

Rationale

The Literacy programme at David Livingstone Memorial Primary follows Curriculum for Excellence guidelines. Our core planning reflects the Benchmarks and all teachers take careful consideration of the 7 design principles. Curriculum for Excellence recognises that literacy is a major component of primary education. It states that:

“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: Literacy and English, Principles and Practice, Scottish Government, 2009)

Writing Organisers

Writing is one of the 3 organisers within the Literacy and Language Framework and this is then subdivided into the following:

- Enjoyment and choice
- Tools for writing
- Organising and using information
- Creating texts

In planning, our staff will consider each of these subdivisions across the curricular areas, taking account of individual needs and abilities.

Across the Curriculum for Excellence levels, challenge and progression appropriate to individual abilities will be at the heart of learning and teaching to ensure that each child achieves his or her potential. We aspire to make learning coherent and relevant in order that learners link the purpose and value of the experiences to their lives, present and future.

Writing within Curriculum for Excellence

At David Livingstone Memorial Primary School our children will be provided with opportunities to:

- Explore sounds, letters and words
- Explore different materials for writing
- Develop handwriting and presentation skills
- Learn spelling rules and exceptions
- Record experiences, ideas and feelings in different ways
- Develop and use effective vocabulary
- Write functionally, personally and imaginatively

At Early Level, children will be encouraged to see the relevance and importance of writing, for example, making marks on paper to produce a shopping list. They will be provided with interesting resources to explore and develop this skill. Children will progress on to recognising and producing the correct formation of letters, words and sentences.

At First Level, children will use their skills to explore and record their own experiences and imaginary worlds. Children will learn to make notes under given headings and use them to understand information, explore ideas and problems and create new texts. They will become more aware of punctuation and the ordering of a story, e.g. beginning, middle and end.

At Second Level, note-taking will develop to allow individuals to independently organise information, encouraging in-depth analysis of texts. Children will use more complex punctuation, paragraphs and will vary their sentence structure with an awareness of audience and purpose.

VCOP

Within all writing activities, there will be a focus on developing VCOP (Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation). In P1-3, reference should be made to VCOP characters, namely Violet Vocabulary, Captain Connective, Incredible Opener and Doctor Punctuation. There should be a VCOP display in all classes, with the VCOP characters displayed in P1-3 classrooms. In addition, there should be examples of the VCOP strategies included in the display, with children encouraged to add their own contributions, too.

When highlighting evidence of VCOP being used, the following colours of highlighters should be used in the children's jotters:

Vocabulary = blue
Connectives = pink
Openers = orange
Punctuation = green

Writing Lessons

Where possible, VCOP should be practised daily in all classrooms. As part of the formal Writing lesson that is completed once per week, the following timings should be observed:

P1-3 = 20 minutes VCOP, 10 minutes planning, 20-30 minutes individual writing
P4-7 = 30 minutes VCOP, 15 minutes planning, 45 minutes individual writing

Each child should have their own Writing jotter. In P1-3, this jotter should be A4 in size with alternate blank and lined pages (15mm wide spaced lines); in P4-7 this jotter should be A4 in size and lined (8mm spaced lines) on all pages. There should be a contents page included at the front of each child's jotter, recording the writing that has been completed weekly.

During class writing lessons, children should engage in a range of self, peer and teacher assessment, with feedback given relating to how the child's writing could be improved.

Planning

Over the course of the year, children should engage in a range of personal, imaginative and functional writing. Writing lessons can be isolate in nature, or they can be linked to the current interdisciplinary topic for the class. Where appropriate, writing frames should be provided to support the children with their learning. Following the baseline assessment which is completed in August of each year, classes should complete the relevant 6 lessons for high impact appropriate to their stage during Term 1.

Assessment

Baseline assessments should take the form of a letter and should be completed in August of each year. Children's work will be assessed according to the Scottish Criterion Scale.

Thereafter, one piece of writing should be formally assessed each term using the Scottish Criterion Scale. Over the session, these assessments should include one personal piece, one functional piece and one imaginative piece of writing. Scores for these assessed pieces of writing should be recorded and the piece of writing completed added to the child's individual Assessment Folder.

Pupil Success

Each class will have a 'Star Writer' display outside their classroom door. There is also the opportunity for a piece of writing to be chosen to be included on the Golden Standard Wall every term.