**Ballater School Literacy 2020**

Literacy includes reading, writing, and listening and talking. All the areas of Literacy are linked, and skills are taught in Language lessons and across other curricular areas. A competent level of Literacy is crucial to future education and lifetime achievement.

‘*Literacy is fundamental to all areas of learning, as it unlocks access to the wider curriculum. Being literate increases opportunities for the individual in all aspects of life, lays the foundations for lifelong learning and work and contributes strongly to the development of all four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence.’*

*Curriculum for Excellence defines literacy as:*

*“the set of skills which allows an individual to engage fully in society and in learning, through the different forms of language and the range of texts, which society values and finds useful”*

**Curriculum for Excellence: Literacy and English: Principles and Practice, Scottish Government, 2009**

At ­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­Ballater Primary, we strive to ensure that every child should become competent and confident in the use of English: able to live, work and succeed in a literate world, using the necessary ability and skills. This means being able to communicate effectively and express ideas and opinions, both orally and through various media.

Children will develop critical literacy skills which will enable them to understand and make informed decisions by interpreting and analysing information.They will develop the necessary tools for learning, knowledge and understanding to be creative, self-reflective, solve problems, collaborate and build positive relationships.

We recognise that by supporting children to improve their reading, writing, talking and listening skills, we are equipping them with skills for life and work.

It is the responsibility of all practitioners to ensure that we achieve these goals through a variety of learning and teaching opportunities, which effectively and successfully raise the attainment of Literacy and English amongst all learners.

**Phonics**

In Ballater School Phonics is taught through a multi-sensory approach, introducing the initial sounds and blends using songs and actions from ‘Jolly Phonics’ methodology.

We follow the North Lanarkshire Active Literacy programme throughout the school.

Letters are introduced in a specific order. This order is established as it enables the children to create and read more words early on than any other.

In the Early Level sounds will be introduced at an appropriate pace for the children. This generally is one sound per week to allow for practise, revision and consolidation.

For every sound taught a multi-sensory approach will be used.

Children **listen** for the sound in stories, rhymes, songs and when talking generally.

When **talking** the children are encouraged to use correct pronunciation.

Pronunciation of the sounds

It is important that the sounds of the letters are used and not their names - a, b, c and not ai, bee, sea. This will help to when making words or when breaking words up into sounds.

They also need to be pronounced softly and without an added ‘i’ sound –

s = ssssss not ‘si’

r = rrrrrrrr and not ‘ri’

m = mmmm not ‘mi’

n = nnnnnnnn and not ‘ni’

**Reading** the sound. Recognising the symbol in print, in books, on the walls, in the environment,

**Writing** the sound using correct letter formation. The correct formation of writing (how a letter is actually written) is crucial for emergent writers. If the child forms letters incorrectly, they may have great difficulty later on with joined up writing, which impacts on the flow of their writing in later years.

Once a selection of sounds has been introduced the children will move onto blending sounds together to form words, using the North Lanarkshire Say, Make/break, Blend, Read, Write method.

Phonic use is encouraged with all the children throughout all stages within the school.

Resources used include North Lanarkshire Active literacy,

<https://www.jollylearning.co.uk/>

<https://highlandliteracy.com/spelling-and-phonics/>

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/practice-exemplars/aberdeenshire-council-learning-pathways-from-early-to-second-level/>

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/curriculum-for-excellence-benchmarks>

**Spelling**

In spelling, we begin with the thoughts (abstract) and move towards having them put down on paper in a concrete way.

It is important that when we teach spelling, we begin without seeing the word written down. If we begin with the written words, we are teaching from concrete to abstract. We need to enable our pupils to say the word, break it down into individual sounds then match a sound to a grapheme (the letter or number of letters that represent a sound in word) and then write the word which is the abstract to concrete process.

**Early Level**

At the Early Level once children are familiar and have frequently practised the say, make/break, blend, read, write method using phonic sounds to form words, ‘tricky words’ (words that cannot be sounded out) can be introduced.

These words are referred to as common words. Words the children will see in their reading books and increasingly want to use as their writing develops.

Initially three word are introduced weekly and the children are taught a variety of strategies to help remember them. Lessons are as interactive as possible using a variety of fun activities.

**Early Level Strategies**

* Remember the shape of the word.
* Can you sound it out?

 Some words use short phonic sounds taught e.g. can c-a-n

* Has it got a wee word in it?

 e.g. into is made up of in and to

* Has it got a tricky bit you need to remember?

 e.g. you sounds like y-oo but its not oo but ou

* Can you use an old word to help?

 If you know how to spell one word you can spell similar words e.g. Use the spelling

 of you to learn your, if you can spell hill, you can spell mill, will, fill etc. Noticing

 similarities and differences in words.

**First / Second Level**

The number and complexity of the words introduced increases and the pupils are taught following a spelling group rota system. Lessons continue to be as fun and interactive as possible. Words are still discussed, and a supporting strategy is used to help children remember them. Pupils will be encouraged to find their own best strategies for aiding retention.

Throughout the session we also use our IDL topic as a source of spelling words and the pupils are also encouraged to suggest categories of words, they would like to be able to spell.

Activities used at these stages include the use of

Elkonin boxes

Elkonin boxes help pupils build phonological awareness by segmenting words into sounds or syllables. They teach pupils how to count the number of phonemes in the word (not always the number of letters). They help pupils better understand the alphabetic principle in decoding and spelling.

Diacritical marking

Diacritical marking involves investigating words – recognising and identifying which phonemes (sounds) are contained within each word. The children are involved in listening carefully, saying the words accurately and using the diacritical marking code to identify individual sounds and blends.

Spelling cards

Fun interactive activities are used for spelling practise. These can be used independently or in small groups. They are more effective than worksheets and will lead to pupils becoming more independent and focused learners. Activities include for e.g. writing the words backwards, using different writing styles. painting the words, putting the words in alphabetical order etc. A set of cards is available in all classrooms.

**First / Second Level Strategies**

* + **Mnemonic –** e.g.*because – big elephants can always understand small elephants*. Pupils learn them more easily if they are funny or if they make them up themselves.
	+ **Memory hooks –** These are usually personal e.g. Chihuahua **– hua** ‘hairless underarm animal’ -forming a picture in your head that helps you to remember.
	+ breaking it up into syllables orally (often called ‘**spell speak’**) e.g. bus-i-ness, Feb-ru-ary
	+ **Visual clues** **–** have a go- does it look right? Try another way – does that look right?
	+ **Spelling rules –** e.g. ‘*i before e except after c’***.** 90% of words actually follow the rules
	+ **Word meaning –** Words related in meaning are usually related in spellings e.g. *hear* and *heard.*
	+ **Word derivation –** Think about how some longer words are built up of parts that we do know how to spell e.g. *mis-under-stand-ing*
	+ **Mix and match –** If you know how to spell television and headphone you can probably spell telephone
	+ **Grammar –** A word’s function in a sentence may help with its spelling e.g. practice is the noun and practise is the verb
	+ **Repetition –** Is part of the word repeated? e.g. Chihuahua
	+ **Words inside words –** strategies -‘rate’

Progressing from First Level into Second Level the children are encouraged to write their words in sentences and paragraphs. This helps pupils practise writing their words and use them in the correct context. The children also discuss the meanings with the teacher and suggest any other words which have similar patterns/ homophones/suffixes/prefixes/plurals

At all levels dictation is used to help assess and consolidate words taught.

Frequent practise in school and at home helps the children remember and become able to spell the words independently.

Repetition is key to becoming a competent speller.

Resources used include North Lanarkshire Active literacy,

<https://highlandliteracy.com/spelling-and-phonics/>

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/practice-exemplars/aberdeenshire-council-learning-pathways-from-early-to-second-level/>

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/curriculum-for-excellence-benchmarks>

Pre-Teaching Vocabulary (PTV) materials developed by Pip St John

<https://www.widgit.com/resources/literacy-language/vocabulary/pre-teaching-vocabulary/index.htm>

**Reading**

Reading is a critical tool for lifelong learning and our main aims are to encourage and teach children to read fluently with expression and understanding and to develop a love for books.

The children are taught to read through a process of guided reading using a variety of texts with a range of different genres. When working with a group on a text the teacher initially provides an overview of the text and works with the children introducing any new vocabulary. Time is taken to teach the children various comprehension strategies to help them gain a better understanding of the text.

Books are book banded and the children move through the coloured levels following teacher judgement and using the PM Benchmarking tool to access each child’s individual level of fluency and understanding.

**Early Level**

The children will read aloud daily using their class reader.

Initially books with no words are used. This encourages the children to use illustrations to retell the stories, looking at characters, settings, what’s happening, how characters are feeling and develop vocabulary through discussion.

The children then move onto book with words where one to two books are focused on per week. These books have a lot of repetition and some simple words that the children can use their phonic knowledge to sound out and read.

The teacher always introduces the book first and reads it to the children. Children are then given the book and have a go at reading it aloud. The teacher corrects any mistakes as the children are reading. The book is then sent home for practise, to read with parents/carers and discuss the content. The same book will be read several times at home and in school enabling the children to develop their sight vocabulary, or ability to recognise words, and for time to be spent on follow up activities to develop reading skills and develop comprehension.

**Reading Skills**

* Knowing how to hold a book, the correct way round and reading from front to back, one page at a time.
* Blending CVC (consonant, vowel, consonant) sounds to read simple words.
* Extending use of ‘sounding out’ and blending sills to read more complex words.
* Beginning to recognise the shape of words, learning some ‘tricky words’ (words that cannot be sounded out) by heart.
* Recognising the use of capital letters and full stops to mark a sentence and pausing at a full stop when reading aloud.
* Recognising rhyme in words and using rhyming sounds to help when reading new words.

**First/Second Level**

The children continue to work through the coloured book banded texts.

Skinny novels are introduced then longer novels. The children are also given the opportunity to engage with a wide variety of genres and as they progress through the school, the amount of factual text increases.

The teacher will follow a three-part approach. The pre read, reading with teacher, then the follow up.

During the pre-read the children work independently of the teacher, this can be alone or with others. The pre read enables the children to initially familiarise themselves with the text and then in discussion with their partner or small group deepen their understanding of the texts.

Reading with the teacher involves the children developing their reading comprehension strategies. To skim and scan, practise and develop questioning techniques in small groups, discuss authors word choice and clarify and discuss the meanings of words.

Follow up activities give written evidence of the children learning.

**Developing Comprehension**

Comprehension or reading to learn – is one of our primary purposes in teaching our pupils to read. It is not something that comes without focus or effort and comprehension strategies are taught in a structured way.

Children’s comprehension and memory of text improves when they are actively taught comprehension strategies.

There are many different comprehension strategies. Many of them overlap and are interconnected.

* Noticing similarities and differences (words/letters/sounds which are the same and not the same)
* Reasoning (why do you think that happened?)
* Visualising (Can you close your eyes and imagine what the castle looks like, describe it to me?)
* Predicting (Looking at the front cover/blurb- what do you think the story is about? What do you think is going to happen next?)
* Making links to prior knowledge (what do we now about….?)
* Skimming (Looking at pictures or words to get a general idea of what the story is about)
* Asking Questions (respond to both open, requiring a lot of words and explanation, and closed, simple one-word answer, questions, developing curiosity and asking questions throughout the story)
* Refining and evaluating (shall we change our story to have a different ending?)
* Comparing (different texts and their purposes)
* Understanding (encourage climate where child feels comfortable to stop story to confirm meaning making links to other skills e.g. questioning, predicting etc.)
* Self-correction (confident readers will reread to make sure the text makes sense)
* Emphasising (confident readers will be able to pick out the main characters, features and events in a story)
* Summarising (retelling the story in chronological order – refer to questioning such as who, what, why and where)
* Scanning (looking for particular information by running eyes quickly over text or pictures)

In the early stages (early into first level), comprehension is secondary to decoding and word recognition but still needs to be taught.

At this stage strategies are introduced in an oral way when listening to the child reading in a guided reading group.

As children progress and become increasingly fluent in their reading and proficient in decoding, comprehension takes the main focus in reading.

The children are still taught orally with increasing levels of independent written comprehension work.

The strategies need to be actively taught, rehearsed, modelled and tried.

As the children move towards the end of first level, the main focus is on comprehension and reading for learning.

Comprehension strategies are taught in a systematic way, focussing on individual strategies and show how some strategies overlap and connect with others.

At all levels the children’s’ comprehension is enhanced through Higher Order Thinking using Blooms question fans

<https://highlandliteracy.com/reading-2/blooms-taxonomy/>

and/or Blooms buttons

<https://questioningforteachersandstudent.weebly.com/blooms-buttons.html>

by staff and children to support questioning.

Children at all levels listen to a class book/novel read to them daily. Children gain new vocabulary from being read to which benefits and helps develop all areas of literacy.

Children access the school library as personal reading for enjoyment is encouraged as much as possible. These books are self-chosen, with guidance from the class teacher, and are read at home as well as in school. Each class has their own small library which is freely access by the children.

**Parents can help by**

Your child will come home with a variety of texts to read at home such as a novel study, core reader, library book. Please encourage your child to read at home and for sustained periods of time. Having texts at home or through visiting the library can support your child in their development of reading and writing. You could encourage your child to keep a reading record of what they have read throughout the year. This could include a range of texts, comics, magazines, newspapers, etc.

Resources used

<https://highlandliteracy.com/>

<https://highlandliteracy.com/the-highland-literacy-progression-steps-to-success/>

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/practice-exemplars/aberdeenshire-council-learning-pathways-from-early-to-second-level/>

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/curriculum-for-excellence-benchmarks>

**Writing**

Writing is a major part of the literacy curriculum and along with reading, listening and talking, makes a significant contribution to the development of children as thinkers and learners.

In developing a child’s writing we aim to develop:

• A legible, fluent handwriting style and the skills to word process.

• Accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar. – this developed in complexity

• The ability to convey meaning.

• Knowledge and understanding of writing for different purposes in a variety of contexts

Writing involves the skill of handwriting as well as learning to write for a purpose in different genres.

**Handwriting**

Handwriting is a motor skill.

Children have to experience the stages of motor learning through initial pencil control concepts. Explicit handwriting instruction is built on children’s early movement and coordination skills, and their security in the pencil control concepts of shape formation, shape manipulation, directionality, fluidity of movement, fine motor skills, pressure control and pencil grip, which are the different aspects which underpin the way in which you hold and manoeuvre the pencil on the page in a purposeful manner.

It is important to think about the stages of motor learning that children experience. Initially, children need to go through these stages with the pencil control concepts, they then need to start at stage one again to apply it to letter formation and then again into handwriting.

Stage 1: Thinking about it (cognitive stage)

• Children gain understanding and knowledge about different aspects of the skills.

• Activities that can help at this stage are ones that include thinking (asking questions and reflecting), looking (attending to different aspects) and doing (experiencing the movement).

• Feedback is very important. This can be either internal or external, from another child or an adult.

Stage 2: Practising it (associative stage)

• Children rely on their knowledge and previous experiences to refine their skills.

• Repetition is not the same thing as practice. Repetition can lead to mistakes that can become embedded and difficult to correct. Practice involves thinking and making changes.

• This stage of learning may take a long time. For handwriting, it is expected that this will take several years.

Stage 3: Doing it automatically (autonomous stage)

• Once children have reached this stage, they are able to focus on what they are writing, rather than on how they are writing.

In Ballater School once the children are secure in their pencil control skills and have learned the initial letter formation, that have become automatic, the children move onto using a cursive style of handwriting.

Early Level

The focus is on developing

Gross and fine motor skills. Scissor skills. Prewriting skills. Pencil control. Letter formation.

First/ Second Level

The focus is on Letter formation and moving onto developing a cursive handwriting style.

By the end of Second Level and beyond the children are encouraged to develop their own style of handwriting.

All writing should begin with pupils engaging with quality examples of oral or written text across the genres. This engagement will involve texts being discussed and/or spoken and rehearsed orally before pupils put pen to paper. Pupils will become familiar with a text by imitating its structure and/or substituting elements of the text as their own. This will progress to pupils creating their own texts independently. Regardless of age and stage, teachers should model writing (while thinking aloud) before pupils write independently. Pupils need a good model for writing appropriate to style and genre.

**Writing Genres**

Writing genres are developed throughout the levels.

Writing genres in the early level include:

Narrative -imaginative made up story, Personal, Information, Recount- retell events, Explanation

Writing genres in first and second level include:

Information, Persuasive, Report, Poetry, Instructional/Procedural, Play scripts, Explanation, Personal, Discursive, Narrative -imaginative made up story, Recount- retell events.

In Ballater School the Talk for Writing scheme is used where a variety of texts are shared with the children to enable them to gain more knowledge about improving their own writing. Children read to write and write to read.

We encourage the oral preparation of texts before writing. We make the learning visible using shared success criteria and tools for writing (figures of speech, spelling, vocabulary, punctuation, key features) We model, thinking aloud, during shared writing sessions to teach and coach a new skill.

In the early stages the children go through the process of imitation where they get to know the model of the text really well through hearing it, saying it, playing it, dramatizing it drawing it which will allow them to read it. This leads to innovation where changes to the model text are made either through substituting characters or settings for example or adding adjectives, similes or adverbs or by adding extra bits, building on and developing sentences or through changing the text by changing the viewpoint, time or text type. The last stage is independent application and invention where the children try writing alone applying their prior learning.

At first and second level the process involves the children starting with a Cold written Task where they write without any teacher input. This gives something to compare with after the taught lessons. A model text is then used, and time is spent with the children discussing, analysing and teaching a specific area of focus for example character description. The children apply their learning from the lessons to writing the task again, this time it is referred to as a Hot Task and becomes evidence of their learning. Comparing Cold Task to Hot Task can show the progress that has been made and where further development is needed.

Resources Used

<https://highlandliteracy.com/oral-language-toolkit-sequence-and-narrative/>

<https://highlandliteracy.com/the-highland-literacy-progression-steps-to-success/> ,

<https://www.talk4writing.com/>

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/curriculum-for-excellence-benchmarks>

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/practice-exemplars/aberdeenshire-council-learning-pathways-from-early-to-second-level/>

**Talking and Listening**

We encourage children to express themselves confidently in the spoken word by creating opportunities in drama, discussion, storytelling, games, poetry, speech making and listening skills.

We use a variety of resources and activities.

Teachers should ensure a planned programme is delivered to learners at all stages to ensure listening and talking skills are developed appropriately across the school.

Staff should be using the

<https://highlandliteracy.com/the-highland-literacy-progression-steps-to-success/> , <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/curriculum-for-excellence-benchmarks>

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/practice-exemplars/aberdeenshire-council-learning-pathways-from-early-to-second-level/>

to plan appropriate next steps for all learners.

Plans should be completed on the whole school formats in line with the planning calendar.

**Listening Skills**

Children will develop skills within Listening and Talking individually and in groups, in a variety of contexts and for a variety of purposes to gain information, understand what they have heard and respond appropriately to speakers and texts. Teachers plan for these types of activities through specific Literacy activities or in an interdisciplinary approach to learning. Cooperative Learning strategies is a key area through which we develop key skills in Listening and Talking. These skills are also developed as part of everyday school and class routines and children are also given opportunities to perform to various audiences over each session.

Listening and Talking Skills include:

Early Level

• Listening to other children and adults.

• Talking to other children and adults.

• Understanding the need to take turns in conversations.

• Paying attention to information and instructions

• Enjoying stories, songs, music and rhymes.

• Saying what they think about pictures, music and rhymes or to share information.

• Changing their voice to match a context, e.g. volume, tone, expression.

• Using eye contact when talking to peers/adults.

First/Second Level

• Contribute to class and group discussions/ debates.

• Ask and answer questions and access a range of texts including written, digital and Scots

 Language.

• Listen and talk with confidence across a range of topics and curriculum areas.

• Have opportunities to develop Pupil Voice through Committees and assemblies.

• Talk with increasing confidence to a range of audiences.

• Respect the contributions of others.

• Have increased ability to summarise and clarify key points.

• Use appropriate tone, pace, language and register to engage the audience.

<https://highlandliteracy.com/literacy-toolkit/group-talk-feedback-a-focus-on-the-individual/>

can be used in providing effective feedback to individuals within group talks.

Ballater School Listening and Talking Activity ideas include

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Early Level | First Level | Second Level | Third Level |
| [www.lucysanctuary.com-](http://www.lucysanctuary.com-)games and ideas | Class Memory Quiz | Hot seating | Ask Me Later |
| Descriptions of senses and feelings | Describing Pictures | Class Memory Quiz | A Four Word Story |
| Use of feely bags | Magic Pen | Describing Pictures, events | Eavesdropping |
| Class memory quiz- use simpler questions | Interviews | What a Silly thing to Say | Class debates |
| Describing pictures | Sound Mapping Sensory games | Dual Dictation | Roles within different discussion settings |
| Teaching Active Listening skills | Pongy Perfumes | Listen for Lies | Personal talks/presentations |
| Circle Time | Magic Sound | Interviews | Verbal and Non-verbal communication skills |
| Shared Planning | On-nature Trail | Collaborative News | Talking to an audience eg leading younger pupils, presenting assemblies |
| Social snack – table discussions | Philosophy for Children | Reading follow up tasks- questioning skills. |  |
| Peer/paired reading | Circle Time | The Lucky Balloon |  |
| Nursery rhymes | Body Language skills | Good Cop/Bad Cop |  |
| Book Bug Sessions | Fact or opinion discussions | Magic Sound |  |
| Reading room | Short prepared talk | Un-Nature Trail |  |
| Role play areas | Note taking exercises | Sensory Corner |  |
| Stay and play  | Reading following up tasks | Philosophy for Children |  |
| Assemblies | Roles within a discussion | Circle Time |  |
| Short prepared talk |  | Group Presentations |  |
| Talk for writing – retelling |  | Individual presentations/talks |  |
| Helicopter stories |  | Class debates |  |
| Sound walks |  | Note taking to create texts |  |
| Daily storytime |  | Active listening skills to develop non verbal communication |  |
| Reading follow up tasks |  | Roles within a discussion |  |
|  |  | Talking to an audience eg leading younger pupils. |  |
|  |  | Paired/peer reading |  |
|  |  | Thinking Hats |  |

Parents can help by…

• Lots of chat! During family mealtimes, at the supermarket, helping around the house,

 playing games and at bath time.

• Don’t be afraid to use ‘grown up’ vocabulary sometimes in conversation, children

 understand many more words than they use themselves and this can help to extend their

 vocabulary in the long term.

• Set aside time each day to talk with your child about the day and answer any questions,

 bedtime is often a good time.

• Give your child opportunities to pass on spoken messages for you.

• Share your child's enjoyment in the sounds around them and in music. A dripping tap, whistling wind, nursery rhymes and jingles, new favourite songs, different kinds of music.

• Encourage your child to become more aware of sound and rhyme in language. Playing ‘I

 Spy’, making up tongue-twisters and rhyming riddles.

• Listen to story tapes in the car.