

Guidance for Teaching Core Skills for Functionality- Literacy, Numeracy and ICT

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1.School aims

The school aims to “teach children the knowledge skills and confidence that will enable them to lead as full, happy and independent a life as possible. Within the school and community it aims to provide a learning experience that is exciting and challenging and that offers its pupils the same curriculum opportunities at an appropriate level, as their peers in mainstream schools.” The ability to communicate, read and write is a fundamental skill to independent living.

The Glyne Gap curriculum is therefore designed to be both incisively relevant to the needs of individual pupils and ensure an entitlement to curricular breadth and balance. To provide a short hand Glyne Gap School uses the term tier 1 to address the former and tier 2 to address the latter. A full explanation of this is found in Curriculum Guidelines 6- Design & Delivery.

Teaching at Tier 1 is characterised by the Essential Skills for Learning and Life through Communication and PSHE and Core skills for building functionality, through Literacy, Numeracy and ICT. The emphasis on teaching the core skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT is in terms of ‘what it can do’ to develop pupils’ independence and confidence through their functional use to support their learning in school, in the community and their future lives, rather than teaching the skills in isolation.

2. Definitions & Development of Communication, Language and Literacy

In order to understand the link between communication and literacy it is important to have clear definitions of both terms.

Communication is ‘fundamental to children’s development; children need to be able to understand and be understood; it’s the foundation of relationships and is essential for learning, play and social interaction.’ (Hello Campaign)

At Glyne Gap we define Communication as how we interact with others. Communication incorporates:

- The use of non-verbal methods e.g. listening, looking, facial expression, body language
- how we understand others and the world around us (receptive skills) and
- how we make ourselves understood (expression)

Language at Glyne Gap is defined as the comprehension of a vocabulary (receptive language) and how this vocabulary is used (expressive language).

The New National Curriculum (2014) does not contain a definition of literacy, however the English framework divides 'language and literacy' into three sections: spoken language, reading and writing and vocabulary development.

The Department for Education (DfE) does not maintain a definition of literacy as schools are free to develop their own literacy practice around statutory requirements.

Here at Glyne Gap we define literacy as reading and writing, with a focus on teaching skills for functionality.

There is a complex link between communication and literacy. In this setting, all pupils have difficulties with their Speech, Language and Communication due to the nature of their learning disabilities. The development of formal literacy requires a certain level of language skills. All pupils need to establish the pre requisite skills of communication (Essential Skills for Learning and Life) before progressing to early literacy skills (Core Skills for Functionality). (See Appendix 5- The Glyne Gap Curriculum Model)

3. Introduction- The Bridge to Literacy

Language and literacy is rightly at the very centre of education, both in curriculum and accountability terms. "Communication and Language" (along with personal and social development) is at the very centre of SLD/PMLD education.

This should not be seen as a separate subject but as an integral pre-cursor to "literacy". Although no pupil in the school is attaining National Curriculum Level 1 in reading and writing, the DfE programme of study makes explicit: "the National Curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum- cognitively, socially and linguistically. The document goes on to say that 'spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing'.

Speaking and listening, communication and language is fundamental to children's development. It is central for them to be able to meet their basic needs and to progress nearly all other learning. It is vital to children so they are able to progress their social, emotional and cognitive development. Particularly in the SLD/PMLD school context, the ability to communicate, as effectively as an individual's disability will allow, is the fundamental human right.

4. Delivery and Development of Reading

i Context

For our pupils reading should be interpreted as any activity that leads to the derivation of meanings from visual or tactile representations, for example, objects, pictures, symbols, or written words... and that these may be accessed visually or through touch. It can provide

functional sight vocabulary to enable pupils to be independent within the community. In the Nursery the prime area of Communication and Language and the specific area of Literacy form a central element of the early years curriculum. In the infants and juniors Reading is taught across the curriculum and more specifically as part of the class Literacy sessions for pupils that are working at P6 and below and planned for through their IEPs. In addition to this pupils working at P7 and above in the infants and juniors (and who have been assessed for readiness) work together in small ability groups for specific targeted Reading sessions linked to their IEP targets. Reading for Senior pupils and pupils at the Faculty will be incorporated through functional literacy linked to developing their independence.

ii Strategies for teaching Reading

For pupils working at P6 and below:

- providing access to a language/symbols/text rich environment
- providing a means of handling, using and gaining information i.e. objects of reference, photos, pictures, symbols etc
- providing a culture of reading for enjoyment and leisure
- group stories and related activities
- development of listening skills
- early phonics e.g. initial letter sounds of pupils' names
- early word recognition e.g. names, timetable vocabulary
- introduction of symbol/word topic vocabulary
- personalised reading books (photos/symbols)
- functional sight vocabulary e.g. shopping list
- symbolised recipes
- symbolised instructions/timetables

In addition, for pupils working at P7 and above may attend specific targeted Reading sessions to work on:

- more advanced phonics e.g. initial sounds, final sounds, blending to read CVC words
- Footlights (symbolised high frequency word reading scheme)
- Rigby Starr reading scheme
- High frequency word activities
- Comprehension skills

These pupils may be given homework such as:

- Individualised reading books to take home
- Tricky word boxes
- Reading activities

For more details of the progression of reading skills, see the Appendix Development of Reading skills.

5.Delivery and Development of Writing

i Context

For our pupils writing should be interpreted as any activity that communicates and records events, experiences, information, thoughts and feelings. This will include selecting the most appropriate form of recording according to pupils needs for example using objects of reference,

pictures, photographs, symbols, word stamps, audio recordings and dictation. All relevant ICT and communication aids should be used to foster and support writing. Writing is mainly taught as part of class Literacy sessions for infant and junior pupils and planned for through their IEPs. However there may be opportunities to incorporate writing within topics and through creative arts. Writing for Senior pupils and pupils at the Faculty will be incorporated through functional literacy linked to developing their independence.

ii Strategies for teaching Writing

- Tactile exploration
- Mark-making in variety of materials
- Use of mark-making tools
- Opportunities for mark-making through play
- early phonics e.g. writing initial letter of pupils' names
- Introduction of early handwriting skills (e.g. tracing, overwriting, joining dots, copy writing)
- Use of technology e.g. typing, composition using symbols on screen
- Use of photos/symbols/words to recount events, tell stories, answer questions, write captions
- as well as functional skills for independence and leisure, such as form filling, texting, emails and use of the internet

For more details of the progression of writing skills, see the Appendix Development of Writing skills.

6. Delivery and Development of Numeracy

i Context

Numeracy is mainly taught as part of class sessions for Infant and Junior pupils and planned for through their IEPs. However there may be opportunities to incorporate some aspects of numeracy within other sessions, through topics and through creative arts. Numeracy for Senior pupils and pupils at the Faculty is incorporated through functional Numeracy linked to developing their independence.

ii Strategies for teaching Numeracy

Numeracy comprises the three strands of Number, Using and Applying and Shape, Space and Measure

Infant and Junior pupils:

- Providing opportunities for sensory exploration of a variety of objects
- Using number songs and rhymes to engage pupils and develop their understanding of number
- Providing play activities involving a variety of objects and media of different sizes, shapes, colours (e.g. sand, water, stacking objects, bricks, musical instruments, puzzles)
- Establishing a culture in which counting activities are incorporated throughout the day and in different contexts, including sabotage in which there are not enough or too many items
- Developing pupils' understanding of the passage of time through class timetables and calendars.

- Giving access to games which develop mathematical skills (e.g. dominoes, snakes and ladders, lotto games)
- Where appropriate, providing more formal numeracy sessions for pupils to develop specific mathematical skills
- Providing opportunities to transfer mathematical skills into a real life context (e.g. in the community, through role play)

Senior and Faculty pupils:

- Providing opportunities for students to develop and apply mathematical skills in a way that is functional and develops their independent living skills (e.g. shopping within a budget, programming a microwave for the correct amount of time, finding correct seat number in a theatre)

In addition, pupils working above P8 may attend specific targeted Numeracy sessions to work on:

- More advanced number and calculation skills
- Telling the time
- Use of calculators

7. Design and Development of ICT

i Context

ICT within our school context is focussed on the functional application of ICT skills rather than the technological equipment used. The new expanded Functional ICT P-scales are designed to promote independence and functionality, they have been sub divided into three areas of: communication and information skills, independent living and leisure to reflect the needs of our pupils rather than the content of the new National Curriculum (2014). The P-scales are progressive; new skills are introduced throughout the levels, as a pupil moves up through the levels, opportunities to generalise skills in a range of contexts or using a range of different technological equipment are provided.

ICT is mainly taught as part of class sessions for Infant and Junior pupils and planned for through their IEPs. However, there may be opportunities to incorporate some aspects of ICT within other sessions, through topics and through creative arts. ICT for Seniors and at the Faculty is incorporated through Functional ICT linked to developing their independence, which is planned on an individual basis linked to their IEPs and goals, this may be delivered individually, in pairs or small groups and in a range of different contexts.

ii Strategies for teaching ICT

Functional ICT comprises of three strands of Communication and Information, Independent Living and Leisure.

Infant and Junior pupils:

- Provide opportunities to use information carrying devices within regular activities (e.g. circle time for news)
- Giving access to a range of technological equipment during activities throughout the day to develop ICT skills (e.g. plasma screen during literacy, a blender to make smoothies, an IPAD during art or music)

Senior and Faculty pupils:

- Provide opportunities to develop functional communication and information skills through the use of mobile phones and the internet. (e.g. text a friend to arrange a meeting, look up the time of a film)
- Planned activities to develop and apply independent living ICT skills in a functional context within the school and faculty setting (e.g. making own hot lunch using technological equipment in the café or silver room)
- Opportunities to generalise these skills across a range of different contexts (e.g. home, flat, work placement)
- Giving access to technological leisure activities (e.g. console games, video links with friends)

For our most able pupils there would be opportunities to demonstrate that they can use a range of functional ICT skills within a real life situation in a day or the whole week (e.g. plan, shop, cook etc for a day in the flat, or plan and carry out activities, meals, daily cleaning tasks at the flat during a block week)

8. Tracking Progress, Monitoring and Evaluation

There are 7 assessment instruments we use in school to show achievement and to track progress for pupils- see CG 7 Assessment, Recording, Reporting.

For Literacy, Numeracy and ICT the 5 most compelling assessment instruments are:

1. Pupil IEP's which include communication goals and may include literacy, numeracy and ICT goals that are written and evaluated on a termly basis and are p-level referenced.
2. Pupil Assessment Files- contain a summative assessment using the speaking and listening, reading, writing, number, shape, space and measure, using and applying, and computing DFE performance descriptors and have the expanded p-scale assessments for each area which are updated at least annually. In addition some end of key stage 4 pupils may use the Glyne Gap functional literacy and functional numeracy p scale assessments for levels 1 and 2.
3. Annual Review Reports- which provide summative description of Communication and Language, Literacy, Numeracy and ICT progress during the past year which is p-level referenced and goes to parents.
4. Zig Zag Books/Progress files – which are cumulative pupil records of achievements that describe attainment and progress that are p-level referenced and are completed on a termly basis.
5. Liaison Meetings – judgements on Communication, Language and Literacy, Numeracy and ICT attainment and progress are made in terms 1 & 2 liaison meetings using the previous year's CASPA data and teacher assessment for every pupil.

Core skills will be reviewed as identified in the school monitoring plan and linked with the school's development plan. Within this cycle, subjects within core skills will be the subject of discussion at a Teaching and Learning Governors meeting, external monitoring by a consultant or county advisor, with written reports being submitted to governors. The school maintains an open access policy to these documents, please see the core skills subject leaders for details.

10. Curriculum Leadership

The Core Skills Leaders will be the 'knowing colleague' (see guidelines 23 – "Curriculum coordinator and subject leaders responsibilities" for further details) and lead, support and monitor the staff in the Core skills team which consist of Barbara- Literacy, Iona-Numeracy and Wendy-ICT who will have an overall responsibility for the development and review of core skills teaching.

The Core Skills leaders will support the teaching staff in the delivery of Literacy, Numeracy and ICT. They will monitor the subjects within the school and will also commission independent

external consultants on behalf of the Governing Body for monitoring and further development of the core subjects based on the external monitors report and recommendations. As a critical part of their role they will develop an evidence based monitoring file of each of the core subjects planning, assessment and recording throughout the school. They will identify relevant courses to attend or to recommend to staff. They will organise training for staff and parents, keep a detailed record of courses attended and give feed back from courses at teachers meetings.

11. Working with parents

The school has a policy on partnership with parents and this includes negotiating and agreeing termly goals. (See curriculum guidelines no 1). Goals are individually drafted and forwarded to parents for comment at the beginning of term, a copy of the agreed goals are then sent to parents and the evaluated goals are sent to parents at the end of term. Pupils individual goals will include at least one or two goals within Communication and Language taken from their communication programme and may include a Literacy, Numeracy or ICT goal. Additionally teachers will ask for parental support with home reading or communication work. Training for parents is offered in all aspects of Literacy with a particular emphasis on communication such as signing and PECs, this may be in a group setting or tailored to meet the individual needs of parents and their child.

Other supporting policies and teaching guidelines

Please also read;

- Design and Delivery -Curriculum Guidelines no 6
- Supporting the Development of Communication and Language– A policy with teaching guidelines and advice- Curriculum Guidelines no 22
- Assessment, Recording and Reporting-Curriculum Guidelines no 7
- Curriculum Co-ordination and subject leadership-Curriculum Guidelines no 23
- Working with Parents-Curriculum Guidelines no 1
- Equal Opportunities Policy-School Procedure No 17

Appendix 1: The Development of Reading Skills

Appendix 2: The Development of Writing Skills

Appendix 3: Core Subjects IEP and Annual Review Report pro forma

Appendix 1

The Development of Reading Skills

P LEVELS

P1i Objects of Reference

P3i Photos

P3i Pictures

P3i Symbols

P4 Single word level with symbol support if necessary

P5-8 2-4 word

P5 initial letter recognition of own name/peers names

P5 initial letter sound of own name/peers names

P6 letter/sound recognition own name

P6 matching same letters in lower case

P7 sound/sign initial letters of familiar words

P7 Letters and Sounds (DfES)

P8 initial sounds/final sounds

P8 rhyming words/patterns

P8 blend

P8 Footlights-

Introduces sets of 6 high frequency words with symbol support

Level 1c+ Rigby Starr Reading Scheme

Blending sounds to read words (CVC, CCVC, CVCC, CVVC etc)

High frequency word activities

Comprehension skills

Appendix 2

The Development of Writing Skills

P levels

P1 Fully prompted or intermittent reaction to tactile exploration

P2 Manipulation of objects and materials for short periods (e.g. grasping, holding, releasing)
Coactive mark-making

P3 Deliberate formless mark-making in materials
Holding mark-making tools
Awareness of own actions
Looking at own work

P4 Understanding that marks convey meaning
Use of symbols/photos to convey meaning

P5 Describe pictures at a 2 word level
Trace/overwrite/copy shapes or straight line patterns

P6 Write own name
Copy single words
Sequence three words/symbols to describe a picture

P7 Group letters with spaces in between
Write a few simple words from memory
Rehearse and dictate a sentence for an adult to scribe

P8 Writing for a range of purposes
Write some letters in response to sounds
Copy writing from whiteboard
Put words of a sentence in the correct order

1c + Spelling
Handwriting
Punctuation
Composition

Appendix 3

Guidance for Writing Core Subject IEPs and Annual Review Reports

All IEPs and annual review reports in the infants, juniors and seniors should contain the following headings in bold. The subsequent headings are the attainment targets that annual reports should also contain p-level judgements on.

Literacy

Reading and Writing

Numeracy

Number

Using and Applying

Shape, Space and Measure

ICT

ICT

Appendix 4
Input for Higher Attaining Readers

Pupils working at P7 and above will be considered for specific targeted Reading sessions in addition to the input they are receiving in class. These sessions will focus on:

- more advanced phonics e.g. initial sounds, final sounds, blending to read CVC words
- High frequency word activities
- Comprehension skills

Pupils receiving this input may also be given homework such as:

- Individualised reading books to take home
- Tricky word boxes
- Reading activities

When considering pupils for this additional input, the following will be taken into account:

- P level in Reading
- P level of other class members in Reading (is the pupil substantially ahead of his/her peers?)
- Potential to make progress in this area (based on progress over time and teacher's professional judgement)
- Baseline assessment of phonics and high frequency word recognition

Pupils that are selected for input will receive a minimum of one session per week. This may focus on phonics, whole word recognition, comprehension or a combination of all three depending on the needs of the child.

The teacher delivering the input will liaise with the class teacher at the beginning of each big term to discuss targets for each child and how the class team can support their learning.

Parents are encouraged to support their child with any tasks sent home e.g. reading books, word activities, and advice will be given on how to do this.

Pupils will be assessed at the end of each big term to determine whether the input is having an impact on their reading. If it is considered not to be having an impact, consideration should be made as to whether the type of input should be changed or whether the input should stop.

Generally speaking, this additional input is for pupils in the Infants and Juniors as they will then move onto the Functional Literacy curriculum when they reach the Seniors. However, if the school feels it appropriate to continue with the input in Seniors, it may do so. This is likely to be a situation where a child was on the verge of being able to read fluently and it was felt that, with this continued input, they would achieve this.

The final decision regarding pupils' addition to or removal from the programme lies with the Senior Leadership Team.

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