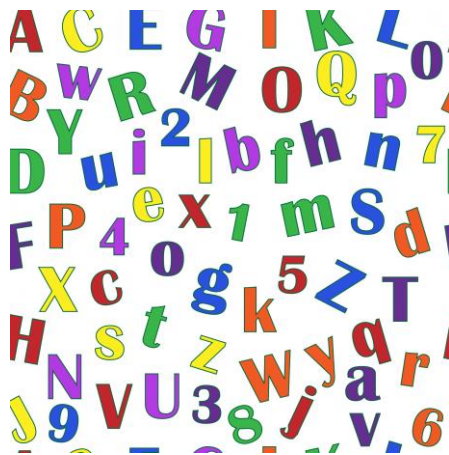


Literacy & Numeracy Policy



**St Patrick's Primary School,
Glenariff**

Chairperson of the Board of Governors: _____ Date: _____

Principal: _____ Date: _____

INTRODUCTION

It is the central purpose of our school, supported by parents, to ensure that our pupils develop the necessary Literacy and Numeracy skills to succeed at school and later, in life and at work.

This policy for Literacy and Numeracy contains agreed statements by the staff of St Patrick's Primary School about the principles, practices, provision and monitoring of these two areas of study throughout the school.

AIMS OF OUR LITERACY AND NUMERACY POLICY

To set out our school's principles and practices for the promotion and development of Literacy and Numeracy, both across the curriculum and within the Areas of Learning.

To clarify the responsibilities for all stakeholders in ensuring the support and development of Literacy and Numeracy skills.

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

CONTEXT

The stated vision of the Department of Education for N. Ireland (DENI) is "To ensure that every learner fulfils his or her potential at each stage of his or her development." (DE 2010)

This has been enunciated 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."

In March 2011 DE published "Count, Read, Succeed - A Strategy to Improve Outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy." It states; "Literacy and Numeracy are at the very heart of the revised curriculum" (para 2.3)

"Developing Literacy and Numeracy therefore must be central elements of a school's delivery of the revised curriculum, and of the support and professional development for teachers implementing the curriculum" (para 2.5)

DEFINITION OF LITERACY AND NUMERACY

Count, Read, Succeed

Para 1.7 defines Literacy as...

“The ability to read and use written information and to write appropriately and legibly, taking account of different purposes, contexts, conventions and audiences. It involves the development of:

- a. an integrated approach to the acquisition of talking, listening, reading and writing skills across the curriculum;
- b. knowledge that allows a speaker, writer and reader to use appropriate to social situations;
- c. formal and informal language across all areas of social interaction; and
- d. the ability to read, understand and use information in multiple formats and platforms, including traditional print and on-screen material.”

Para 1.10 defines Numeracy as...

“The ability to apply appropriate mathematical skills and knowledge in familiar and unfamiliar contexts and in a range of settings throughout life, including the workplace. It involves the development of:

- a. an understanding of key mathematical concepts and their inter-connectedness;
- b. appropriate reasoning and problem-solving;
- c. the proficient and appropriate use of methods and procedures (formal and informal, mental and written); and
- d. active participation in the exploration of mathematical ideas and models.”

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVENESS

The School Improvement policy document, “Every School A Good School,” (DE 2009) has outlined characteristics of what we at St Patrick’s Primary School will recognise as effective performance. They are set out under four headings:

1. Child centred provision
2. High quality teaching and learning
3. Effective leadership
4. A school connected to its community

1. CHILD CENTRED PROVISION

At St Patrick’s our school motto, **“We are all valued. We always do our best”** is displayed on a wall in every classroom and clearly demonstrates that we encourage and expect our children to achieve to the best of their ability.

We believe that it is important to celebrate success at our school to develop children’s self-esteem and confidence in their abilities. This is carried out using a variety of methods: positive comments in line with our marking policy and connected to learning outcomes; showing work to others in their own class, to staff or children in

other classes and the principal; stickers; dojo points; on the school website; through the Seesaw app: applause at assembly for special certificates or achievements gained both in and out of school; displaying their work in the classroom and also in shared areas where their parents or other children can appreciate it.

We at St Patrick's Primary School, work together as a staff, to draw up a School Development Plan, which identifies, facilitates and supports improvement in Numeracy and Literacy within the school.

Each year, we decide on a focus we would like to develop in both areas of learning. A range of activities and resources are used to promote development in these target areas to meet the requirements of all the children in our care. In each area the curriculum coordinators lead the staff in their Staff Development Days for the focus of the year ahead. This includes detailing what is required for the chosen area, what they would like to be achieved and a variety of resources and ideas are also provided as guidelines or a starting point. Staff meetings are designated to evaluate the progress made in chosen areas and the effectiveness of interventions.

All teachers are trained in the delivery of the Sounds~Write programme which is delivered from Primary One to Primary Seven. The school took part in the SEN CPD Literacy project in September 2013 – March 2015. As a result of this training, we have explored the areas of handwriting and spelling and are more aware of the needs of children with dyslexia. We are now better equipped to develop a programme to support children displaying dyslexic tendencies.

In the area of Mathematics, we have developed Key Stage resource booklets to support the teaching of data handling, financial capability and money skills.

The children are encouraged to evaluate their own and others' work. They look for strong points in pieces of work and consider ways it could be improved. Parents are advised to assist/check over their children's homework and ensure that it is well presented. In the early years the parents are actively encouraged to comment on their child's Literacy and Numeracy homework to ensure there are consistent strategies being used both at home and at school. This also helps to address any issues which may arise as soon as possible. Our homework guidance includes ways in which parents can support their child through the use of practical activities, songs, games or Internet resources.

Children who have difficulty in Literacy and Numeracy are given added assistance by the class teacher and classroom assistants. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator provides guidance, where needed, in suggesting suitable resources or activities to use with SEN children. Two classroom assistants are trained in The Reading Together Programme and they are deployed to help individual children having difficulties in Literacy in Key Stage 1. They also use their skills to support guided and group reading in both the Primary One and Two classes.

Every year the RISE team offer a range of training courses for staff which focus on many of the key skills development for children in the early years. Both the classroom assistants and teaching staff have completed many of these courses and apply their knowledge and skills to the classroom. In addition to this, members of the RISE team visit our school to work one to one with individual children in many areas

including speech and language, motor skills, behavioural support and delayed progress in specific curriculum areas. They offer suggestions to the teachers and parents about how we can work together to help children to overcome developmental difficulties which in turn can affect the rate a child progresses in Literacy and Numeracy. If a child continues to have difficulty picking up concepts in Literacy and Numeracy, further assessment is sought from the Educational Psychologist. This can lead to help from outside agencies e.g. Literacy Support Service (LTSS).

We also believe that it is equally important to meet the individual needs of any high achieving children in the school. They are given opportunities to tackle more open-ended tasks and problem-solving activities to further stretch their understanding in Literacy and Numeracy. As a school we have recently focused on how we can Stretch and challenge our children so they are able to achieve their full potential. The ETI have also observed and responded positively to a number of these focused lessons.

We analyse the end of year data from the Progress Test in English and Maths, as well as the CAT Assessments to highlight those children who are high and low and under achieving in specific areas to ensure we meet their needs in the following year. We also set targets based on these levels, highlighting any children who may not be reaching their full potential.

The setting up of our school council in 2011 has given the children more involvement in school matters. The experience of devising manifestos, reading them aloud to classmates and taking part in a voting process has made the understanding of elections real to the children in P3 - P7. The children are aware that they can offer ideas to members of the council to be addressed at meetings.

The Mathematics programme gives children the opportunity to consolidate their knowledge and understanding of a variety of mathematical concepts. It also provides individual support, targeting any area of maths which may need reinforced. It also provides an excellent resource to be used for home learning to support our class teaching.

Every week the school children and teachers gather together for assembly. Each class in the school presents a school assembly every term which involves speaking to a larger audience and encourages the children to speak clearly and audibly.

Assembly is also a time in the school week when we celebrate achievements made by the children in their many interests outside school. Often the children bring in awards such as certificates or medals for their success in karate, swimming, drama, Irish dancing etc. The children are often asked to explain what they got the award for and are praised for their willingness to practise hard in these activities and encouraged to keep it up. These achievements are also added to our monthly newsletter and on our school website so that the wider school community can appreciate the talents and achievements of the children from St. Patrick's.

2. HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

We strive to provide high quality teaching and learning experiences in Literacy and Numeracy that meet the needs of all our pupils. In so doing we recognise the importance of creating a happy, stimulating school environment where the children are motivated to learn. This involves staff taking responsibility for careful planning, using good practice, incorporating a range of teaching strategies, sourcing suitable material and monitoring and evaluating their teaching of Literacy and Numeracy. We also place great importance on staff training to keep up-to-date with recent developments in both Literacy and Numeracy. This may take the form of training in school or provided by outside agencies including RISE, CPD, EA, STEM, STEAM and colleges of further education e.g. Stranmillis and St. Mary's College, Belfast.

The staff draw up long term, monthly and weekly plans ensuring that learning intentions and the relevant tasks in both Literacy and Numeracy are met. These plans include differentiation to stretch and challenge all of our pupils and to support those children who require it. There is also a strong emphasis placed on the use of practical mathematics to provide the children with a concrete basis to develop their skills from. In Literacy we ensure that the key areas of Talking and Listening, Reading, Writing and Communication across the Curriculum is planned for and assessed. In Mathematics we ensure the key areas matched to each key stage are planned for and assessed. In the Foundation Stage we plan for Number, Measures, Shape and Space, Sorting and Patterns and Relationships. In Key Stage One and Two we plan for Processes in Mathematics, Number, Measure, Shape and Space, Handling Data. We also plan for and assess Using Mathematics across the curriculum.

The children are made aware of the weekly learning intentions in Literacy and Numeracy using the Assessment for Learning methods. Each week we evaluate our lessons and make the necessary changes/plans for the following week.

The nature of our school means that the staff meet each other daily and opportunities are available to talk, both formally and informally. Advice and ideas are shared regularly among staff about how best to promote Literacy and Numeracy understanding in the school. When we attend courses in these areas of learning, we inform the other teachers about suggestions or resources which could be used in the school.

Whole-class teaching, co-operative group work, individual work and differentiated individual work (for SEN pupils or high achievers) are used in the teaching of Literacy and Numeracy. Modelled, shared, guided and independent reading and writing opportunities are used throughout the school. The use of big books and eBooks on the Interactive Whiteboard are particularly effective in the teaching of Literacy in the Foundation and Key Stage 1 classes. There is a very good range of reading material in the school for guided reading which includes both fiction and nonfiction texts. The books are Reading Recovery levelled and this makes it easier to pinpoint the progress the children are making. These books are stored in a room allocated primarily for Literacy and Special Needs resources. Sets of novels are used in Key Stage 2 and new books are added as recommended. We have also purchased sets of books to encourage reading in boys, for example the

Boys Rule series. In the past we noticed that boys sometimes needed more encouragement to pick up a book to read for enjoyment. We feel this range of books has brought more interest to the 7-9 year age group.

Our Shared Education partnership with two local schools has enabled the introduction of Accelerated Reading to Primary 3 to 7 pupils. This has proven to be successful in motivating our children to be independent readers and recognising the pleasure/knowledge that reading can bring. A library has been organised so that children are able to access books linked to their reading ability - ZPD levels. The STAR reading assessment, which runs alongside the Accelerated Reading programme, is carried out four times a year to ensure that our children are reading books suited to their ability. The STAR assessment tool also provides useful reports and data to help inform class teachers of pupil progress and highlight those children who may need additional literacy intervention. Information about the AR programme is found in the parent area of the school website. (See Appendix 2). Parents are made aware of children's AR progress in parent meetings and pupil achievement is celebrated with rewards and photos placed on the school website.

We have looked at ways to introduce stretch and challenge into literacy lessons. CPD training highlighted how digital images and short video stories can be used to stimulate interest and encourage good literacy response. As a result of this training, we have created a bank of picture resources and noted useful websites for staff to access. We also use mind maps to help children to organise their thoughts and take time to include more open - ended activities in lessons to develop discussion, which in turn leads to more thoughtful pieces of writing. Success criteria checklists used in creative writing have also helped children to stay focused, ensure they are following correct procedures and ultimately improving the structure and content of their writing. Resources linked to stretch and challenge in literacy have been placed in the staff folder.

Practical materials and resources for teaching Numeracy are used regularly in activity-based learning, play and also to support all other aspects of teaching and learning in Mathematics. At St Patrick's we place great importance on the use of practical apparatus to support our Mathematics teaching. We understand that children need to experience new concepts using a wide variety of materials before advancing to pictorial and abstract activities. We also actively encourage the children themselves to demonstrate concepts like sorting, ordering and size. Stretch and challenge resources have been purchased to develop the skills of using and applying maths e.g. Collins Busy Ant Maths. The layout of these publications has fostered lots of investigation and discussion among pupils and a greater understanding about how maths works in everyday life. In addition, techniques introduced as a result of CPD training have been built into lessons to give a better understanding of the areas of maths. e.g. bar modelling has helped with fractions and percentages in KS2. A range of stretch and challenge resources for mathematics have been carefully collated by the maths coordinator and stored in the staff folder.

Digital technology is used throughout the school to support many aspects of Numeracy. Mathletics has been sourced for all children in the school and it is proving to be a helpful tool to support Maths in school and home learning. In the Foundation Stage we use a range of C2k apps to support the teaching of Literacy and Mathematics. These include the Just2Easy software to support the teaching of directions; Tizzy's Toybox and All about Number to develop mathematical language

and problem solving. We also use the programmable robots e.g. Bee Bot and EARLs to support movement work, alongside the BeeBot app on our iPads. The Seesaw app is widely used in the Foundation stage to support both Literacy and Numeracy. The children record their own videos and voices, complete set tasks at home to revise skills covered in school or to complete topic work.

In Key Stage One we use programmes such as Scratch Junior, MS Paint, Compose World Junior, PowerPoint, Word, Just 2 Easy and News Desk Junior. In Key Stage Two we use programmes like Scratch, ClipArt, Just 2 Easy, PowerPoint, Word and News Desk. Throughout the school, wide use is made of the Internet to provide individual support to children who need to be challenged further or to consolidate a concept already covered.

We have found that digital technology has been very beneficial in helping with aspects of grammar, phonics and spelling throughout the school. Sites that have proven useful in this area include Topmarks, BBC Bitesize, cBeebies, Coxhoe, Woodlands Junior and various educational websites.

We are aware of the use of data, both qualitative and quantitative to inform teaching and learning in Literacy and Numeracy. This information is relayed to parents at the November meetings and used to inform the teacher's future planning. As a result, parents and teachers are better equipped to work together to help support children on certain aspects of Literacy and Numeracy which are proving difficult.

BURT Word Recognition and Single Word Spelling tests (Dyslexia Portfolio) are administered to P3 - P7 in February to help teachers monitor progress in Literacy half way through the school year. P1 and P2 use the Duncan Words Test (Reading Recovery Resource) and The Sounds~Write Alphabetic Code Knowledge Test. The online CAT, which measures cognitive ability, is carried out in February with P4 and P6 pupils only. Progress in Mathematics and English tests are administered in May/June. At this stage Primary One and Two use the selection of Phonemic Skills tests from the Sounds~Write programme. This data forms the basis of our benchmarking and target setting at the start of the new school year. This guides the teachers to plan for their incoming class and see what steps they may have to take to meet the needs of all children. (see appendix)

In the Early Years we use the RISE assessment tool to determine when a child is ready for writing. This also helps us to target specific problems with pencil grasp, spatial/shape awareness and concepts. In Mathematics, informal and formal observations help us to record the children's development in all the key learning areas of Maths.

3. EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

St Patrick's Primary School is relatively small so naturally all the staff meet to help draw up a School Development Plan with clear and realistic targets to improve Literacy and Numeracy throughout the school. The Principal leads these meetings and the views and opinions of all the staff is valued in making decisions about the setting of annual targets. The Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators create action

plans and then take responsibility for assisting the staff in these areas so that suitable work can be carried out in the classroom. Coordinators arrange meetings to inform staff about activities they could carry out with specific children. A resource booklet (with sample activities/ideas), list of suitable books or website information is often provided. The development of these areas is further monitored when the staff meet to review these specific Literacy or Numeracy lessons and show samples of the children's work. The staff realise the importance of sharing and learning from each other during this feedback.

The School Development Plan is discussed with the Board of Governors and they are kept informed of arrangements that have been made to develop Literacy and Numeracy in the school. They review the End of Key Stage Assessment statistics in the school and are interested to see the level of achievement in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy.

The Principal provides the Literacy and Numeracy Coordinators with necessary assessment data on all children in the school. Data associated with standardised tests are studied. Meetings in August are held to view and analyse results of these tests so that the staff are fully aware of the progress of all the children from year to year (those who are underachieving and those who are performing well).

The Principal ensures that staff are aware of opportunities for Continued Professional Development and to further enhance the teaching and learning of the children in the school. The Principal ensures time is allocated during the school week for Coordinators to develop their duties in Literacy and Numeracy.

School finances are monitored by the Principal, and together with the staff and Board of Governors, best use is made of the money to help the learning of the children. This may be in the form of human resources to help develop Literacy/Numeracy with children who have additional needs or to assist those teachers with composite classes in teaching these subject areas.

4. A SCHOOL CONNECTED TO ITS COMMUNITY

A monthly newsletter is distributed to all the families in the school to keep parents/guardians informed of important events. Updates are sent regularly to parents of children in the Foundation Stage through the Seesaw app to ensure they are fully aware of the learning intentions of their children in both Literacy and Numeracy. This means they can help their children at home to revisit or develop work set in class.

The Reading Together Programme available in school requires parental permission and home involvement. Parents are made aware of their children's progress in Literacy and Numeracy during parent teacher meetings in the first term. Often they request further meetings at different times in the school year to monitor progress.

The Book Fair visits the school in the Spring term and this provides an opportunity for parents to come in and see/buy the books suitable for their child.

The whole school takes part in the annual Maths Week activities involving competitions, fun games and practical investigations.

Parents are invited into school Masses and together, with the whole school community, take part in readings, singing and prayer.

Glenariff Hurling Club has close links with the school and they often send newsletters for the children. The children enjoy reading the information and discussing upcoming events with their peers.

The Feis na nGleann competition is special to the whole community of Glenariff and each year the children enter competitions which can include handwriting or story writing. Many of the art and craft ideas have an Irish legend angle so the children enjoy listening to or reading these stories in preparation for their art work.

Local people have visited the school to share their expertise with the children - farmers, builders, firemen, sailors, fishermen and people skilled in making St Brigid's crosses. The children enjoy the experience of learning from and listening to the visitors. The PSNI have visited the school and the Primary 7 children attend RADAR and StreetWise with other schools. Also, through collaboration with St Killian's College the children have had the opportunity to participate in many scientific investigations.

Continued contact with external agencies such as members of RISE, the Educational Psychology Service, LTSS and Special Education Needs advisors can provide invaluable support to the teaching staff in meeting the needs of our pupils in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF POLICY

The Literacy and Numeracy policy will be:

- Reviewed every two years and updated in consultation with staff/parents;
- Presented to and ratified by the Board of Governors upon each review;
- Available for parents.

Appendix 1

Summary of Abbreviations/Acronyms used in the policy:

AR: Accelerated Reader

SEN CPD: Special Educational Needs Continuous Professional Development

RISE: Regional Integrated Support for Education

ICT: Information Communication Technology

EA: Education Authority

STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

STEAM: STEM plus Art

PSNI: Police Service for Northern Ireland

RADAR: Risk Avoidance Danger Awareness Resource

ZPD: Zone of Proximal Development

Appendix 2

ACCELERATED READER- Information for Parents

What Is Accelerated Reader?

Accelerated Reader (AR) is a computer program that helps teachers manage and monitor children's independent reading practice. It is started when children reach a higher level of independent reading which usually happens in P.3 or P. 4. It can, of course, start earlier or later depending on progress. Your child will pick a book in the school library according to their reading ability and when finished, will complete a short online quiz on this book. The quiz will help to assess their comprehension or understanding of the book. This information then helps the teacher assess their reading progress and decide how to help them progress further. The reading books selected by the children are within a selected group, therefore, you can be confident that the books that they read are at an appropriate level for them.

How much will my child read during the day?

According to Renaissance Learning's research children who read at least 20 minutes per day see the greatest reading gains. In school we will set aside between 20 and 30 minutes of silent reading every day for those pupils involved in the programme.

Should my child read AR books at home?

Yes. Some of the books that your child reads will not be completed during the reading time in school. Encouraging them to read while at home will help them improve further.

How did the school decide on my child's reading level?

All children involved also complete an AR STAR Reading Assessment at the beginning of the programme and at various stages throughout. Star Reading is a computerised reading assessment tool that uses computer-adaptive technology. The test uses multiple-choice questions and takes approximately 20 minutes. Questions continually adjust to your child's responses. If your child's response to a question is correct, harder questions will be asked. If your child misses a question, the next question will be easier. This adaptation to children's responses helps determine their appropriate reading level.

What is a ZPD?

ZPD stands for Zone of Proximal Development. A ZPD is simply the range of books that a pupil will read within. They are carefully selected to appropriately challenge a child without causing frustration or loss of motivation with their reading. The ZPD is identified after the children sit the STAR Reading Assessment. This range will change according to a child's reading progress.

My child's book has a coloured sticker on the spine and a white sticker on the inside cover. What do they mean?

The coloured sticker indicates the Book Range that the child is reading within. The inside sticker provides a variety of information about the book. The information most useful to parents is the ATOS Book Level and the points available to the reader when he/ she finishes the book.

What is an ATOS Book Level?

An ATOS book level represents the difficulty of the text. There are 6 levels in total and they range from 0.0-1.9 through to 6.0+.

How can my child reach his or her target?

Every time a child reads a book and successfully completes an online quiz, they will receive the allocated points for the book. The points can be found on the sticker on the inside of the book. AR points are based on the difficulty and the length of the book. AR Targets are set each half term, the children are aware of the number of points they must gain, and this is formulated using the following information; ZPD, 25 mins daily reading time and achieving 85% average accuracy in quizzes taken. Depending on the number of questions answered correctly, children will earn points and make their way to their target. Children are rewarded for reaching their targets- this can take many forms. We have encouraged our children to come up with their own way of being rewarded for their achievements. Some children decided to have more time using ICT, others preferred a homework pass or having a non-uniform day. There will also be occasions when we have a prize – names of those who achieved their targets will be placed in a hat and a draw will take place.

Will my child still read books in their class reading group?

Your child will continue with their normal reading in class within their reading group. AR books from the school library are additional reading material.

My child has told me that they complete Accelerated Reader quizzes in class. Can they do them at home?

The quizzes are completed in school. Quizzing does not happen at home.

Can I supply Accelerated Reader books for my child?

If you wish you can purchase AR Reading books for your child or find ones at the local library. We will continue to increase our school stock of AR books over the next few years, but we are aware there may be a range of AR books at the local library that children may like to read. Quizzes on these books can be completed in school and the books brought back home. If you wish to check if a book you are going to buy/borrow is an AR Book with a quiz, you can visit Accelerated Reader Bookfinder. at www.arbookfind.co.uk

