Craighbank Primary School

Literacy Position Statement
RATIONALE

The Literacy programme at Craigbank Primary School follows Curriculum for Excellence Guidelines. Our core planning reflects the benchmarks and all teachers take careful consideration of the 7 design principles.

Curriculum for Excellence recognises that literacy is a major component of primary education. It states that:

‘Literacy is fundamental to all areas of learning, as it unlocks access to the wider curriculum. Being literate increases opportunities for the individual in all aspects of life, lays the foundations for lifelong learning and work, and contributes strongly to the development of all four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence’.

Curriculum for Excellence: Literacy and English, Principles and Practice (Scottish Government, 2009)

Curriculum for Excellence looks at literacy and language in the context of the 21st century, taking into account the changing forms of language which the young people of today will experience and use. This includes communicating face to face, communicating through the written word and communicating through ‘an ever increasing range of media’. It defines literacy as:

‘The set of skills which allows an individual to engage fully in society and in learning, through the different forms of language, and the range of texts, which society values and finds useful.’

Craigbank Primary school aims to support all children as they develop to become Successful learners, Confident individuals, Responsible citizens and Effective contributors through a structured programme of study which capitalises on everyday opportunities to plan responsively and develop literacy skills across the curriculum. Furthermore, as part of our improvement planning at school and National level, we have developed a focussed programme of support to close the poverty related attainment gap, improve literacy attainment and ensure that the needs of all learners are met.

Our pupils will be encouraged to develop a responsibility for their learning by ensuring:

- Awareness of what is expected of them through the sharing of success criteria and learning intentions.
- Provision of appropriate feedback through self, peer and teacher assessment.
- Promotion of reflection on where they are and on the next steps for progression.

Our framework for literacy and language provides a set of statements (benchmarks) that describe the success criteria our pupils will strive to achieve throughout school and our staff refer to these when planning for learning and teaching. We believe that literacy is pivotal to improving skills for learning, life and work.
‘The languages, dialects and literature of Scotland provide a rich resource for children and young people to learn about Scotland’s culture, identity and language.’
(Literacy & English: Principles and Practice.) (Scottish Government, 2009)

The breadth of our literacy programme extends to embrace Scot’s language and texts.

Opportunities are offered for children to explore the dialect, literature and culture of Scotland through class topics and a school wide focus in January which includes a Burns Competition.

We have a clear framework which ensures a consistent approach across the school. In addressing the L1 + L2 Languages approach, our school focuses on English, French and Scots Language, with every year group having the opportunity to participate in activities that span all three organisers.

**Literacy and Language Organisers**

Within the literacy and language framework, there are three organisers and within these organisers there are the following sub-divisions:

1. Listening and talking
   - Enjoyment and choice
   - Tools for listening and talking
   - Finding and using information
   - Understanding, analysing and evaluating
   - Creating texts
2. Reading
   - Enjoyment and choice
   - Tools for reading
   - Finding and using information
   - Understanding, analysing and evaluating
3. Writing
   - Enjoyment and choice
   - Tools for writing
   - Organising and using information
   - Creating texts

In planning, our staff will consider each organiser and sub-divisions across the curricular areas, taking account of individual needs and abilities. Robust approaches in monitoring, assessment and evaluation ensures appropriate pace and challenge for every child. (Please see Appendix 1: Literacy Overview from Assessment Framework Calendar.)

Across the Curriculum for Excellence levels, challenge and progression appropriate to individual abilities will be at the heart of learning and teaching to ensure that each child achieves his or her potential. Through active and collaborative learning strategies, we provide opportunities which support a range of learning styles. We aspire to make learning coherent and relevant in order that learners link the purpose and value of the experiences to their lives, present and future.

Challenge and progression is at the centre of learning and teaching to ensure that every child achieves his or her potential. Every class includes formative and summative assessment, including self and peer which also relate to the current Benchmarks. These
Benchmarks have been incorporated into our planners in the key organisers of Literacy, which clearly show progress and help in the monitoring of every pupil, thus maintaining appropriate pace and challenge.

Learner conversations take place daily with evidence of key learning and targets formally recorded in individual Learning Logs.

We strive to make learning motivating, engaging in line with our school’s motto: ‘Dream, Believe, Achieve’
LISTENING AND TALKING

At Craigbank, Listening and Talking are at the heart of all learning and takes place throughout the curriculum, using a wide range of Inter-Disciplinary opportunities. There is a breadth of teaching and learning opportunities eg. Our children develop their pupil voice through participation in school committees. In Primary 1 our children are introduced to Talking and Presenting to large audiences and have the opportunity to work collaboratively with others. As pupils progress through the school, their interactions and Listening and Talking skills are progressively developed to include opportunities for personalisation and choice through planning and presenting Solo Talks, Debates, Performances and extending their retrieval skills through listening to a variety of texts.

Children use a diversity of genres and contexts in which to develop relevant skills, including:

- Enjoyment and choice
- Tools for listening and talking
- Finding and using information
- Understanding, analysing and evaluating
- Creating texts

Higher Order Thinking Skills are developed through remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating and creating. In order to scaffold the development of skills in Literacy and English, children are offered active, collaborative learning opportunities where they will be encouraged to:

- Read, think, question and take notes.
- Discuss, share and question.
- Draw conclusions and clarify understanding.

Collaborative Learning activities are at the foundation of all aspects of our Literacy Curriculum and learning opportunities using this approach are planned into weekly lessons. Through using appropriate language and skills identified within this approach, the children are clear about their next steps and can confidently discuss their learning.

All children are encouraged to build upon previously learned skills thus encouraging continuity and progression. For children at Early Level, the focus is the development of vocabulary, pronunciation and communication, whilst at Second Level, the focus extends to Higher Order Thinking Skills and the application of these in a variety of new contexts. Children are given the opportunity to talk in pairs, trios, and groups and to the whole class and, at times, whole school, for a variety of purposes. This may include discussion of a
particular topic, presenting ideas to others, class talks and school presentations e.g. school shows and assemblies presented by our Pupil Committees to raise awareness of key social issues.

Pupils’ progress is closely monitored using skills based progression and evidence of their progress is analysed and used to plan next steps. All children are supported and work is differentiated according to ability to enable appropriate pace and challenge.

Presentations to the school are given during our focus on Scots language and culture.

“I used to be scared to talk to folk and I couldn’t do my presentation to the class in the first term. But then I saw what everyone else was doing and thought that I could do it too. In the second term, we had to mark everyone else’s (solo) talk so I knew what the teacher was looking for. I did a talk on our visit to the bowling at M & D’s and it was quite good. I know that I can do it now and was pleased I did it.”

Jake, P7

READING

Learners at Craigbank Primary School are immersed in a positive ethos towards all aspects of reading and are provided with opportunities to develop and revisit knowledge, understanding and skills and to enhance their reading through opportunities to apply learning in a variety of contexts. Reading is celebrated throughout the school and is encouraged at every opportunity with learners who are engaged in a wide variety of opportunities and initiatives both within and out with school, for example, participation in the First Minister’s Reading Challenge, Story Sacks, Activity Sacks, Buddy Reading, displayed book reviews, Extreme Reading Challenge and World Book Day events.
At Craigbank Primary School, we make full and effective use of a broad range of school resources to support the teaching of reading. These include: PM books, novels, Big Cats, ORT, Literacy World, Nelson and Scots Texts. Using PM Benchmarked book banded books and other resources, we provide a wealth of fiction/non-fiction texts which engage, stimulate and challenge children at an appropriate level. In addition to core school resources, staff use other resources/texts in response to children’s interests/topical issues, which may arise, in order to be responsive to interests and engage learners in meaningful and purposeful learning. Each stage is provided with at least one opportunity a year to further develop skills through use of a class novel which is progressive.

Active approaches, such as NLC Active Literacy and Reciprocal Reading (which have clear links to collaboration) listening and talking and writing opportunities are regularly used throughout the school, ensuring that children with different learning styles are addressed. During the Early and First Levels, learners develop their decoding skills and an awareness of bibliographical knowledge. All children are actively involved, on a daily basis, in the development of their ‘Higher Order’ thinking skills, before, during and after reading, by being immersed in quality discussion of texts whilst developing predicting, questioning, clarifying and summarising skills, as set out in the Stonelaw Reading Pack (SLC). Whilst the children in primaries 1 and 2 focus primarily on these skills, the children in primaries 3 – 7 are also developing connections, skimming, scanning, visualising, paraphrasing, synthesising and determining importance in order to extend more critical thinking.

To ensure progress, children are assessed formatively, on a regular basis and summatively, using PM Benchmarking on a termly basis and NGRT annually. As part of the SLC Literacy Strategy, pupils in primary 1 also complete the RWRT and ELSA Screener.

In order to promote reading for enjoyment, all children make weekly use of our school’s lending library. Through the use of an evidence based, progressive approach, our children develop skills from early stages of sound recognition and throughout the development of reading. Whilst doing so, our children are also provided with the opportunity to engage in the reading of and discussion of Scots text.

**Our Primary 7 buddies support reading for enjoyment in our book banded school lending library.**

**WRITING**

At Craigbank Primary, learners engage in active learning experiences to establish a writing skillset. Research shows that the greatest impact on learners comes from “rich literacy experiences as part of their day-to-day learning and teaching programmes” (Scottish Government, 2009) and so opportunities to write in a variety of contexts are available daily. By linking writing to interdisciplinary learning and responding to children’s interests, writing is relevant and meaningful. Furthermore, learners can personalise writing and select genres and features which they enjoy, as described in the information that follows.
Tools for writing are initially developed through exploring sounds, letters and words and progressing to use of a range of ambitious vocabulary. Learners use critical thinking skills to learn and apply, spelling rules and exceptions. Emphasis is placed on ensuring a depth of understanding is achieved in use of punctuation and appropriate grammar. As learners progress, they work to expand their knowledge and application of openers and connectives, to create sentences of varying length and greater complexity. Furthermore, incorporation of more descriptive language and phrases along with use of features such as similes or metaphors are developed to make writing more lively and interesting.

As they organise and use information, pupils at Craigbank have the opportunity to work collaboratively in writing trios, to discuss writing and share ideas. Research has shown that “Playful exploration and frequent ongoing conversations about writing can help involve and engage young writers, enabling them to focus on what they might want to say, to whom and for what purpose” (Cremin & Myhill, 2012)

Across the stages, learners are encouraged to plan writing and develop note-taking skills to facilitate the creation of text. As learners begin to write, classroom displays and word banks, which are rich in environmental print, are pivotal in encouraging common word accuracy and exploration of ambitious vocabulary. Upon completion, a process of proof-reading and editing text is embedded throughout learning at Craigbank. The use of ‘think pink,’ ‘great green’ and ‘yellow for spelling’ allows peer, self and teacher assessment of writing based pre-set success criteria.
A breadth of writing knowledge is achieved through learners developing an understanding of purpose, audience and features of a variety of genres. Knowledge of the language associated with genres is integral to this learning process. Our writing programme at Craigbank aims to facilitate development of skills through achieving both core writing targets and genre specific targets. Each genre focus is planned over a four week block, with the aim of developing skills in 2-3 genres per term (Narrative being revisited every term.)

In Primary 1-3, learners have the opportunity to create text based on narrative, information, recount, report, persuasive and explanation genres. Learners in Primary 4-7, continue to explore these genres and extend their skillset to include discursive writing.

**Example of First Level Core Targets**

With strong emphasis on teacher modelling, collaboration with peers and continual evaluation, learners build new knowledge and progress through a series of stages as they enhance their writing and develop the required skills. Assessment is carried out through day-to-day observation, learning conversations, use of success criteria by peers, teacher and self and through standardised assessment.

Progress is recorded using progression planners which are tailored to reflect development of writing skills at Craigbank and which are based on national benchmarks for writing (Education Scotland, 2017). At Craigbank, individual learning journeys are acknowledged through selection of a monthly star writer from each class. This significant achievement in writing is celebrated by displaying writing on the ‘Exciting Writing’ wall for all to see.
Bibliography


### Appendix 1

**Craigbank Primary School - Reading Overview**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Book Study</th>
<th>To be used in conjunction with Scots text.</th>
<th>Scots Text / French Text</th>
<th>Non-Fiction / Plays / Poetry (ORT, Big Cats, Literacy World, PM Books, Songbirds, Fireflies)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>Percy the Park Keeper</td>
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<tr>
<td>P1/2</td>
<td>Handa’s Surprise</td>
<td>Room on the Broom</td>
<td>Room on the Broom in Scots</td>
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<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>Farmer Duck</td>
<td>Gruffalo</td>
<td>Gruffalo in Scots</td>
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<tr>
<td>P2/3</td>
<td>Katie Morag and the Two Grandmothers</td>
<td>Gruffalo’s Child</td>
<td>Gruffalo’s Wean</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Le petit gruffalo</td>
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<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>The Owl who was Afraid of the Dark</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Hungry Caterpillar (French)</td>
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<tr>
<td>P3/4</td>
<td>Flat Stanley</td>
<td>Fantastic Mr Fox</td>
<td>Sleekit Mr Tod</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Le Navet Géant</td>
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<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>The Queen’s Nose</td>
<td>The Twits</td>
<td>The Eejits</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Bébés Chouettes</td>
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<td>P4/5</td>
<td>Butterfly Lion</td>
<td>George’s Marvellous Medicine</td>
<td>Geordie’s Mingin Medicine</td>
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<td>Suitcase Kid</td>
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<td>Street Child</td>
<td>Billionaire Boy</td>
<td>Billionaire Bairn</td>
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<td>Titanic – Death on Water</td>
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<td>A Wee Book o Fairy Tales</td>
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<td>P6/7</td>
<td>Warhorse</td>
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<td>P7</td>
<td>Divided City</td>
<td>Mr Stink</td>
<td>Mr Mingin</td>
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**Literacy Week** – Whole school focus on Comics, newspapers, adverts, posters.