**Kilmessan Mixed N.S.**

****

**Whole School Plan**

**English**

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**English - Whole School Plan**

1. **Introduction**

This plan was prepared by the staff of Kilmessan Mixed NS in 2020-2021. This policy is intended to guide teachers in their individual planning for English and to ensure a consistent approach in the teaching of the English curriculum. It also takes into account the revised Primary Language Curriculum.

**Rationale**

In Kilmessan Mixed NS, we are committed to the holistic development of all pupils and language is key to the development of the child as a person. In developing this whole school plan for English, we hope to:

● benefit teaching and learning in our school

● conform to principles of learning outlined in the Primary Language Curriculum

● create and implement a core curriculum in the areas of reading, writing, oral language, poetry, spelling, phonics and handwriting.

**2. Aims of the English Plan**

We aim through this plan, drawn up in accordance with the Primary Language Curriculum, to set out our approach to language teaching & learning. This plan will form the basis for teachers’ long and short-term planning.

The Primary Language Curriculum aims to support teachers to:

● enable children to build on prior knowledge and experience of language and language learning to enhance their language learning.

● encourage children of different languages and cultures to be proud of and to share their heritage.

● recognise the wide variation in experience, ability and language style which children bring to language learning in school as a first step in enabling them to engage in relevant and meaningful communicative relationships.

● enable children to fully engage with and enjoy a wide range of relevant and meaningful linguistic and communicative experiences with peers and adults.

● promote a positive disposition towards communication and language by fostering within children a lifelong interest in and a love of language learning for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

● broaden children’s understanding of the world through a rich variety of language experiences and through fostering an awareness and appreciation of other languages and cultures in an enriching learning environment.

● encourage children to engage personally with and think critically about a broad range of spoken, gesticulated, written and multimodal texts.

● support children to develop their literacy skills and enable them to progress at their own learning pace in oral language, reading and writing.

● nurture within children an awareness of language, allowing them to appreciate and understand the content and structure of languages and acquire a basic understanding of the history of languages and other cultures.

The Primary Language Curriculum sets out an image of children as communicators, readers, writers and thinkers, and a vision and understanding of primary classrooms as places where children are enabled to progress at their own pace in environments and relationships which are supportive, engaging and inclusive.

**Broad Objectives, Content and Methodologies**

The broad objectives, content and methodologies for the teaching and learning of oral language, reading and writing are detailed in this document. Each of these areas is presented under the four strand headings of the Revised English Curriculum and reflects best current practice and pedagogy.

1. **Oral Language - Broad Objectives**

The aim of this plan is to provide a structured sequential programme for teachers to enable children to:

1. Gain pleasure and fulfilment from language activity e.g., Aistear themed language

2. Develop the capacity to express intuitions, feelings, impressions, ideas and reactions in response to real and imaginary situations through talk and discussion, and the development of ideas.

3. Develop fluency, explicitness and confidence in communication.

4. Develop listening skills, language conventions, vocabulary, aesthetic response and language manipulation. (*Appendix 1: Vocabulary)*

**4. Reading -Broad Objectives**

The aim of this plan is to provide a structured and sequential programme for teachers to enable children to:

1. Develop reading fluency through print awareness, phonemic awareness, word identification strategies and sight vocabulary. (*Appendix 1: Vocabulary/Appendix 2: Phonics*)

2. Develop their comprehension and analytical strategies. *(Appendix 3: Comprehension Strategies)*

3. Expand their understanding and usage of grammar, syntax and punctuation. (*Appendix 4: Grammar & Punctuation)*

4. Develop their appreciation of the richness and diversity of reading material.

5. Experience the pleasure and fulfilment to be gained from reading.

**DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) Time**

Children are given opportunities to select reading material and read for pleasure for a sustained period during the day.

**Shared Reading/Paired Reading /Guided Reading**

Shared & Paired Reading with parents/other classes is co-ordinated by the staff.

**School & Class Libraries:**

Each class has its own Class Library, which is re-stocked & updated termly (or more often) by the class teacher in consultation with the relevant SET. All class groups are timetabled to visit the school library weekly. Children select 2 books each week. (Covid-19 restrictions have temporarily halted this activity)

**5. Writing Broad Objectives**

The aim of this plan is to provide a structured and sequential programme for teachers to enable children to:

1. Write clearly, correctly and fluently.

2. Use a wide range of vocabulary.

3. Use grammar and punctuation appropriately. (*Appendix 4: Grammar & Punctuation*)

4. Write in a wide variety of genres encompassing differing styles, purposes, audiences and level of formality. *(Appendix 6: Writing Genres)*

5. Experience opportunities to develop presentation, editing and publishing skills.

6. Engage in collaborative writing experiences. *(Appendix 7: The Writing Process)*

7. Edit and redraft writing. Use code system to edit and self-correct work. *(Appendix 8: Marking Scheme)*

8. Develop a high standard of penmanship. Children will be taught joined writing from 1st/2nd class. (*Appendix 9)*

9. Children in 5th & 6th class will be given an opportunity to obtain a *pen licence*. Children do not use correction fluid (*tippex*), instead they cross out the word and write the correct word above or beside the error.

**6. Spellings** *(Appendix 11)*

Regular class time will be timetabled for the teaching of spelling strategies. From First Class upwards, the *Spellings for Me* programme is used. This computer & workbook-based scheme generates an individualised spellings programme for each pupil & includes weekly tests.

The convention of spelling will be achieved progressively through a multidimensional approach. This will include:

● Linking spelling with the development of phonological and phonemic awareness

● Linking it with onset and rime.

● Building up a bank of commonly used words

● Having a rich experience of environmental print

● Compiling word walls and personal word banks, e.g., personal names, local placenames, seasonal words etc.

● Using dictionaries and thesauruses

Using strategies such as:

1. Predict, look, say, cover, write, check

2. Mnemonics

3. Rhythm and rhyme

4. Creation of word searches

5. Aide memoires

6. Spelling buddies

7. Syllabication

8. Exaggeration of the word

9. Becoming familiar with common spelling rules & exceptions

10. Accepting approximate spelling in creative writing

**Use of Dictionaries**

Dictionaries will be used from first/second class. Formal time will be devoted to teaching the children how to use a dictionary correctly. For this purpose, a child friendly dictionary will be selected and provided by the school. Fallon's Children’s Oxford Dictionary, Irish Edition. Rang 5 and Rang 6 will also have some class copies of a more sophisticated dictionary and an appropriate thesaurus, and pupils will be encouraged to use these.

**Curricular Planning**

1. **Language:**

**The two fundamental principles of the English language curriculum are:**

● Children learn language and learn through language (Curriculum p. 3)

● Language learning is an integrated process in which it is difficult to separate the functions of oral language, reading & writing. For example, a lesson in oral language may have related activities in reading & writing and may also address several strands e.g., Competence and confidence in using language and developing cognitive abilities through language (Curriculum p. 2)

The three strands of Oral language, Reading and Writing, as outlined in English: Additional Support Material (2005) remains unchanged as do all the content objectives. The content objectives for each strand are represented under two categories: development and skills.

1. **Strands and elements**

Across the strands of oral language, reading and writing, the elements describe essential language learning. Each element has a set of Learning Outcomes, which describe important language learning in terms of concepts, dispositions and skills.

**The elements of language learning across each of the strands are:**

1. Developing communicative relationships through language

2. Understanding the content and structure of language

3. Exploring and using language.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Elements** | **Oral language** | **Reading** | **Writing** |
| Communicating | Engagement, listening and attention (intentionality, verbal memory) Social conventions and awareness of others (relevance, turn-taking, extra and paralinguistic skills) | Engagement (intentionality) Motivation and choice (relevance) | Engagement (intentionality) Motivation and choice (relevance, purpose, audience) |
| Understanding | Understanding Sentence structure and grammar (syntax, morphology) Acquisition and use of oral vocabulary (semantics, verbal memory, articulation skills) Demonstration of understanding (semantics) | Conventions of print (meaning and interpretation of text/illustration) Phonological and phonemic awareness Phonics and word recognition (alphabetic principle, word identification strategies) Reading vocabulary (semantics) | Conventions of print and sentence structure (syntax) Spelling Vocabulary (semantics) |
| Exploring & Using | Requests and questions Categorisation Retelling and elaborating (narrative text and response) Playful and creative use of language (aesthetic dimension of language) Information giving, explanation and justification (expository text) Description, prediction and reflection | Purpose, genre and voice (awareness of author’s purpose) Comprehension (comprehension, text organisational structure and fix-up strategies Fluency and self-correction (accuracy, fluency and meaning) | Purpose, genre and voice (sense of voice, aesthetic dimension of text) Writing process (using processes, structures and language register) Response and author’s intent author’s purpose and responding) Handwriting (legibility) |

1. **Planning, teaching and assessing for learning**

The Primary Language Curriculum helps teachers to support children’s language learning and development through the process of planning, teaching and assessing for learning in English. Four parts (components) of the Primary Language Curriculum work together to support teachers’ planning, teaching and assessment for language learning: Learning Outcomes, Progression Continua (Appendix), Examples of children’s learning and development, and Support Material for teachers.

Together, the Learning Outcomes and the Progression Continua provide important reference points for teachers to plan for, and make judgements about, children’s language learning. Three tracker children will be selected to represent the three different levels in the classroom, enabling teachers to decide on the next steps in teaching and learning to help children progress in English.

1. **Assessment and Record Keeping**

Teachers are encouraged to use a wide range of assessment methodologies such as:

● Teacher observations

● Teacher designed tasks

● Simple projects

● Responses the child makes to question and answer situations

● Child participation

● Interaction and reaction of the child

Standardised tests are administered in May of each year. Currently we used the Drumcondra Reading Test from 1st– 6th class. The MIST (*Middle Infants Screening Test*) is administered in Senior Infants. *Dolch* lists, BIAP (*Belfield Infant Assessment Profiles)*, the *Primary School Assessment Kit* and *Jolly Phonics* assessments are also used in Junior classes. Further screening, diagnostic and cognitive testing is carried out if necessary.

1. **Children with Additional Needs**

It is the policy of our school that all children will participate in English lessons and activities. The English programme will be differentiated in order to meet the needs of all the children in the class. Every attempt, with the valued assistance of additional staff (Support teachers, SNAs) will be made to ensure that all children are accessing the English Curriculum at their own level. Differentiation will be outlined in our *Cúntas Míosúil* each month to enable the teachers to reflect how effectively and successfully they have differentiated for children with different needs & abilities in each subject area.

We promote an active learning environment, with children working in groups at their level, where the class teacher is responsible for learning in the classroom and is assisted by the SET team. Team teaching and station teaching blocks are arranged throughout the year. SETs use our schools ‘Continuum of Support Plan’ (*See SEN Policy*) to support children with phonics/reading.

1. **Equality of Participation and Access.**

Equal opportunities will be given to all children regardless of gender, ethnic background, and socio-economic status across all strands and activities.

**Organisational Planning**

**1. Timetable**

Time is allocated for English as laid out in the Curriculum and as amended by the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy. Time spent on English has been increased by a half hour overall per week (i.e., to 3.5 hours for infants with a shorter day, and to 4.5 hours per week for students with a full day). This is **40 mins per day for Infants** and **55mins per day for all other classes**. The process of language learning is naturally developed through integrated activities and through a thematic/cross-curricular approach.

1. **Resources and ICT**

Please see the relevant appendices for an outline of the programmes we use in our school. As well as the core materials used in all classes, the teachers also have a range of complementary and supplementary materials in their classroom.

We have a selection of graded readers in each classroom. We also have access to a wide selection of class novels. These are available from the central library. When selecting a class novel, the following factors will be considered:

● Suitability for reading level/age of pupils

● Suitability of content/subject

● Teacher’s own interest in a particular novel/author

● Interests of a particular class

**3.** **Individual Teachers’ Planning and Reporting**

The whole school plan and the curriculum documents for English will seek to provide information and guidance to individual teachers for their long- and short-term planning. Class teachers will be required to prepare:

● Long term plans (yearly or termly)

● Short term plans (fortnightly or weekly for NQTs)

The *Cuntas Míosúil* will be used to measure the success of the English plan and will inform teacher’s preparation for the following year.

1. **Staff Development**

Staff needs will be assessed regularly and details of courses and training days relevant to the English programme will be displayed on the staffroom notice board and staff will be encouraged to attend. In our school, there is a culture of sharing the expertise acquired from these courses. Team teaching takes place in the school which facilitates the sharing of knowledge & skills.

1. **Parental Involvement – Home School Links**

The school recognises parents and guardians as the primary educators of their children. They can be involved in many ways in supporting our English Plan including:

● Parents are aware of the central importance of oral language in the learning process.

● Parents are made aware of the importance of involving children in purposeful language activity. Parents are encouraged to assist their child’s oral language development by discussing the school day with their child, taking an interest in what they are learning and talking with their child daily.

● Parents can support their child’s reading, e.g., paired reading, shared reading, story reading, reading environmental print, ICT programmes, homework – listening to & talking about reading, visiting the local library, participating in book fairs, book week etc.

● The school can support parents in accessing suitable reading materials by providing information about the local library & events of interest.

● Information will be shared with parents, e.g., presentations at induction meetings, discussion at parent teacher meetings, regular emails, the school newsletter, website, PA Facebook page etc.

6. **Community Links**

The school staff and the Board of Management are committed to work in such a way as to embrace the input of children, teachers, parents and members of the community and to enable the highest level of participation and partnership.

***Success Criteria***

The success of this school plan will be assessed based on the following criteria:

● Teachers’ preparation has been based on this plan.

● Procedures in this plan have been consistently followed.

● All children should have achieved progression along the milestones during the year.

**Timeframe**

The current plan will be reviewed in 2024/2025

**Ratification and Communication**

On ratification of this plan by the staff and Board of Management, this plan will be communicated to all teachers through distribution and will be published on the school website.

The English plan for Kilmessan Mixed NS was ratified by the BoM

Signed:………………………………………………….. Date:………………………….

Catriona Flaherty

(Chairperson B.O.M.)

Signed:………………………………………………….. Date:………………………….

Brian Mullins

(Principal)

**Appendix 1 – Vocabulary**

**Basic Sight Vocabulary for Junior Infants to 2nd Class**

**BASIC SIGHT VOCABULARY**

**JUNIOR INFANTS**

a he on

and I see

at in sat

an is the

am it that

big like this

can me to

day my up

do does we

**Nouns – Junior Infants**

birthday box sake

car day school

sun

**BASIC SIGHT VOCABULARY**

**SENIOR INFANTS**

all has now

are have play

as he ran

be her run

but here said

did him she

dog his so

for if they

from house was

get live went

go man with

had not you

**Nouns – Senior Infants**

boy egg girl

house

**BASIC SIGHT VOCABULARY**

**First Class**

of look there

some out then

little down could

when what were

them one would

will yes come

long came ask

very over your

its ride into

just blue red

good any about

around want don’t

how know right

put too got

take where every

pretty jump green

four away old

by their here

saw call after

well think ran

let help make

going sleep brown

yellow five six walk

two or before eat

again who been may

stop off never seven

eight cold today fly

myself round

**Nouns – First Class**

cow pig dog doll

door duck farm farmer

father feet fish game

garden good-bye grass hand

head hill home money

mother name nest night

party pig rain ring

toy tree sheep sister

snow song time top

**BASIC SIGHT VOCABULARY**

**Second Class**

tell much keep give

work first try new

must start black white

ten does bring goes

write always drink once

soon made run gave

open has find only

us three out better

hold buy funny warm

ate full those done

use fast say light

pick hurt pull cut

kind both sit which

fall carry small under

read why own found

wash show hot because

far live draw clean

grow best upon these

sing please thank together

wish many shall laugh

**Nouns – Second Class**

bell bird boat bread

brother chair chicken children

coat corn eye fire

floor flower morning paper

picture rabbit robin seed

shoe squirrel stick street

table thing watch water

way wind window wood

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2nd** | **3rd** | **4th** | **5th** | **6th** |
| Word Webs | ✓ | ✓ |  |  |  |
| Word Families | ✓ |  |  |  |  |
| Definitions | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Rhyming Words | ✓ | ✓ |  |  |  |
| Time words | ✓ |  |  |  |  |
| Alphabetical Order | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |  |  |
| Context Clues | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Word Origins | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |  | ✓ |
| Similes |  | ✓ | ✓ |  | ✓ |
| Homophones |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Connotation |  | ✓ |  |  |  |
| Synonyms |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |  |
| Compound Words |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Homographs |  | ✓ |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Using Examples |  |  | ✓ |  |  |
| Dictionary Entries |  |  | ✓ |  | ✓ |
| Prefixes |  |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Antonyms |  |  | ✓ | ✓ |  |
| Exaggeration |  |  | ✓ |  | ✓ |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Suffixes |  |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Analogies |  |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Using a Dictionary |  |  |  | ✓ |  |
| Puns |  |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2nd** | **3rd** | **4th** | **5th** | **6th** |
| Figurative Language |  |  |  | ✓ |  |
| Shades of Meaning |  |  |  | ✓ |  |
| Metaphors |  |  |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Idioms |  |  |  | ✓ |  |
| Examples and Non-examples of Words |  |  |  |  | ✓ |
| Visualisation Strategies |  |  |  |  | ✓ |
| Alliteration and Assonance |  |  |  |  | ✓ |

**Word of the Week** Children from 2nd - 6th may learn a *Word of the Week* - aim to build vocabulary.

**Appendix 2 – Phonological Awareness programme**

**Junior Infants**

**1. Consonants in initial positions (names and sounds) s, t, p, n, e, k, h, r, m, d, g, l, f, b, j, z, v, y, x, qu (as in Jolly Phonics Programme) to be introduced by Easter.**

**2. Short vowels in initial positions s(names and sounds).**

**Blending of initial sounds when 3 sounds taught, i.e. s-s-t = sat**

**3. Short vowels in medial positions = familiarization with short vowel sounds.**

**4. Revision of initial sounds after Easter.**

**5. Continue blending’s to make 3 letter words e.g. cab**

**6. Building up work families (cat, bat, mat etc.)**

**7. Introduction of onset and rime e.g. c=at**

**8. Depending on readiness, introduce sounds**

**ai oa ie ee or**

**N.W. Word Lists based on 3 letter words (on pages 143-154 of Jolly Phonics Manual)**

**Senior Infants**

**1. Teachers revise Junior Infants, Jolly Phonics**

**Programme and finish sounds ee or ng oo ch sh th ou**

**ue er ar.**

**2. Pay particular attention to discriminating between vowel sounds.**

**3. NB word lists on page 143-154 of Jolly Phonics.**

**4. Concentrate on analysis and blending.**

**Rang 1**

**1. Consonants in initial positions:**

**2. g(hard)k v y j (fun, king etc)**

**3. Final double consonants; ss -ll (mass, hill etc)**

**4. Common endings: -ed -ing -s (singing, sings etc)**

**5. Initial blends: bl cl fl gl pl sl sp st**

**6. Final blends: -nd -st -nt -ft**

**7. Initial diagraphs: ch- sh- th-**

**8. Final diagraphs: -ch sh- th-**

**9. Common irregular words: taken from reading scheme**

**10. Long vowels with silent e**

**Rang 2**

**1. Long vowels with silent e: mane, fine, bone, cure.**

**2. Double e: ee bee etc.**

**3. Initial blends: -it -sp -ld -sk -ly**

**4. Final blends: -lt -sp -ld -sk -ly**

**5. Word endings: -er -est d -ly**

**6. Initial diagraphs: qu- wh- ph-**

**7. Final diagraphs: -th -tch -st -th -ck**

**8. Vowel diagraphs: -ay -ea -ie -oc**

**Teach: when 2 vowels go walking, the first on does the talking**

**9. Simple two-syllable words: kitchen hotel**

**10. Common irregular words, e.g. cough, ghost etc. based on**

**reading scheme.**

**Rang 3**

**1. Vowel diagraphs and combinations: -ue- -oe- -igh- -ew- -ur-.**

**2. Initial blends: scr- str- thr- shr- spl- sch-**

**3. Soft c and soft g: city, gentle**

**4. Diphthongs: -oc- -oy- -ou- -ow- (bow tie/bow your head)**

**5. Endings: -le -ble -dle -ple etc.**

**6. Compound words: lighthouse, searchlight etc.**

**7. Simple homonyms: their/there see/sea no/know two/to/too etc.**

**8. Words with silent letter: (wr(write) kn(know) -mb(lamb) -t-**

**(listen) etc**

**9. –oo- -ow- combinations: soon/book town/gown**

**10. Three and four syllable words: aeroplane television**

**Rang 4**

**As in Rang 3, plus**

**1. Vowel diagraphs and combinations: -ue- -oe- -igh- -ew- -ur-**

**2. Initial blends: scr- str- thr- shr- spl- sch-**

**3. Soft c and soft g: city, gentle**

**4. Diphthongs: -oe- -oy- -ou- -ow-**

**5. Endings: -le -ble -dle -ple etc**

**6. Compound words: lighthouse, searchlight etc.**

**7. Simple homonyms: hole/whole eight/ate deer/dear not/knot**

**8. Words with silent letter: wr(write) kn(know) -mb(lamb) -t-(listen)**

**etc.**

**9. –oo- -ow- combinations: soon/book town/gown**

**10. Irregular words: busy etc. take irregular words from scheme**

**Rang 5**

**1. Root families e.g. express/expressing/expression.**

**2. Prefixes**

**3. Suffixes**

**4. Syllabication**

**5. Compound words**

**6. Simple homonyms: extension of work in Rang 3 and Rang 4. More challenging groups.**

**7. Irregular words based on reading scheme.**

**Rang 6**

**1. Root families**

**2. Prefixes**

**3. Suffixes**

**4. Syllabification**

**5. Compound words**

Each class teacher has a copy of the Phonics Programme relevant to the class level.

**Appendix 3 - Teaching Comprehension Skills**

**Teaching Comprehension Skills and Strategies**

Use the following tips to provide support to students when teaching comprehension skills and strategies.

*Step 1: Select a text*

Consider reading level, genre and interests and connections when selecting a text for comprehension work.

*Step 2: Explain the skill or strategy*

Explain what the skill or strategy is and how it assists comprehension, providing examples to, illustrate and make connections to background knowledge and prior learning.

*Step 3: Model the skill or strategy*

Use reading aloud, visual aids and strategies such as “think aloud” to help students understand and relate to the skill or strategy.

*Step 4: provide guided support*

Ask the students to apply the new skill or strategy to a text, providing resources and guidance to them as they work.

*Step 5: Monitor independent practice*

Allow the students to apply the skill or strategy with decreased support until they are working independently.

*Step 6: Reflect*

Seek feedback from the students on how using the skill or strategy has helped them to understand the text.

**Comprehension Skills in Infant Classes:**

Children should develop skills in;

● questioning

● predicting

● making connections

● sequencing

**Comprehension Skills in Senior Classes:**

**Resource –**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Skills and Strategies** | **Class** | | | | |
|  | **2nd** | **3rd** | **4th** | **5th** | **6th** |
| Questioning | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Prediction | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Making connections | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Visualisation | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Declunking | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Clarifying | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Sequencing | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Determining importance |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Inferring |  |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Cause and effect |  |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Compare and contrast |  |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Synthesis |  |  |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Story structure |  |  |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Summarising |  |  |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Monitoring comprehension |  |  |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Distinguishing fantasy from realism |  |  |  |  | ✓ |

**Comprehension Skills Explained:**

**Questioning**

**Explanation**

Readers often have **questions** about what they are reading. They might want to know why particular words are chosen by the writer of the text, or they might want to know why the writer chose a particular subject.

Although readers cannot contact the writer directly for answers, they can still benefit from using questioning as a comprehension strategy. By asking themselves and each other questions while reading, readers can delve more deeply into a text and enrich their understanding of what they are reading. Questions can be created and prompted by both teachers and students.

**Purpose**

This strategy helps readers to:

* Construct meaning.
* Enhance understanding
* Find answers
* Solve problems
* Find specific information
* Discover new information
* Clarify confusion.

**Prediction**

**Explanation**

When reading a story, readers often want to know what happens next. They may even have an idea of what might happen, based on what they have already read, or on other things they have read and experienced.

Prediction can be used as a pre-reading strategy to gauge expectations and preconceptions of a text based on information such as title or book cover, and also to elicit prior knowledge of a topic. Using prediction during reading encourages readers to anticipate what comes next as a way of engaging actively with and adjusting their comprehension of the text as they read.

**Purpose**

This strategy helps readers to:

* Engage with the text.
* Create a sense of anticipation
* Find answers to questions
* Adjust comprehension of the text
* Build own opinions and awareness

**Making Connections**

**Explanation**

Readers always bring their own frame of reference and experience to what they read. Making personal connections with what you read is a very powerful comprehension strategy, as it activates prior knowledge and helps readers to make sense of the text on their own terms.

Connections can be made to:

* Something in your life (text to self)
* Another text (text to text)
* Something occurring in the world (text to world)

**Purpose**

This strategy helps readers to:

* Understand character feelings and motivations behind their actions
* Reinforce knowledge by creating connections with own experience
* Set a purpose for reading
* Improve focus
* Aid memory and comprehension

**Visualisation**

**Explanation**

To visualise is to create a picture in your mind. In reading, visualisation is a great way to “see” something in a text, whether it is a scene in a story or a mathematical problem.

Good readers automatically visualise what they read before, during and after reading. This visualisation may be based on senses, emotions, prior knowledge or all three. Visualisation helps readers to immerse themselves in the text. It also helps them to draw conclusions, recall details and develop their imaginations.

Ideal texts for this strategy include descriptive writing (fiction or non-fiction) and poetry.

**Purpose**

This strategy helps readers to:

* Create mental images from words in the text
* Enhance meaning with mental imagery
* Link prior knowledge to the words and ideas in the text
* Place themselves in the text
* Strengthen their relationship to the text
* Engage their imagination

**Declunking**

**Explanation**

When skilled readers encounter unfamiliar words – “clunks” – in a text, they use “declunking” strategies to determine the pronunciation and meaning of the words.

Declunking strategies focus on two areas:

* Decoding words (using prior knowledge to decipher parts of the word)
* Looking for context clues in the surrounding text

When choosing a text to teach this strategy, ensure the text is at an appropriate reading level but contains some words and phrases that students will not have encountered before.

**Purpose**

This strategy helps readers to:

* Practise self-monitoring while reading
* Work out the meaning of new words and concepts
* Improve vocabulary
* Improve analytical skills
* Read more fluently

**Clarifying**

**Explanation**

Good readers monitor their understanding of what they read as they are reading, checking that everything makes sense. If something does not make sense, readers can use clarifying strategies to detect the part that is causing difficulty and restore meaning and comprehension so reading can continue.

Many of the other strategies can be used as monitoring or clarifying strategies, for example, questioning, summarising, declunking and sequencing.

**Purpose**

This strategy helps readers to:

* Practise independent reading skills
* Increase confidence in reading ability
* Improve self-monitoring and understanding
* Think logically
* Develop deductive skills
* Engage more with the text

**Sequencing**

**Explanation**

Sequencing refers to the identification of the components of a story, such as the beginning, middle and end, and to the ability to retell events from a story in the order in which they occurred.

This skill is relevant to narrative fiction, but it is also a key strategy when learning to read non-fiction such as newspaper articles and historical accounts. Sequencing is also a key skill in maths and science.

**Purpose**

This skill helps readers to:

* Derive meaning from a text
* Follow descriptions of events and narratives
* Develop a sense of causality and cause/effect
* Organise & recall information logically
* Improve comprehension
* Retell a story in the correct order

**Determining Importance**

**Explanation**

When reading, it is important to be able to distinguish essential from non-essential information. This skill is relevant to all types and genres of reading and evolves as reading skills develop. The reader’s prior knowledge and experience is also an important factor as these influence what they believe to be important in a text.

**Purpose**

This skill helps readers to:

* Remember important information
* Learn new information and build background knowledge.
* Distinguish what is important from what is interesting
* Discern themes, opinions or perspectives
* Answer specific questions
* Determine the writer’s message and purpose.

**Inferring**

**Explanation**

Inferring is a skill used by good readers to “read between the lines” of a text and detect information that is not explicitly stated by the writer. Inferring uses a combination of textual information and the reader’s prior knowledge and experience to aid a deeper level of comprehension.

Inferring creates a personal connection between the reader and the text by allowing the reader to view what the writer has written through their own frame of reference and prior experience. A key part of inferring is justifying inferences using relevant prior knowledge and specific pieces of text.

**Purpose**

This strategy helps readers to:

* Draw conclusions based on clues in the text
* Make predictions before, during and after reading
* Make connections from the text to the reader’s own experience.

**Cause and Effect**

**Explanation**

In addition to describing events, texts often explain *why* events occur and *how* events are connected. If event B happens as a *result* of event A, event A is the **cause** of event B and event B is the **effect** of event A.

Looking for cause and effect relationships in a text means focusing on the process by which events make other events happen. Readers identify the cause and effect in texts by asking themselves, *what happened*? (effect) and Why did it happen? (cause). This is an important skill when reading historical texts.

**Purpose**

This skill helps readers to:

* Sequence events while reading
* Make sense of events and narrative
* Make predictions
* Identify connections
* Develop a sense of causality and logic.

**Compare and Contrast**

**Explanation**

Compare and contrast is used to highlight **similarities** and **differences** between things. It is often used in literature for descriptive effect as well as for characterisation and symbolism.

**Purpose**

This skill helps readers to:

* Distinguish between different concepts
* Use compare/contrast to convey information
* Make connections between familiar and unfamiliar things
* Increase vocabulary
* Think about classifications and characteristics.

**Synthesis**

**Explanation**

Synthesising means reflecting on individual elements of a text and looking at how they contribute to the whole. This strategy allows readers to bring together information that may come from a variety of sources.

Synthesis offers readers the opportunity to step back from what they have read and view it in its entirety. This strategy leans heavily on the reader’s prior knowledge and reading experience and is best suited to older students.

**Purpose**

This strategy helps readers to:

* Distinguish important ideas from less important ideas
* Summarise information
* Identify main points
* Identify concepts
* Make generalisations
* Merge new information with existing information to form new ideas, opinions or perspectives.

**Story Structure**

**Explanation**

The structure of a story is how the different stages and components of a narrative – character, setting, plot, conflict and resolution – are put together. A skilled reader is familiar with the structure of a story and is able to distinguish its component parts. Being familiar with story structure and conventions increases enjoyment of reading stories and develops awareness of the writing process, including concepts such as characterisation and point of view.

This comprehension skill is directly relevant to the reading of narrative texts, both fiction and non-fiction.

**Purpose**

This skill helps readers to:

* Become familiar with narrative conventions
* Read stories fluently
* Discern the role of structure in a well-told story
* Anticipate and make predictions
* Use prior knowledge to engage with the story

**Summarising**

**Explanation**

When summarising, retell the main events or ideas in a text using your own words. Summarising is a powerful comprehension tool as it involves discerning and organising the **key** **information** in a text. It also helps readers to remember what they have read.

Summarising (by definition) is done after reading. However, summarising strategies depend highly on careful and skilled reading in order to identify the main focus of a text.

**Purpose**

This strategy helps readers to:

* Identify main ideas
* Focus on key details
* Use key words and phrases
* Break down larger ideas
* Write and think concisely.

**Monitoring Comprehension**

**Explanation**

When monitoring comprehension, check regularly to make sure you understand what you are reading. This strategy encourages readers to stop and think about then text every so often, to check their understanding, and to take action if they do not understand something.

**Purpose**

This strategy helps readers to:

* Practise independent reading skills
* Improve self-monitoring and understanding
* Use prior knowledge to aid understanding
* Increase confidence in reading ability
* Develop deductive skills

**Appendix 4 - Grammar/Punctuation**

**Suggested List of Topics per Class Level**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2nd** | **3rd** | **4th** | **5th** | **6th** |
| Nouns – Common | ✓ |  | ✓ |  |  |
| Nouns – Proper |  | ✓ | ✓ |  |  |
| Nouns – Masculine and Feminine |  |  |  | ✓ |  |
| Nouns – Collective |  |  |  | ✓ |  |
| Capital Letters | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Full stops | ✓ |  |  |  | ✓ |
| Adjectives | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |  |  |
| Adjectives - Comparative |  |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Adjective - Superlative |  |  |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Present Tense | ✓ |  |  |  |  |
| Singular and Plural | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |  |  |
| Sentence Building | ✓ | ✓ |  |  |  |
| Question Marks | ✓ |  |  |  | ✓ |
| A/An | ✓ |  |  |  |  |
| Commas | ✓ | ✓ |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Past Tense | ✓ |  |  |  |  |
| Apostrophes |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Verbs |  | ✓ |  |  | ✓ |
| Adverbs |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Conjunctions |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Question Words |  | ✓ | ✓ |  |  |
| Root Words |  | ✓ | ✓ |  |  |
| Past Perfect Tense |  | ✓ |  |  |  |
| Prepositions |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |  |
| Speech Marks |  |  | ✓ | ✓ |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2nd** | **3rd** | **4th** | **5th** | **6th** |
| Contractions |  |  | ✓ |  |  |
| Did/Done |  |  | ✓ |  | ✓ |
| Colons |  |  |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pronouns |  |  |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Connectives |  |  |  | ✓ |  |
| Bullet Points |  |  |  | ✓ |  |
| Abbreviations |  |  |  | ✓ | ✓ |
| Continuous Tense |  |  |  | ✓ |  |
| Voice – Passive and active |  |  |  |  | ✓ |
| Exclamation Marks |  |  |  |  | ✓ |
| Proofreading |  |  |  |  | ✓ |
| Brackets |  |  |  |  | ✓ |
| Irregular Verbs |  |  |  |  | ✓ |
| Hyphens |  |  |  |  | ✓ |
| Who/When |  |  |  |  | ✓ |

**Senior Infants:**

* Identifying / Ticking the correct sentence, e.g. I had some sweet / I had some sweets.
* Rewriting sentences and putting the words into the correct order.
* Agreeing / Disagreeing with statements, e.g. The dog flew away [Yes / No].
* Filling in the missing words in sentences.
* Selecting the correct word to complete a sentence, e.g. The cat was \_\_\_ the table [up / on].
* Selecting the correct word to complete a sentence, using pictorial clues.

**First Class:**

* Writing a sentence about a picture.
* Rewriting sentences and putting words in the correct order.
* Verb – Finding the missing verb to complete a sentence.
* Identifying verbs in a sentence.
* Noun – Completing sentences with appropriate nouns.
* Adjectives – Adding adjectives to enhance a sentence.
* Constructing a sentence from a noun, a verb and an adjective.
* Filling the blanks in short passages using nouns/verbs/adjectives.
* Writing simple sentences to describe what is happening in the picture.
* Writing sentences using verbs in past, present and future tense.
* Writing sentences in singular / plural – are /is.

**Second Class:**

* Revision of concepts of singular /plural; past / present tense, as introduced in First Class.
* Completion of a short story using suitable words / phrases [Cloze Procedure].
* Rewriting instructions in the correct order.
* Pronoun – Exercises replacing nouns with suitable pronouns.
* Selecting correct pronouns for different sentences.
* Further exercises – past / present tense, singular / plural.
* Preposition – Completion of sentences using correct prepositions.
* Rewriting given passages / short stories in the past / present / future tense.
* Writing about pictures, using nouns / pronouns, verbs and adjectives.

**Third Class:**

* Verbs – grouping into categories, e.g. run = dash, sprint, jog, chase, rush etc.
* Making sentences more interesting by changing the verb, e.g. I went to school.
* Writing short pieces, e.g. newspaper reports, diary etc. in the first, second or third person [singular / plural].
* Completion of sentences using personal pronouns.
* Collective Nouns – writing the collective noun for different groups.
* Find / Invent collective nouns for different groups.
* Using singular / plural or both?
* Changing from singular to plural.
* Extending sentences.
* Conjunctions – rewriting sentences using conjunctions.
* Adjectives – Grouping adjectives by type, e.g. colours – dull, dark, red, scarlet, beige, etc.
* Changing a short-written passage by replacing the adjectives.

**Fourth Class:**

* Changing nouns from singular to plural “RULES”.
* List adjectives to describe a picture – write a short passage using the adjectives from your list.
* Adjectives – comparative / superlative – Making a table.
* Using comparative adjectives to describe pictures.
* Constructing sentences using comparative adjectives.
* Changing adjectives to comparative adjectives – spelling rules.
* Compiling lists of comparative adjectives, going from least to most, e.g. tiny, small, big, huge, enormous.
* Further “tense” work.
* Adverbs – classifying by “where” “when” “how”.
* Sentence construction, using adverbs in the sentences.
* Finding a number of adverbs that can be used with a list of verbs.

**Fifth Class:**

* Adding prepositions to sentences.
* In all writing activities, check for the correct use of words.
* Agreement of singular and plural with nouns and verbs.
* The use of double negatives, e.g. I’m not going nowhere.
* Classifying nouns by type – proper, common, collective, abstract.
* Review of personal pronouns.
* Clauses – Adding second clauses to sentences.
* Direct and Indirect speech.

**Sixth Class:**

* Clarifying / further practice with pronouns and prepositions.
* Subject and Object in a sentence.
* Correct use of formal language.
* Review of past work.

This is a suggested list of areas / topics that I have found relevant at different class levels. Schools should feel free to adjust / add / remove items on the lists that are not suitable for their particular needs or situation.

**Suggested Punctuation Topics for each Class Level**

**Senior Infants:**

* Draw yourself and write your name.
* Find capital letters in words
* Find capital letters in lists of letters
* Matching lower case to capital letters
* Copy lowercase and capital letters
* Write the correct lower-case letter with the capital letter
* Rewrite sentences using capital letters and full stops
* Identifying correct sentences, i.e. with capital letter and full stop

**First Class:**

* Revision of capital letters / full stops
* Capital letters in months, days, titles, places
* Capital letter – “I”
* Question Marks

**Second Class:**

* Ordering the days / months – capital letters
* Commas – writing lists
* Writing addresses correctly
* Rewriting passages correctly – capital letters, full stops, commas
* Use of comma – not before “and”
* Exclamation Marks!
* Using exclamation marks as punctuation marks in a sentence
* Speech Marks
* Rewriting sentences / short passages using correct punctuation – revision of above work
* Composing short stories from pictorial clues, paying attention to correct punctuation

**Third Class:**

* Revision of punctuation concepts to date
* Changing sentences to questions
* Identifying sentences where commas should be used
* Further work on speech punctuation

**Fourth Class:**

* Use of hyphens
* Use of apostrophe o Apostrophes for possession
* Apostrophes to shorten words o Apostrophe – use with plural nouns ending in s
* Semi-colon
* Negatives

**Fifth Class:**

* Revision of punctuation concepts to date
* Contractions
* Direct and Indirect Speech
* Working with tenses, prepositions and clauses
* “I” or “me”

**Sixth Class:**

* Dashes
* The Colon
* Compound / Complex Sentences
* The Passive Voice
* Use of Brackets in sentences
* Conditionals

These are only suggestions. Teachers should feel free to adjust them to suit the needs of their own situation.

**Appendix 5: Class Novels**

Class Novels covered each year - 1st - 6th Class (these are subject to change & updating)

Junior and Senior Classes to cover a selection of fiction and non-fiction storybooks.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Class** | **Novels** |  |  | **Additional novels available** |
| 1st Class | Flat Stanley  The Owl who was afraid of the Dark | George’s Marvellous Medicine  Chicken School  Horrid Henry’s Guide to Perfect Parents |
| 2nd Class | Spud Murphy  Bill’s New Frock |
| 3rd Class | James and the Giant Peach  Kensuke’s Kingdom | Fantastic Mr. Fox  The Silver Sword  Stig of the Dump  Pants on Fire  Skellig  Ice Man  The Secret Garden |
| 4th Class | The Boss  The Iron Man |
| 5th Class | Break the Mould  Holes  The Race for the Lost Keystone | Esty’s Gold  Charlotte’s web  The Diamond Brothers  The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas  Skulduggery Pleasant  The Guns of Easter  When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit |
| 6th Class | Harry Potter & the Philosopher’s Stone  Goodnight Mr. Tom  Stay Where You Are & Then Leave |

**Reading Scheme**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Paired Reading Scheme** | |
| Junior Infants | Oxford Reading Tree;  Stages 1, 1A, 2, 2A  Read with Biff, Chip and Kipper; Levels 1 and 2  Songbirds; Levels 2 and 3  First Story Rhymes; Pack A  Scholastic: Pink  Start Reading; Pink Band 1A and 1B  Go Books; Levels 1, 2 and 3 |
| Senior Infants | Oxford Reading Tree; Stages 2, 2A, 3, 3A  Read, Write, Inc Phonics  Sails  Oxford Literacy Web |
| 1st Class | Oxford Reading Tree; Stages 3, 3A, 4, 4A  Oxford Reading Tree: Owls, More Owls, Robins, More Robins  Scholastic Readers, Yellow, Blue  Scholastic Reading Ladder: Level 1  Read, Write, Inc Phonics,  Sails  FuzzBuzz Yellow  Oxford Literacy Web  O’Brien’s Pandas |
| 2nd Class | Oxford Reading Tree; Stages 4, 4A, 5, 5A  Oxford Reading Tree: Robins, More Robins, Magpies, Jackdaws  Scholastic Readers; Green, Orange  Scholastic Reading Ladder: Level 2  First Young Puffin  Wolf Hill; Levels 1 and 2  FuzzBuzz Blue  O’Brien’s Pandas  Treetops Level 10 |
| 3rd Class | Oxford Reading Tree: Magpies, Jackdaws, More Jackdaws, Woodpeckers  Scholastic Readers: Orange, Turquoise, Gold, Purple  Wolf Hill, Levels 2, 3, 4  Treetops Level 10 and 11  Sprints |

Graded Readers – Collins Big Cats/Oxford Reading Tree/PM readers/Over the Moon series in Junior infants -2nd. Class.

Wonderland series in 3rd. – 6th. Class.

**Appendix 6 - Writing Genres:**

The first five genres are covered from 2nd class, progressing to all eight genres by 5th and 6th class. The progression can be seen in the table below.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Genre** | **2nd** | **3rd** | **4th** | **5th** | **6th** |
| Recount | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Description | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Informational Text | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Narrative | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Procedure | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Exposition |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Discussion |  |  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Response Writing |  |  |  | ✓ | ✓ |

**Genre Descriptions:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Genre** | **Recount** |
| **Purpose** | To retell an experience or event in the order in which it happened. |
| **Features** | Usually written in the past tense (it is important that the students discover this rather than being told)  Tells us who, what, where, when why and how things happened.  Each new event is a in a new paragraph  Includes a final paragraph that tells us what happened at the end and how the writer feels about it. |
| **Text Types** | Stories, newspapers or magazines, diaries, email, history books. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Genre** | **Description** |
| **Purpose** | To create a vivid picture of the person, place or object being described |
| **Features** | Usually begins with a statement that tells the reader what is being described  Includes characteristics – What does the person or item look like? What do they do?  Contains lots of adjectives  May have a concluding statement summarising the ideas. |
| **Text Types** | Stories, poetry, guidebooks. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Genre** | **Procedure** |
| **Purpose** | To provide information on how to make or do something |
| **Features** | Usually has a title that explains what the procedure is for  Contains a list of things or materials that are needed for the procedure.  Has numbered steps or a method explaining what to do. |
| **Text Types** | Recipes, science experiments, instruction manuals, rules of a game. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Genre** | **Exposition** |
| **Purpose** | To share a particular point of view or opinion |
| **Features** | Usually argues one side of an issue  Begins with a statement of how the writer feels about the issue  Contains a series of reasons to support how the writer feels  Includes a conclusion that summarises and emphasises the writer’s arguments |
| **Text Types** | Essays, speeches, advertisements, letters, flyers or leaflets |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Genre** | **Informational Text** |
| **Purpose** | To present information about something or explain how something works |
| **Features** | Usually begins with a statement  Explains things in order  Uses present tense verbs  May use visual aids such as a picture to help the reader understand |
| **Text Types** | Fact files, magazines, reports, encyclopaedia entries |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Genre** | **Narrative** |
| **Purpose** | To entertain by telling a story |
| **Features** | Usually features characters  Takes place somewhere – the place where the story happens is called the setting  Features a problem for one of the characters  May have a beginning, a middle and an end |
| **Text Types** | Short stories, stories, novels |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Genre** | **Discussion** |
| **Purpose** | To examine both sides of an issue and present a balanced argument |
| **Features** | Begins with an opening statement to explain the issue  Presents arguments for the issue and evidence to support them  Presents arguments against the issue and evidence to support them  Includes a closing statement that summarises the arguments for and against the issue |
| **Text Types** | Newspapers, magazines, letters |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Genre** | **Response Writing** |
| **Purpose** | To give an opinion about a written or visual work, an object or an event |
| **Features** | Usually has a title that indicates what the piece is about  Includes context, or information about the work, object or event  Provides a description of the story, artwork, etc.  Presents the reviewer’s insights or judgements about the work, object or event |
| **Text Types** | Newspapers, magazines, essays |

**Appendix 7: The Writing Process**

**Seven steps to teaching writing**

**Step 1: Familiarisation with the genres**

Integration with reading and oral language is vitally important, for example, comparing samples of the genre.

**Step 2: Use an example to devise a framework**

Use a problem-solving approach where the child is active in their own learning, when teaching a new genre of writing. Ask children to look at various examples and through teacher-questioning and paired discussion children figure out the framework.

**Step 3: Modelled writing (teacher only)**

The teacher “thinks aloud” as he/she writes, while the class observe. The teacher justifies decisions, for example, in relation to the content or the language that is to be used, and also clarifies thoughts and ideas.

**Step 4: Shared writing**

The teacher has the pen and continues to “think aloud” but uses children’s ideas also. This is an effective and non-threatening way to support children’s writing and involves the teacher and the children writing together. Children make suggestions and the teacher writes these down on a flip chart, thus modelling the writing conventions.

**Step 5: Children plan their writing**

Children compose with a partner, or in a small group, so that there is peer support as they write, using the framework they have devised. The teacher’s role is to guide and encourage students by giving explicit feedback that refers to the structural or language features required in the text form.

**Step 6: Independent writing**

The child writes independently using the framework, as a reference. The teacher is always on-hand to facilitate this process through encouragement, feedback, guidance and affirmation.

**Step 7: Presentation to an audience**

The children present the writing to a variety of audiences, for example, read aloud to parents, publish in a school newsletter, e-mail to a friend, or display on a notice-board.

**Appendix 8 -Marking Scheme**

**Editing Codes Rang 5/Rang 6**

H - Heading missing

U – Underline in Red pen

P – Punctuation (. , : ; ? ! )

Caps – Capital Letter

I – Capital I

sp - spelling

gr - grammar

str – sentence badly structured

ss - shorten sentence

fs - full sentence

“ “ - speech marks missing

Λ - piece missing

**Editing Codes Rang 3/Rang 4**

H - Heading missing

Caps – Capital Letter

I – Capital I

sp - spelling

gr - grammar

Λ - piece missing

**Editing Codes Rang 1/Rang 2**

Caps – Capital Letter

I – Capital I

sp - spelling

Λ - word/words missing

**Appendix 9: Spellings**

Regular class time will be timetabled for the teaching of spelling strategies. The convention of spelling will be achieved progressively through a multi-dimensional approach. This will include:

• Linking spelling with the development of phonological and phonemic awareness

• Linking it with onset and rime

• Building up a bank of commonly used words.

• Having a rich experience of environmental print.

• Compiling personal word banks, e.g personal names, local place names, seasonal words.

• Using dictionaries and thesauruses.

• Using strategies such as;

(1) Predict, look, say, cover, write, check

(2) Music

(3) ICT

(4) Mnemonics

(5) Rhythm and rhyme

(6) Creation of word search

(7) Spelling buddies

(8) Breaking words into syllables

(9) Exaggeration of the word

• Becoming familiar with common spelling rules.

• Accepting approximate spelling in creative writing

**Junior Infants:**

• Learn to form and name individual letters using various materials.

• Understand left-right orientation when forming words.

• Copy letters and words informally and from signs in the classroom.

• Write own Christian name.

• Use labels to name familiar people and things

Spelling Homework

Homework will consist of letter/word recognition and formation.

Spelling lists will not be given at this stage

**Assessment**

Informal teacher assessment of knowledge of letter and word structure.

Formal assessment of letter recognition and sound formation.

**Senior Infants:**

• Learn to form and name individual letters using various materials.

• Understand left-right orientation when forming words.

• Copy letters and words informally and from signs in the classroom.

• Write own name, Christian name and surname.

• Use labels to name familiar people and things.

• Write letters and simple words from memory

• Become aware of lower case and capital letters

• Develop the confidence to use approximate spelling.

• Begin to develop conventional spelling of simple words, e.g. 3 letter words using onset and rime, e.g. e-at, b-at, r-at.

• Simple spellings based on phonic programmes

Spelling Homework

Homework in spellings will consist of letter/word recognition and formation. Spelling lists will not be given at this stage.

**Assessment**

Informal teacher assessment of knowledge of letter and word structure.

Formal assessment of letter recognition, sound formation and some conventional spelling of simple 3 letter words

**Rang 1**

• Learn about common word endings, word families and roots of words.

• Spell words in a recognisable way based on an awareness of the most common word strings and patterns (Page 58 Teacher Guidelines).

• Use of approximate spelling as an interim measure in mastering the convention of spelling.

• Break longer words into their constituent syllables – maximum 2 syllable words.

• Spell correctly a range of familiar important and regularly occurring words, and use of variety of sources as aids to spelling.

• Develop Word Bank to include:

(1) Numbers 1 – 10

(2) Colours

(3) Names of class mates

(4) Dolch list 1 – 4

(5) Class topics

• Spelling lists will not be taken from reader.

• Children will be grouped according to spelling ability in order to achieve success. This will be achieved by either reducing the number of spellings or by the provision of easier lists for different groups.

Pupil Resource

Each pupil may have an envelope folder, where spelling lists and worksheets will be stored.

Homework

Formal learning of spellings begins in Rang 1

Adequate class time will be given to teach spelling strategies.

Words will be based on phonics, word strings, spelling books etc. As above and will not be based on reader.

Lists of spellings to be learned will be divided into daily segments, e.g. 2 per night.

**Assessment**

Regular testing will take place.

Spelling tests will be marked by the teacher, and records of progress kept.

All children will be given the opportunity to experience success.

***Spellings for Me*:**

*Spellings for Me* is an individualised spelling programme for all class levels from first to sixth (we currently use the Programme from 2nd – 6th) Children engage with the programme by completing dictation sentences in an online setting. These dictation sentences are made up of *Dolch* words appropriate to each class level.

 Once children have built up a specified number of incorrectly spelled words, these words become their own personalised list of spellings; referred to in the programme as 'Learning Words’.

 Learning Words are then printed and pasted into a *Spellings for Me* workbook. Children learn these spellings for homework and use them to complete written activities in their workbooks.

Once Learning Words activities are completed using the workbooks, children return to online testing. A 'Learning Words’ test is taken online to assess their learning thus far, before beginning the whole process again.

The entire process and the Spellings for Me workbooks are identical for each class level, with only the pupils' differentiated list of spellings being the varying factor. There are 40 levels of testing which cover a diverse range of abilities across all class levels. Each pupil has a bespoke list of Learning Words commensurate with their abilities. They progress at their own pace & there is continuity as they move from class to class.

**Rang 2**

• Learn about common word endings, word families and roots of words.

• Spell words in recognisable way based on an awareness of the most common word strings and patterns (page 58 Teacher Guidelines)

• Use approximate spelling as an interim measure in mastering the convention of spelling.

• Break longer words into their constituent syllables – maximum 3 syllable words.

• Spell correctly a range of familiar important and regularly occurring words and use of variety of sources as aids to spelling.

• Develop work bank top include:

1 Numbers 1 – 20

2 Days of the week

3 Seasons

4 Relevant countries

5 Class topics

6 Names of class mates, some surnames.

7 Commonly used words which sound the same e.g. blue-blew

8 Commonly used words which mean the same e.g. big-huge

9 Commonly used words which are opposite e.g. large-small

10 Commonly used question words e.g. when, what, where, how etc.

• Adequate class time will be given to teach spelling strategies.

• Words will be based on phonics, word strings & *Spelling for Me* lists.

• Lists of spellings to be learned will be divided into daily segments e.g. 2-3 per night.

**Assessment**

• Regular testing will take place

• Total of words to be tested in a test will not exceed 20

• All children will be given the opportunity to experience success

• Spellings will be marked by the teacher

**Rang 3**

• Learn about common word endings, word families and roots of words.

• Spell words in a recognisable way based on an awareness of the most common word strings and patterns (Page 58 Teacher Guidelines)

• Use approximate spelling as an interim measure in mastering the convention of spelling.

• Break longer words into their constituent syllables.

• Spell correctly a range of familiar important and regularly occurring words and use of variety of sources as aids to spelling.

• Develop Word Bank to include

(1) Numbers 1 – 100

(2) Ordinal numbers 1st – 10th

(3) Days, months, seasons

(4) Names of class mates

(5) Relevant countries and counties

(6) Place names and addresses

(7) Class topics

(8) Homonyms

(9) Synonyms

(10) Antonyms

(11) Dolch list 1 – 11

(12) Class topics

**Assessment**

• Regular testing will take place

• Total of words to be tested in a test will not exceed 20

• All children will be given the opportunity to experience success

• Spellings will be marked by the teacher

**Rang 4**

• Learn about an increasing more complex set of word endings, word families and roots of words.

• Spell words in a recognisable way based on an awareness of the most common word strings and patterns. (Page 58 Teacher Guidelines)

• Use approximate spelling as an interim measure in mastering the convention of spelling

• Break longer words into their constituent syllables – maximum 4 syllable words.

• Spell correctly a range of familiar important and regularly occurring words and use of variety of sources as aids to spelling.

• Develop Work Bank to include:

(1) Ordinal numbers 1st – 100th

(2) Full names of pupils

(3) Place names and addresses

(4) Class topics

(5) Homonyms

(6) Synonyms

(7) Antonyms

(8) Curricular topics

• Children at this stage may be occasionally involved in marking their own work or the work of their peers, under the guidance of the teacher.

**Assessment**

• Regular testing will take place

• Total of words to be tested in a test will not exceed 20

• All children will be given the opportunity to experience success

• Spellings will be marked by the teacher

**Rang 5 and 6**

• Increased use of dictionary

• Use of thesaurus

• Study word derivation, e.g. octagon, century etc.

• Learn about an increasingly more complex set common word endings, word families and roots of words.

• Spell words in a recognisable way based on an awareness of the most common word strings and patterns (Page 58 Teacher Guidelines).

• Use approximate spelling as an interim measure in mastering the convention of spelling.

• Break longer words into their constituent syllables;

• Spell correctly a range of familiar important and regularly occurring words and use of variety of sources as aids to spelling.

• Children will use a personal dictionary for new words.

**Assessment**

• Regular testing will take place

• Total of words to be tested in a test will not exceed 20

• All children will be given the opportunity to experience success

• Spellings will be marked by the teacher

**Appendix 10: Poetry**

**POETRY**

Children’s engagement with poetry will be governed by the ‘pleasure principle’.

Our poetry course will examine every area of children’s experience and engage their imaginations as well.

Poetry will encompass:

• Seasons

• Festivals

• Home and family relationships

• Nature

• Magic and mystery

• Story

• History and mythology

• Humour

**The repertoire of poetry**

In the early years the emphasis will be on rhymes, riddles, nursery rhymes and jingles. This introduction to poetry is important and should convey the notion that poetry, more than any other form of language, has to do with a very special use of words, their meanings and connotations. The strong rhythmic and rhyming character of this sort of verse makes it very attractive to young children and makes it eminently suitable. The classroom library contains a wide selection of poetry collections and anthologies. These, coupled with the teacher’s knowledge of what is available from the vast field of what might be appropriate to the children’s stage of development, will form the basis for choosing poems. Children will be encouraged to read poems themselves. They will have the opportunity to hear, read, write and enjoy poetry on a regular basis. When writing poetry, the children will be allowed to work as a whole class, in groups and pairs as well as individually. Teachers will write the different types of poems. Children will have an opportunity to present their work.

**Writing Poetry**

**Junior and Senior Infants**

**Onomatopoeic Poems**

Onomatopoeic Poems are sound poems and are an ideal way for young children to think about objects, people, animals, birds etc. and the sounds they make. Children would need plenty of preliminary work before creating the poem and it may link with oral language, a story that has just been read, an excursion etc. e.g.

The Supermarket

• Trolleys banging

• Mammies talking

• Music playing

• Babies crying

• Registers ringing

• I want to go home

**Pyramid Poems**

A Noun

A adjective Noun

A adjective, adjective Noun

A adjective, adjective, adjective Noun

In the Pyramid poems get the children to describe the chosen topic using one adjective in the first line, then two adjectives in the second line and so on. The children can add as many lines as they wish, with a short sentence at the end to round off the poem. The following example is based on the story “Can’t You Sleep Little Bear” by Martin Waddell

**Bear**

A bear

A little bear

A cute, little bear

A tired, cute, little bear

A scared, tired, cute, little bear

Go to sleep little bear

**First and Second Class**

**Acrostics**

Write the title vertically on the left hand side of the page, each letter represents a word and can then be added to form a sentence. For younger children you can begin by using their name, mammy, daddy, pets, animals, birds, seasons etc. Develop the theme for older children by using feeling, emotions or other abstract ideas

**G**ardening all the time

**R**ubs my knee when I fall

**A**nd makes yummy scones

**N**ever gives out

**N**ever complains

**Y**es, I love my granny

**Rhyming Couplets**

Teachers can begin using rhyming couplets with infant classes, but children need a lot of practice with rhyming words. Nursery rhymes are a great place to start; rhyming couplets can also be linked to phonological awareness or with rhyming poems and stories. Teachers can begin using rhyming couplets. Begin by reciting common nursery rhymes to the kids, but change the last word on the first line, get the children to fill in a word that rhymes with this e.g.

Humpty Dumpty went to the shop

To buy himself a... lollipop/spinning top

Humpty Dumpty bought a hat

In it was a big black...cat/rat

Jack and Jan (Dan, Gran, Stan, Ann)

Went to...Japan

To see a...man in a caravan

Or just make up your own rhymes. It is important to brainstorm rhyming words with the children before you begin e.g., bear, there, where, lair, mare, hair, chair, glare, pear, pair, stair, tear, wear etc.

Deep in the wood was a grumpy bear

Who sat all day in a gloomy lair...

I saw a lovely young red fox

With a black tipped tail and white, white socks

**Alphabet Poems**

Good precursors to alphabet poems are oral language games such as the Minister’s Cat. These allow children to think of adjectives, going from a-z to describe the cat.

The minister’s cat is an **a**wful cat

The minister’s cat is a **b**eautiful cat

The minister’s cat is a **c**reepy cat etc.

This game can also be played using the names of the pupils.

My name is **D**eirdre and I like **d**oughnuts

My name is **T**om and I hate **t**omatoes etc.

Or

My name is **Ita** and I am in **Ita**ly (countries)

My name is **Mar**y and I eat **mar**malade (food)

This depends on the level and ability of the class

There are numerous different forms of alphabet poems, in the example below we focus on verbs but you can create a poem using adjectives, nouns etc. The poems don’t have to rhyme.

The Playground

A asked to go to the loo

B bounced a ball

C crawled under the fence

D danced round Paul

**Adapting the theme for senior classes**

ABC Books allow children to choose a word for each letter of the alphabet and describe it in some way. As a class you may wish to focus on a theme, animals, insects, countries, flowers, feelings etc.

A is for anger and gritting my teeth

B is for blushing and making silly mistakes

C is for cranky when I don’t get my way...

**Group Poems**

In the following poem the title of the poem is taken and repeated throughout the poem, to begin link the theme to a topic that the children are familiar with e.g.

In the Playground

We run around

In the Playground

We swap lunches

In the Playground

We play chasing

In the Playground

**Free Poems**

It is important that children remember that poems don’t always have to rhyme in order to be a poem. Similarly, we don’t always have to tell children to write a poem for them to express themselves poetically. A young six-year-old wrote the following piece in her nature copy, she was not asked to write a poem, but when the teacher saw the piece she praised the child for the beautiful poem, the child was delighted. You may have opportunities within your own class that can highlight children writing poetically, it may be a sentence from an essay etc.

I Like Nature

Flowers come with nature

Trees come with nature

We come with nature

**Colour Poems**

Colour poems can be written and developed right through the school. When writing colour poems with junior classes just repeat the colour at the beginning of each sentence. Get the children to brainstorm things that are this colour e.g.

Black

Black is my cat

Black is granny’s stove

Black is my shiny shoe

You can also focus on themes when writing this sort of poetry e.g., Friends are..., Autumn is ......etc.

**Adapting the theme for Senior Classes**

War is..., Hunger is...etc. When working with the older classes you don’t have to repeat the colour/theme at the beginning of each sentence, also rather than constantly thinking of solid objects ask the children to think of things that the colour/object/theme represents e.g.

Black

The old mine degenerating in the dead of night

The exposed body lying helplessly on waste ground

An engulfing darkness in a maze of winding passages

A dagger of evil stained with blood

A cold and lingering silence

**Third and Fourth Classes**

**Adjective Poems**

In this instance we repeat the title three times on the first and last lines of the poem and at the end of each line in the poem. The poem can be as long or as short as you want. For younger kids the words may be of just one syllable but in order to develop this type of poem for the middle classes and senior classes you can ask for two and three syllable words also. You can also ask that all of the adjectives in each line begin with the same letter e.g.

Pirates

Pirates, Pirates, Pirates,

Big, beefy, burly pirates,

Dark, dour, dangerous pirates,

Mean, mucky, massive pirates

Pirates, Pirates, Pirates.

A variation of this poem is to use verbs and *adverbs* e.g.

Sailing

Sailing, sailing, sailing

Silently sailing,

Swiftly sailing,

Surely sailing

Sailing, sailing, sailing

**Up and Down Poem**

This variation of acrostics poems and can be used with the older classes – a theme or title is taken and is written in capitals and in a bright colour. They create their poem around this. Before beginning, choose one “key” word as the focus – e.g. slavery, Peace, freedom etc. Brainstorm related key words – adjectives, adverbs, feeling words, power words etc. Write the word DOWN the middle of the page, (one letter per line). Students can write individually, in pairs or in small groups. Fit words and phrases around the letters by choosing your kindred words, or by using the brainstorm list to help. The idea is that each letter from the key word becomes incorporated into the word or phrase going across. The one rule is that the first line and the last should be connected in some way – same word or same sentiment. A more difficult exercise is to write the title down the right side of the page, so that all the lines of the poem end with those letters.

HOMEWORK

**H**orrible stuff,

c**O**mpletely disgusting, in fact!

**M**akes

m**E**

**W**ants to

g**O** and find a

“**R**eal job” ...

Nah, I don’t thin**K** so!!

**Sausage Poems**

Sausage poems are lots of fun. In these poems the last letter in the first word is the same as the first letter in the second word and the last letter in the second word is the same as the first letter in the third word and so on.

Before you begin play *Word Tennis Pairs*. It’s a great oral language game and a good introduction to these types of poems.

Word Tennis Pairs (countries), e.g., EnglanD, DenmarK, KenyA etc.

Examples of Sausage Poems:

HoW WoulD DangerouS SnakeS SnaP PetrifieD DonkeyS?

HippoS SwoP PyjamaS SO OfteN No-onE EveR RememberS

Now try write the poems so that the last letter of the word is the same as the first letter of the first word, this is known as a circle sausage poem

**Riddle Poems**

Riddle poems can be just two lines long e.g.

I am a see-through pear

Hanging from my tree-less branches (Answer: Light bulb)

**However, there are riddles that have a standard format:**

Line 1: Clue about the subject

Line 2: Hint using an adjective and a noun

Line 3: Two actions connected with the riddle

Line 4: Last clue in the form of a phrase/statement

Line 5: Answer to the riddle

**Character poems**

(Character first name) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Lives \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, (where?)

Hears\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

Sees\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Touches\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Needs \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Fears \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

Gives \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

Wonders \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

Dreams \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

Believes \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

Loves \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and

Is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

(last name of character)

An example of a character poem:

Frodo

Lives in Bag End where he

Hears horses’ hooves,

Sees black riders gallop,

Touches the one ring to rule them all,

Needs to save the Middle Earth,

Fears the Orcs,

Wonders if he can fulfil his quest,

Dreams of home,

Believes in Gandalf’s magic,

Loves Bilbo, and

Is strong enough to defeat all enemies.

Baggins

**Limericks**

In limericks line one, two and five rhymes, and line three and four rhymes.

In a castle that had a deep moat

Lived a chicken a duck and a goat.

They wanted to go out

And wander about

But they didn’t have was a boat

**Fifth and Sixth Classes**

Kennings

A title or topic is chosen, and children describe it in other ways without using the name.

Storm

An angry sky-god

A lightening-thrower

An electricity-charge

A tree-destroyer

**Alliteration Poems**

For the middle classes poems with alliteration can be scaffolded. Here the children are given sentences that may act as starting points. Similarly, the children may be given a word that can begin each sentence (e.g. to rhyme or not to rhyme).

Alliteration poems are sentences, phrases or statement where the words in each sentence begin with the same letter e.g.

One waggly walrus won a wet wager

Two trustful twins tumble in a typhoon,

Three thin thoroughbreds thumped a thick thief...

Cinquains

These poems have five lines:

Line 1: 1 noun

Line2: 2 related adjectives

Line 3: 3 descriptive gerunds (verb + -ing)

Line 4: 1 complete, related sentence

Line 5: 1 noun (a synonym of first noun)

War

War

with its antonym

(opposite) (b) Line 5: 3 gerunds

(verb + ing) to describe noun (b) Line 6: 2 adjectives to

Describe noun (b)

Line 7: noun (b)

Seasons

Winter

Rainy, cold

Skiing, skating, sledding

Mountains, wind, breeze, ocean

Swimming, surfing, scuba diving

Sunny, hot

Summer

**Haiku**

This is a traditional form of Japanese poetry. The first two lines make a statement and in the final line these two statements are combined.

Line 1: 5 syllables

Line 2: 7 syllables

Line 3: 5 syllables

Example of Haiku:

A broken oak branch

In the dark and soggy wood

Supports my trip home

**I.C.T.**

ICT is an integral element of learning across all subjects in our school. Computers (laptops & iPads) are regularly used by pupils to draft, edit, re-draft their written work. Computers are also used by pupils for research & presentation purposes, allowing pupils to present their work in different genres (e.g., narrative writing, project work, PowerPoint displays, poetry etc.).

Spellings for Me.

Software is available for use in the school for the English programme.

All software will be stored centrally where it is accessible to all.