

St. Joseph's National School, Moneygall, Birr, Co. Offaly.

Roll Number - 17003A

Whole School Literacy Plan

Introductory Statement

This whole school plan for English was initially formulated in consultation with teaching staff in Moneygall NS in term 3 of the 2025/2026 school year. It is intended to guide teachers in their individual planning for English and to ensure a consistent approach in the teaching of the English Language curriculum. It takes into account the revised Primary Language Curriculum.

Rationale

The rationale of this plan is

1. To conform to the principles of learning as outlined in the Primary School Curriculum
2. To review the existing plan for English in light of changed emphases and new methodologies outlined in the Primary School Curriculum
3. To benefit teaching and learning in our school. As a rural school located in Co. Offaly, we recognise the importance of fostering a rich, welcoming and encouraging learning environment, where language learning is meaningful, connected to lived experience, and rooted in community and place.
4. To create and implement a core curriculum in the areas of reading, writing, oracy, grammar, spelling, phonics and handwriting.
5. To maintain continuity and familiarity from one classroom to the next.
6. Recent school self-evaluation has focused on improving comprehension.

Vision

In this school, we are committed to the holistic development of all pupils in order to assist them to contribute and play a fulfilling role in their own community. We see the development of their language skills as being central to this process. We believe that the ability of our pupils to communicate fluently, confidently and effectively, will contribute greatly to the development of their self-esteem and their personal growth. It is our belief that their academic progress depends to a large extent on their ability to communicate orally and

through written word. In this school, we attach great importance to giving pupils a command of the English language. We see the teaching of English as something which underpins all other subjects across the primary curriculum. We believe that language learning is a tool for lifelong learning. Guided by our Catholic ethos, we seek to help pupils listen with empathy, speak with respect, read with curiosity and write with purpose.

Aims

1. Children and their lives

The Primary Language Curriculum aims to support teachers to:

- a. enable children to build on prior knowledge and experience of language to enhance their language learning
- b. encourage children to embrace Irish positively, and promote our cultural identity through the use of the Irish language
- c. encourage children of different languages and cultures to be proud of and to share their heritage
- d. 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

2. Children's communications and connections with others

The Primary Language Curriculum aims to support teachers to:

- a. 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
- b. 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
- c. enable children to fully engage with and enjoy a wide range of relevant and meaningful linguistic and communicative experiences with peers and adults

3. Children's language learning and development

The Primary Language Curriculum aims to support teachers to

- a. 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

- b. 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
- c. enable children to use language imaginatively and creatively and to appreciate its aesthetic aspects
- d. encourage children to engage personally with and think critically about a broad range of spoken, gesticulated, written and multimodal texts
- e. support children to develop their literacy skills and enable them to progress at their own learning pace in oral language, reading and writing
- f. nurture within children an awareness of language, allowing them to appreciate and understand the content and structure of languages

Curriculum Planning

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 and are:

- Developing communicative relationships through language (communicating)
- Understanding the content and structure of language (understanding)
- Exploring and using language (Exploring and using)

In Moneygall NS, the curriculum will be planned across three strands-

- Oral Language
- Reading
- Writing

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

Element 1: Communicating

Strand	Learning Outcome

Oral Language	1. Engagement, listening and attention 2. Motivation and choice 3. Social conventions and awareness of others
Reading	1. Engagement 2. Motivation and choice
Writing	1. Engagement 2. Motivation and choice

Element 2: Understanding

Strand	Learning Outcome
Oral Language	1. Sentence Structure and Grammar 2. Vocabulary 3. Demonstration of Understanding
Reading	1. Conventions of Print and Sentence Structure 2. Phonological and Phonemic Awareness 3. Phonics Word Recognition and Word Study 4. Vocabulary
Writing	1. Conventions of Print and Sentence Structure 2. Spelling and Word Study 3. Vocabulary

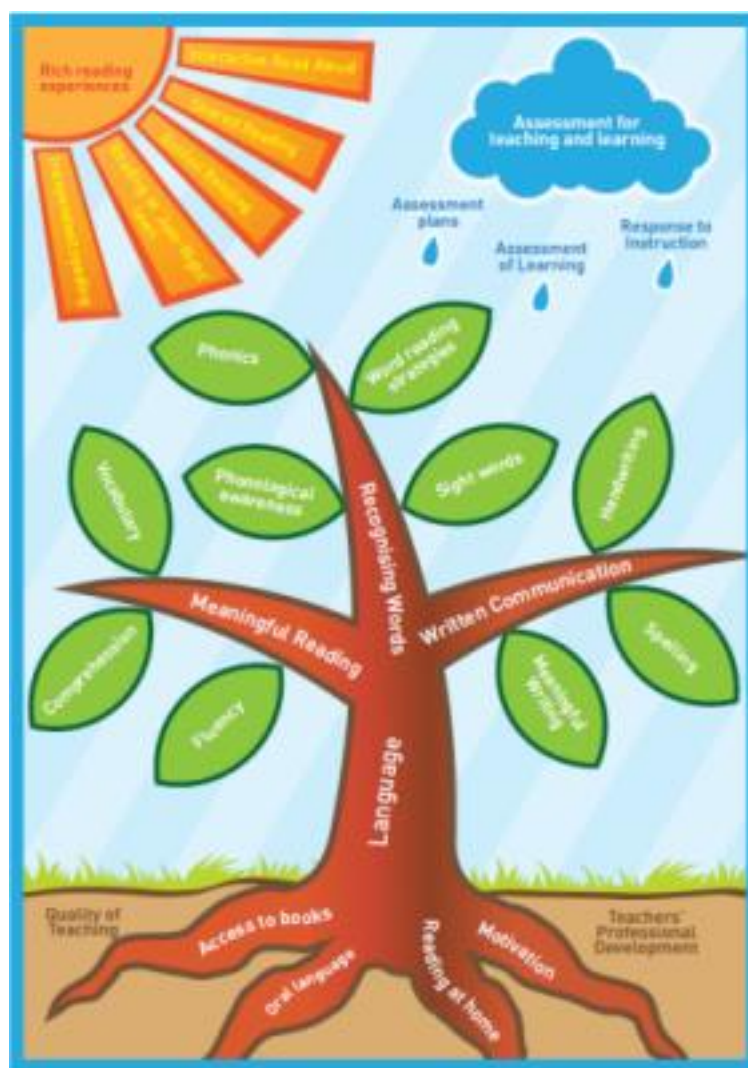
Element 3: Exploring and Using

Oral Language	1. Requests, Questions and Interactions 2. Categorisation 3. Retelling and Elaboration
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	4. Playful and Creative Use of Language 5. Information giving, explanation and justification
Reading	1. Purpose, Genre and Voice 2. Response and Author's Intent 3. Comprehension 4. Fluency and Self Correction
Writing	1. Purpose, Genre and Voice 2. Writing Processes and Creating Text 3. Response and Author's Intent 4. Handwriting and Presentation

Balanced Literacy Framework

Phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, writing and vocabulary knowledge are skills critical to literacy development. These skills are best nurtured within a developmentally appropriate, research based, balanced literacy framework.



Oral Language

Learning Outcomes for Oral Language

Element: Communicating		
1. Engagement, Listening and Attention	2. Motivation and Choice	3. Social Conventions and Awareness of Others
Element: Understanding		
4. Sentence Structure and Grammar	5. Vocabulary	6. Demonstration of Understanding

Element: Exploring and Using		
7. Requests, Questions and Interactions	8. Categorisation	9. Retelling and Elaboration
10. Playful and Creative Use of Language	11. Information Giving, Explanation and Justification	12. Description, Prediction and Reflection

‘Oral Language permeates every facet of the primary school curriculum. The development of Oral language is given an importance as great as that of reading and writing, at every level, in the curriculum. PDST, 2014). Each teacher will endeavour to use the five components of effective oral language instruction as an approach to the teaching of Oral Language.



There are a variety of spoken texts that teachers can use to address the functions of language that are required in different contexts.

Spoken Text Types	
Oral Reports	Conversations
Storytelling and Anecdotes	Questioning and Interviews
Partner and Small Group Work	Arguments and Formal/Informal Debates
Giving Instructions/Procedures	

Teachers Planning for Oral Language

- English oral language is integrated thematically through play, through teaching topics and discussing language based on texts.

- New vocabulary is displayed in the classrooms. The use of synonyms and antonyms are encouraged in the senior classrooms.
- Key vocabulary for pupils is identified for all subject areas and listed in teachers' short-term planning.

Whole School Strategies for Oral Language

Assembly

- Monthly whole school assemblies
- Appropriate and respectful language is modelled
- Good listening and appropriate responses are encouraged
- Common social functions are taught
- Positive non-verbal behaviour is encouraged

Yard/Visiting other classes:

- Using words to communicate and solve problems
- Self-Maintaining Language
- Model positive and respectful language
- Use of Restorative Practice Questions

Playful approaches to learning:

- Play based learning activities daily in Junior classes. We use a thematic approach and ensure that an oral language/role play station is included in the theme.

Methodologies: Oral Language

- Using words for common social functions in a polite and respectful manner (daily)
- Communicating to meet personal needs (on-going, daily)
- Listening (rhymes, jingles, riddles, listening activities, bingo, news)
- Recalling (re-telling stories, class trips/visits, news)
- Naming (name, address, days, months, seasons, family members, things you need/find)
- Categorising and classifying (people, places, family, clothes, weather, animals, food, pets)
- Describing (colour, shape, feelings, characters)
- Denoting Position (orientation-left/right, relational-under/beside/behind/on/in)
- Sequencing (alphabet, days, months, seasons, times of day, sequencing words)

- Reasoning (relational words-because/but, problem solving-what shall I do? 20 questions, proverbs)
- Giving instructions and directions (how do we make a cup of tea/go to the shop?)
- Reporting (reporting back from a group activity or project)
- Speaking out clearly (on going, daily)
- Predicting (hear part of a story, what do you think will happen next?, picture sequences)
- Projecting/empathising (picture/story, How do you think they are feeling? How would you feel if I?)
- Imagining (a new planet, a newly discovered species of animal)
- Questioning (20 questions, the Yes/No game show)
- Interpreting and using appropriate non-verbal language
- Taking turns in speaking and listening (circle-time, news time)
- Showing tolerance for views of others (circle-time, debating)
- Think Talk time (thinking and talking about questions of a philosophical nature to develop critical-thinking)

Resources

While English schemes from publishing companies are not the sole resource to aid teachers with their instruction, they do help by providing a consistent and structured guide which can ensure all strands and elements are taught. For Oral Language purposes, the following schemes are used to supplement teaching within the school: Rainbow Oral Language Programme, Starlight and Over the Moon (Gill & MacMillan).

Reading

Learning Outcomes for Reading

Element: Communicating	
1. Engagement	2. Motivation and Choice
Element: Understanding	

3. Conventions of Print and Sentence Structure	4. Phonological and Phonemic Awareness	5. Phonics, Word Recognition and Word Study	6. Vocabulary
Element: Exploring and Using 7. Purpose, Genre and Voice	8. Response and Author's Intent	9. Comprehension	10. Fluency and Self Correction

Phonological and Phonemic Awareness

Phonological Awareness and phonics is an integral part of the acquisition of the English language and a huge emphasis is placed on its importance in the early school years.

Phonological Awareness is taught explicitly using the ***Jolly Phonics Programme and UFLI.***

Phonological Awareness Methodologies:

- Rhyming Awareness
- Word Awareness
- Syllabic Awareness
- Phonemic Awareness
- Blending & Segmenting
- Manipulation
- Look and Say

Phonics, Word Recognition and Word Study

Alphabet

Reciting the alphabet will be taught in Junior and Senior Infants. Children will be asked to say the alphabet starting and stopping at different intervals to promote familiarity. Children will be encouraged to state the name and the sound. More focus will be on the sound. Awareness of vowels will be taught from Senior Infants.

Syllable Division

Syllable division utilises direct, systematic instruction for breaking phonetic multisyllabic words into small manageable chunks by identifying the syllable pattern. Knowing the rules for syllable division can help students read words more accurately and fluently.

Understanding syllables can also help students learn to spell words correctly.

Teaching syllable division strategies informally will provide instruction to enable students to transfer those word attack skills when reading text independently. A student can then sound out the word based on the syllable types and patterns.

The seven syllable types are:

1. Closed Syllables
2. Open Syllables
3. Magic E
4. Vowel Teams
5. Bossy R (words that contain R controlled vowels)
6. Diphthongs
7. Consonant – le

These skills are beneficial for children who have difficulty reading multisyllabic words, but they are also an essential reading strategy for students with dyslexia.

Phonics

Phonics will be taught explicitly in all classes with a deeper focus from junior infants to 3rd class. A *spiral approach* to phonics will be implemented to encourage reinforcement of previously learned concepts, which promotes retention of skills in later classes. Phonics Categories: Letter Sounds, Digraphs, Blends, Vowel Sounds, Diphthongs, Vowel Teams, R Controlled Vowels, Silent Letters, Prefixes, Root Words, Suffixes, Multisyllabic Words and Advanced Phonics.

Junior Infants	All 42 sounds of the Jolly Phonics programme are taught and introduced in Junior Infants. At the end of the year, Junior Infants are expected to know the 26 sounds and to be able to blend CVC words • S,a,t,i,p,n, c,k,e,h,r,m,d, g,o,u, l,f,bj,z,w,v,y,x,qu sh,ch,th,ee,or ai, oa, ng, oo, er,ar, ou, ue, oi • Word families: • at, an, ap • in, it, ip • ed,et,en • og, op, ot • un, ug, ut
Senior Infants	• Revision of 26 initial sounds • Double consonants ss,ll, ff, zz, ai, oa, ie, ee, or, Y (ending), oo, sh, ch, th, wh, ph. ou, oi, ue, er, ir, ur, ar, ay/oy (toughy y)ng, magic e with a,e,i,o,u, aw, ea, ow, igh • Blends: • sp, st, sc, sk, sl, sm, sn, sw • cl, cr • bl, br, • fl, fr
First Class	• Double consonants - ll,ff,ss,zz, Consonant digraphs - sh,ch, th, wh, ph, gh, Magic e with a,e,i,o, /ee/ - ee, ea, e_e, y, /ai/ - ay, ai, a_e /ue/ - ew, ue, u_e, /oa/ - ow, oa, o_e, /ie/ - igh, ie, i_e, y, /oi/ & /oy/ (toughy y) /ai/ & /ay/, Hard and soft g,Hard and soft c, aw & au, ow & ou, er, ur, ir, ar, /our/ & /or/, al, tch • Suffixes - ing, ed Word wall: • Letter strings • Compound words

Second Class	● Magic e (multisyllabic words), Long vowels, Diphthongs - oi,oy, ow, ou, /er/, /ar/, /ur/, /ir/ Silent letters - h, b, gh, g, w, k, Y at the end of a word, doubling rule, le, el, al, dge, ve se, -ce & - se, all, al, tch, Ought, aught, Multisyllabic words, Homophones, Irregular plural nouns, Homographs ● Suffixes ○ -ing, -ed ○ S,es,ies,ves (plural endings) ○ -ly, -ily & -ally Word wall: ● 3 letter blends ○ scr, thr, str, shr, spr, squ, sch ● Compound words
Third Class	● Magic e, Silent letters, ought. aught ● Prefixes ○ un, re, dis, over, il, im, ir, in, ex, mis, mid, de ● Suffixes ○ -s, -ed, -ing, -y, -ly, -ily, -ally ○ er,est ○ -eg, -ous, -ive ○ -tion, -sion, -ssion, -cian, -able, -less, -ible, -ness, -ful

Fourth Class	● Revision of ○ /ai/ - a_e, ay, /qu/, /ure/, /nch/, /or/, ○ /eer/ - eer, ear, ere, /ue/ - u_e, ui, ew,oo ○ el, al ○ ve (words cannot end in v alone) ○ gh, ough, augh ○ Homophones ● Prefixes ○ Revision of 3rd class prefixes ○ Pre-, ○ Uni, Bi, Tri and Other Numbers ● Root Words ○ dent, use, bio, mov(e), aero, know, port, mid, geo, multi, ped, cover, auto, under, graph, large, aud, micro, chron, - ex, sign, rupt, scope, cent, tri ● Suffixes ○ Revision of -S, -es, -ies, -ves (plural endings) ○ Revision of 3rd class suffixes -ness, -less, -ful ○ -ically ○ -ory ○ -ist ○ -ant, -ent ○ -logy
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Fifth Class	● Revision of ○ Homophones ○ Silent Letters ○ Ough ● Homonyms ● Rhyming Words ● Prefixes ○ Negative prefixes, un-, dis-, ir-, im-, in, ○ Non-, -fore, post-, after- ● Root Words ○ Trans, anti, hydr, am, anim, amb, meter/metre, scribe, therm, camp, curr, flex, tele, ject, photo, duct, poly, mono, aqua, uni, tract, astr, bene, struct, port, aud ○ Others: Latin and Greek word parts for size, (micro, mega, super, hyper) ● Suffixes ○ Revision of -ly, -er, -able, -ful, -ion, -ive -tion, -sion, -ssion, -able, -ible ○ /ij/ -eage, -age ○ The suffix -ion ○ -ation, -cation, -ition ○ -ify ○ -ous, -ious, -tious
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Sixth Class	● Revision of ○ Silent letters ○ Homophones ○ Rhyming Words ○ Soft C, Hard G ○ Ch - /ch/, /k/, /sh/ ● /j/ -nge, ● Y- /i/ (short and long) /e/, /yuh/ ● Y or I? ● Heteronyms ● Prefixes ○ Multi-, mono-, ○ Latin prefixes sub, com, pro, en ● Root Words ○ Quad, sub, inter, mille, phobia, san, grat, clin, dem, psych, cred, voy, dict, phon, mal, spec, mort, flec, omni, vert, vis, form, man, mit, tele, tract ○ Others: Latin and Greek Word Parts for how much, (poly, equi, omni, magni, mini) ● Suffixes ○ Revision of -S, -es, -ies, -ves (plural endings) ○ -ance, -ence, -ancy, -ency, -ary, -ery, -ory, ○ -sure, -ture, ○ -cial, -tial ○ -ate
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Sight Words A multi-sensory approach is used to teach all sight words. The sight word is taught in isolation initially before being taught in context.	
Junior Infants	Words sourced from decodable readers.
Senior Infants	Jolly Phonics Tricky Words 1-72
1st Class	Dolch Words 1-220. Fry's list of most common 300 words and phrases.
2nd Class	Assess and support as needed.

Vocabulary

Opportunities for both incidental word learning and explicit intentional teaching are necessary to develop vocabulary knowledge. When selecting vocabulary for instruction, teachers will endeavour to use the Three Tier Framework. This framework categorises words into three tiers.

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Description	Basic words that most children know before entering school	Words that appear frequently in texts and for which students already have conceptual understanding	Uncommon words that are typically associated with a specific discipline or domain of knowledge
Examples	Rock, come, play	Emerge, prosperous	Igneous, herbivore

Words will be selected from a text the children are using for read-aloud or texts that children will read as part of their literacy instruction.

Guidelines for Comprehensive Vocabulary Instruction

1. Using literature to develop understanding of word meanings

- a. Short daily interactions
- b. Class notice board for interesting words

c. Sample activities include Frayer Model, Questioning, Role Play/Write/Illustrate, Sentence Stems, Word Wizard Chat, Word Cline

d. Maintenance Work

2. Incidental word learning

a. Encouraging children to use newly acquired vocabulary

b. Modelling use of vocabulary

c. Vocabulary logs

d. DEAR time

3. Dictionary and thesaurus work

a. Dictionary and thesaurus activities

b. Morphemic analysis

c. Using context clues to infer meaning of text

Use of Dictionaries

Dictionaries are introduced from 1st Class up. Formal time is devoted to teaching the children how to use a dictionary correctly.

Comprehension

Comprehension Strategies will be taught explicitly in line with the Building Bridges of Understanding Programme. Strategies in *italics* indicate the new strategies that will be taught at that class level.

Class	Comprehension Strategy
Junior Infants	<i>Predicting</i> <i>Visualising</i> <i>Connecting</i>
Senior Infants	Predicting Visualising Connecting <i>Questioning</i>

1st Class	Predicting Visualising Connecting Questioning <i>Monitoring Comprehension: Declunking</i>
2nd Class	Predicting Visualising Connecting Questioning Monitoring Comprehension: Declunking <i>Determining Importance</i>
3rd Class	Predicting Visualising Connecting Questioning Monitoring Comprehension: Declunking <i>Monitoring Comprehension: Clarifying</i> Determining Importance <i>Inferring</i>
4th Class	Predicting Visualising Connecting Questioning Monitoring Comprehension: Declunking Monitoring Comprehension: Clarifying Determining Importance Inferring <i>Synthesising</i>
5th Class	All Comprehension Strategies

6th Class	All Comprehension Strategies
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Fluency

Reading fluency has two major components that are associated with adequate levels of reading comprehension:

1. Automaticity in word recognition
2. Prosody or expressiveness in oral reading.

Methodologies to promote and teach fluency in reading:

1. Wide reading: give access to a large and wide amount of reading
2. Repeated or Deep Reading
3. Assisted reading
4. Automatic sight word recognition
5. Phrasing instruction
6. Reader's Theatre

Station Teaching/Literacy Lift Off/Guided Reading

In this school we use Station Teaching, Literacy Lift Off and Guided Reading as an instructional approach in the teaching of reading and comprehension skills as well as oral language development. It allows for differentiated teaching to occur in small-groups. The children are assessed using a variety of different assessment methods such as running records, then grouped and matched to a text at their instructional level.

Class Novels:

There are a wide range of class novels and novel sets (8 packs) available for teachers to use. These novels cover a range of genres and assist with differentiated learning. Novels can also be block booked through Nenagh/Birr Library or downloaded onto Ipads via Borrowbox. The class novel can be used as reading material in a number of ways:

- Individualised reading
- Group reading
- Whole class reading
- Teacher reading aloud: modelling and demonstrating

Poetry

Poetry will be taught in the context of oral language, reading and writing. Through the use of poetry, we will expose the pupils to the experience of sounds of words, rhymes and rhythms, syllabication, wordplay and poetic licence. We will ensure that the pupils will develop an enjoyment for poetry through hearing and reciting poetry which will deal with topics of interest to the pupils. Pupils will compose their own poems throughout the school year which will provide for the experience of this writing genre. Poetry will be integrated with other areas of the curriculum, drama, SPHE, special occasions and music.

In each class pupils will:

- learn poems and rhymes off by heart – target of 10 poems per year to be memorised by each class with progression from year to year and teacher collaboration on what poets/genres of Irish and International poems are being taught each year.
 - Perform and recite poetry at our monthly school assemblies. Each class will be invited to perform and recite poetry at our Halloween Show, our Christmas Show, our celebrations for Lá Féile Padraig and our end of year Shows.
- enjoy poetry
- discuss poetry
- respond to poetry - through discussions, drama, art, movement etc.
- self-expression through the medium of poetry - compose poems
- the senior classes will be given an introduction into poetry analysis, exploring techniques such as symbolism, imagery and form.

Whole School Strategies for Reading

- D.E.A.R time
- Paired/Buddy Reading – mixed classes, pupils from Senior Classes paired with Junior Classes.
- Peer Reading/Tutoring
- Readathon Challenges
- Author Visits
- One Book, One School Initiative
- Grandparent Story Time
- World Book Day Events - Book Character Assembly, Book Tastings, Campfire Reading etc.

- Book Swaps
- Scholastic Book Fair
- Visits from Birr/Nenagh Librarians or connecting in online to reading webinars provided by local libraries.

School Library

Each pupil visits the school library with their class. There, they will have the opportunity to choose, read and discuss books with their peers and class teacher. Children will be familiarised with the features and procedures of an actual library such as checking in and out books etc. when such resources allow.

Resources for Reading:

Selection of class reading programmes - Over the Moon Reading Programme, Folens Reading Programme	Class novels Novel sets
Picture Books - linked to different comprehension strategies.	PM Levelled Reading Programme
Words their Way Programme	Phonological Awareness Programme
Selection of Phonics Programmes - Just Phonics, Sounds like Phonics, Jolly Phonics etc used interchangeably	Prim Ed Comprehension Boxes
Folens Reading Packs	Dolch Word List 1-220 Frys list of words/phrases
Building Bridges of Understanding Teacher Resource Book	UFLI - University of Florida Foundations Toolbox (Phonics and Word Study Programme found online)
School Library Books	Oide Resources - found online ● Literacy Development in the Primary Classroom - Six Key Components. (2020) ● The Reading Process Manual (2014)

	● PLC Webinars and E-Bulletins ● Components of Effective Oral Language instruction.
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Writing

Learning Outcomes for Writing

Element: Communicating			
1. Engagement		2. Motivation and Choice	
Element: Understanding			
3. Conventions of Print and Sentence Structure		4. Spelling and Word Study	5. Vocabulary
Element: Exploring and Using			
6. Purpose, Genre and Voice	7. Writing processes and creating text	8. Response and Author's intent	9. Handwriting and presentation

Genre

Writing Genres will be taught explicitly using the Seven Steps to Writing Genres/First Steps
The writing genres used are as follows:

- Recount: the purpose is to retell events. Main features of a recount include events in time order, linking words to do with time, simple past tense.
- Narrative: the purpose is to entertain. A narrative tells an imaginative story (some can be based on facts). Main features of a narrative include defined characters, a setting, problem or complication, descriptive language and are usually in the past tense.

- Procedure: the purpose is to tell the way to do things. Main features of a procedure include stating the goal of the procedure, materials, method, evaluation, tense is timeless and use of linking words.

- Report: the purpose is to present factual information on a person, place, animal or thing. Main features of a report include classification, description, summary, subject specific vocabulary and objective language.

- Persuasive: the purpose is to persuade. Main features include arguments for/against, evidence, conclusion, mainly timeless present tense and use of passives.

- Explanation: the purpose is to explain how something came to be. Main features include a definition, description of various parts, how or why it works and summary.

Grammar and Mechanics of Writing

Junior and Senior Infants (Stage One)		
Conventions of Print	Grammar	Punctuation
● Print carries a message ● Left to right orientation ● Top to bottom orientation ● Return Sweep ● Appropriate spacing	● Identifying the correct sentence e.g. I had some sweet / I had some sweets. ● Putting sentences into the correct order. ● Agreeing / Disagreeing with statements e.g. The dog flew away [Yes / No] ● Filling in the missing words in sentences ● Selecting the correct word to complete a sentence e.g. The cat was ---- the table [up /on] ● Selecting the correct word to complete a sentence, using pictorial clues.	● Draw yourself and write your name ● Find capital letters in words ● Find capital letters in lists of letters ● Matching lower case to capital letters ● Copy lower case and capital letters ● Write the correct lower case letter with the capital letter ● Rewrite sentences using capital letters and full stops. ● Identifying correct sentences i.e. with capital letter and full stop.

1st and 2nd Class (Stage Two)		
Conventions of Print	Grammar	Punctuation
● Print carries a message ● Left to right orientation ● Top to bottom orientation - Return Sweep ● Appropriate spacing	● Verbs ● Write using verbs in past, present and future tense ● Nouns ● Adjectives ● Constructing a sentence from a noun, a verb and an adjective. ● Filling the blanks using nouns/verbs/adjectives. ● Using a and an ● Writing sentences in singular / plural ~ are / is. ● Revision of concepts of singular /plural; past / present tense, as introduced in first class. ● Pronoun ~ Exercises replacing nouns with suitable pronouns ● Preposition ~ Completion of sentences using correct prepositions ● Use basic connectives ● Rewriting sentences and putting words in the correct order ● Cloze Procedure activities	● Revision of capital letters / full stops ● Capital letters in months, days, titles, places. ● Capital letter ~ 'I' ● Question Marks ● Ordering the days/ months ~ capital letters ● Commas ~ writing lists ● Use of comma ~ not before 'and' Rewriting passages correctly ~ capital letters, full stops, commas. ● Writing addresses correctly ● Identify exclamation marks in text ● Identify speech marks in text
3rd and 4th Class (Stage Three)		
Conventions of Print	Grammar	Punctuation

	● First, second or third person [singular / plural] ● Personal pronouns ● Nouns – Proper and common ● Collective Nouns ● Singular and plural ● Extending sentences ● Conjunctions ● Connectives ● Adjectives ~ Group adjectives by type , e.g. colours ~ dull, dark, red, scarlet, beige ● Adjectives ~ comparative / superlative ● Verbs ~ grouping into categories, e.g. run = dash, sprint, jog, chase, rush etc. ● Verbs - Further ‘tense’ work ● Am, is, are / they’re, their, there / to, too, two ● Adverbs ~ classifying by ‘where’ ‘when’ ‘how’ ● First, second or third person [singular / plural] ● Sentence construction, using adverbs in the sentences. ● Finding a number of adverbs that can be used with a list of verbs ● Making sentences more interesting by changing the verb / adjective / adverb	● Revision of punctuation concepts to date ● Capital letters – Sentence, I, proper names and places, days, months and festivals ● Commas – Lists & place names ● Changing sentences to questions ● Identifying sentences where commas should be used ● Speech marks ● Exclamation marks ● Use of hyphens ● Use of apostrophe ● Conjunctions – and, but, because, or ● Apostrophes for possession ● Apostrophes for contractions ● Apostrophe ~ use with plural nouns ending in s ● Negatives ● Introduction to paragraphs
5th and 6th Class (Stage Four)		

Conventions of Print	Grammar	Punctuation
.	● Review of past work ● Adding prepositions to sentences ● Clarifying / further practice with pronouns & prepositions ● Subject and Object in a sentence ● Correct use of formal language ● Agreement of singular and plural with nouns and verbs ● The use of double negatives e.g. I'm not going nowhere. ● Classifying nouns by type ~ proper, common, collective, abstract. ● Further use of adverbs and conjunctions ● Clauses ~ Adding second clauses to sentences ● In all writing activities, check for the correct use of words	● Revision of punctuation concepts to date ● Capital letters – Titles, relating to countries/languages , person's titles (Mr., Dr.) ● Contractions ● Paragraphs ● Direct and Indirect Speech ● Working with tenses, prepositions and clauses ● 'I' or 'me' ● Commas ● Dashes ● The Colon ● Semi – Colon ● Simple Sentences ● Compound /Complex Sentences ● The Passive Voice ● Use of Brackets in sentences ● Conditionals

Spelling

Spelling development is recognised as a developmental continuum rather than a rigid class-level programme. Pupils progress through stages of spelling knowledge at different rates depending on their linguistic development, literacy experiences, and learning needs.

The school adopts a structured literacy approach to spelling instruction informed by phonology, orthography, morphology, and etymology. Instruction is explicit, cumulative, diagnostic, and responsive to pupil needs.



The four strands of spelling develop in parallel over time:

1. **Phonology** → hearing and manipulating sounds
2. **Orthography** → understanding spelling patterns and conventions
3. **Morphology** → understanding meaningful word parts
4. **Etymology** → understanding where words come from and why they are spelled that way

The balance changes as children grow. In the early years, phonology and basic orthography dominate. By the senior classes, morphology and etymology become increasingly important.

“For students to deeply understand how English words work and take advantage of that knowledge in reading new words, they must attend to both the phonemic parts of the word (sounds and spellings) and the morphology part of the word.” (Blevins, 2023)

Spelling screeners, writing samples, standardised testing and teacher observation can be used to identify each pupil’s current stage of spelling development and to inform instruction.

Screening results are used diagnostically to:

- identify strengths and areas for support,
- group pupils flexibly where appropriate,
- guide classroom instruction,
- and inform supplementary support.

While broad developmental expectations are associated with each class level, pupils may work within different spelling stages depending on individual readiness and attainment. A pupil’s spelling stage does not necessarily correspond directly to class level.

Support for spelling may be provided:

- within whole-class teaching,
- through differentiated small-group instruction,

- through in-class support,
- or through supplementary support teaching where appropriate.

The level and type of support provided will depend on:

- assessment information,
- class context,
- pupil need,
- available school resources.

Approaches to the Teaching of Spelling:

Junior and Senior Infants	Phonological awareness is introduced in Junior Infants. From this point the children engage in a systematic phonics programme developing both phonemic and phonological awareness, building the blocks for spelling work from 1st class onwards.
1st - 6th Class	<i>Spelling Stages</i> with a direct link to our four strand model of learning spellings as shown below.

Developmental Stages of Spelling

The school recognises spelling development as a continuum progressing from simple sound-symbol correspondence to increasingly complex understanding of word structure, morphology, and etymology.

Spelling instruction progresses developmentally through:

- consonants and short vowels,
- digraphs and blends,
- long vowel and complex vowel patterns,
- inflected endings,
- syllable junctures,
- unaccented syllables,
- affixes,
- and Greek and Latin elements.

These stages are taught through an integrated linguistic approach involving:

- phonology (sounds),
- orthography (spelling patterns),
- morphology (meaningful word parts),
- and etymology (word origins).

Although broad expectations exist for each class level, pupils may work across stages according to assessed need and developmental readiness.

Stage	Main Area
Consonants	Phonology + Orthography
Short Vowels	Phonology + Orthography
Digraphs	Orthography
Blends	Phonology
Common Long Vowels	Orthography
Other Vowels	Orthography
Inflected Endings	Morphology
Syllable Junctures	Orthography + Morphology
Unaccented Final Syllables	Phonology + Orthography
Affixes	Morphology
Greek and Latin Elements	Morphology + Etymology

Spelling Stage	Main Linguistic Focus	Typical Emphasis
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Consonants	Basic Phoneme- Grapheme Meaning	Early 1st
Short Vowels	CVC Patterns	1st
Digraphs	Two Letter Sound Patterns	1st - 2nd
Blends	Adjacent Consonant Sounds	1st - 2nd
Common Long Vowels	Vowel Teams/Silent E	2 nd
Other Vowels	Complex Vowel Patterns	2nd - 3rd
Inflected Endings	-s, -ed, -ing	1st - 3rd
Syllable Junctures	Doubling, syllable division	3rd - 4th
Unaccented Final Syllables	Schwa, weak endings	4th - 5th
Affixes	Prefixes, suffixes	3rd - 6th
Greek and Latin Elements	Roots, origins	5th - 6th

Spelling Resources

- Spelling For Life by Lynn Stone (Spelling Stages and Spelling Rules)
- Spellings For Me Individualised Online Spelling Programme
- Words their Way (Spelling Stages)
- Phonics Schemes & TTRS
- Dolch lists
- SNIP Spelling Programme (not used in isolation, but rather as an additional support to the teaching of spelling rules)
- Word Study Work
- Brendan Culligan's Corewords 1 & 2
- Extension Work: Themed Spelling
- Dictionary Work/Vocabulary Work

Parental Involvement

Parents are encouraged to ensure that their children complete their spelling homework each night using approaches outlined by the teacher, depending on the stage of instruction.

Writing Processes and Creating Text

Knowledge of the writing process is an essential part of the writing curriculum. Children will be given the opportunity to take part in the writing process when creating texts. Planning, drafting, editing, re-drafting method through the medium of First Steps will be used throughout the school. The use of writing checklists are encouraged in each class both as a means of editing children's work during the writing process and also as a form of self assessment. Checklists can be dependent on the text structure, such as narrative and recount.

Free Writing

All children will partake in free writing activities throughout the school. This will provide a record of progression throughout the school year. Children are told beforehand that it will not be marked, corrected or criticised. Children may be given an opportunity to read what they have written to the teacher. The children can choose the topic although they may need some guidance in the beginning. There is no pressure on children to "produce" an amount of writing. Spelling is not the focus of the work as it is about the child getting his/her message down. The reluctant writer may use pictures to convey a message.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment is used by teachers to inform their planning, selection and management of learning activities so that they can make the best possible provision for meeting the varied needs of the children in our school.

The following are a list of assessments carried out to inform the teaching of reading in Moneygall NS.

Phonics and Word Study	● End of Junior Infant Jolly Phonics and Alpacca online assessment of 42 sounds and sight words, reading of CVCs ● End of Senior Infants Jolly Phonics Assessment ● Drumcondra Early Literacy for Senior Infants ● Belfield Infant Assessment Portfolio (BIAP) ● Dolch List Assessments ● MIST Screening Programme
Fluency	● Fluency Assessment - Words Per Minute and Fluency Rubric

Spelling	• Words their Way Spelling Screener • Spelling tests at teacher's discretion
Comprehension	• NGRT New Group Reading Test (www.testwise.com) • YARC • PM Reading Assessment
Standardised Assessments	• Drumcondra Reading Assessment Level 1-6 • Drumcondra Spelling Assessment Level 1-6

Literacy Support for Pupils with Additional Needs

Children with learning difficulties and special educational needs are helped to achieve their potential and access the Primary Language Curriculum in the core skills of oral language, reading and writing.

Assessment is ongoing and a school support plan (SSP) is drawn up and co-ordinated by the SET in conjunction with the parents, class teacher and Special Needs Assistant (SNA) where applicable. Specific short term targets are agreed. Regular consultation also takes place with external professionals e.g. NEPS psychologist, NCSE advisors, Speech & Language Therapist, Occupational Therapists etc. The class teacher maintains the first line of responsibility for the welfare of the child. Suitable resources are provided to meet the learning needs of individual children. The SET may provide direct instruction to individuals or small groups of children regarding literacy development, sometimes withdrawing from the classroom or through station teaching in the classroom and other co-teaching models, whichever is deemed most appropriate to meet the needs of the child/children. SET's meet with class teachers to plan, teach, assess and review the learning of pupils on a regular basis. More information can be found in the Special Education Policy.

Timetable and organisation planning

The whole school plan and the Primary Language Curriculum will seek to provide information and guidance to individual teachers for their long and short term planning.

The Primary Language Curriculum suggests schools spend a weekly allocation of 3 hours 15 minutes on Language 1 in Stage 1, 4 hours 45 minutes in Stage 2, 3 hours 45 minutes in Stages 3 and 4.

Class teachers will be required to produce:

- Yearly/ Termly plans

- Fortnightly plans in conjunction with the New Primary Language Curriculum.

The Cuntas Míósúil will be used to measure the success of the English plan and will inform teachers' preparation for the following month.

Literacy and ICT

Acknowledging that ICT has its own unique literacy to be developed, ICT tools have the potential to help support the development of literacy across the curriculum. A variety of strategies are already being used in the school including; the use of online programmes to develop phonemic awareness and basic reading skills as well as comprehension skills; the use of word-processing programmes for the drafting and redrafting of written work; whole-class revision of literacy skills using specific activities for IWBs; and the use of the internet for information gathering and research activities. Teachers regularly use the internet to source activities and lesson plans as well as research new texts and classroom resources.

- We have tablets for use throughout our classes.
- We have computers in each classroom and 6 laptops in the Resource rooms
- We have developed a digital strategy plan that encourages the reinforcement of ICT tools to promote literacy throughout our school.

Homework

Discrete English homework is a regular feature in all classes, from learning letter sounds and sight words to reading for pleasure. The practice of learning and exploring English spelling is also a consistent component. Typically, one written piece of homework is assigned that often has an interdisciplinary component.

Parental Involvement

Parents are encouraged to support their child's development of literacy skills by:

- Our initial welcome meeting for parents of the incoming Junior Infants at which the importance of speaking with and listening to as well as reading to and with the young child is discussed.
- Written communications via the child's Homework diary or Class DoJo, email, Aladdin, website.
- Attending parent/teacher meetings.
- Taking part in Whole School Literacy initiatives throughout the year – World Book Day, Scholastic Book Fair.
- Enrolling their child in the local library and encouraging reading for pleasure. (Information on initiatives and opening hours in local libraries are made available to parents)
- Supporting the work of the school by participating with their child in collaborative activities.

- Implementing suggested home-based activities in their child's classroom or school support plan and discussing the outcomes with the child's teachers.
- Book sharing/reading stories.
- Storytelling e.g.as part of the bedtime routine.
- Paired reading (listening to and giving supportive feedback on oral reading)
- Having discussions about school and other activities to build vocabulary and thinking skills.
- Writing lists and short accounts about children's experience.
- Using simple computer software and apps to support learning in English.
- Taking children on trips to the library, museum, zoo and other places of educational interest. Community Links
- Children are encouraged to register with their local Library.
- Authors are invited to visit the school.
- World Book Day is celebrated annually.
- Children take part in various quizzes in the community and beyond eg. Credit Union and Cumann na mBunscoil school quizzes.

Continuing Professional Development

As an integral part of the Primary School Curriculum, English literacy will be addressed on a regular basis through staff meetings, other whole-staff professional development experiences and all curriculum planning exercises. Teachers are encouraged to seek out opportunities to improve their practice in literacy through their own personal continuing professional development, and all teachers are encouraged to consider connections between their annual personal professional development goals and literacy teaching/learning. Details of courses and training days relevant to the English programme will be emailed to staff.

Success Criteria

The success of this school plan will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- Teacher/parent/pupil/community feedback
- Children's feedback regarding their learning
- Suggestions and reports of DES Inspectorate
- Monthly records of teaching and learning

IMPLEMENTATION

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Leadership team of Moneygall NS are responsible for:

- Leading the teaching and learning of Literacy throughout the school.
- Leading the school in a continuous process of self-evaluation in the area of Literacy.
- In consultation with other staff members, developing, promoting and reviewing school policy in relation to Literacy.
- Disseminating information about new ideas in the teaching and learning of Literacy. ● Encouraging the implementation of Whole School strategies to improve areas of Literacy.

Class teachers are responsible for:

- The implementation of the Literacy programme for their own classes.
- Differentiating the Primary Language Curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils within the class. Timeframe:

This policy will be implemented following ratification from the Board of Management. It will be reviewed on a regular basis particularly in regards to developments and training within the Primary Language Curriculum Framework.

THE OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS POLICY LIES WITH THE PRINCIPAL AND TEACHERS.

Ratification

This policy was agreed by staff in May 2026 and formally agreed and ratified by the Board of Management on 10th of September 2026-

Date: 10/09/2026

Henry Healy, Chairperson, Board of Management

Jane Finnegan, Principal/Secretary, Board of Management