will be considered when seeking to identify if objectives have been met are the following:

- Evidence of teacher preparation having been based on this plan.
- Evidence that the procedures in this plan have been consistently followed.
- Evidence that all children have achieved a degree of progression along the milestones during the year.
- Results from the MIST, Spelling Tests and Micra Reading Tests will be considered valuable means in giving an overall view of progress but we must bear in mind that they are only a partial representation of progress.
- The observation skills of the class teachers and S.E.T. teacher are a major indicator of success, particularly in the area of oral language – which in itself is difficult to evaluate as each child may be developing at his/her own rate.
- Feedback from parents & second level schools.

Implementation & Review

Roles and Responsibilities
An informal review will take place at planning meetings/staff meetings by class teachers at different levels.

Ratification and Communication

On ratification of this plan by Board of Management this plan will be communicated to all teachers through distribution and will become part of the School Plan

Ratification Date	1st Review Due	2nd Review Due	3rd Review Due
November 2023	June 2026	June 2028	June 2030
	Completed:	Completed:	Completed:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____