

Policy on Literacy, Cnoc Mhuire, Granard, Co Longford 25/4/12

Scope – This document sets out the school's policy in respect of the tuition of literacy as part of the integrated education of all students. We are committed to the development of a whole-school approach to literacy and recognise the need for a multi-stranded approach. We are committed to using a whole-school approach to literacy to improve learning and raise standards.

Link to Mission Statement

This Literacy Policy is an important framework within which we are committed to creating a learning environment which emphasises the holistic development of our pupils so that Cnoc Mhuire can be "**A place of excellence where children can achieve full potential in their academic, creative, personal, physical, moral and spiritual development**"

Rationale – In July 2011, Minister for Education and Skills, Ruairi Quinn, launched the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life 2011- 2020, to improve literacy and numeracy among children and young people in Ireland. DES Circular 0025/2012.

Definition of Literacy

Literacy includes the capacity to read, understand and critically appreciate various forms of communication including spoken language, printed text, broadcast media, and digital media.

Aims

This Literacy Policy aims to ensure that appropriate opportunities and procedures are in place to enable the school

- to ensure that the education programme is supported by the development of literacy skills in our students by using incoming 1st year assessments, their primary school passport and National assessments at end of 2nd year.
- to ensure that all students are supported in improving their literacy skills (oral, written, listening and reading)
- targeted interventions to support students with poor literacy skills in Learning support/ Resource
- to ensure subject specific literacy/ common terms are taught in all subject areas, including subject specific vocabulary and to recognise the reading, comprehension and writing demands of specific subjects by using literacy boards.
- to promote whole-school literacy by maintaining a positive ethos, creating a high public profile (e.g. creating a print rich environment using displays, spelling bees, paired reading)
- to develop the specific teaching of literacy within English and related departments (e.g. Learning Support and Resource)
- to ensure students understand exam vocabulary
- to encourage and promote reading among our students
- to improve spelling, syntax and grammar by all teachers showing concern for same
- to improve digital literacy by using Resource/ computer room once a week for all 1st years
- to develop oral skills (by questioning/ reading aloud/ oral presentations/ discussion/ debating)
- to devote time to staff in-service training in the area of literacy
- to promote continued parental involvement and support of their child's literacy development

- Goals/Objectives

Agreed goals/ targets from 8/1/2012

All 1st years should know

- ✓ How to use capital letters and proper sentences, punctuation, commas and apostrophes
- ✓ Be able to compose a postcard, letter and to write a short essay using paragraphs (150 words)
- ✓ Answer questions on comprehensions
- ✓ Be able to comprehend the textbooks' language and put it into simpler language
- ✓ Know their teacher's names and correct spelling of same
- ✓ Have neat tidy writing, line their copies, know their key words/ definitions in each subject area
- ✓ Not use text language, slang or abbreviations

All 3rd years should know

- ✓ How to build on all of the above so that essays should be well structured with an introduction/ body/ conclusion (two A4 pages)
- ✓ Know the exam terminology and to answer what is asked
- ✓ Use descriptive and expressive language/ broader vocabulary

All 6th years should

- ✓ Use critical thinking skills, analysis and comprehension skills and be able to use them competently
- ✓ Recognise and use different language registers
- ✓ Be able to plan, write and structure critical essays
- ✓ Compose a logical argument on a given topic
- ✓ Write creatively, displaying diverse vocabulary and clarity
- ✓ Understand subject specific terminology and address the question asked
- ✓ Remain cognisant of mechanics of grammar, spelling, syntax and punctuation

Roles & responsibility - Literacy is everyone's responsibility

Owen Swaine & Jordy Cattigan are the literacy team

Sandra Durkan is the Literacy Link person

Agreed Initiatives for Implementation as Whole School Activities:

Literacy boards	DEAR	Spelling bees
Dictionary	Spelling tests (one per week)	Cloze tests
Contemporary novels purchased	Visiting poet/ theatre	
Use of school library for 1st years	Laminated definitions of key terms in classrooms	
One reading class per week for 1st years		
Parents asked to buy a book at Christmas for the DEAR initiative		
Consistent approach to writing, layout, punctuation, grammar etc by all teachers		

A visit for first year students to the Granard library.

Teachers agreed to correct and date homework regularly.

When correcting classwork /homework, provide positive feedback and treat literacy issues as important.

When marking exams / assessments, give positive, instructive and developmental feedback.

Success Criteria

Standardised test results at end of 2nd year (2015)

Monitoring implementation - *Who & when?*

All subject teachers shall participate fully and enthusiastically in the agreed whole school literacy initiatives. The Board of Management, Principal, and Literacy team shall monitor and implement the policy.

Review & evaluation

The Literacy Policy will be reviewed by teachers and by the Board of Management in 2015 and thereafter every four years. Evidence will be gathered, analysed and judgements made as to the strengths and weaknesses of the policy.