

Introduction

“Literacy and numeracy are simply too fundamental for progress not to be led by a specific strategy and a focused, strategic approach is therefore needed.”

“The strategy calls for a better co-ordinated and more effective cross-curricular emphasis on literacy and numeracy in both primary and postprimary schools that supports all teachers in recognising and exploiting opportunities to support the development of literacy and numeracy through their teaching.”

“Literacy and numeracy are essential skills that enable the young person to develop as an individual, and as a contributor to society and to the economy;”

“The development of literacy and numeracy skills will enhance an individual’s learning in all other areas of the curriculum, self-esteem, employability and life chances and help break the cycle of social and economic disadvantage;”

“Improvements in literacy and numeracy are delivered not through policy statements or inspection reports but through the work of the teacher in the classroom.”

“The planning for literacy and numeracy, not just in language & literacy and mathematics & numeracy lessons but across the curriculum, should be based on structured programmes matched to the overall requirements of each class and to the needs of its individual pupils.”

“The primary responsibility for raising standards in literacy and numeracy and for closing the gap in achievement lies with teachers in schools. If this strategy is to influence significantly the work of teachers, and bring about improvement, particular care will be needed to ensure that the strategy is given highest priority within the school and recognised as an integral and ongoing element of the revised curriculum and of the school’s own improvement agenda for all pupils.”

All quotations from:

Every School A Good School, June 2008

A strategy for raising achievement in literacy and numeracy

June 2008

Numeracy Definition

The definition of numeracy in ESAGS June 2008 is:

Numeracy is the confidence and competence to apply mathematical skills in routine and unfamiliar contexts. It involves having the mathematical skills necessary to be a full contributor to society and the economy, including those central to personal financial capability, and having the disposition to think mathematically in everyday situations, including those arising in future employment. It involves the development of an understanding of key Mathematical concepts and inter-connectedness, the systematic development of reasoning and problem-solving skills, the proficient and appropriate use of methods and procedures (formal and informal, mental and written), and active participation in the exploration of mathematical ideas and models.

Rationale

Numeracy is one of the bedrocks of entitlement for all young people, regardless of age or ability. Across the curriculum, at a level appropriate to their ability, pupils should be enabled to:

- choose the appropriate materials, equipment and mathematics to use in a particular situation;
- use mathematical knowledge and concepts accurately;
- work systematically and check their work;
- use mathematics to solve problems and make decisions;
- develop methods and strategies, including mental mathematics;
- explore ideas, make and test predictions and think creatively;
- identify and collect information;
- read, interpret, organise and present information in mathematical formats;
- use mathematical understanding and language to ask and answer questions, talk about and discuss ideas and explain ways of working;
- develop financial capability;
- use ICT to solve problems and/or present their work.

Aims and Objectives

This Numeracy 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:-

- clarify the school's thinking on the development of numeracy throughout the school
- ensure a consistent approach to the development of numeracy for all pupils
- provide positive direction for all staff on matters related to numeracy
- provide a framework for action and evaluation of numeracy developments
- provide a platform for the centralisation of resources (e.g. Using Maths assessment/non assessed tasks, departmental audits etc)

Staff Responsibilities

“The strategy calls for a better co-ordinated and more effective cross-curricular emphasis on literacy and numeracy in both primary and post primary schools that supports all teachers in recognising and exploiting opportunities to support the development of literacy and numeracy through their teaching.”

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Teachers and Governors are aware that enabling young people to become Numerate is one of their core responsibilities. Each teacher is responsible for developing pupils Numeracy and skills in ‘Using Maths’ within their own area of learning.

Every teacher at Key Stage 3 has a responsibility to help pupils acquire and develop these skills. This will occur as an ongoing part of classroom activity. The skills are not intended to be something that is added on at the end, but rather a way of helping pupils develop and demonstrate a deeper understanding of the subject.

Teachers will therefore be involved in planning – identifying where and when specific skills can best support the teaching of particular topics, concepts, case-studies, issues etc. While the skills are transferable and cross-curricular, they are most meaningful when embedded in contexts within the learning area/subject strand where they can contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the subject.

Departments should therefore plan coherent programmes for learning, teaching and assessment, across the key stage, which provide opportunities for pupils to acquire, develop and demonstrate the skills.

(CCEA Revised Curriculum Stage 1 Training)

Information Communication Technology

Appropriate ICT resources will be used in each area of learning to enhance pupils' learning experiences.

Each member of staff should evaluate any such resources and should be aware of the 'numeracy' content of all such resources used.

Through consultation and co-operation, the mathematics department will advise on and co-ordinate the introduction and development of calculator skills and other similar technologies to ensure consistent use throughout the school.

Monitoring Progress

- The Numeracy Coordinator will meet regularly with other areas of learning in order to coordinate the timing and depth of treatment of Numeracy in their areas of learning and to coordinate the assessment and reporting of Using Maths
- The Senior Leadership Team and Numeracy Coordinator will meet regularly each year to review and plan for Numeracy tasks and development.
- The whole school Numeracy Policy will be reviewed to ensure that it is in line with ongoing Numeracy developments

Assessment and Reporting

There will be a requirement to assess Using Maths formally each year with reference to the levels of Progression in 'Using Maths'.

Assessment should build on the acquisition and development that is taking place across the curriculum. However while all subjects are required to contribute as appropriate, to the acquisition and development of 'Using Maths', not all are expected to contribute to the formal assessment of reporting.

Teachers will also be involved in using formative assessment strategies (Assessment for Learning) to promote the development of these skills along with knowledge and understanding in their subjects. This may involve making a particular skill an explicit focus for learning (learning intentions and success criteria), planning activities for pupils to demonstrate their competence and providing feedback, from teacher, peers, or self to help the pupil identify what s/he is good at and what they need to focus on next time.

Although every teacher has to promote the acquisition and development of Communication, Using Mathematics and ICT, some subjects will be able to provide much better opportunities than others. Not all subjects have to assess and report on these 3 skills.

Assessment evidence should be drawn from at least two key areas of learning across the key stage. Each pupil's progress in Using Maths will be reported annually in the pupil profile.

Homework Guidelines

As in school's homework policy

Parental Involvement

- Parents will be encouraged to help their children with homework / investigations etc
- Parents will be kept informed of developments in numeracy

Additional Activities

- Maths fun days
- Maths competitions
- Numeracy noticeboard
- Maths quizzes
- Lunch time Maths activities