

Whole School Plan for English as an Additional Language.

**Introductory Statement**

This document is a statement of the aims and objectives, principles and strategies for implementing the English as a second language in Scoil Mochua, Clondalkin It was formulated by the school staff and informed by the Curriculum Statements and Curriculum Guidelines, needs of the children and the expertise and experience of the staff.

The following supports were used in drafting the plan:

* National Council for curriculum and Assessment: English as an additional Language in Irish Primary Schools, guidelines for Teachers, June 2006.
* Circular 0053/2007: Meeting the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language.
* Circular 0015/2009: Meeting the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language.
* NCCA: EAL post primary assessment kit.
* NCCA: EAL post primary intercultural guidelines.
* NCCA: EAL in primary schools.
* NCCA: Intercultural guidelines for Primary Schools
* Communication, Language and literacy curriculum for Irish primary schools.
* Communication, Language and Literacy levels 1 to 3 in the Junior Cycle programme.
* Communication, Language and Literacy levels 1 and 2 for the Senior Cycle programme.
* Flo Longhorne: A sensory curriculum for very special people.

**Rationale**

This process was undertaken to develop the students’ English language and literacy skills and in doing so update the existing plan taking account of new programmes, methodologies and the ever-changing learning needs of students in the school. In addition, the school currently has 27 non-national pupils, and this number is growing due to increased immigration from worn torn and economically deprived countries such as the Ukraine and Nigeria.

**Vision and Aims**

Central to the ethos of Scoil Mochua is the recognition of the uniqueness of every child. It focuses on their diverse individual needs, abilities and culture and is committed to their holistic development-academically, physically, socially, spiritually and emotionally. It strives to create an environment that enables all children reach their full potential, supporting their attainment of maximum independence, choice and inclusion in their communities. We regard effective communication and the teaching of language as central to the whole process.

**Aims**

We endorse the aims of the Primary School Language Curriculum in line with NCCA guidelines on NCCA EAL guidelines for primary and post primary pupils.

* To promote positive attitudes and develop an appreciation of the value of the English language - spoken, read and written
* To create, foster and maintain the child's interest in expression and communication in the English language.
* To develop the child's ability to engage appropriately in listener-speaker relationships in English.
* To develop understanding in listening, speaking, reading and writing in English.
* To develop cognitive ability and the capacity to clarify thinking through oral language, writing and reading in the English language.
* To enable certain children to read and write independently in the English language.
* To enhance emotional, imaginative and aesthetic development through oral, reading and writing experiences in the English language.
* To provide opportunities for students to achieve certification through participation in the Junior and Senior Cycle.
* To foster an appreciation of different cultures in the school.
* To provide opportunities for the pupil’s and their families to share aspects of their birth culture and their first language.

**Strands and Elements**

There are three strands in the Primary Language Curriculum — oral language, reading and writing in both English and Irish. Across the strands, the elements describe essential language learning. Each element has a set of Learning Outcomes, which describe important language learning in terms of concepts, dispositions and skills. The elements are interdependent

In conjunction with the elements of the Primary Language Curriculum, teachers refer to the language needs of the children:

Due to the diverse nature of disabilities, the children in Scoil Mochua present with varied oral language abilities. This is especially true for EAL pupils. Their physical disability impedes free exploration of their environment and in addition many students have a learning disability ranging from mild to moderate and severe GLD. This has implications for their language development. An increasing number of students have multiple disabilities and language development can be delayed due to:

* cognitive disability
* communication difficulties (including children using non-verbal methods to communicate )
* health problems
* visual/hearing impairments
* language delay
* behavioural difficulties

Teaching and planning are adapted for the needs of students and strategies used recognise the need for smaller steps appropriate to the needs of students who progress at different rates. Explicit teaching of basic concepts and skills is necessary.

**Strategies used to develop an appreciation of developing communicative relationships through language.**

In devising strategies for the above it is necessary to take account of the fact that the Oral Language ability of the children in Scoil Mochua develops at varying rates hence differentiation is necessary to cater for the individual needs of each child. The strategies are include adjusting the comprehension levels allowing the pupils to take his/her turn in contributing to the topic and further challenging the child/children for listening comprehension and expression as they contribute, in turn. Many of the strategies will include modelling conversations and interviews, modelling social situations, creating opportunities to engage in real life social interactions such as going to the school tuck shop, going to the local Lidl.

The Aistear programme mirrors this for the preschool at their age level. The pupils engage in communication through nurturing relationships in a supportive environment.

Children in Scoil Mochua are encouraged to develop communicative relationships through language using the following strategies: These include turn-taking, establishing eye contact, use gestures, signs and communication aids to communicate, adopt appropriate verbal and nonverbal behaviour, introducing oneself and others; greeting others and saying good-byes; giving and receiving messages; using the telephone/mobile; making requests for information; giving directions; expressing appreciation; welcoming visitors; making a complaint; expressing sympathy etc.

Children/students with moderate GLG

In addition to strategies discussed above, children/students with moderate GLD will be encouraged

* to establish eye contact
* to take turns using communication devices
* to listen carefully to others and attend to topic
* to use appropriate gestures to convey meaning through hand signs, pointing, facial expressions and vocalization.
* to use non-verbal signs and speech to communicate
* to use appropriate communication device to tell news on daily basis
* to engage in conversation when opportunities arise such as greetings, toilet needs, lunchtime, music, P.E
* to use appropriate gestures to convey yes/no, likes/dislikes, hunger, pain
* All of the Teachers and SNAs will continue to update their LAMH skills as this is a vital gate way for EAL students to communicate with peers and adults alike.

**Strategies used to develop and expand vocabulary**

Strategies used to develop and expand vocabulary are outlined in the Teacher’s programmes which follow strategies suggested in the Primary language curriculum:

* Theme work
* Listening to story
* Big Books, Flip Chart Posters

**Understanding the context and structure of language.**

The school aims to develop the pupil’s understanding of the context and structure of language. The following approaches are adapted:

* Talk and discussion
* Play and Games,
* Story
* Poetry
* Improvisational Drama.
* Bag books

The children are involved in story-based activities such as listening to and retelling stories, recalling particular events in a story, asking questions, and communicating the narrative through role-playing language games, rhymes, songs, poems and jingles. Older students listen to local, national and international news, make presentations to the class, justify opinions and take part in formal debates, re-creating characters, events and emotions in role playing, miming stories and parts of stories, describing different characters, re-telling the story.

Further differentiation for students is required and teachers and SNAs assist with appropriate cues and prompts, use pictures and photographs and enable students respond using communication aids where necessary. Students with moderate and severe GLD are encouraged to engage with the world through a multi-sensory programme that alerts the child to his/her immediate environment by listening to and discriminating sounds in the environment using visual and tactile symbols to communicate. Teachers and SNAs use appropriate verbal and non-verbal behaviour to secure and maintain the attention of the listener by attending to eye contact, facial expression, audibility, clarity of enunciation, tone of voice and allowing the child additional time to communicate.

The following contexts are used for play: sand, blocks, water, the ‘home corner’ , Lego, toy human figures, toy animals, toy furniture, building and construction, materials, plasticine, Play Dough, construction straws and play house. The role of the teacher and SNA is considered vital in the development of play and maximum learning can be gained through adult mediation, guidance and direction. An enrichment of language can be achieved by asking questions, prompting new directions for the play, suggesting possibilities, initiating dialogue, introducing a new child into the activity, encouraging individual children to co-operate in play activity, encouraging role-play and encouraging children to talk about what they are doing and to discuss it with other children. Social stories that are made using clicker 8 and widget are particularly useful in this regard for EAL students.

A thematic approach is followed in the development of language and the following themes are developed through the pre-school and primary school through a cross-curricular approach.

Myself, My home, My School, Food, Television, Shopping, Past-times and Hobbies, Sport and Entertainment, Clothes, Weather, Special Occasions.

The following are strategies used in Scoil Mochua to develop higher order thinking skills at the various levels of the school with differentiation according to levels of ability of the children:

Emphasis in the Junior school is to: answer and ask questions having listened to a story, describe people, places, times, processes, events, colour, shape, size, position. EAL students will be assessed for their language proficiency when they first come to Scoil Mochua. The aforementioned aims will be modified to cater for this. These concepts are developed through the school in a thematic approach and involves discussion of different possible solutions to simple problems, giving a description, retelling a story, answering questions about it, describing in detail people, places, times, processes and events, discuss issues that directly affect his/her life, argue and persuade. Responses are differentiated according to the ability of the students e.g. one/two words/sentences (or more) as appropriate, activation of prior knowledge to assist meaning. Time is afforded to students to respond, and visual and tactile aids are employed when appropriate. E.g dynavox, etran frane, talkers etc.

**Oral Language programmes and resources**

Early Start Language Programme/Aisteor: Communication- Pre-School

Chatterbox 1 – Primary 1: Chatterbox 2 – primary 2, puppet theatre/puppets, play equipment (Sand, blocks, water, the ‘home corner’, Lego, toy human figures, toy animals, toy furniture, building and construction, materials, plasticine, play dough, construction straws, play house)

Large Books, Telephone/Mobile, Big Macks, Switches, Communication Boards, Dynavox

Boardmaker cards, Symbol cards, Objects of Reference System, Craig Barrie ( Visual Impaired)

Lamh, Speech Therapists, Smart Chute cards-,Radio,Newspapers,Magazines,Class novels/Library books,’ Look, Listen, Think’, photographs, paintings, Interactive whiteboard ,Poetry Ireland Authors List

Activities from PPDS website.

**Exploring and Using Language**

Children are encouraged to explore experiences and feelings through talk, writing play and drama.

Integrating Oral language through the Reading and Writing process

The following oral language activities and skills will be developed through the teaching of reading and writing – Comprehension strategies, language experience approach, brainstorming at the pre-writing stage, peer-conferencing and conferencing with teacher, children in author’s chair, use of novel, writing process, etc.

Integrating Oral language across the curriculum

Oral Language is the activity which binds all areas of the Curriculum and forms the basis for a broad range of subjects and activities. Oral Language permeates every facet of the Curriculum. In English many elements of reading and writing will involve considerable oral language work. Oral Language will have a significant role to play in such areas as:

* Developing Reading Skills
* Developing Comprehension Skills
* Developing Children’s’ response to fiction
* Developing Children’s’ response to poetry
* Preparing a topic for writing
* Editing & Redrafting writing

Integration with other areas of the curriculum is used to develop oral language. The use of talk and discussion is seen as a powerful learning strategy in every curriculum area. Opportunities of engaging in social English are provided for all class levels. This includes going to the tuck shop, going to Lidl, and class outings.

Reading:

The ability to read effectively is an essential requirement if the child is to benefit from the educational process, to develop his/her potential and to participate in society. It is our goal to promote effective reading for EAL pupils and to nurture a lifelong love of reading in our children.

In our approach to reading, we consider the following:

•the children’s general language development

•the different stages of development and varying degrees of learning disabilities that impact on the reading process.

•the unique learning needs of students such as visual impairments and perceptual difficulties that impact on development of reading ability.

•the central role of phonological and phonemic awareness

•the planning of book related events such as book fairs, book weeks and world book day.

•the involvement of parents in children’s reading

These approaches will be recognised at all stages of children’s acquisition of reading i.e. from the emergent reader to the instructional reader and to the independent reader.

**Understanding the context and structure of language.**

All children are encouraged to appreciate the usefulness and pleasures of reading. Opportunities are given to allow children to read alone, to read for a variety of audiences and be read to. Throughout the school children are encouraged to learn about the terminology and conventions of books.

In developing an understanding of the context and structure of language in using language our school attends to the following areas the school adapts the strategies :

**Print-Rich Environment**

We are very conscious of the importance of a print-rich environment throughout all classes and a variety of age-appropriate examples of a print-rich environment are evident in our school. These include big books in a range of genres, picture books, independent reading books, 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 (messages for children to read), charts of days, months, seasons and festivals calendars, theme charts, environment print in the neighbourhood, etc. ICT resources, dictionaries, newspapers, YouTube, online resources and magazines. Specialist signs are used throughout the school that incorporate print and associated pictorial representation.

**Reading Material**

We aim to use a variety of reading material such as big books, class readers, supplementary readers, poetry anthologies, etc.

•Reading schemes –Sunny street, Ginn Readers and Flying Start.

•Alternative reading material: There is a cohort of children who reach Primary 3 and experience significant difficulty making progress on the Sunny Street/Flying Start reading scheme due to rate of introduction of new words. These children are given parallel readers whereby emphasis is on high interest material and low vocabulary range. This includes books from an appropriate stage of the Oxford Reading Scheme/Sail/Flying Start.. Should the child encounter difficulties with this approach teachers may develop personalised books for the child based on a language experience approach building vocabulary and sentences from the child’s own experience and using Clicker 8 , widget symbols and pictures.

•Supplementary readers are used in the shared reading programme throughout the school. Children are encouraged to read for pleasure and develop independence in reading. Each child will bring home a least one book per week. A record of these books will be made by teacher/ parent/ child (as appropriate) on an individual reading record sheet. Reading record sheets vary at each class level and are teacher designed. These supplementary readers include:

Footsteps ( Sunny Street)

Oxford reading Tree

Sails (First Wave)

Ginn 360

Flying Start

•Big books are used in the pre-school, Primary 1 and Primary 2 and it is anticipated that each year teachers purchase new books to expand repertoire.

•Sensory bag books are used from preschool to primary 3.

•Class novels are read from Junior to senior cycle.

•A period each day is devoted to reading in each class and students who can read independently are afforded time to quietly read alone. Those students who require assistance read with the teacher, SNA, student on placement.

The following strategies are used for children with moderate GLD

•Develop awareness of symbol word link through communication boards and objects of reference

•Link sounds to individual letters through phonic programmes –Jolly Phonics and associated audio-visual aids (tapes, DVDs, ICT software)

•Identify different sounds in spoken words through rhymes, raps and phonological programmes such as P.A.T.

•Clap syllables in words using rhythm and beat to ‘Songs with Mike’

•Build a sight vocabulary of common words from books and personal experience using flashcards, snap games, Bingo, Lotto, and matching games.

•Relate picture to text by pointing

•Experience the reading process being modelled by teacher/SNA/ parent

•Engage in shared reading activities using age appropriate books- Ginn 360/ Oxford Reading Tree, flying start and books appropriate to needs e.g. sensory and tactile books.

•Create personalised books for the child based on a language experience approach building vocabulary and sentences from the child’s own experience and using Clicker 8 and pictures.

•Creation of class book from class book.com for world book day.

•Listen to daily reading of class novel using appropriate and engaging books

•Choose books from class library and public library.

•To experience books being read for information-Factual books.

•To use ICT to read- Read Along Books

•Link with home reading each night with parent from book and recording same.

•Attend the mobile library once a month.

**Book related events**

In Scoil Mochua we endeavour to promote a reading culture in the school. Throughout the year, book related events are organised. These include class trips to the local libraries, Readathon activities (students/class present books they read in school hall), visits from writers and poets as part of World Book Day or days devoted to communication.

**Poetry**

Exploring poetry is an important part of all three Strand Units (Oral Language, Reading, Writing) Each Class teacher will have a copy of the anthology of poetry in the classroom. Teachers are encouraged to purchase poetry anthologies for class libraries.

Each class will endeavour to create a Poetry Box – i.e. a box file containing laminated copies of interesting and relevant poems to be collected over the school year 2025-26.

**Emergent to Independent Reading**

Pre-school

Emphasis in the pre-school is on informal reading activities as recommended by Early Start Programme and children are introduced to reading through story, large books, picture books, pop-up books, tactile books posters. Children are encouraged to listen to story, respond, describe, re-tell, sequence pictures related to story and use books appropriately e.g. turn pages, left-right orientation

**Basic Sight Vocabulary**

Basic sight vocabulary will be acquired from a number of sources, such as language experience material, large-format books, environmental print, labeling, flash cards, etc. Sight vocabulary will be developed through selecting common words, core words, words from the reader, high interest words, Dolch list, and social sight vocabulary. The use of the Dolch Lists and social sight words lists will start in Primary and continue throughout the school.

**Phonological Awareness**

The awareness that speech can be segmented into phonemic units (sounds) is regarded as crucial for the development of reading and begins in the pre-school on an informal basis through nursery rhymes, poems and clapping games.) throughout the school it is developed through:

* Syllabic awareness – syllabic blending, syllable segmentation, syllable counting, syllable isolation.
* Onset and rime – nursery rhymes and rhyming poems, detecting rhymes in stories, rhyme judgement, rhyme generation.
* Phonemic awareness – identify initial sound – final sound - medial sound;
* PAT Programme

**Phonics**

The primary strategies recognised in this school to enable children to identify words are their knowledge of letter-sound relationships (grapho/phonic 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.

The phonics programme used in the Primary School is Jolly Phonics and age-appropriate programmes and interventions are utilised in the senior classes and post-primary school. These include:

•Toe-by-toe

•AcceleRead AcceleWrite

• Alpha to Omega

**Reading Fluency**

In order to develop reading fluency among our children we ensure time is allocated daily to reading activities, and paired reading is encouraged with the teacher/SNA/ other pupil/on a daily basis. Due to distance from the school a paired reading programme is not practical with parents during school time, hence parents are encouraged to read with their child each day as part of homework.

Teachers explicitly teach several comprehension strategies that relate to factual texts and fictional texts including scanning, skimming, search reading, reflective reading, brainstorming and categorising, sequencing, predicting etc. by modelling the language and process for children. Comprehension skills are developed through oral and written work with an emphasis on discussion.

**Exploring and Using Language**

At all class levels children are encouraged to

* Associate print with enjoyment through reading and or listening to stories and poems read aloud and perceive reading as a shared, enjoyable experience.
* Respond to characters, situations and story details, relating them to personal experience.
* Record response to text through various media – art, music, writing, drama.
* Pursue and develop individual interests through engagement with books.
* Engage frequently in informal discussion of books with teachers and others.

**Writing**

Understanding the context and structure of language.

The Curriculum stresses the importance of the process of writing as well as the product. It incorporates the principal that the act of writing is a part of the language learning process. In Scoil Mochua we aim to create and foster the impulse to write, and children are encouraged to write from their own experiences. Children will write for different audiences on a wide range of topics and in a variety of genres and children develop independence to the best of their ability as outlined in the curriculum.

For many children in Scoil Mochua writing poses particular difficulties. Teachers work in collaboration with Occupational Therapists and the Assistive Technology Department. Children in the Pre-school, Primary 1 and 2 use individualized writing programmes at the discretion of their teacher.

As children get older emphasis is on key board training and developing typing skills. As children get older the following principles are followed:

•Greater emphasis on quality rather than quantity.

•Through discussion on their writing, children will engage in a process of drafting, editing, re-drafting their work and progress to becoming more independent writers. ICT may be used in this process and software packages such as Kidspiration.

•Develop a sense of appropriate presentation of written work and display work accordingly.

•A wide selection of topics should be selected for writing. There is an emphasis on children writing from their own experiences and ideas.

**Children with Different Needs**

1. Differentiation of content

To enable all children access the English curriculum the following strategies are employed:

•Planning topics that are suited to the learning needs and abilities of class groups/students and are based in familiar contexts

•Providing alternative forms of information eg visual representations

•Modified text/worksheets

•Step by step instruction

•Varying pace of delivery

•Additional support from SNA/teacher

2.Differentiation of the task

•Varying types of tasks according to physical and learning ability of student

•Using task analysis outlining steps to be learned/completed

•Specialised equipment (such as reading and writing assistive technology) will be made available to students where appropriate

•Different levels of difficulty within a task.

•More able children/students will be encouraged to undertake additional reading and writing tasks.

•Modifying materials in task

•Students can work on different parts of a task

•Use the different interests and talents of children.

•Encourage use of internet for research purposes for more able students

•Varying levels of support from SNA

2. Differentiation by grouping.

•Whole class teaching

•Mixed ability group

•Ability grouping

•Friendship groups

•Work in pairs

•Peer tutoring/ buddy system

3. Differentiation by Output: quality, quantity and how children will respond

Students will be given opportunities to record work in different ways e.g. : worksheets

Review

It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the English curriculum. We aim to review this plan in June 2025.

On this date we will refer to the tasks in our action plan and check that they have been completed in accordance with the agreed time frame.

Success Criteria

The aim of this plan is to enhance the teaching, learning and understanding of English in our school. We will know that we are reaching our aims if:

• Teacher’s individual planning is based on this plan

• Procedures outlined in this plan are consistently followed.

• Feedback from teachers, pupils and parents indicate the success of the plan.

• Teacher observation and testing indicates that the plan has enhanced pupils learning.