Example Primary School

LITERACY POLICY

Section 1 – Aims

The Highland Literacy Strategy aims to raise standards in reading, writing, talking and listening. To equip our learners for life in the 21st century, it is vital that, as leaders of learning, teachers recognise the fundamental importance of literacy and its place in the curriculum. All teachers have a responsibility to promote and develop reading, writing, talking and listening skills.

Highland Council Literacy Strategy 2013

In Example Primary School we have a commitment to ensuring that our learners are equipped with the literacy skills which are required to become literate in the 21st century.

Literacy is at the core of learning, and through the use of progressive programmes learners in Example Primary School are supported in making links to literacy in all that they do.

Our staff work in a collegial manner to ensure that standards are shared across the school, in line with The Highland Literacy Progression – Steps to Success. We work together to plan, assess, track and evaluate learning across the Broad General Education. We aim to naturally incorporate literacy into our programmes of work organically, without including as an afterthought.

Our learners value literacy as a key which allows access to the whole curriculum. Learners work within and through the significant aspects of learning of listening and talking, reading and writing. Staff use these significant aspects of learning within core literacy objectives and interdisciplinary learning projects. Our aim is for learners to independently transfer their literacy skills across all areas of the curriculum.

The parents and carers at Example Primary School are encouraged to take an active role in their child's learning. Through the delivery of parent and carer workshops we aim to explore the importance of Literacy across Learning, and provide guidance as how parents and carers can best support their child's progress.

Our Literacy Policy is built around the principles of The Highland Learning Policy – engagement, participation, dialogue and thinking. Through a collegial approach between pupils, staff and parents and carers, these principles are the foundation of our policy; our systems and programmes are the building blocks.

This policy was created with pupils, staff and parents/carers. The school's Literacy Working Group initially met together to audit where we were with Literacy. After this, all staff engaged with the audit during inset and created an action plan of how literacy in our school can grow and develop. In succession of this, pupils were consulted through our Learning Council who evaluated our current literacy programmes with each our classes. Parents/carers were consulted thorough a SurveyMonkey on our blog as well as at a Parent Council meeting. This has resulted in a meaningful 'live' Literacy policy, contributed to by all. Our standardised testing in 2013/2014 highlighted that many of our learners were performing just below their expected age. It is with the development of our literacy policy that we aim to raise achievement for all learners. We aim that during testing in the 2015/2016 session we see these learners attaining, or surpassing, the expected standard for their age.

Section 2 – Systems

Literacy Working Group
The Literacy Working Group is represented by 4 staff within the school who work across the CfE Levels. They meet on a monthly basis and are currently reviewing our Literacy programmes to ensure that they are in line with the significant aspects of learning. They deliver aspects of the Highland Council Literacy Toolkit during our collegiate sessions, and seek the ideas, skills and expertise of all staff to continually enhance our programmes. They work with the pupils in our Learning Council to promote engaging literacy experiences. They work with the pupils in our Pupil Council to organise literacy themed whole-school events.

Planning and Tracking
Within Example Primary School staff work with their stage partners to plan their literacy experiences using The Highland Literacy Progression – Steps to Success as a reference tool. On a termly basis staff meet within their CfE Levels to share their planning objectives and evaluate programmes of work. This allows for consistency across the Level. Coverage of the Experiences and Outcomes is tracked at individual class level to ensure that learners engage in a breadth of learning experiences. The shared planning allows staff to work in conjunction with one another and we use team teaching approaches wherever possible to utilise the skills of all staff.

Assessment
Individual learners assess their own progress and evaluate their learning against the success criteria for a lesson, or series of lessons. Staff work in conjunction with learners through formative dialogue and written comments to highlight strengths and plan for next steps. Learners record evidence of their progress in their Learning Journey. This is shared with parents on a monthly basis, in addition to a Pupil Progress meeting in January and End of Session report in June. We use Big Writing assessments on a termly basis from P2 – P7. The Primary One Literacy Assessment and Action Resource (POLAAR) is used to support learners in the Early Level.

Transition
Within the Early Level, Nursery children visit the P1 environment on a regular basis throughout the year. The shared planning on a once termly basis allows teachers and Early Years Practitioners (EYPs) to plan meaningful learning experiences based on the Literacy and English Experiences and Outcomes (Es and Os). As Nursery and P1 staff work in tandem, they are able to work together to support the transition of nursery learners into P1.

Within First Level, our P3 and P4 staff work together to allow pupils a smooth transition between the stages. Our P3 and P4 learners work together on a Paired Reading initiative to improve the reading skills of all learners involved.

Within Second Level, our P6 and P7 staff work use a team teaching approach to deliver Literacy. In conjunction with the PSAs that work in Second Level, they provide a concentrated 90 minute Literacy session each day. These staff are involved in transition discussions with Example Secondary School prior to learners' transition into S1.

In addition to the methods above, as well as the shared planning, transition discussions take place on an annual basis across the school from Nursery to P7. Teachers comment on individual learner progress in line with the significant aspects of learning for each of the curriculum areas.

Individual Programmes
Our teachers plan progressive programmes for learners in line with their individual ability. They use The Highland Literacy Progression – Steps to Success to target whole-class, small group and individual success criteria. Learners are involved in discussions regarding their progress throughout the school. Class Teachers and PSAs work with learners to provide them with additional support to access the full curriculum, in addition to supporting those learners who require challenged.

Section 3 – Structure of Literacy Programmes

In Example Primary School, our Literacy Programme looks like:
[some links are only available on Example Primary School server]

Curriculum Area	What? How? Key Resources
Writing	The Highland Literacy Progression and the Highland Literacy Website are used when planning learning experiences.
	At Example Primary School we combine a variety of approaches to meet the needs of our pupils in a progressive and supportive environment.
	Big Writing/Big Talk Resources are used for the learning, teaching and assessment of writing within Example Primary. Achievement for P2 – P7 pupils is tracked on spreadsheets within the Big Writing Tracking folder.
	Big Writing, alongside aspects of HLP, Foundations of Writing and North Lanarkshire Writing are used to shape our writing programme. We use the guidance of Highland Literacy to ensure that learners are exposed to a variety of engaging material.
	Jolly Phonics is used [Early/First level] as a phonic programme and for early word building.
	Cripps/Nelson is used for letter formation and handwriting.
	Spelling is supported through programmes such as Spelling Made Easy, Nelson and Spelling City. We teach spelling in three forms: common words, spelling patterns and spelling for writing. Highland Literacy - Spelling and Phonics Guidelines are available for support.
Reading	The Highland Literacy Progression and the Highland Literacy Website are used when planning learning experiences.
	In the Early Level we progress through the first 33 Initial Sounds of Jolly Phonics. Highland Literacy - Spelling and Phonics Guidelines are available to support the delivery of Phonics. The Example Primary Blending Handout can be used to strengthen the home/school partnership in developing Early Reading Skills.
	We promote the use of environmental print, including ICT based texts, across all stages of the school.
	In Example Primary, our learners experience a variety of fiction and non-fiction genres. Learners' comprehension is enhanced through Higher Order Thinking. Bloom's Question Fans and Bloom's Buttons are used by staff to support questioning.
	Key Resources Early Level - Oxford Reading Tree and Non-Fiction texts First Level – Oxford Reading Tree, Kingscourt and Non-Fiction texts Second Level – Kingscourt, Novels and Non-Fiction texts ASN – Toe-by-Toe, Speedy Readers, Wellington Square and Phonic Cracker
Listening and Talking	The Highland Literacy Progression and the Highland Literacy Website are used when planning learning experiences.
	Learners' talk is assessed individually and as a group. The Highland Literacy Toolkit contains a CPD resource which can be used by staff to explore the process of providing effective feedback to individuals within group talk.
	Listening is embedded across the curriculum. We use Co-operative Learning approaches – focusing on Listening as a key Social Skill. We also develop listening and talking through reading and writing.

At Example Primary School, in each of the CfE Levels, our Literacy Programme looks like:
[some links are only available on Example Primary School server]

CfE Level	What? Significant Aspects of Learning	How?	Key resources
Early	• Listening and Talking • Reading • Writing	➢ Reading – daily individually/ groups/ whole class ➢ Writing Activities – daily ➢ Big Talk/ Big Writing Activities – throughout week ➢ Listening and Talking – daily ➢ Literacy games – individually/ groups/ whole class	Highland Literacy Progression Highland Literacy Website Big Writing/Big Talk Resources Literacy and English - Staff Docs Interactive Websites Jolly Phonics Cripps
First	• Listening and Talking • Reading • Writing	➢ Reading – 4-5 sessions per week ➢ Writing Activities – discrete and topic based ➢ Big Writing Activities – throughout week ➢ Listening and Talking – daily	Highland Literacy Progression Highland Literacy Website Big Writing/Big Talk Resources Literacy and English - Staff Docs Interactive Websites Cripps
Second	• Listening and Talking • Reading • Writing	➢ Reading – 4-5 sessions per week ➢ Writing Activities – discrete and topic based ➢ Big Writing Activities – throughout week ➢ Listening and Talking – daily	Highland Literacy Progression Highland Literacy Website Big Writing/Big Talk Resources Literacy and English - Staff Docs Interactive Websites

Taken from the Example Primary School Curriculum Rationale (2013)

Our programme is tailored to the individual needs of learners. It is supported by The Highland Literacy Progression – Steps to Success.

Through our school's Learning Journey policy, our learners are supported using reflective dialogue [pupil-pupil and teacher-pupil]. Learners identify targets and record these within their Learning Journeys. Targets are tailored to individual needs identified within our learning conversations. Learners, with support from school staff, collect evidence of their learning and record this in their Learning Journeys. Learning Journeys are shared with parents on a monthly basis.

Individuals are tracked across the Broad General Education against the Literacy and English Significant Aspects of Learning. This is updated twice yearly [November and May], and feeds into the Summary of Personal Progress (SPP).

Section 4 – Understanding Standards

From Section 2:

Planning and Tracking

Within Example Primary School staff work with their stage partners to plan their literacy experiences using The Highland Literacy Progression – Steps to Success as a reference tool. On a termly basis staff meet within their CfE Levels to share their planning objectives and evaluate programmes of work. This allows for consistency across the Level. Coverage of the Experiences and Outcomes is tracked at individual class level to ensure that learners engage in a breadth of learning experiences. The shared planning allows staff to work in conjunction with one another and we use team teaching approaches wherever possible to utilise the skills of all staff.

A shared planning approach allows for consistency within Example Primary School. The work of the school's Literacy Working Group ensures that all stages have access to resources that are transferable across the school, as well as resources that are specific to Stages and CfE Levels.

Through collegiate working, time is allocated to allow staff across the school to moderate against The Highland Literacy Progression – Steps to Success. We use this in conjunction with our Assessment for Excellence (AfE) data and classroom observations to make a judgement on individual pupil attainment and progress.

Our staff take part in two three-part observation cycles each session. The format is as follows:

Establishing the cycle	Observation Round 1	Post-observation Dialogue 1	Observation – Round 2	Post-observation Dialogue 2	Observation – Round 3	Post-observation Dialogue 3
Identify a peer visit partner and agree an observation focus linked to The Highland Learning Policy.	Peer partners observe one another.	Provide feedback to peer partner and set target(s) for next observation.	Peer partners observe one another.	Provide feedback to peer partner and set target(s) for next observation. Liaise with SMT regarding targets prior to visit 3.	SMT observation.	Feedback session with SMT and set target(s) for the next round of observations.

Through our observation model, the Senior Management Team work with staff to ensure that our learners have access to a consistent delivery of Literacy experiences – tapping into the skills of our staff to develop Literacy experiences across the school. Our staff are encouraged to visit other establishments to share practice. This is promoted in schools across and outwith the Area School Group (ASG).

Our ASG work together to develop Literacy and English. Our Assessment Working Group in the ASG meets regularly throughout the year with an agreed focus. We meet throughout the session to take part in moderation events and agree a shared ASG standard. We have used The Highland Literacy Progression – Steps to Success and the Big Writing: Scottish Criterion Scale to support professional dialogue.

Learners with Additional Support Needs continue to work through individual programmes, linked to The Highland Literacy Progression –Steps to Success. Form 1s, Child's Plans and the EAL Profile of Competencies support this.

Section 5 – Supporting the Policy

At Example Primary School our policy, as highlighted in Section 1, has involved pupils, staff and parents/carers in its formation. We aim to continue to evaluate, adapt and modify our policy. Consultation led by our Literacy Working Group takes place with staff during collegiate focus groups, pupils through the learning council and parents through the parent council.

In reviewing our Policy, we will seek the views of our stakeholders through school based paper and online surveys, continual dialogue with pupils staff and parents/carers, and evaluation of the AfE data.

In addition to the in-house professional development opportunities through The Literacy Toolkit, staff will be encouraged, as mentioned in Section 4, to liaise with colleagues to share good practice in-house, within the ASG and across the Authority. Staff will also be supported to take part in Authority led professional development opportunities tailored to their individual, the school or Authority priorities. We have an ethos in which staff cascade their new learning with colleagues, working in conjunction with the Literacy Working Group.

Section 6 – The 4 Contexts for Learning

Our Literacy Policy is organised through the 4 Contexts of Learning:

Curriculum Area and Subject-based learning
Section 3 highlights how Example Primary School structures a progressive core Literacy programme.

Opportunities for personal achievement
Through our Learning Journeys (section 3) learners have the opportunity to reflect on their learning, and take part in learning conversations to identify next steps.

Our Curriculum Rationale (2014) highlights the following opportunities for personal achievement:

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT [*Confident Individuals*]
ON-GOING
➢ Achievement Book – celebrating achievements with the whole school and the wider community ➢ Head Teacher's Awards ➢ Monthly Achievement Assembly ➢ Assemblies – child led class assemblies ➢ House Points – led by the House Captains and SMT ➢ Star Writers ➢ Learning Journeys – recording personal achievements each month ➢ Target setting across the curriculum – recorded within Learning Journeys and individual profiles ➢ House Events – led by the House Captains and supported by SMT ➢ Example Primary Website and Class Blogs – update on achievements ➢ Junior Leaders – in being a Junior Leader and being awarded points when taking part in Junior Leader Challenges ➢ Pupil Council/ ECO competitions ➢ Performance opportunities – Mod, Music Festival, Highland Youth Theatre, Sports Tournaments e.g. Athletics, Cross Country, Football, Gymnastics, Hockey, Netball and Tennis ➢ Example Sports – weekly classes

As Example Primary School believes Literacy to be at the heart of learning, we are confident that learners' literacy skills contribute to wider-achievement both within and outwith school. Using Learning Journeys, practitioners support learners in identifying their wider achievements.

Interdisciplinary Learning

At Example Primary it is expected that all staff, when planning with learners, include a significant aspects of learning for literacy in their interdisciplinary plans. This may take the form of developing a specific aspect of listening and talking e.g. group presentation, an aspect of reading e.g. developing comprehension skills through Paired Reading or writing e.g. creating a multimedia text. We support learners in enabling them to transfer the skills that they have developed in core literacy programmes into IDL topics.

Ethos

Example Primary School believes in literacy learning for life. We support our learners and their families to access the literacy curriculum. We offer parent and carer workshops at all Levels across the school and provide guidelines to parents and carers that can be used to support their child at home. We value literacy as a key which provides access to the whole curriculum. Learners take pride in their literacy learning, and through learning conversations they are encouraged to enhance the skills which will allow them to function in the 21st century, developing a sense of empowerment.

Section 7 – Evaluation and Improvement

Our Literacy Policy continues to grow and develop. Our Literacy Working Group facilitates evaluations with pupils, staff and parents/carers. The Policy will be used to shape the Literacy experiences across the school; therefore making the Policy a 'live' document.

We seek feedback on our Literacy programmes each year to ensure that learners are progressively supported and challenged, providing with the opportunities to experience success.

Our Assessment for Excellence (AfE) data is interrogated by Class Teachers to identify individual cause for concern and by the SMT to identify trends across the school. These evaluations are used to make reasonable modifications to this Policy.

We will know the Literacy Policy is embedded fully when learners value literacy across the curriculum, practitioners feel confident in supporting and challenging all learners in literacy, and our literacy attainment increases across the school.