

Literacy Policy

Mayfield Community School

As a staff, we believe that improving the literacy levels of our students is important because:

- It is a necessary life skill**
- Increased levels of literacy will enhance student's self esteem**
- Our students will be able to function fully in society**
- Our students can be confident and comfortable in the classroom**
- Our students can understand and access subjects in the curriculum**
- It will open up opportunities for our students in terms of their career options**
- It will allow our students explore their individual interests through written, visual and spoken genre**
- Our students will be able to interact socially and communicate through new technology and multimedia**

The role of our teachers

Teachers understand that there are different types of learners and that learner's needs are different

Teachers are committed to ensure that students achieve their individual potential

Teachers through a variety of teaching approaches endeavour to include all learners regardless of ability

Teachers should consider the pace of their teaching so that students can keep up

Teachers take the opportunity to display students work in the classroom

Teachers should identify students with literacy and numeracy difficulties

Teachers have a responsibility to keep up to date with teaching approaches to meet the needs of pupils who are presenting with learning difficulties

Teachers should avail of the support and advice of colleagues who have expertise in this area

Teachers should be aware of the National Strategy “Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life”

Teachers have a role in encouraging and fostering an interest in reading

Teachers can encourage students to read for pleasure and to develop a love for reading

Teachers should build on students strengths and talents as we endeavour to develop the literacy levels of our students

Incoming First Years

We gather information about our incoming first years in a number of ways:

- **The use of standardised tests**

NFER Nelson GRTII

Baseline data is available for incoming first years over the last number of school years. This details the incoming student’s reading age in first year and this has been tracked for students right through second year to third year. This data is available in the school’s learning support department.

The Assessments given to our incoming students while they are in sixth class

Our transfer programme involves meeting each parent of our incoming first years with the students

One of the questions posed to parents at this interview specifically asks about any literacy difficulties their son / daughter may have. This is recorded by the teacher interviewing the parents at this point.

Teachers visit the Primary Schools where meetings take place with primary school resource / learning support teachers.

Various Reports are placed in the student files including psychological reports and reports of meetings with NEPS psychologist.

All primary schools are asked to complete Student Transfer Form which is placed in all student files. Copy of this form can be seen separately.

Primary teachers are asked to record results of standardised assessments in the areas of literacy and numeracy.

Our starting point is that a whole school approach beginning in first year is very effective in improving the literacy levels of our students:

Our school wide approach has included:

- **Targeting first year students**
- **Paired Reading / Mentoring programmes**
- **Continuing Professional Development for Teachers**
- **Developing a range of reading strategies**
- **Providing where possible individualised instruction**
- **Reading strategies for literacy development in subject classrooms**
- **Where possible use of ICT for individualised programmes e.g. Accelerated Reading Programme**

Interventions that we have worked in our school

- **Who wants to be a Word Millionaire**
- **Reading Challenge**
- **Make-a-Book**
- **Paired Reading**
- **Drop Everything and Read (DEAR)**
- **One Book One Community Initiative**
- **Library Visits**
- **Using our own library**
- **Reading magazines / newspapers**
- **Readalong – CDs / Audiobooks**
- **Open Book – Senior Cycle – Differentiated Novels**
- **The Unfinished Book Of Poetry**
- **Keyword Strategy**
- **Accelerated Reader**
- **LCA pupils reading a number of books for Practical Achievement Task**
- **Homework Club**
- **Lunchtime Reading Club**
- **Displaying pages of newspaper in mall**
- **Once a week in French with first and second year classes reading for pleasure time in French class**

Strategies for reading development /extension we are using in our classroom

- **Readability of Text**
- **Using Keyword Approach**
- **Skimming & Scanning**
- **Writing Frames**
- **Graphic Organisers**
- **Mind Maps**
- **Note Taking Skills**
- **SQ3R**
- **Spelling**
- **Marking assignments**
- **Reconstruction Activities**
- **Cloze**
- **Sequencing**
- **Matching up technical words to definitions**
- **Labelling**
- **Classification**
- **Prediction**
- **Analysis Activities**
- **Text Marking**
- **Labelling/Segmenting**
- **Pupil generated questions**
- **Diagram Completion**
- **Summarise information**

DEIS Planning in Literacy and Numeracy

The interventions discussed below are whole school interventions and work to support existing practices in terms of learning support provision for children with literacy difficulties as a result of specific learning disabilities, general learning disabilities and other disabilities. We use team teaching, small group withdrawal and some individual support as strategies in this regard.

As a staff we endeavour to create a print-rich environment in our school. We are conscious of the corridors and halls as literate spaces. In recent times we have displayed daily newspapers, particularly sports sections and headline pages in prominent areas. We have displayed student work in the visual display area at the front of the library and in various other areas around the school and in classrooms.

08/09: School-wide collection of baseline literacy data

All this baseline data is presented in an appendix to this document

Specific interventions were discussed and implemented

Some of the interventions involved post-test evaluation, others did not.

Summary of interventions to date:

Literacy:

1. Re-stocking and furnishing of library space to a functioning if basic level. Funding was provided through the JCSP Reading Corner Initiative. The library is now in use by most Junior Cycle classes. This is a long-term project that will require significantly more resources than those provided through the reading corner initiative.
2. Drop Everything and Read Initiative (DEAR) was implemented through the JCSP with all first and second year classes. This was a joint initiative between JCSP and HSCL: "One Book, One Shandon". All first year students read "Ice Man: Tom Crean". There were many successful spin off events where the book and the act of reading took centre stage.
3. It was decided that KEYWORDS strategies would form the backbone of teaching and learning across all classes.

4. Make a Book was used as a literacy strategy with Diarmaid 1. The initiative was run by Olwyn Brady and Clare Buckley. The students created books around animals that were inspired by a trip to Fota Island. They also made a model of a fantastical hybridised creature.
5. Toe By Toe (Individual Reading Coaching) – training being provided to Teaching Assistants. Toe By Toe programmes were then put in place for students who were presenting as non-literate or were at an extremely basic level. This work is ongoing.
6. Who Wants to Be a Word Millionaire (KC & CB) was employed as a second year reading intervention (class Diarmaid 2). See pre and post-test data. This will also be used with class Deaglan 1 during the third term (April 10).
7. Paired Reading (09/10) was undertaken as a school-wide literacy intervention. Volunteers from transition year were trained as peer tutors for classes Deaglan 1 and Cathal 1. The intervention lasted six weeks. Post-test data available.
8. Team teaching has been introduced to Class Diarmaid two as an aid to literacy development. It has been successful to date.(KC & CB)

Numeracy:

1. Tuesday 21st October saw a meeting of Maths/Science teachers with Jerry McCarthy to discuss numeracy as a whole-school issue.
2. Maths Games Initiative was applied for and implemented by Anthony Marian (08/09).
3. Maths For Fun HSCL Initiative was put in place by Maura Lynch (08/09)
4. Investigation of suitable materials for numeracy assessment: Drumcondra available.
5. MALT are available but seem too literacy heavy as a measurement tool.
6. Team Teaching has been introduced as a numeracy intervention in LCA. (CD & CK)

Actions for term three 09/10:

Review of baseline data, intervention review.

Implementation of a structured sustainable literacy plan for 2010/11 first years.

Literacy plan for SENIOR Cycle particularly TY and LCA

Collection and collation of numeracy data

2010/11 Year One Literacy Plan:

Our focus for this year is to boost the literacy scores of incoming first years. This will be addressed through concerted, orchestrated and consistent literacy interventions designed to consolidate progress.

24 weeks of structured and semi-structured literacy interventions for all first year students.

4x 6 week interventions:

Paired Reading

One Book One Community

Reading Challenge

Story Cubes

Who Wants To Be A Word Millionaire

Keywords Challenge

DEAR (Drop Everything and Read)

Library Usage (school and community library)

Toe By Toe Individual interventions

It is also envisaged that targeted and concentrated interventions will be used for students who are at a very low current level of literacy (<8). This will involve the use of Toe By Toe and SNIP as instruments for direct instruction.

It is envisaged that some of these interventions will run in conjunction with HSCL. This year's One Book One Community intervention worked jointly between HSCL and JCSP focused on the novel "The Firework- Maker's Daughter" by Philip Pullman. It was read in conjunction with our Paired Reading project and involved a launch in the Frank O Connor library by Munster Rugby (including players, coaches and administrators)

Year Two:

WWTBAWM will be conducted with both Deaglan 2 and Cathal 2. They will be post-tested to measure success.

There will be a second literacy-based initiative after Christmas.

Year Three:

Specific and individualised literacy interventions provided for through the team teaching model of Special Education provision. This intervention focused on work with class Diarmaid where two teachers took the class for English and the focus was always on literacy development and curriculum differentiation through content, process and product.

Transition Year:

Participation in The Unfinished Book of Poetry project where several students published their poems

Interventions for 2011/2012:

- Second year reading club- Monday lunchtimes- Organised through HSCL (ML)- Focus on class Ciara2. Parents & fifth years attend as tutors and helpers.
- One Book Community operating on a Paired Reading model including TY students and parents. The chosen book is “The Spirit of the Titanic” by Nicola Pierce.
- Involvement in first year Literacy project through PDST in relation to the implementation of the “Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life”
- Story Cubes initiative will run with first years (TY & parents as tutors).
- Using one timetabled modern language period as a “Reading for Pleasure” period.
- First years will be accessing the library on a weekly basis both in school and at the local Frank O Connor library.
- Poetry workshop for TYs in the Frank O Connor library. Students and parents will work for three weeks on creative writing and it will culminate in a book launch at the Farmgate restaurant (6th December 2011)
- Our Homework Club will provide ongoing support in terms of literacy and text access for students with reading difficulties.
- EAL teacher and a parent from another school. providing literacy support to Senior cycle students

- Various JCSP initiatives will run during the year including Who Wants to be a Word Millionaire, Paired Reading, Keywords strategies, Reading Programme in the English Classroom, Drama initiative.
- Increase in timetabled access to learning support at senior cycle and the allocation of a teacher with learning support qualification and experience to co-ordinate LSU at senior cycle

1. Literacy Levels in the Junior Cycle 2008

How many students at each of the following stages in Junior Cycle have significant literacy problems, as indicated by their Reading Ages?

Current Stage in Junior Cycle		Reading Age below 8		Reading Age between 8 and 10	
A.	Junior Cycle, Year 1 (40)	<i>No. of 1st Years</i> 7	<i>% of all 1st Years</i> 17½%	<i>No. of 1st Years</i> 7	<i>% of all 1st Years</i> 17½%
B.	Junior Cycle, Year 2 (43)	<i>No. of 2nd Years</i> 6	<i>% of all 2nd Years</i> 14%	<i>No. of 2nd Years</i> 0	<i>% of all 2nd Years</i> 0%
C.	Junior Cycle, Year 3 (56)	<i>No. of 3rd Years</i> 4	<i>% of all 3rd Years</i> 7%	<i>No. of 3rd Years</i> 6	<i>% of all 3rd Years</i> 10.7%

To what extent do students with significant literacy problems on entry make measurable improvements in literacy over the course of the Junior Cycle?

Compare the current Reading Ages of the current 3rd Year cohort with their Reading Ages on entry to the school in 1st Year. (For comparison purposes, include only those students who have attended this school throughout the Junior Cycle)

3 rd Year Students who started 1 st Year in this school	Reading Age below 8		Reading Age between 8 and 10	
Reading Age in 3rd Year	<i>No. of Students</i> 4	<i>%</i> 7%	<i>No. of Students</i> 7	<i>%</i> 12.5%
Reading Age on entry in 1st Year	<i>No. of Students</i> 10	<i>%</i> 18%	<i>No. of Students</i> 12	<i>%</i> 21%

Of those who sat the Junior Certificate examination in English in the past two years, how many attained less than Grade D on Ordinary Level paper? How many took the Foundation Level paper?

Junior Certificate Examination	Year of Examination 2007 (52)	Year of Examination 2008 (39)
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Attained less than Grade D on Ordinary Level English paper	<i>No. of candidates</i> 0	<i>% of all candidates</i> 0%	<i>No. of candidates</i> 3	<i>% of all candidates</i> 7.7%
Sat Foundation Level English paper	<i>No. of candidates</i> 2	<i>% of all candidates</i> 4%	<i>No. of candidates</i> 0	<i>% of all candidates</i> 0%
Tape & Reader	3		3	7.7%

2. Literacy Levels in the Senior Cycle

How many students at each of the following stages in Senior Cycle have significant literacy problems?

Stage in Senior Cycle	No. with Literacy Problems	% with Literacy Problems	Basis of Measurement <i>e.g. standardised test, school test, teacher assessment</i>
Transition Year	8	19.5%	Teacher Assessment
Leaving Certificate Year 1	0		
Leaving Certificate Applied Year 1	7	58%	Teacher Assessment
Leaving Certificate Year 2	0		
Leaving Certificate Applied Year 2	5	45%	Teacher Assessment

To what extent do students with significant literacy problems at the start of the Senior Cycle make measurable improvements in literacy over the course of the Senior Cycle?

How are improvements in literacy tracked and measured in the Senior Cycle?

3. Any other significant data

Are there patterns among those with significant literacy problems that would assist the effective targeting of literacy improvement measures?

Factor	Associated with literacy problems in your school? (YES/NO)	Outline briefly how this risk factor affects literacy levels in your school
Gender (e.g. in your school's experience, are boys more likely to have literacy problems than girls? Or are girls more likely to have literacy problems than boys?)	Yes	More boys than girls with literacy difficulties
Family factor (e.g. medical card, lone parent, trauma, unemployment, sibling record...)	Yes	All
Academic performance	Yes	
Special educational need	Yes	50 students with assessed SEN
Attendance	Yes	Erratic attendance patterns among many reluctant readers
Behaviour	Yes	
Membership of a minority group (e.g. ethnic, traveller, sexual orientation, other...)	Yes	Multi-national cohort
Teenage parenthood	Yes	
Health/disability	Yes	Eyesight, hearing
Record of being bullied	Yes	Attendance, self esteem
Influence of peer group	Yes	Macho element regarding literacy
Other (specify)		No literacy in household
Other (specify)		

Analysis (to identify priority areas for target-setting):

I. Literacy in the Junior Cycle (i.e. issues arising from section 1 above):

II. Literacy in the Senior Cycle (i.e. issues arising in section 2 above):

III. Patterns (from section 3 above) **highlighting factors associated with low literacy:**
Measures already in place in the school to improve literacy

Measure	JCSP, HSCL or SCP supported?	Retain? <i>Working well</i>	Amend? <i>Has potential</i>	Drop? <i>Ineffective</i>
Reading Challenge	JCSP	✓		
DEAR (new)	JCSP	✓ (new)		
Readalong	JCSP			✓
Paired Reading?	JCSP		✓	
Paired Reading (Home)	HSCL		✓	
Library Time	WS & JCSP		✓	
Keywords Strategy	JCSP	✓	✓	

Analysis (to focus selection and development of measures)

I. Do the current measures address low levels of literacy at Junior Cycle? YES

II. Do the current measures address low levels of literacy at Senior Cycle? NO

III. Do the current measures focus on the needs of students with the greatest literacy problems?

IV. Gaps in current measures?

Magazines from teachers

Kids bring in books they don't want for Christmas

Reading books on tape - text books, audio cds

Reading materials for supervised classes

In addressing the issue of literacy, schools that offer JCSP are advised to avail of the expertise of the Junior Certificate School Programme Support Service and to consult JCSP Literacy Guidelines and Resource Materials for Developing a School-Wide Literacy Plan. Advice and materials to support the involvement of parents in their children's literacy development are available through the HSCL Scheme.

DEIS Planning: Baseline Data on Literacy

4. Literacy Levels in the Junior Cycle 2010/11

How many students at each of the following stages in Junior Cycle have significant literacy problems, as indicated by their Reading Ages?

Current Stage in Junior Cycle		Reading Age below 8		Reading Age between 8 and 10	
D.	Junior Cycle, Year 1 (49)	<i>No. of 1st Years</i> 5	<i>% of all 1st Years</i> 10.2%	<i>No. of 1st Years</i> 7	<i>% of all 1st Years</i> 14.3%
E.	Junior Cycle, Year 2 (51)	<i>No. of 2nd Years</i> 2	<i>% of all 2nd Years</i> 3.92%	<i>No. of 2nd Years</i> 4	<i>% of all 2nd Years</i> 7.84%
F.	Junior Cycle, Year 3 (43)	<i>No. of 3rd Years</i> 4	<i>% of all 3rd Years</i> 9.3%	<i>No. of 3rd Years</i> 3	<i>% of all 3rd Years</i> 7%

To what extent do students with significant literacy problems on entry make measurable improvements in literacy over the course of the Junior Cycle?

Compare the current Reading Ages of the current 3rd Year cohort with their Reading Ages on entry to the school in 1st Year. (For comparison purposes, include only those students who have attended this school throughout the Junior Cycle)

3 rd Year Students who started 1 st Year in this school		Reading Age below 8		Reading Age between 8 and 10	
	Reading Age in 3rd Year (43)	<i>No. of Students</i> 4	<i>%</i> 9.3%	<i>No. of Students</i> 3	<i>%</i> 7%
	Reading Age on entry in 1st Year (42)	<i>No. of Students</i> 7	<i>%</i> 16.66%	<i>No. of Students</i> 8	<i>%</i> 19%

Of those who sat the Junior Certificate examination in English in the past two years, how many attained less than Grade D on Ordinary Level paper? How many took the Foundation Level paper?

Junior Certificate Examination	Year of Examination 2009		Year of Examination 2010	
		<i>No. of candidates</i>	<i>% of all candidates</i>	<i>No. of candidates</i>
Attained less than Grade D on Ordinary Level English paper (46)	1	2%	1	2.2%
Sat Foundation Level English paper	8	17.4%	3	6.6%

DEIS Planning: Baseline Data on Literacy

5. Literacy Levels in the Senior Cycle

How many students at each of the following stages in Senior Cycle have significant literacy problems?

Stage in Senior Cycle	No. with Literacy Problems	% with Literacy Problems	Basis of Measurement <i>e.g. standardised test, school test, teacher assessment</i>
Transition Year (45)	4	9%	GRT II
Leaving Certificate Year 1 (43)	5	12%	
Leaving Certificate Applied Year 1 (12)	5	-42%	—
Leaving Certificate Year 2 (35?)	4	11%	
Leaving Certificate App Yr 2 (14)	8	57%	

To what extent do students with significant literacy problems at the start of the Senior Cycle make measurable improvements in literacy over the course of the Senior Cycle?
How are improvements in literacy tracked and measured in the Senior Cycle?

DEIS Planning: Baseline Data on Literacy

6. Any other significant data

Are there patterns among those with significant literacy problems that would assist the effective targeting of literacy improvement measures?

Factor	Associated with literacy problems in your school? (YES/NO)	Outline briefly how this risk factor affects literacy levels in your school
Gender <i>(e.g. in your school's experience, are boys more likely to have literacy problems than girls? Or are girls more likely to have literacy problems than boys?)</i>	Yes	
Family factor <i>(e.g. medical card, lone parent, trauma, unemployment, sibling record....)</i>	Yes	
Academic performance	Yes	
Special educational need	Yes	
Attendance	Yes	
Behaviour	Yes	
Membership of a minority group <i>(e.g. ethnic, traveller, sexual orientation, other...)</i>	Yes	
Teenage parenthood	Yes	
Health/disability	Yes	
Record of being bullied	Yes	
Influence of peer group	Yes	
Other (specify)		
Other (specify)		

DEIS Planning: Baseline Data on Literacy

Analysis (to identify priority areas for target-setting):

IV. Literacy in the Junior Cycle (i.e. issues arising from section 1 above):

V. Literacy in the Senior Cycle (i.e. issues arising in section 2 above):

VI. Patterns (from section 3 above) **highlighting factors associated with low literacy:**

Measure	JCSP, HSCL or SCP supported?	Retain? <i>Working well</i>	Amend? <i>Has potential</i>	Drop? <i>Ineffective</i>
Paired Reading One Book, One Community	JCSP HSCL	YES		
Who wants to be a Word Millionaire?	JCSP	YES		
Library Access	JCSP	YES	Increase access	
Keywords Strategy	JCSP	YES		
LSU/RES Withdrawal		YES		
Toe by Toe		YES		

School-wide literacy and comprehension methodologies

Analysis (to focus selection and development of measures)

V. Do the current measures address low levels of literacy at Junior Cycle? YES

VI. Do the current measures address low levels of literacy at Senior Cycle? NO

VII. Do the current measures focus on the needs of students with the greatest literacy problems? NO

**VIII. Gaps in current measures?
Senior Cycle Literacy**

