



Saint Benedict's College Literacy Policy

Definition

“Literacy is the ability to read and use written information and to write appropriately and legibly for a range of purposes, within a range of contexts and for a variety of audiences. It also involves the integration of talking, listening and critical thinking with reading and writing and includes the knowledge that enables a speaker, writer and reader to recognise and use language appropriate to different social situations. Literacy permeates and develops learning in all areas of the curriculum, formal and informal, and all areas of social interaction and development.”

Every School a Good School – a strategy for raising achievement in literacy and numeracy 2008

Rationale

Literacy is the key to improving learning and raising standards. At Saint Benedict’s we strive to promote the personal potential of each child. Therefore, we aim to:

- provide a supportive, stimulating and secure environment where pupils will develop their ability to use language
- to communicate in relationships and learning
- to understand ideas and to order
- to explore and refine their thoughts, regardless of ability.

Pupils should be enabled to:

- emerge confident in reading a variety of texts with accuracy and understanding
- communicate effectively
- have the technical vocabulary to discuss texts
- write for a range of purposes
- develop their imagination, creativity and critical thinking.

Aims and objectives

The Literacy policy will evolve as a working document, relevant to and produced by, the whole staff of the school through a planned and coordinated development programme.

The policy document aims to:

- raise the standards of literacy
- adopt a whole school approach to literacy across the curriculum
- enable pupils to express and communicate meaning in the spoken language
- enable pupils to listen to and interpret what others say, matching style and response to audience, context and purpose
- provide pupils with a range of purposeful and relevant opportunities to develop their ability to read understand and engage with various types of text
- enable children to communicate using written language effectively, making and shaping text appropriately, according to context, purpose, reader and/audience
- develop pupils thinking and problem solving skills
- develop pupils as creative users of language.

Talking and Listening

Rationale

Talking and listening are seen as integral life skills. Spoken word activities should be a regular part of classroom activities and should have parity with the development of reading and writing.

Our overall aim is for our pupils to be efficient language users. This will be achieved by devoting time, energy and resources to the development of oral communication. Through purposeful interaction with class teachers, pupils will be provided with experiences that develop their skills and their thinking.

Teaching approaches to consider would be:

- listening and talking should be relevant, purposeful and meaningful
- providing contexts for talk which stimulate pupil's imagination
- modelling good listening and talking skills
- offering a wide range of media to talk about and listen to, including photographs, film, newspaper and magazine
- developing pupils ability when talking and writing to choose a style of language appropriate to purpose and audience
- capitalising on pupil's experience of family, school, local community and the wider world as opportunities for language activities and language development
- talking and listening and assessment for learning.

Reading

Rationale

Success in reading has a direct effect on the progress made in all areas of the curriculum. It is crucial that we help our pupils to develop their independence, self-confidence and motivation.

It is the aim of Saint Benedict's College that our pupils will enjoy a wide range of texts and become independent, critical and life long readers.

Reading Environment

Saint Benedict's will endeavour to promote a strong reading culture within the College through:

- ensuring there is a variety of texts in classrooms, school notice boards and in the school library available to pupils
- consideration given to how books are displayed in classroom and library
- promoting the use of the school library for all subjects across the curriculum
- displays of pupils' work
- promotion of Accelerated Reading Programme, Booked Up programme, The Friday Club and Homework Club in the school library.

Teaching approaches to consider would be:

- provide reading materials for all ages and abilities
- encourage reading and assessment for learning
- celebrating success in reading across the curriculum
- paired reading.

Writing

Rationale

Writing makes a significant contribution to the development of children as thinkers and learners. Pupils write to express their emotions, to convey their thoughts and opinions and to present evidence of learning. Through the development of these skills we can equip our pupils to use writing across the curriculum.

It is the aim of Saint Benedict's College that our pupils will develop the ability to write effectively in various forms according to purpose and audience. They should be encouraged to develop as independent writers, writing with increasing accuracy and proficiency.

Writing Environment

Saint Benedict's College will endeavour to assist pupils in acquiring knowledge and skills to become efficient and effective writers through:

- developing opportunities to display writing by pupils in all subjects across the curriculum to create a literacy rich environment
- displays of key words in the classroom.

Teaching approaches and organisation of learning

Writing is a complex skill that will not develop without teaching and practice. Therefore staff will:

- offer pupils opportunities to gain more knowledge of how to improve their own writing
- provide frameworks where appropriate
- give practise of extended writing in a variety of purposeful contexts
- support improvement and high expectation of core skills i.e. Spelling Grammar and Punctuation
- teach subject specific vocabulary and spelling
- develop positive attitudes to the writing process in each subject area
- provide pupils with feedback that will enable them to improve their writing skills
- use data to set targets and track pupils progress in writing.

Parental involvement

Parents will be encouraged to help their children with homework / spellings etc.

Parents will be kept informed of developments in literacy through the schools website.

Parents whose child requires special educational support will be made aware of the literacy support packs available to their child.

Information Communication Technology

Appropriate ICT resources will be used in each area of learning to enhance each pupil's learning experience.

Staff should evaluate any such resources and be aware of the literacy content of all resources used.

Through consultation with ICT co-ordinator and the English Department, Literacy links to 'literacy fun sites', advice for pupils and parents and worksheets can be accessed via the schools website.

Monitoring Progress

The Literacy Coordinator will meet monthly with the SENCO and Learning Support Assistants to offer strategies, advice and literacy support for pupils.

The VP of Saint Benedict's College and the Literacy coordinator will meet every two months to review and plan for Literacy tasks and development.

The Literacy coordinator will meet each term with subject leaders to coordinate treatment of literacy in subjects across the curriculum and advise on the assessment and reporting of Communication.

Assessment and Reporting

There is a requirement to assess Communication each year with reference to the levels of progression in 'Communication'. Therefore pupils will be assessed on their written and oral communication skills within specific subjects.

Assessment will build on the acquisition and development that is taking place across the curriculum. However, not all subjects are required to contribute to the formal assessment of reporting.

Teachers will also be involved in using Assessment for Learning to promote the development of these skills along with knowledge and understanding of their subjects. Learning Intentions and Success Criteria should be made clear as a focus for learning. This is an essential strategy alongside planned activities for pupils to demonstrate competencies in communication. Pupil, peer and/or teacher feedback will help pupils identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Every teacher must promote the acquisition and development of Communication and Using Mathematics. Not all subjects are required to report on these skills. English, Home Economics and Religious Education will report on Communication each academic year.

Assessment evidence should be drawn from at least TWO key areas of learning across the key stage.

Homework Guidelines

As in school's homework policy

Special Educational Needs

Children who experience difficulty in particular aspects of literacy are identified through whole school reading audits and Progress in English tests.

SEN pupils will receive support as outlined in their IEP.

Where appropriate the SENCO will involve the support of outside agencies.

Children on the SEN register are set targets in the way of an IEP.

Interventions are put into place in accordance with the SEN and Newcomer policies.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Literacy Coordinator should:

- support departments in the implementation of the Literacy policy
- coordinate literacy initiatives
- liaise with SENCO to provide literacy support for SEN pupils
- provide Literacy support packs for home use
- monitor the impact of the literacy policy on standards of literacy within Saint Benedict's College
- liaise with VP and review literacy policy on a yearly basis.

Methods for monitoring pupil's literacy developments:

- standardised testing
- evaluating literacy support work completed at home
- end of key stage three examinations
- evaluation of GCSE results
- evidence of pupil assessment on the particular literacy focus.

Additional Information

- Literacy and Numeracy fun days
- Literacy notice board - (main corridor)
- Reading Buddies
- The Irish News project
- Literacy quizzes