

# Holy Trinity

# Primary School



# Communication Policy

## **Holy Trinity Communication Policy**

At Holy Trinity Primary School it is our aim that our children are surrounded by a rich, literate environment and are taught with skill and enthusiasm. We endeavour to foster and develop the interaction of all English skills needed for self-expression and effective communication. All children have an equal right to appropriate learning experiences in Literacy, based on their individual needs. Using our school scheme of work and the teaching objectives set out in the Northern Ireland Curriculum, all teachers plan appropriate and purposeful activities for all our children. In Holy Trinity Primary School each child will acquire the basic communication skills of Talking, Listening, Reading and Writing to the best of their ability.

### **General Aims of Policy**

- Children will recognise themselves as learners in Communication.
- Children will have the ability to read, understand and engage with various types of text for enjoyment and learning.
- Children will experience a wide range of texts in shared and guided reading contexts
- Children will develop their interest in reading.
- Children will use a range of reading strategies.
- Children will attempt to spell words independently using Linguistic Phonics
- To develop children's imagination by providing a wide range of Communication experiences.
- To ensure that all children achieve enjoyment and success, whatever their ability, in language based activities.

### **Specific Aims \***

#### **Talking And Listening**

Pupils should be enabled to:

- listen to and take part in discussions, explanations, role-plays and presentations;
- contribute comments, ask questions and respond to others' points of view;
- communicate information, ideas, opinions, feelings and imaginings, using an expanding
- vocabulary;
- structure their talk and speak clearly so that ideas can be understood by others;
- adapt ways of speaking to audience and situation;
- use non-verbal methods to express ideas and engage with the listener.

#### **Reading**

Pupils should be enabled to:

- read a range of texts\* for information, ideas and enjoyment;
- use a range of strategies to read with increasing independence;

- find, select and use information from a range of sources;
- understand and explore ideas, event and features in texts\*;
- use evidence from texts\* to explain opinions.
- *Texts refer to ideas that are organised to communicate and present a message in written, spoken, visual and symbolic forms.*

## **Writing**

Pupils should be enabled to:

- talk about, plan and edit work;
- communicate information, meaning, feelings, imaginings and ideas in a clear and organised way;
- develop, express and present ideas in a variety of forms and formats,
- using traditional and digital resources, for different audiences and purposes;
- write with increasing accuracy and proficiency.

*(Cross-Curricular Skills-Communication Framework- Northern Ireland Curriculum 2012/13\*\*)*

## **Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation**

Planning for the teaching and learning process is the responsibility of each teacher in the school, working in co-operation with their year group colleague(s), their key stage colleagues, all other teachers, the Communication Co-ordinators and the Senior Management Team.

Progression and differentiation are ensured by:

- Planning within year groups
- Planning across year groups
- Planning in Key Stage groups
- End of Key Stage Testing ( AU's, INCAS)
- Standardised tests e.g.(N.F.E.R)
- Running Records
- Teacher's observation
- Assessment for Learning(W.A.L.T and W.I.L.F)
- Planning board(KWL)
- Monitoring of work samples
- Basing programme of work at appropriate level for children in year group
- Evaluation of outcomes
- Monitoring of planning, delivery (including learning styles) and outcome, by Communication Co-ordinators and/or Senior Management Team.

## **Organisation**

All four areas of Communication – talking, listening, reading and writing – are interwoven and linked across the curriculum. Skills development within each of these areas is planned for, both within a Communication context and within other areas of the curriculum. A variety of teaching strategies and contexts are used, based on best practice arising from staff development and an awareness of individual needs. These include:

- Whole class teaching
- Small group work
- Differentiated group work
- Individual activities
- Access to ICT
- Access to a range of appropriate resources

## **Reading**

We believe that reading is a great source of pleasure, as well as information and our class and school libraries are well stocked with a variety of fiction and non-fiction books.

The newly purchased reading scheme books are colour banded according to their level of difficulty. All reading schemes are accompanied with ICT resources for the interactive whiteboards, which are installed in every classroom. The children can take a banded book at their own reading level home to read to you, or a general fiction or information book of their choice to share. Some of the books are also graded for difficulty and the children are encouraged to take class books home to independently or with you. Information about how we teach reading is given to parents at regular curriculum meetings.

We aim to have pupils reading fluently and accurately with understanding. Research and reference skills are developed as the children progress. The reading schemes used in the foundation and key stage one are Big Cat, Rigby Star, and Oxford Reading Tree.

The reading schemes used at the upper stages of the school are New Ginn 360 and a selection of newly purchased novels. This provides a vast array of reading materials and allows the development of comprehension skills. Our pupils also make use of fiction titles as reading books. The children are encouraged to read for both enjoyment and information.

## **Phonics**

All our teachers have been trained on the Linguistic Phonics programme. This phonic programme has been implemented throughout all classes primary 1 to Primary 7. The central rationale of Linguistic Phonics is that children understand the relationship between their spoken language and the written word.

Research into Linguistic Phonics carried out by Stranmillis University College, during 2005-6, indicated that the Linguistics Phonics approach has been particularly successful in raising reading standards among primary school pupils.

Parents indicated that their children were significantly more likely to enjoy reading and to read books other than their schoolbooks than parents of children using other phonic approaches.

## **Talking and Listening**

The children are encouraged to talk and listen to each other, in groups, to the class, to the teacher, and to a wider audience throughout all areas of the Curriculum. This helps to develop their skills as both a listener and talker and develops a sense of audience awareness. Situations which allow discussion occur at all stages of the school and we try to develop and progress the skills as the pupils mature. All classes follow the Circle Time programme.

## **Writing**

We encourage the children to develop their writing skills through a variety of means: - personal writing, imaginative writing and functional writing. A wide range of published materials are used to assist writing development. Pupils in Primary 1 and Primary 2 follow a common course which involves emergent writing. Older pupils develop skills in spelling, grammar and punctuation. All classrooms have computers and pupils are exposed to using the computer as a word processor. This enables the children to record information, stories, poems etc., on the computer and provides an attractive presentation of their work, in which the children take great pleasure.

## **Role of ICT**

Developing literacy is a cross-curricular activity and I.C.T plays an important role in developing our children's ability to communicate competently in an increasingly technological environment. Currently all classrooms in Holy Trinity have been fitted with Interactive Whiteboards in addition to the computer suite. As part of Holy Trinity's commitment to classroom 2000 all teachers are trained in personal I.C.T competence. This enables pupils to access a wider range of software.

## **Role of Communication Co-ordinators**

The Communication Co-ordinators are responsible for development and update of an active Communication policy in consultation with the principal and members of staff. They will ensure that the policy is implemented by providing relevant resources and appropriate support to colleagues. They will have an overview of Communication throughout the school and will work to ensure breadth, balance and progression through provision of appropriate support and monitoring.

The Communication Co-ordinators' responsibilities are:

- *to promote Communication throughout the school*
- *to ensure the provision of appropriate resources and materials and keep an up to date inventory of these resources*
- *To encourage high standards of teaching and learning with*

*particular responsibility for language and thinking across the curriculum*

- to ensure continuity and progression in planning to ensure that effective evaluation takes place and informs subsequent planning*
- to identify training needs among staff and to ensure that these needs are responded to*
- to co-ordinate, with the Special Needs Team, in the provision of special support*
- to meet with teachers to give guidance and support and share good practice*
- to keep staff informed of developments which affect Communication*
- to ensure that the means of assessment of pupil progress are appropriate and all teachers are familiar with these mechanisms*
- to monitor and track assessment data*
- to assist with the CCEA "Quality Assurance Moderation" process*
- to support the teachers involved in the "End-of-Key-Stage Assessment"*

### **Role of teachers**

All staff should be involved in the review and implementation of the Communication policy. As reflective practitioners, teachers have a key role in promoting success in Communication through the curriculum by careful planning, delivery and evaluation of outcomes.

**In the teaching of communication, the teacher fulfils a number of roles, these would include:**

**The role model:** As skilled users of language, teachers have the unique opportunity to enthuse the children and foster positive attitudes towards literacy.

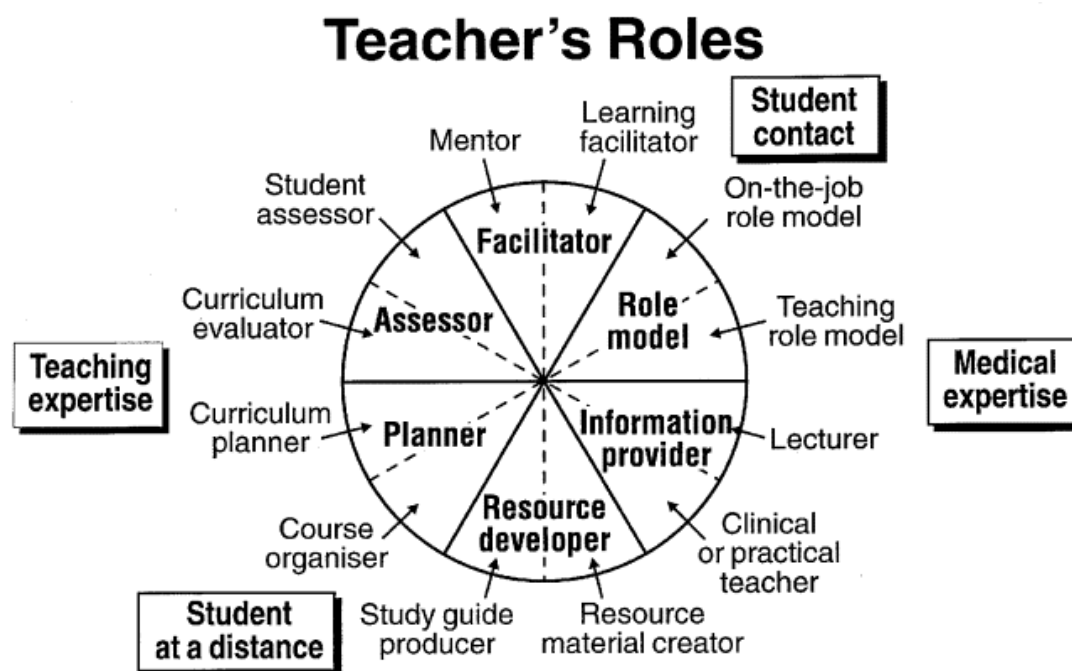
**The learning facilitator:** Providing a stimulating, safe and supportive environment in which the children can flourish, organising purposeful and appropriate activities in which the children develop their skills.

**The mentor:** A responsibility of the teacher is to pass on to students the information, knowledge and understanding at a level appropriate at the stage

of their studies, providing a wide range of activities to develop their skills in talking, listening, reading and writing.

**The monitor:** observing and recording the development of the children's literacy skills.

The assessor: evaluating and assessing the development of the children's skills in literacy.



**(MEDEV, School of Medical Sciences Education Development- The twelve roles of a teacher)**

### Parental Involvement

Holy Trinity Primary School aims to develop strong home/school links. We seek to involve parents actively in the promotion of literacy skills. There are several parents' information meetings throughout the year, these include:

- Curriculum meetings for all year groups in September to outline the curriculum taught, class topics, expectations and the structure of class work and homework throughout the year.
- Parent/Teacher meetings to discuss children's progress
- Paired Reading meetings for the parents of Primary three and Primary six pupils in September
- Linguistic phonics information sessions (Term 1)

We have links with the community: through school concerts; poetry festivals; assemblies; organised school visits to libraries and visits to the school by local librarians; book fairs; EMU activities; local GAA clubs; nominated charity work and fund-raising events.

## Homework

Where appropriate children will receive homework in the form of reading, writing, spellings(Linguistic Phonics Programme) and Number work each night of the week. (Reference Holy Trinity Homework Policy) Parents are responsible for checking and signing homework and for monitoring their child's reading. They are also encouraged to follow any guidance provided by the class teacher.

## Differentiation

Each teacher will be aware of the different needs of the children in their class. The teacher will provide work appropriate to the children's ability and vary teaching strategies in order to cater for different learning styles, e.g. audio, visual and kinaesthetic learners. This will involve whole class teaching, group work and individual work. Differentiation will be in evidence by the task given and by the expected outcome.

## Special Needs

Holy Trinity PS has a Special Needs Co-ordinator and three other SEN staff who have overall responsibility for the provision of targeted support for children identified as being on the special needs register. The SEN team plan, in conjunction with the Communication Co-ordinators to provide an effective Communication programme.

Children experiencing specific difficulties in relation to aspects of Literacy are first of all identified by the class teacher. As an outcome of liaison between the class teacher and SENCO, specific support is provided, where possible. Where appropriate, external agencies are involvement in assessment, provision and review of the needs of children.

The Communication Co-ordinators' and SEN team's responsibilities are:

- *to evaluate the results of screening assessments*
- *to take action to provide for children with special needs*
- *to liaise with teachers and parents*
- *to decide on the need for outside assistance (educational*
- *psychologist, Peripatetic support, Outreach support)*
- *to assist the teacher with appropriate materials*
- *to assist the teacher with the preparation of IEPs, where necessary*
- *where appropriate, to withdraw children for more intensive tuition*
- *to monitor the children's progress and keep records*



Within each Key Stage, support is given in small groups; individual programmes of work will be prepared, in conjunction with the SENCO, for specific children. The SEN team have the opportunity to team teach as a means of assessing how the children transfer the skills learned in small group sessions to the whole class environment.

### **Equal Opportunities**

We are aware that issues of gender, class and ability affect progress in Literacy and seek to address these difficulties in practical terms through our planning in the areas of classroom management, the choice and use of resources and teaching styles.

The Literacy Co-ordinator will assist in the process of target setting, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, with the specific aim of raising standards of achievement for all children, regardless of gender, class and ability.

**This policy was agreed by the staff of Holy Trinity PS in September 2012**

**It will be referred to in implementation of schemes of work and will be reviewed on or before:-**

**Date:**