

Scoil Íosagáin Whole School Plan for English

Curriculum Planning

English

Introductory Statement and Rationale

Introductory Statement

The English whole school plan was reviewed by staff and updated to incorporate the New Primary Language Curriculum in Term 1 2023.

Rationale

In Upperchurch N.S, we are committed to the holistic development of all pupils and we see language as being a key component in each child's development.

In developing this whole school plan for English, our hopes are:

- a. To benefit the teaching and learning of the English Curriculum in our school
- b. To create and implement a core curriculum in the areas of reading writing, oral language, poetry, spelling, phonics and handwriting.
- c. To conform to principles of learning outlined in the Primary School Curriculum.
- d. To ensure consistency, development and continuity in our approach to the teaching of all aspects of English throughout the school.

Vision and Aims

Vision

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. In keeping with this vision set out in the new Primary Language Curriculum, our intention at Upperchurch National School is to develop our students' abilities in relation to the areas of communication, reading, writing and thinking. In seeking to do this we will strive to deliver teaching which enables our students to progress at their own pace in environments and through relationships that are supportive, engaging and inclusive. (Primary Language Curriculum p. 12)

Aims and Objectives of Primary Language Curriculum

Children and their lives

- Enable children to build on prior knowledge and experience of language to enhance their language learning.
- Encourage children to embrace language positively, and promote our Irish identity through use of the Irish language.
- 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.

Children's communications and connections with others

- 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.

Children's language learning and development

- 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.
- 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 texts, gesticulated, written, spoken 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. (*Primary Language Curriculum, p.12/13*)

We want all our pupils by the end of sixth class to be able to:

- Read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding;
- Be able to orchestrate a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual) to monitor their reading and correct their mistakes;
- Understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately;
- Have fluent and legible handwriting;
- Have an interest in words and their meaning and a growing vocabulary;
- Know, understand and be able to write in a range of genres in fiction and poetry, and understand and be familiar with some of the ways in which narratives are structured through basic literary ideas of setting, character and plot;
- Understand, use and be able to write a range of non-fiction texts;
- Plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing;
- Have a suitable technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their reading and writing;
- Be interested in books, read with enjoyment, and evaluate and justify their preferences;
- Through reading and writing, develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.

We believe that a consistent, structured and intensive oral language and phonics programme will improve learning and teaching in all areas of the curriculum. Therefore, we are using the **Jolly Phonics** programme to enhance the competence and confidence in phonics and blending, which will enable development in reading and writing. We are using the **Starlight** oral language programme from Junior Infants to Sixth Class to enhance competence and confidence in speaking and listening.

A thematic approach is used to teach Oral language, Reading and Writing from Infants to 6th class.

To further develop English comprehension we are using the **Building Bridges of Understanding** along with **PDST Manuals** and **First Steps for Writing**.

Curriculum

Strands and Elements :

The following table sets out the Strands and Elements of the Primary Language Curriculum:

Element 1: Communicating

Strand:	Learning Outcome:
Oral Language	Engagement, listening and attention (intentionality, verbal memory) Social conventions and awareness of others (relevance, turn taking, extra- and paralinguistic skills)
Reading	Engagement (intentionality) Motivation and choice (relevance)
Writing	Engagement (intentionality) Motivation and choice (relevance, purpose, audience)

Element 2: Understanding

Strand:	Learning Outcome:
Oral Language	Sentence structure and grammar (syntax, morphology) Acquisition and use of oral vocabulary (semantics, verbal memory, articulation skills) Demonstration of understanding (semantics)
Reading	Conventions of print (meaning and understanding of text/illustration) Phonological and phonemic awareness Phonics and word recognition (alphabetic principle, word identification strategies) Reading vocabulary (semantics)
Writing	Conventions of print and sentence structure (syntax) Spelling Vocabulary (semantics)

Element 3: Exploring and using

Strand:	Learning Outcome:
Oral Language	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
Reading	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)
Writing	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)

Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes are organised in four stages

- Stage 1 Junior and Senior infants,
- Stage 2 First and Second classes
- Stage 3 Third and fourth classes
- Stage 4 Fifth and sixth classes

The Primary Language Curriculum builds upon the principles of Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework. 'Through appropriately playful learning experiences, children should be able to...' is used to introduce all Stage 1 Learning Outcomes (junior and senior infants), clearly indicating a playful approach to

teaching and learning in the early years of primary school. For Stages 2 to 4 (first to sixth class), the phrase, 'Through appropriately engaging learning experiences, children should be able to...' is used to introduce all Learning Outcomes. Together, these introductions to the Learning Outcomes highlight the importance of active, interactive and enjoyable language-learning experiences for children throughout their primary school years.

Oral language Activities will be approached through five principal contexts:

- Talk and Discussion.
- Play and Games.
- Story.
- Improvisational Drama.
- Poetry and Rhyme.

Oral Language

In Upperchurch NS we endeavour to equip pupils with the necessary oral language skills needed for life. We adopt a whole school approach to Oral Language. Children need to work in a range of situations – developing the ability to question, explain and present ideas; give and understand instructions; Plan, discuss, tell stories and take part in collaborative and exploratory play. They will learn to develop confidence, precision and competence in reasoning, predicting, re-calling and expressing feelings. They develop sensitivity to audience and tolerance of views and ideas is encouraged.

The staff of Upperchurch NS are aware of the pivotal role that Oral language plays in the development of each child, and is an integral part of all other subjects across the primary curriculum. The schools agreed approach to Oral Language will draw on three areas of content.

1. Discrete Oral Language

In planning for Oral Language we will implement and focus on the three elements:

- Communicating
- Understanding
- Exploring and Using

Form, structure, use of language and grammar are addressed during Discrete Oral Language time. Children are encouraged and taught to use correct pronunciation, grammar etc. when speaking. Discrete oral language will be addressed using curriculum objectives as guidelines e.g. introducing oneself and others; greeting others and saying good-byes; giving and receiving messages; using the telephone; making requests for information; giving directions; expressing appreciation; welcoming visitors; making a complaint; expressing sympathy etc. In Upperchurch NS. the Aistear programme is implemented. The programme provides a structured framework for oral language development and acquisition. A number of strategies eg 'Show and tell', Vocabulary Games, Oral Reports are used to develop expressive and receptive oral language skills. The Starlight programme is implemented from Infants to Sixth Class.

Infants to Sixth classes have timetabled oral language sessions weekly using some activities from the Starlight Oral Language programme. Oral language games, News time and Guided Reading/Literacy Lift-Off sessions are used to promote oral language development. In planning for oral language, the following are some examples of the activities used throughout the school

- Talk and discussion
- Recount
- Story Telling and Anecdote
- Interest Talks
- Conscience Alley/ Expressing opinions justifying and persuading
- Story
- Improvisational Drama/Play (Aistear)
- Poetry and Rhyme (Including ScórnaPáistí)
- Games include 30 seconds/ Articulate for kids/5 second rule
- Questioning and Interviews
- Oral Reports
- Think, Pair and Share
- Debating

Learning Outcomes

1. Engagement, listening and attention
2. Motivation and choice
3. Social conventions and awareness of others
4. Sentence structure and grammar
5. Vocabulary
6. Demonstration of understanding
7. Requests, questions and interactions
8. Categorisation
9. Re-telling and elaborating
10. Playful and creative use of language
11. Information giving, explanation and justification
12. Description, prediction and reflection

2. Integrating Oral language through the Reading and Writing process

Oral Language is used as a basis for reading and writing. The following oral language activities and skills are developed through the teaching of reading and writing - comprehension strategies, language experience approach, brainstorming at the pre-writing stage, peer-conferencing and pupil teacher conferencing, children in author's chair, use of novel, writing process, etc.

3. Integrating Oral language across the curriculum

The following oral language skills will be targeted in an integrated way e.g. describing skills in Visual Arts, listening skills in Music and PE, turn taking, expressing opinions, media study in SPHE. Teachers will incorporate a variety of organisational settings into the teaching and learning for development of Oral Language such as pair work, group work, whole class discussion.

Upperchurch NS recognises the important role drama plays in developing children's self-confidence and building self-esteem. We hold a Christmas concert annually where children are actively involved in all aspects of planning, exploring and making drama, co-operating and communicating, performing and reflecting.

Teachers will incorporate a variety of organisational settings into the teaching and learning for development of Oral Language such as pair work, group work, whole class discussion, formal and informal debates and circle work. Other initiatives include Guided Reading, Literacy Lift-Off, Jolly Phonics, First Steps and Aistear. As well as discrete oral language time oral language will be fully integrated across the curriculum.

Development of receptive/listening and expressive skills:

- Listen and respond to stories, describe feelings, instructions, directions etc
- Listen and respond to a variety of sounds both inside and outside the classroom
- Develop both verbal and non-verbal behaviour
- Repetition of words, phrases and sentences
- Use of variable tones of voice
- Engage in real and imaginary situations involving language use
- Provide vocabulary to help describe personal experiences
- Expressive skills through role play

Assessment of Oral Language:

- Observation by the Teacher.
- Conferencing
- Peer/ Self Assessment
- Teacher Designed Tasks and Tests
- E- Portfolio (e.g., recording on various platforms)
- Questioning
- Concept Mapping

Reading

In Upperchurch NS we endeavour to provide pupils with essentials for Reading include access to books, oral language experiences, reading at home and motivation

Learning Outcomes

1. Engagement
2. Motivation and Choice
3. Conventions of print and sentence structure
4. Vocabulary
5. Phonics, word recognition and word study
6. Phonological and phonemic awareness
7. Purpose genre and voice
8. Comprehension
9. Response and author's intent
10. Fluency and self correction

Aims for Reading

In the area of reading development we aim to:

- promote positive attitudes and develop the appreciation of reading
- develop print awareness, an understanding of the purpose of print, and a control over the different ways meaning is derived from print
- develop a range of reading skills and abilities that would include phonemic awareness, word identification strategies and a growing sight vocabulary
- develop an appropriate range of comprehension strategies to help interpret text beyond the literal level (prediction, inference, etc.)
- develop an awareness of the richness and diversity of reading material reading from a variety of texts of gradually increasing complexity
- engage in and enjoy sustained silent reading
- enhance emotional and imaginative development through reading
- develop cognitive ability and the capacity to clarify thinking through reading
- Use the school library to increase fluency and interest in books.
- Use explicit instruction of reading skills and strategies to enable at-risk children to participate more fully in literary experiences.

Key Elements of Emergent Reading

A variety of examples of a print-rich environment are evident in our school including big books in a range of genres, picture books, independent reading books, new vocabulary for Aistear theme, charts of poems, songs and rhymes, labels and directions, name charts, written materials produced by the children, jobs chart, timetables, word charts, magnetic surfaces and magnetic letters, notice board, charts of days, months, seasons and festivals calendars, theme charts, environment print in the neighbourhood, etc.

Basic Sight Vocabulary

Basic sight vocabulary is an important component of the language children need before embarking on a structured reading programme. It will be acquired from a number of sources, such as language experience material, large-format books, environmental print, labelling, flash cards, word boxes and jolly phonics tricky words.

Sight vocabulary is initially developed following the Jolly Phonics Programme. These groups of words have been graded to progress from the very simple, using the earliest learnt sounds, to the more complex syllabic words. We also extend sight vocabulary by selecting common words, core words, words from the New book, high interest/frequency words, Dolch list, and social sight vocabulary.

Phonemic and Phonological Awareness:

- Infants are introduced to letter sounds through such schemes as Jolly Phonics which is currently being used.
- They are introduced to the concept of Rhyme through saying and learning nursery rhymes, rhymed stories and a range of activities e.g. sound wheels, rhyming charts, I spy games involving onset and rimes.
- Syllabic Awareness – clapping out words.
- Link the sounds to letter names.
- An emphasis on an agreed basic sight vocabulary of high frequency words e.g. Dolch.

Phonological Awareness Methodologies:

- Rhyming Awareness
- Word Awareness
- Syllabic Awareness
- Phonemic Awareness - Isolation of initial/final/medial sounds
- Blending
- Segmenting
- Manipulation
- Look and Say

Assessment of Individual Phonological awareness: The Infant teacher informally assesses individual phonological awareness. Informal/ formal tests and teacher observation identify children experiencing difficulties. A classroom Support Plan is drafted and implemented when necessary (See SEN policy).

Sight Words

Sight words are taught as Tricky Words from Junior Infants to Second Class and will be supplemented from First Class by the Dolch list.

* Note –

The children will say the letter names as they spell / read each sight word as opposed by letter sound.

Comprehension

Comprehension skills are developed through the explicit teaching and guided practice using the Building Bridges of Understanding programme culminating in the gradual release of responsibility relating to the following strategies: predicting, connecting, visualising, questioning, seeking clarification, de-clunking, determining importance, inferring, and synthesising.

Junior Infants	Senior Infants	First Class	Second Class
Predicting	Predicting	Predicting	Predicting
Connecting	Connecting	Connecting	Connecting
Visualisation	Visualisation	Visualisation	Visualisation
	Questioning	Questioning	Questioning
		Skimming/Scanning	Skimming/Scanning
		Declunking	Monitoring Comprehension Declunking Clarifying

Third Class	Fourth Class	Fifth Class		Sixth Class
Predicting	Predicting	Predicting		Predicting
Connecting	Connecting	Connecting		Connecting
Visualisation	Visualisation	Visualisation		Visualisation
Questioning	Questioning	Questioning		Questioning
Skimming/Scanning	Skimming/Scanning	Skimming/Scanning		Skimming/Scanning
Determine Importance	Determine Importance	Determine Importance		Determine Importance
Inferring	Inferring	Inferring		Inferring
	Summarising and Paraphrasing	Summarising and Paraphrasing		Summarising and Paraphrasing
	Synthesising	Synthesising		Synthesising
Monitoring Comprehension Declunking Clarifying	Monitoring Comprehension Declunking Clarifying	Monitoring Comprehension Declunking Clarifying		Monitoring Comprehension Declunking Clarifying

Reading Fluency

The primary strategies recognised in this school to enable children to identify words are their knowledge of letter-sound relationships (graph/phonetic cues), their experiences and understanding of the world (meaning or semantic cues) and their knowledge of the forms of language (syntactic cues). From the outset children are encouraged to look at letters in words, the shape of words, for letters they recognise, to sound out letters that they know, to look for little words in big words etc. Other strategies used with the children every day are encouraging the children to look at the shape of the word, look for small words, breaking the word into syllables etc. In order to develop reading fluency among our children we ensure time is allocated to reading independently.

The Instructional Stage of Reading – 1st, 2nd, 3rd.

- Literacy Lift-Off
 - Guided Reading
 - Reading Scheme - Starlight
 - Class Novels
- Teaching word identification skills using semantic and syntactic cues.
 - Phonological Awareness with emphasis on Onset and Rime.
 - Phonemic Awareness – Constant practice at manipulating sound segments in words.
 - Create word families, lists etc.
 - Working at whole sentence level at predicting, checking confirming and self-correcting.
 - Simple Cloze Activities to develop predicting skills.

Lift Off to Literacy

Lift Off to Literacy is an intensive programme that gives children lots of opportunities to read books at their own level of competency and gradually raise the complexity of what they can do in both reading and writing. Children are grouped according to their reading ability using the PM Bench Mark Assessment Kit. This intensive intervention gives children an opportunity to learn in small groups at their own level. It caters for children with diverse learning characteristics. This programme is being implemented in Infants and 1st class. As part of the programme pupils engage with oral language, reading, word study and writing.

It involves station teaching (4 stations; guided reading, familiar reading, word study and writing). It is being implemented by class teachers and members of the Special Education Team. Children bring home books each week which have been read during Lift Off to Literacy. Parents are encouraged to take time to listen to their child reading these books.

Guided Reading

Guided Reading is implemented by the Class Teacher from 2nd to 6th Classes with the assistance of members of the Special Education Team. This is a station teaching initiative which groups children according to reading age. A wide range of reading material will be provided which will include fiction/non-fiction and novels. The writing station is varied and includes the current genre of writing as outlined in our literacy plan. Ipads are used to reinforce learning with relevant literacy apps. The skills of reading are taught using a variety of strategies eg. picture cues, word attack skills, phonics, dictionary work, comprehension strategies, information retrieval skills, automaticity, rhythm and intonation etc., Teachers cater for the different needs in the classroom by asking questions gauged at different levels of ability. Resources used include the Big Cats Series, Ipads, Independent/familiar Reading, Browsing Boxes, comprehension boxes, novels.

Resources: Collins Big Cat, Engage, Blueberry Hill, PM Readers, Nelson Cards, Prim-ed Comprehension Cards, Novels.

Silent Reading

DEAR time – Drop Everything and Read.

Silent Reading was introduced in September 2014 and teachers have noted its success. First– sixth classes drop everything and read at a regular time chosen by the teacher. Teachers ensure that all children have a book they can read in advance of DEAR time. Teachers use their discretion in deciding the amount of time children spend reading silently.

Library Reading:

Children have daily opportunities to choose books from the well-stocked class libraries and to engage with a wide and varied range of text. Library books are used for pleasure for reference and for factual information. Children are encouraged to bring their own reading materials in for knowledge lessons, and for sharing. Stories are read aloud by teachers regularly – stand alone stories or instalments - serial reading.

Class Novels

The novel is used from 2nd class up to give children the experience of using real books. Competent readers are introduced to novels in 1st class, when appropriate. Novels can be read independently or used in a group or class setting. Carefully selected class novels help to encourage children to read and draw the child's attention to descriptive text, development of characters, plot etc. Real books are also used from Junior Infants, with Big Books being used in the early years. In the senior classroom, station teaching is used for novels with each member having his/her own role within the group. The children are in graded groups for novel work. At least two novels a year are covered.

Teacher's Role

Planning appropriate contexts, which will encourage the children to reflect while reading and also improving the quality of reflection through teaching, modelling, instruction and applying the various comprehension skills. Oral Language will be at the core of the programme for developing Comprehension Skills. The use of written response will be greater in Senior Classes but will be used as a follow up to discussion and other forms of oral response.

Independent Reading will be promoted by also making available to the children a wide variety of reading materials in each classroom to cater for all ability levels including magazines and periodical newspaper articles etc. Project work will be a regular feature of class work in senior classes to strengthen children's skills of locating and organising information, taking notes, listing, summarising correlating etc.

Parental involvement

Teachers recognise that the parent's support is crucial and parents support teachers primarily by showing an interest in their child's learning: listening/talking with their children, talking about pictures in books, listening to their children reading, asking them questions on what they have read, checking spellings, encouraging them to become members of the local library etc. Parents are asked to sign their children's homework diaries. Some class teachers may ask parents to sign reading logs. If parents are concerned about their child's progress they should discuss this with the class teacher at the earliest opportunity.

Assessment of Reading:

A. Informal –

- Teacher Observation,
- Monitoring Progress,
- Listening to children Read
- Conferencing
- Peer/ Self Assessment
- Teacher Designed Tasks and Tests
- E- Portfolio (eg recording on various platforms)
- Questioning

B. Formal -

Test for Phonological Awareness and sight vocabulary using Jolly Phonics assessment kit.

Standardised Tests – Drumcondra Reading Test

Diagnostic Tests – YARC Assessment of Reading, Aston Index Schonell Reading, MIST

These are used with pupils needing extra help to find the exact area of difficulty and to remediate with an appropriate programme to cater for the specific weaknesses found.

POETRY:

Poetry is taught in the context of Oral Language, Reading and Writing.

The Choice of poetry is informed by:

- a) Personal choice of the teacher or in consultation with the class.
- b) Integration across the Curriculum.
- c) Enjoyment value.
- d) Themes, such as Seasons, Humour, Content, Magic and Mystery, History and Mythology etc.

Children will experience a wide range of poetry, humorous, narrative, traditional and modern, ballads, folksongs, lyrics etc.

Responding to Poetry:

We will encourage an understanding of Poetry by exposing children to many types of poems, including the various different styles and forms of poetry. Children are encouraged to respond in a variety of ways that help develop their sense of taste and discrimination and that fosters a conviction that Poetry is a great sense of pleasure.

- Cloze Activities.
- The Visual Arts used as a response to poetry.
- Memorisation of a selection of poems.
- Dramatising / Mime of a poem.
- Children compiling an Anthology of poems they created in class.
- Recitation – Individual or Choral Verse Speaking.
- Children composing their own poetry for School Bulletin.
- Poetry Techniques- rhythm/aliteration/similes etc
- Composing poems in a variety of genres – Every child should get the opportunity to write poetry and verse as one of the Genre in his / her writing experience and should be encouraged to perceive accuracy and sincerity of expression as the most important requirements in a poem.

Poetry Resources:

- Reading Scheme.
- Anthologies of Poems (Class Library)
- Internet

Writing

Learning Outcomes for Writing

1. Engagement
2. Motivation and Choice
3. Conventions of print and sentence structure
4. Vocabulary
5. Spelling and word study
6. Purpose genre and voice
7. Writing process and creating text
8. Response and author's intent
9. Handwriting and presentation

Aims

We will develop within the children the ability to see that writing is a communication tool. Our writing programme will be based on the following principles:

- a) The process of Writing is as important as the product because it's through consistent practise in using the process that children learn to write.
- b) Children will write for different audiences on a wide range of topics and in a variety of genres.
- c) Children will have significant control over their subjects and audiences.
- d) Children will have consistent experience of drafting, editing and redrafting a piece of writing.
- e) Teacher as mentor in this process helping to develop expressive ability and accuracy.
- f) Develop gradually abilities to self-correct – Independent writer.

Emergent Early Writing:

Junior / Senior Infants and 1st Class

Writing will be relevant to the children's experience. The teacher will act as a scribe and will model the writing, at all levels. The process of writing will be particularly taught using the language experience approach, which are shared writing / modelled writing. Writing and drawing are closely linked in this communication process. By the end of Senior Infants, children will be enabled to write a sentence and improve on it. This is the beginning of the Drafting, Editing and Redrafting Process of the senior classes.

Early Writing skills;

Children from Infant Classes up to First Class will write and draw frequently beginning with scribbles, patterns, symbols, attempts at writing letters will develop into letter formation, which entails teaching the correct pencil grip and posture, moving onto instruction, lower case letters, capitals and full stops. Use approximate spelling and learn conventional spelling through linking it with the Phonological Awareness Programme Jolly Phonics and punctuation. Teacher will draw children's attention to this in their reading lessons and in structured and directed written activities.

Key Elements of Writing Throughout the School

The importance of AUDIENCE and PURPOSE will be emphasised. For whom and why are we writing this? Children will learn to write in different genres. The seven genres are divided over a two year period and will be taught with an emphasis on teacher modelling.

Planning Grid for Literacy Year 1 - Junior Infant Senior Infants & 1st Class

Elements:		Communicating		Understanding		Exploring & Using	
Term	Oral Language c/f PDST Handout on Oral Language & link with Aistear	Reading (Teacher modelling & Teacher led)	Writing	Grammar & Punctuation	Integration		
Term 1	Learning Experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Storytelling Anecdotes Conversation 	Reading Strategies Predicting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Split Images Personal Predictions Check the text Crystal Ball Think Sheet Extended Anticipation Guides 	Making Connections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connecting with the Text Before and After Chart Think and Share Linking Lines What's in a text? Visualising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Picture This! Sensory Chart Changing Images Open Mind Portrait 	Narrative 7 Step Process (Familiarisation–Presentation) See PDST Writing booklet Learning Experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tired words/Boring sentences Connecting words Pass it on Building character profiles 	Linking Words (1 st) Contractions (1 st) Paragraphs (1 st) Speech Marks Pronouns (1 st) Letter Writing	History SPHE	
Term 2	Learning Experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arguments & Debates Extended Conversations Discussions 	Reading Strategies Questioning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clouds of Wonder B.D.A Questions (orally) 	Determining Importance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What's your story? Famous 5 – Key Word Search V.I.P.s Main Idea Pyramid Comparing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Venn Diagrams Like or Unlike? Teacher led	Persuasive 7 Step Process (Familiarisation–Presentation) See PDST Writing booklet Learning Experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass argument around group Four corners Informal/Formal debate Be the expert Change the point of view Character defences 	Fact and Opinion (1 st) Persuasive Language Linking Words (1 st) Letter Writing	SPHE Media Studies	
Term 3	Learning Experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questioning and Inquiry Interest talks Partner and small group inquiry Extended Conversations 	Reading Strategies Inferring -(Reading between the lines) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Character Self Portrait What's my point of view? 	Synthesising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turn on the Lights Plot Profile Teacher led Re-reading	Explanation 7 Step Process (Familiarisation–Presentation) See PDST Writing booklet Learning Experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headings Read explanation Informal explanations Explanation jigsaw Oral explanations Tell from the diagram Independent construction 	Linking Words (1 st) Adjectives (1 st) Verbs (1 st)	SESE	

Planning Grid for Literacy Year 2 – (J1 – 1st Class)

Elements:		Communicating		Understanding		Exploring & Using	
Term	Oral Language	Reading	Writing	Grammar & Punctuation	Integration		
Term 1 Recount	<u>Learning Experience</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Extended ConversationsOral ReportsStorytelling and AnecdotesGreeting	<u>Summarising and Paraphrasing:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Oral SummariesReciprocal Retells <u>Decoding</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Phonics awareness – SegmentingMaking/Breaking WordsChunkingSpelling Patterns – Syllabic Awareness	<u>Recount</u> <u>7 Step Process</u> (Familiarisation – Presentation See back of sheet) <u>Learning Experiences</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Living ChartsClass Writing BagSequencing EventsWritten TimelinesTell your NewsShared WritingClass DiaryNews Broadcast	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Simple past tenseAction VerbsLinking Words/TimeLetter Writing	History Geography		
Term 2 Procedure	<u>Learning Experiences</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">InstructionsQuestioning and InquiryPartner and Small group Inquiry	<u>Skimming and scanning:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Picture FlickSneak PreviewHunt the text challengeInteresting Words Chart <u>Re-Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Deeper understandingWord IdentificationDeveloping Fluency	<u>Procedure</u> <u>7 Step Process</u> (Familiarisation – Presentation See back of sheet) <u>Learning Experiences</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Read a Procedure/Discuss & LabelSimon SaysTell Me About – Oral retellClass RecipeSequence PicturesMatch picture & CaptionRole Play InterviewMake a GameLost Instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sequencing WordsBossy verbs and adverbs (1st)Present tense	Science		
Term 3 Report	<u>Learning Experiences</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Oral ReportsInterviewsInterest TalksArguments and Informal Debates	<u>Determining Importance</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">What's your story?Famous 5 – Key Word SearchV.I.P'sMain Idea Pyramid <u>Skimming and Scanning</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Picture FlickSneak PreviewHunt the text challenge	<u>Report</u> <u>7 Step Process</u> (Familiarisation – Presentation See back of sheet) <u>Learning Experiences</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Model & Shared Writing ReportsShow & TellCreate displays & label itemsWho We Are – Shared WritingMind MapsOral Activities eg. Barrier Games, Spot the Difference	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Amazing adjectives (1st)Vivid verbs (1st)Descriptive language	SPHE Media Studies Geography		

Planning Grid for Literacy Year 1 (20 – 6th Class)

Elements:		Communicating		Understanding		Exploring & Using	
Term	Oral Language	Reading	Writing	Grammar & Punctuation	Integration		
Term 1	Learning Experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storytelling • Anecdotes • Conversation 	Reading Strategies Predicting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Split Images • Personal Predictions • Check the text • Crystal Ball • Think Sheet • Extended Anticipation Guides 	Making Connections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting with the Text • Before and After Chart • Think and Share • Linking Lines • What's in a text? Visualising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picture This! • Sensory Chart • Changing Images • Open Mind Portrait • Post your senses • Information Images Declunking	Narrative 7 Step Process (Familiarisation–Presentation) See PDST Writing booklet Learning Experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tired words/Boring sentences • Connecting words • Pass it on • Building character profiles 	Linking Words Contractions Paragraphs Speech Marks Pronouns Letter Writing	History SPHE	
Term 2	Learning Experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arguments & Debates • Extended Conversations • Discussions 	Reading Strategies Questioning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clouds of Wonder • B.D.A Questions • Stop & Think cards • Written conversation 	Determining Importance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's your story? • Famous 5 – Key Word Search • V.I.P.s • Main Idea Pyramid Comparing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venn Diagrams • Like or Unlike? • Just like • Double Entry Journal 	Persuasive 7 Step Process (Familiarisation–Presentation) See PDST Writing booklet Learning Experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pass argument around group • Four corners • Informal/Formal debate • Be the expert • Change the point of view • Character defences 	Fact and Opinion Persuasive Language Linking Words Sentence Steps Letter Writing	SPHE Media Studies	
Term 3	Learning Experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questioning and Inquiry • Interest talks • Partner and small group inquiry • Extended Conversations 	Reading Strategies Inferring -(Reading between the lines) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character Self Portrait • What's my point of view? • Interviews • Rating scales • Developing dialogue • Report card 	Synthesising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn on the Lights • Plot Profile • Great debate • Synthesis Journal Re-reading	Explanation 7 Step Process (Familiarisation–Presentation) See PDST Writing booklet Learning Experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headings • Read explanation • Informal explanations • Explanation jigsaw • Oral explanations • Tell from the diagram • Independent construction 	Linking Words Adjectives Verbs Comparatives Cause & Effect	SESE	

Planning Grid for Literacy Year 2 – (2nd – 6th Class)

Elements:				Communicating		Understanding	Exploring & Using	
Term	Oral Language	Reading	Writing	Grammar & Punctuation	Integration			
Term 1	Learning Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended Conversations Oral Reports Storytelling and Anecdotes Greeting 	Summarising and Paraphrasing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral Summaries Reciprocal Retells Main Idea Sort Newspaper Report 66 Words Declunking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phonics awareness – Segmenting Making/Breaking Words Chunking Spelling Patterns – Syllabic Awareness 	Recount 7 Step Process (Familiarisation – Presentation See back of sheet) Learning Experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Living Charts Class Writing Bag Sequencing Events Written Timelines Tell your News Shared Writing Class Diary News Broadcast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simple past tense Action Verbs Linking Words/Time Letter Writing 	History			
Term 2	Learning Experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructions Questioning and Inquiry Partner and Small group Inquiry 	Skimming and scanning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Picture Flick Graphic Overlays Sneak Preview Hunt the text challenge Beat the Buzzer Quiz Retrieval Charts Interesting Words Chart Re-Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deeper understanding Word Identification Developing Fluency 	Procedure 7 Step Process (Familiarisation – Presentation See back of sheet) Learning Experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read a Procedure/Discuss & Label Simon Says Tell Me About – Oral retell Class Recipe Sequence Pictures Match picture & Caption Role Play Interview Make a Game Lost Instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sequencing Words Bossy verbs and adverbs Present tense 	Science			
Term 3	Learning Experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral Reports Interviews Interest Talks Arguments and Informal Debates 	Determining Importance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What's your story? Famous 5 – Key Word Search V.I.P's Main Idea Pyramid Skimming and Scanning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Picture Flick Graphic Overlays Sneak Preview Hunt the text challenge Beat the Buzzer Quiz 	Report 7 Step Process (Familiarisation – Presentation See back of sheet) Learning Experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model & Shared Writing Reports Show & Tell Create displays & label items Who We Are – Shared Writing Mind Maps Oral Activities eg. Barrier Games, Spot the Difference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amazing adjectives Vivid verbs Descriptive language 	SPHE Media Studies			

Introduction of a new genre:

The formal teaching of one individual genre will take place over 6-8 weeks during each term, while the genres taught in the previous year will be recapped on and revised.

We will teach the different genres of writing through the reading and examination of samples of the genres. A significant link will be made between Reading and Writing in all classes.

7 Steps to Teaching a Writing Genre

Step 1: Familiarisation with the genre

Integration with reading and oral language, for example, comparing samples of the genre, using sample displays, reading to and reading with students.

Step 2: Use an example to devise a framework

Children **analyse** one effective sample of the text form. Children **discover** the framework of a form of a text. . Create a framework with key words/prompts for the genre e.g. in Narrative: Title, Setting, Characters, Problem, Resolution.

Step 3: Modelled writing (teacher only)

The teacher 'thinks aloud' as he/she writes while the class observe.

Step 4: Shared writing

Teacher has the pen and continues to 'think aloud' but uses children's ideas also. Children engage in talking, writing and reading within the genre.

Step 5: Guided Writing: Children plan their writing

Children can plan their writing in pairs/groups using the framework they have devised.

Step 6: Independent writing

Children plan and write their own piece including drafting, editing and redrafting.

Step 7: Presentation to audience

Children write for real purpose and for real audience.

Fostering the Process of Writing

The school will provide opportunities for children to write for real purposes and real audiences, recognising that drafting, editing and redrafting are at the heart of the writing process. Free writing will be used to enable the children to become independent writers.

Valuing Childrens' Writing:

- Through children receiving and giving a positive response to Writing.
- Having it Displayed.
- Reading it Aloud, Sharing their Work.
- Projects, Class Anthologies, Articles for school bulletin
- A recount in monthly School Newsletter on events of importance.
- Sharing their Writing with other Classes.

Handwriting

Good habits in handwriting are developed at an early stage eg. posture, paper position, pencil grip. Children in 5th Class will be given an opportunity to obtain a pen licence.

Handwriting/Penmanship

As per the primary language curriculum, children will be encouraged to write legibly and fluently in a chosen script using a personal style, ensuring correct formation of lower and upper-case letters. As children have been taught to form letters in cursive script they will be encouraged to write in this script. Throughout the school there is an emphasis on penmanship. The pupils begin cursive script from Junior Infants and continue this style of writing through all classes.

In Junior Infants, the pupils begin by learning one lower-case letter per week. As their fine-motor skills develop, the pupils may learn 2 letters per week until the formation of all letters is taught. In Senior Infants they will learn how to form upper case letters.

The importance of precision and presentation is constantly reiterated and encouraged in copies, worksheets, free writing and otherwise.

Our Approach to Handwriting:

- The best way to ensure good handwriting is to learn it correctly from the beginning
- A good cursive style of handwriting will ultimately improve the speed and fluency of writing, which in turn will assist the child's written expression. ▪ Good penmanship also improves spelling since letter strings are connected when the child is writing a word.
- Good posture, pencil-grip and how the children form their letters are explicitly taught
- Pre-writing patterns are taught before separate letter formations at infant level
- Children are encouraged to practise common letter strings after learning how to form an isolated letter, e.g. 'a' – ate, at, eat, etc...
- A multi-sensory approach to handwriting is adopted in the school ▪ Where appropriate, all teachers will follow the same style/format of cursive handwriting throughout the school.
- Cursive script is encouraged for all written activity and not just English alone.

Approach Used to Introduce Letters

- Ready to Write
- Air pencil
- Tracing: on table, on each other's backs
- Playdough
- Sandpaper letters
- Large Letter in Crayon
- In Sand

Pencil Grip & Position of body

- Tripod Grip with 'Crocodile Snap', 'Frog Legs'
- Helper hand to hold page in place

Timetable for Penmanship

- Junior Infants and Senior Infants: 40 minutes per week
- First – Second class: 30 minutes/week

Parental Awareness of Handwriting

- Parents will see the handwriting style as part of homework.
- Guidelines/instruction for parents will be provided at the teacher's discretion

Assessment of Handwriting

Teacher observation and specially designed tasks.

Spelling

The focus of planning is on the child's acquisition of spelling skills and his/her progress with spelling.

The school's structured phonics programme will help children learn spelling. However teachers are aware that phonics alone cannot be used to teach spelling and a consistent multi-dimensional approach is used in order to ensure that children do not become overreliant on phonics when spelling. Teachers encourage children to use a combination of *Look, Cover, Say, Write and Check*, Phonics and Word Attack skills when teaching spelling.

Senior Infants/1st Class: The teacher will assign spellings to the senior infants after the first term. These spellings will be initial blends and CVC words devised by the class teacher initially, in keeping with the sounds being taught at that time. Senior Infants and First Class will follow Spellbound and will use 'Look, Say, Cover, Write and Check' method.

First/Second classes:

Children are tested weekly from *Jolly Grammar Spelling Lists* 1 and 2, which are used also for dictation and phonics. Teachers will try to ensure that all pupils will be able to spell the first 100 words from the DOLCH List.

2nd – 6th Class:

Spellings for Me is an individualised spelling programme used from 2nd Class. The programme is an online and an offline programme. The online aspect is the child's profile, where they log in and take a series of tests. The offline aspect is the differentiated workbook. The child works according to their ability, not their class or age. No two children will have the same spellings, to allow for maximum differentiation. Children also learn specific spelling strategies.

Assessment of Spelling

Teachers in the school use a variety of approaches.

- Teachers teach spelling and give spelling tests regularly in younger classes. However, depending on the ability of the children or the length of the week they may choose not to give a spelling test. Spelling still needs to be monitored and children with difficulties identified.
- The senior classes complete tests online. Spellings for Me provides different variations of testing - Dictation Sentences tests/ Spelling tests/ Learning Words tests/ Mastered Words tests/ Writing Genres tests. Each test is differentiated to each individual child.

Grammar and Punctuation

In Upperchurch N.S. we aim to teach grammar and punctuation in the context of the children's own writing and/or reading and we emphasise the oral aspect of teaching. Grammar and punctuation are introduced formally from first class supplemented by Starlight Programme and Better English.

Creative Writing

Children begin Creative Writing informally in the infant classes. This is stimulated and developed in many ways such as through Aistear and through the use of free drawing (Infant Classes) and free writing copies used in Literacy Lift-Off. Creative Writing is introduced formally in First Class and continues throughout the remainder of the children's years in the school.

Selecting Topics for Creative Writing

Sources of topics for children's writing include:

- Print-Rich Environment
- First Steps Writing- Narrative Genre
- Thematic Approach
- Personal Concerns
- Life at home and in school
- Stories
- Social Needs
- Personal Reading
- Poetry
- Drama
- Aistear
- Everyday personal experiences
- Use of home language

Strategies for Planning Creative Writing

- First Steps Writing- Narrative Genre strategies and ideas
- Oral Discussion: Whole Class, Teacher/Pupil, Pupil/Pupil
- Brainstorming
- Webbing
- Story Board
- Story Plans
- Story Templates
- Poetry/Drama/Story as stimulus

Whole School Approaches to Writing and Drafting

- Planning, Drafting, Editing, Re-drafting Method through the medium of First Steps from First Class
- Encouraging Self Correction and Self Checking
- Publishing in our School Bulletin

Whole School Approaches to Valuing Creative Writing

- Displays
- Writer's Corner
- Bulletin
- Constructive and precise comments when possible
- Work included in anthologies
- Team Teaching with a focus on the Narrative Genre for creative writing

Children with Different Needs

In the teaching of English in Upperchurch N.S. we aim to ensure that all are included. Children with special needs will receive support from our SET. The SET supports language/literacy needs through team teaching/collaborative approach. We also have a balance of In-class support and withdrawal as necessary. We also use a variety of strategies to stimulate the better able children including use of materials to suit their level, entering competitions and suitable project and computer work.

Resources and ICT

We are aware of the value of ICT in the teaching and learning of English. All teachers have access to literacy materials on I-pads, laptops and shared drive. We also have Interactive white boards in each room.

Success Criteria

The success of this plan will be evaluated through teacher's planning and preparation, and if the procedures outlined in this plan have been consistently followed. We will also judge its success if the children have been enabled to achieve the aims outlined in this plan and children's learning has been enhanced in the following ways:

Oral Language

- Increased confidence and competence in communicating.
- Greater willingness to express opinions and participate in class discussions.
- Improved listening skills.

Reading

- Improved standards in reading – *as measured on Standardised Testing and Teacher Assessment*.
- Increased involvement in independent reading.
- Experiencing of reading as an enjoyable activity.

Writing

- Greater fluency and explicitness in communicating ideas and experiences.
- Enhanced experience of writing in a variety of genres and sharing stories and poems.
- Increased use of ICT to support the writing process.
- Improved presentation of written work.

The achievement of these success criteria will be assessed through feedback from teachers, pupils, and parents.

Organisational Planning

The teaching of English will be conducted in line with the time allocation as set out by the DES and NCCA (ref: Circular 0056/2011), as follows:

Class Level:	Time Allocation for Language 1 (i.e. English):
Junior and Senior Infants	4 hours per week
First – Sixth Class	5 hours per week
<i>Discretionary time may also be used for the teaching and learning of English</i>	

The teaching of English will be organised on both a **whole-class** and **team-teaching** level. A team-teaching approach will be taken to support the teaching and learning of English and will involve the input of the support staff in the classroom. Such will be organised based on the needs of each class and will focus on specific areas of the curriculum.

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is considered an integral part to effectively implementing English as Upperchurch N.S. appreciates that parents are the primary educator and that therefore play a crucial role in the language development of their children. This plan and the curriculum documents are available for parents to inform them of the programme for language.

Community Links

Upperchurch N.S. believe that the local community has a very important role to play in supporting the programme in English and endeavour to liaise with the members such as local authors, librarian etc. We also encourage our children to take part in initiatives such as write-a-story projects, competitions, quizzes, debates.

Implementation

Roles and Responsibilities

Upperchurch N.S. believe that the school community must be involved to successfully implement the English Curriculum. Therefore, the teaching staff will implement this plan with the support of the Board of Management, Parents, and the Local Community.

Review

Timeframe

This plan will be reviewed in 2024 /25 or as necessary.

Ratification

Signed : P. Harrington
Chairperson – Board of Management

Signed : Alma Quinn
Principal

Date : 27th Feb 24

Date : 27.02.2024

