

Rationale

Language learning enables children to understand the world around them and to communicate effectively with others. Communication takes many forms, from the non-verbal and verbal to print-based and digital texts.

- Language shapes who we are.
- Language learning is a developmental process.
- Language learning is an integrated process.
- Children learn languages through interactions.
- Children learn languages in different school contexts.

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

The Primary Language Curriculum supports children in realising their full potential as individuals and as members of communities and society during childhood and into the future

Aims

1. Children and their lives

The Primary Language Curriculum aims to support teachers to

- enable children to build on prior knowledge and experience of language to enhance their language learning
- encourage children to embrace Irish positively, and promote our cultural identity through the use of the Irish language
- 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 that children bring to language learning in school as a first step in enabling them to engage in relevant and meaningful communicative relationships.

2. Children's communications and connections with others

The Primary Language Curriculum aims to support teachers to

- embrace children's uniqueness by nurturing their appreciation of their home language, their understanding of language and diversity, and their ability to use different languages, gestures and tools to communicate with people in a variety of contexts and situations
- encourage and enable children to communicate effectively in both the first and second language of the school and to communicate in their heritage language for a variety of purposes
- enable children to fully engage with and enjoy a wide range of relevant and meaningful linguistic and communicative experiences with peers and adults

3. Children's language learning and development

The Primary Language Curriculum aims to support teachers to

- 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

St Fiacc's English Plan

- 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
- enable children to use language imaginatively and creatively and to appreciate its aesthetic aspects
- 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

Strands and Elements

There are three *strands* in the Primary Language Curriculum — **oral language**, **reading** and **writing** in both English and Irish.

Across the strands, 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 are interdependent.

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

1. **Developing communicative relationships through language**
2. **Understanding the content and structure of language**
3. **Exploring and using language**

Learning Outcomes and Transfer of Skills

Learning outcomes are used to describe the expected learning and development for learners at the end of a period of time.

Many of the Learning Outcomes in one language have concepts and skills which transfer across Learning Outcomes in the school's other language.

Oral Language Learning Outcome labels

Engagement, listening and attention

Motivation and choice

Social conventions and awareness of others

Sentence structure and grammar

Vocabulary

Demonstration of understanding

Requests, questions and interactions

Categorisation

Retelling and elaboration

Playful and creative use of language

Information giving, explanation and justification

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Description, prediction and reflection

<https://curriculumonline.ie/Primary/Curriculum-Areas/Primary-Language/Oral-Language/>

Reading Learning Outcome labels

Engagement

Motivation and choice

conventions of print and sentence structure

Phonological and phonemic awareness

Phonics, word recognition, and word study

Vocabulary

Purpose, genre, and voice

Response and author's intent

Comprehension

Fluency and self-correction

<https://curriculumonline.ie/Primary/Curriculum-Areas/Primary-Language/Reading/>

Writing Learning Outcome labels

Engagement

Motivation and choice

Spelling and word study

Vocabulary

Purpose, genre, and voice

Writing Process and creating text

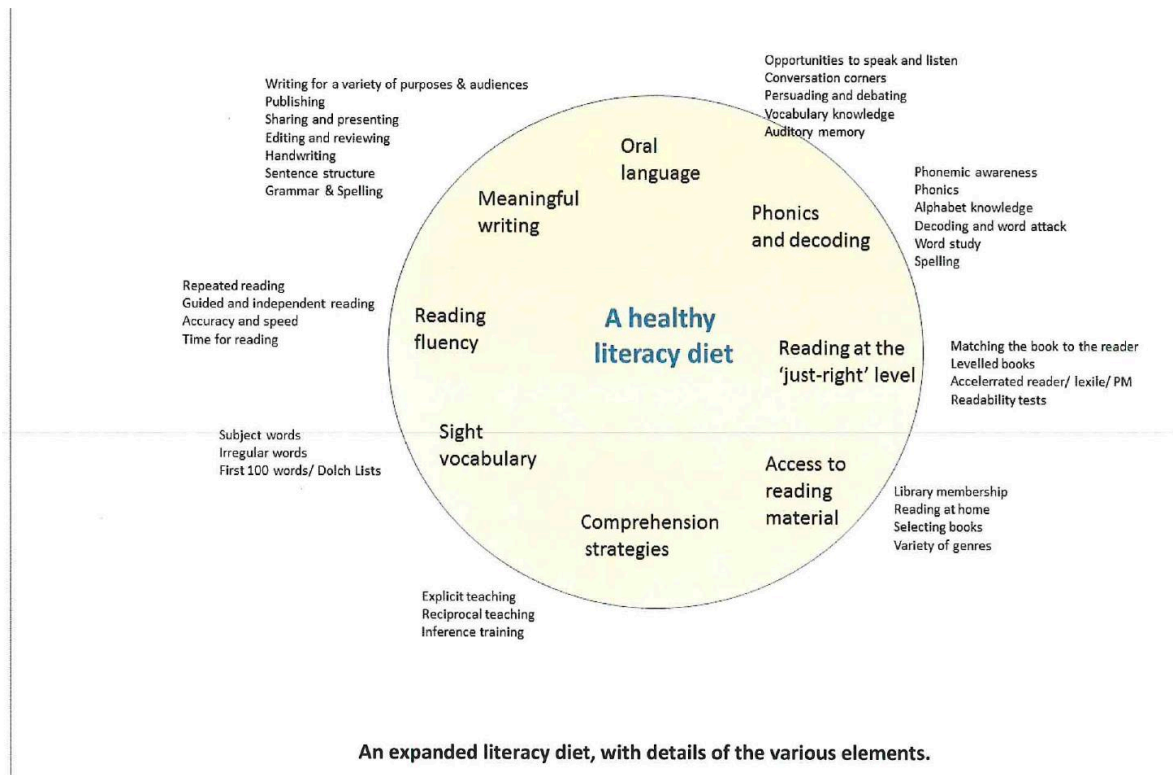
Response and author's intent

Handwriting and presentation

<https://curriculumonline.ie/Primary/Curriculum-Areas/Primary-Language/Writing/>

PLC – Overview (English)			
	<u>Oral Language</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Writing</u>
Communicating ("The Will")	Engagement, Listening and Attention	Engagement	Engagement
	Motivation and Choice	Motivation and Choice	Motivation and Choice
	Social Conventions and Awareness of others		
Understanding ("The Skill")	Sentence structure and Grammar	Conventions of print and Sentence Structure	Conventions of Print and Sentence Structure
	Vocabulary	Vocabulary	Vocabulary
	Demonstration of Understanding	Phonics, Word Recognition and Word Study	Spellings and Word Study
		Phonological and Phonemic Awareness	
Exploring and Using ("The Thrill")	Requests, questions and interactions	Purpose, Genre and Voice	Purpose, Genre and Voice
	Categorisation	Comprehension	Writing process and creating texts
	Retelling and elaboration	Response and Authors Intent	Response and Authors Intent
	Playful and Creative use of language	Fluency and Self correction	Handwriting and Presentation
	Information Giving, Explanation and Justification		
	Description, prediction and Reflection		

St Fiacc's aims to teach a balanced approach to Literacy in line with NEPs recommendations



Approaches and methodologies for teaching English to EAL pupils

- Second Language learning: Once pupils have acquired some words in the new language, they begin to mix and use L2 words in L1 sentences giving mixed utterances. If the new language is acquired in a familiar setting, they will learn words and phrases that are regularly used throughout the day.
- The communicative approach: precommunicative stage; communicative stage; post communicative stage.
- Functions of language: A person's use of language to achieve some communication goal is called a 'language function'.
- Immersion: Following a period of immersion in the new language, children should be encouraged to transfer the skills they have learned in the new language to other languages and vice versa
- Transfer of skills: The process of learning a second language can be supported if teachers devote some instructional time to teaching for transfer across languages rather than viewing each language in isolation, or as separate "subjects".
- Language awareness and cultural awareness: For children who are speakers of a language different to the majority in a class, it is important for the teacher to affirm their

language skills and to provide opportunities to share the culture and customs of the country/heritage of their language.

- Linguistic Diversity: Acknowledging the presence of a variety of languages in a classroom provides an opportunity for teachers to embrace the multilingual classroom.

Approaches and methodologies for teaching English (general)

- Play: Play makes a major contribution to literacy in the opportunities it provides for the development of the children's oral language.
- Cross-curricular and disciplinary literacy: Learning in other curriculum areas offers rich potential for the meaningful and critical application of language and literacy skills
- Critical literacy: Critical readers not only understand what they are reading, they question it.
- Digital literacy: is the child's ability to locate, select and critically analyse relevant information in multiple modes to include text, visual and audio. It also includes the capacity to engage with digital technology in creative and imaginative ways

Content and delivery of the Three Strands

Oral Language

[Overall-Oral-Language-Plan.pdf](#)

Discrete Oral Language lessons are taught using the online Starlight Programme (Folens)

[Checklists for assessment of Oral Language](#)

Reading

Phonological Awareness

Phonological Awareness is introduced in Junior Infants using the Heggerty Programme before Phonics is introduced in November.

[Junior Infants Phonological Awareness Plan](#)

[Senior Infants Phonological Awareness Plan](#)

[First Class Phonological Awareness Plan](#)

Phonics

[Junior Infants Phonics Plan](#)

[Senior Infants Phonics Plan](#)

[First Class Phonics Plan](#)

[Second Class Spelling Plan](#)

[Draft-Spelling-morphology3rd-6th.pdf](#)

DEIS Plan - Literacy

Our DEIS plan outlines a suite of actions and interventions undertaken throughout the school to improve **Reading Fluency**

[Literacy DEIS Plan](#)

[Literacy-Continuum.pdf](#)

Comprehension

Comprehension strategies are taught discretely at St. Fiacc's using Big Books recommended from The Building Bridges of Understanding Programme

Class	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Junior Infants	Prediction	Creating Images/Visualising;	Making Connections
Senior Infants:	Prediction	Creating Images/Visualising; Making Connections;	questioning
First/Second	Prediction Creating Images/Visualising	Making Connections; questioning;	determining importance
Third/Fourth	Prediction Creating Images/Visualising	Making Connections; questioning;	Summarising and Paraphrasing/Clarifying; determining importance
Fifth/Sixth	Prediction Creating Images/Visualising Making Connections	questioning; Summarising and paraphrasing/Clarifying; determining importance;	inferring; Synthesising

Declunking, skimming and scanning can be taught through any form of text.

[Comprehension Strategies Big Books Year 1](#)

[Comprehension Strategies Big Books Year 2](#)

Guided Reading

Guided Reading is taught in the 3rd, 4th and 5th classes using levelled fiction and non-fiction Big Cat readers for 8 week blocks. (T1/T2). Pupils are "Levelled" before each block of intervention using the PM Benchmarking Kit.

Peer Tutoring

Peer Tutoring takes place in the 6th classes for a 6 week block in Term 2 levelled fiction and non-fiction Big Cat readers

Literacy Interventions

Intensive targeted literacy interventions programmes are taught for 8 week blocks from Senior Infants to 2nd. (T1 & T2). The levelled PM readers and Red Squirrel decodable readers are utilised.

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A targeted intensive literacy intervention programme for 8 week block is taught in Junior Infants using decodable readers, letter formation, and phonics/phonological awareness every March. Baselines are established before each intervention and are retested at the end of the 8 week period. To promote **Shared Reading** with parents, the levelled text/decodable goes home with the child for the duration of the interventions from infants-5th in a plastic folder.

Reading Inventory of levelled readers

The inventory of PM Books, Big Cat readers and Red Squirrel decodable readers will be added to the policy this year.

Classroom Novels

Class novels are available from 2nd - 6th. The class novels are currently banded according to class level.

[Novel List 2023-2024](#)

Library

All classes have timetabled access to the school library and a classroom library. The class library is stocked with a variety of reading material including dual language books for EAL pupils.

Use of Dictionaries

Dictionaries will be used from Second Class up. Formal time will be devoted to teaching the children how to use a dictionary correctly.

Writing

Writing Genres

Writing Genres are taught over a two year cycle at St Fiacc's using the 7 Steps to Teaching Writing Process. Tracker samples are examined against agreed benchmarks to measure progress.

[Steps-to-teaching-Writing.pdf](#)

Writing Genres taught in Year 1

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Recount (also using narrative)	Persuasive	Procedural (Also may use explanatory)

Writing Genres taught in Year 2

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Report	Narrative	Explanatory

[Benchmarking-for-REPORT.pdf](#)

[Benchmarking-for-NARRATIVE.pdf](#)

[Benchmarking for Explanatory](#)

*The remaining benchmarks will be added over the next two years.

Handwriting

[HandwritingPolicy-November-2017.doc.pdf](#)

[Handwriting-Checklists.pdf](#)

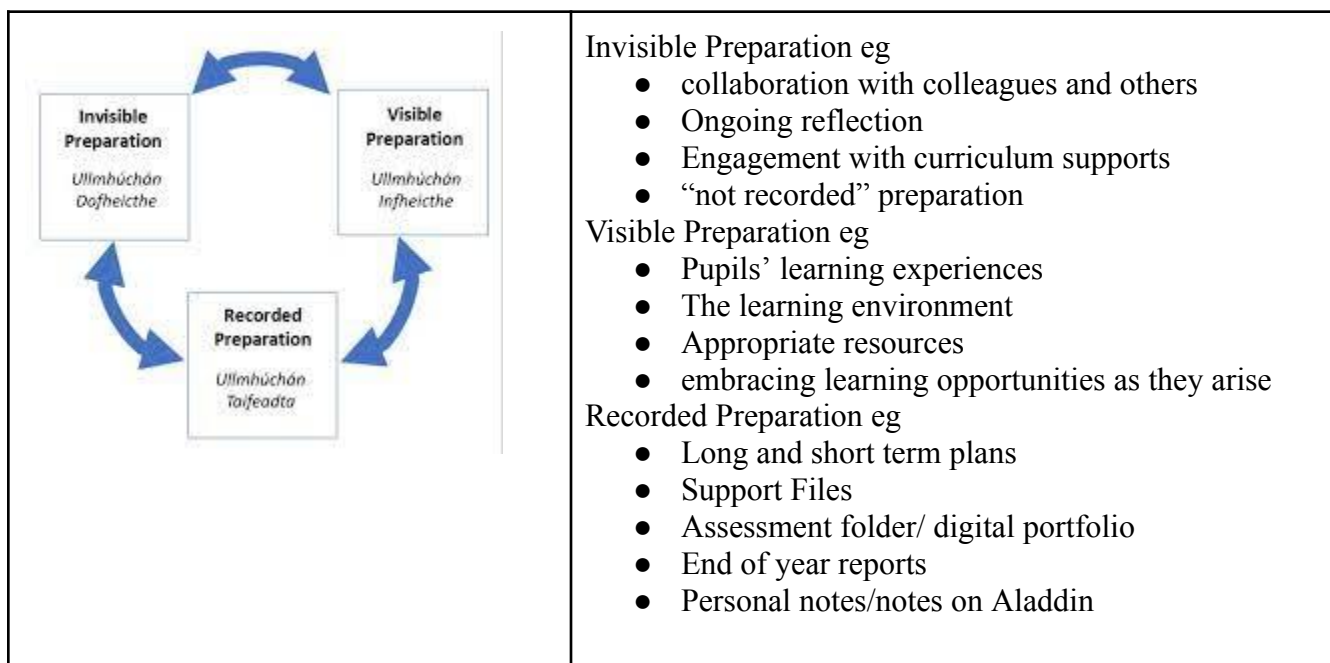
Free writing

All classes practice Free Writing for a variety of audiences weekly.

Functional Writing

[Functional-Writing.pdf](#)

Arrangements for Individual Teachers, Planning and Reporting



Timetabling

The time allocation for English language instruction each week is 3 hrs 15 mins in the infant classes and 4 hours 45min in 1st & 2nd and *3 hours 45 min in the 3rd - 6th classes.

- 1hr/week for Language 3 learning

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching. It involves teachers and children working together to use information to inform and support learning and teaching. These decisions are informed and shaped by:

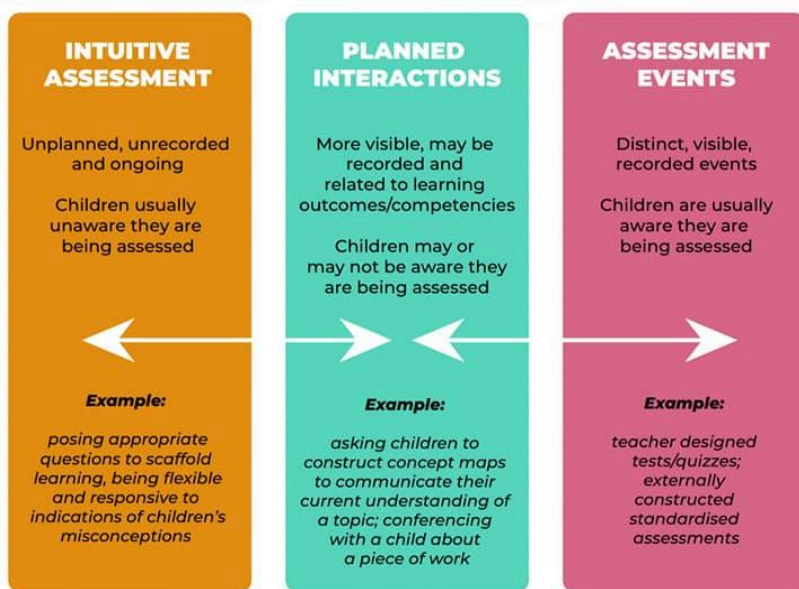
- **knowledge of the child** and their prior learning (relationship with child, parent, previous teacher; Reports/Support files; observations)
- **knowledge of the curriculum** www.pmc.oide.ie www.curriculumonline.ie CPD; supports
- **knowledge of pedagogy**. (appropriate & engaging learning experiences; reflective practice; taking account of children's interests and prior learning)

Providing children with regular time to talk about their learning, reflect and determine their next steps contributes to their identity and confidence as learners.

Opportunities for assessing learning:

Children's learning can be assessed along a continuum from 'intuitive' to 'planned interactions' to 'assessment events' as shown in Figure 10. The three types of assessment are complementary, and necessary, to gain a comprehensive picture of a child's progress and achievement.

Figure 4: Continuum of assessment



*Portfolios: Portfolios can be assembled, digitally or otherwise, to compile evidence of children's language learning and provide a source of self-reflection, feedback and assessment. Artefacts could include pictures, recordings and work samples, among others. All pupils keep digital portfolios at St Fiacc's NS.

Meeting with individual needs.

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Children scoring below the 12th percentile on a Drumcondra SAT are withdrawn for small group support from 2nd - 6th. Support for all is provided through inclass targeted learning interventions from infants to 5th. Children scoring above the 95th percentile are offered a language Enrichment programme from 2nd - 6th. St Fiacc's has 1 trained Reading Recovery teacher.

Homework

English homework can vary from reading, to writing to representing learning digitally. It is kept to a minimum and generally acts as reinforcement. follows on from class work.

Success criteria

- Achievement of the aims as set out in the start of this plan.
- A successful implementation of the Primary Language Curriculum
- Utilisation of all the approaches as set out in this plan.
- That all pupils will succeed at language in accordance with their abilities

Roles and Responsibilities

All members of staff will implement the plan and issues involving its implementation will be discussed at Whole Staff, Senior Management and English Committee level. Miss Payne, as Literacy Co-ordinator has overall responsibility for monitoring of the English plan.

Time frame for review

The plan will be initially reviewed annually to embed and every three years thereafter