Reviewed June 2025

Strong Close Nursery School

Literacy Policy

Rationale

"The single most significant factor influencing a child's early educational success (more than family circumstances, parents' educational backgrounds or income) is an introduction to books and being able to read at home prior to beginning primary school."
-Imagination Library.com.

"Every great writer was a new writer once– even Shakespeare" ***Alan Bleasdale***

Comprehension, word reading and writing are all about communication of ideas, feelings and information. Undoubtedly, these skills are fundamental in allowing us to operate fully within our world and in order to reach our full potential. The environment we create for children should reflect this importance. Children need to be offered experiences that will support their growing awareness of and enthusiasm for comprehension, reading and writing.

"It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing)."

Statutory Framework for the EYFS Educational Programme.

To provide effectively for the learning, interests and needs of all our children we will use the 'Statutory Framework for The Early Years Foundation Stage' to inform our practice. The seven key features of effective practice from the non-statutory Development Matters will be at the heart of our day to day practice. We recognise the individuality of all children and the need to nurture their confidence, capabilities, and independence. Our curriculum will reflect the needs and interests of our children and we will develop more in depth learning through schemas, projects, real world experiences and repeated and motivating activities. To this end we will ensure that our practice reflects the characteristics of effective teaching and learning; Playing and Exploring, Active Learning and Creating and Thinking Critically. Our children that are on or being assessed for our resourced places are assessed using the Developmental Journal resources.

We know that Language and Literacy are inextricably linked and that both are vital foundations for life. This policy should be read in conjunction with our Communication and Language Policy.

Aims

Our aims set out how we intend to deliver a high quality curriculum

- To support all children in developing a love of reading and writing

- To provide a cross-curricular and whole school approach to the teaching of literacy, which is grounded in knowledge and understanding of the subject matter and the most effective ways of teaching and learning

- To value and respect the skills knowledge and understanding and the rich literacy heritages that many children bring in from home and their wider community

- To have a particular focus on the aspects of literacy in our planning and assessment
    - Comprehension
    - Word Reading
    - Writing

- To ensure that all children are supported in making progress and that we work towards narrowing the achievement gap.

Objectives

Our objectives set out how we implement our aims

- We will ensure that we develop and extend children's existing skills and concepts by providing a rich and varied range of literacy experiences in all areas of the school

- We will create a literacy rich environments that will engage, encourage and inspire children

- We will foster emergent literacy skills through conversational turn taking and exposure to a wide range of vocabulary, songs, rhymes books and stories.

- We will establish regular reading habits with children as we model reading and demonstrate how books can be used in everyday life

- We will encourage all families to register their child for a free book each month with the Imagination Library, provide a half termly core story for every child on Early Years Pupil Premium and introduce every child and family to our library with their own book bag

- We will promote opportunities to develop core strength and large muscle coordination which is a crucial first step towards writing

- We will promote early reading skills by developing word recognition and language comprehension across a broad range of opportunities

- We will use the indoor and outdoor environment, visitors, trips and outings as sources of literacy, extending experiences and learning in the real world

- We will provide a range of activities, materials and media to develop fine motor muscle coordination and children's mark making and emergent writing (this will be enhanced through the weekly visits of our artist in residence, write dance, dough disco and funky finger activities)

- We will provide children with opportunities to engage in dialogic reading (the opportunity to extend oral language skills through hearing a story and talking about it).

- We will ensure we provide targeted support to children who are learning English as an additional language and children with special educational needs.

- We will ensure that the literature and displays presented in the school reflect the diverse cultures and abilities represented in school.

- We will ensure all children have equal access to all the curriculum.

- We will involve and support parent / carers in our work by sharing individualised and specific and relevant strategies from our schema toolkit, 50 Things to do Before you're 5 app and Tiny Happy People website in relation to Literacy.

- We will discuss children and their interests weekly to inform planning, and share at home with parents and carers through our What's Happening to help support and deepen children's learning through play. Half termly planning newsletters are also developed by staff and shared with parents/carers.

- To ensure that children are making the best progress, over time, we will assess their progress and interests termly using Development Matters and the key observational checkpoints including the Developmental Journal materials for those children on specialist places, supported to make smaller steps of progress. The results of these, will inform future planning both at an individual level and also at a curriculum level.

The following support the **implementation** of this policy and ensure we monitor **impact**

a. Guidelines on Curriculum Planning

b. Communication Policy and Communication Strategies with Children

c. Literacy and phonics guidelines.

d. Development Matters

e. Developmental Journal documents

f. Assessment Policy and Guidelines

Strong Close Nursery School
Literacy Policy Guidelines

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These guidelines set out how we implement our aims and objectives of the Literacy policy.

- Each room should have an attractive, inviting and comfortable book area containing a wide range of books both fiction and non-fiction, including dual text, pop up, lift the flap, homemade books, poetry, rhymes etc.

- Books displayed should take into account pupil's linguistic competence, backgrounds and children's individual interests

- Books should enhance equal opportunities.

- All books must of good quality and in good condition. They should be checked regularly.

- The environment should provide lots of opportunities for informal reading. Displays of all kinds should include different kinds of print, including some with dual language texts and children own writing.

- Use phonic sounds to sound out letters in the environment and in books and when ready provide phonic group times fusing a range of practices to support the many schools our children transition to.

- Walks outside the school and trips will reveal a wealth of environmental print in a variety of styles and will raise awareness and discussion points – e.g.: road signs, numbers and signs on shops.

- Incorporate a wide range of strategies in the teaching of reading.

- Provide children with opportunities for reading for different purposes.

- Encourage children to take care of books when handling them and to turn the pages one at a time, showing the text and how English print is read left to right and top to bottom. Draw their attention to features of the book e.g. page sequencing, the cover, the author and the page number.

- Ensure there is plenty of time and opportunity for informal sharing of books.

- Adults are of great importance as positive models for reading - Enjoy stories and read yourself in front of children.

- Bilingual staff should use their skill as positive role models to read dual text books.

- Children should be encouraged to share and enjoy books together.

- Encourage parents and carers to use the school library for their child to choose and borrow books from school with their provided book bag and to read to their child at home.

- Encourage parents and carers to register their child for a free book for their child every month which the school will fund through the Imagination Library Keighley.

- Build up a bank of favourite stories, children gain a lot from hearing the same story and developing the knowledge to re-tell or 're-read' it independently

- Use children's names on cards as an aid to recognising their own names e.g. for self-registration, snack or children's class registers etc.

- Where appropriate there should be a /Headphones /tablet available for listening to stories and poems

- Provide an environment both inside and out that inspires children to want to experiment and make marks. Ensure there is a variety of mark making tools and materials available at all times and in all areas of the room.

- Children should be offered lots of opportunities to develop gross motor, fine motor skills, control and hand eye co-ordination.

- Provide opportunities for children to explore pattern, to develop orientation, control, size, flow.

- Provide opportunities to explore pre writing skills through activities such as dough disco, right dance funky fingers.

- Guide children in holding mark making implements effectively.

- Ensure children are given every encouragement to show and use the skills in other languages as well as English.

- Experiences should be geared towards the interests and enjoyment of children rather than in purely practicing skills.

- Use a cross curricular approach when planning mark making experiences.

- Ensure children understand the purpose of writing when it is for real purposes and audiences.

- Make use of resources and artefacts as a stimulus, such as photographs, texts from different cultures, stories, magazines, puppets, modern culture etc.

- Ensure children's writing/mark making is displayed.

- Children's ideas and writing attempts should always be valued.

- Encourage children to share their work with each other - talk about or tell the story they have been reading or what their mark making is about. This enables them to practice their knowledge and reflect upon their work.

- Ensure that observation and assessment procedures inform long term, medium term and short-term planning. This should be done by identifying individual needs in the short term, areas of learning that require focus in the medium term and in the longer-term organisation, resources and training needs.

Promoting Reading through the Areas of Provision. Adults should continually act as role models reading signs / notes etc. not just books.

Mark Making

Using name cards – reading own and other children's names
Reading own marks made / story books
Reading alphabet cards

Reading dual text books and display of words from different cultures
Labels on the ranges of materials and resources used
Use of core story – Keywords
Books, artefacts, resources relating to-/ interests or project work

Mathematics
Numerals, shapes, alphabetical letters on table
Labels on resources
Jigsaws, matching shapes activities
Reading own marks made

Book Corner / Listening Corner
Making good use of the variety of books available
Reading labels on resources, displays
Use of magnetic board numerals, letters
Use of bilingual adults to read children

Home Corner
Opportunities for different role – play reading menu's, pricelists, shopping lists, telephone numbers, calendars and other resources related to focus /or children's interests
Recipe books
Reading labels / own marks or marks made by others

Outdoor
Opportunities to role play – writing / reading lists
Reading books and labels on equipment
Using chalks on chalk boards, on the playground or writing wall
Using other mark making media i.e. water and paint brushes to create marks to read

Dry / Wet Sand
Matching equipment / tools to templates
Reading books, labels on equipment
Discussing patterns made in sand

Snack / Cookery area
Reading ingredients in a recipe
Name cards
Labels on equipment – utensils, cupboards, displays etc.
Dual text labels

Office Area
Use of Atlases, alphabet, Business Letters and envelopes and application forms
Labels on resources and equipment

Water
Matching equipment to templates
Labels on equipment, reading numerals, lettering on equipment i.e. measuring jugs etc.

Small Construction
Labels on equipment / resources
Matching equipment to templates
Reading / writing lists

Reading maps, signs etc. depending on focus /interests or project work

Paint Area
Labels on paint equipment / displays
Displays of children's work
Observations of artefacts, resources, books
Reading own marks or other children's / adults

Scrap Materials / Collage
Labels on trays, equipment, resources
Reading print on recycled, bottles, boxes etc.
Use of catalogues for college

Play dough / Clay
Labels on equipment, resources depending on focus
Displays – Labels, names of children etc.

Wood work
Labels on equipment / resources
Matching of tools to templates
Displays

Music / Sound Area
Reading music notations
Song / Rhyme books
Displays
Making and reading lists

Promoting Writing through the Areas of Provision - Adult should continually act as scribe, role model in all areas using different scripts.

Mark Making
Providing a variety of different sized tools to make marks on a selection of paper/card
Providing a variety of different surfaces to write on including the writing wall both indoors and outdoors
Make use of name cards
Encouraging children to write for a reason
Adults as a role model to scribe for child
Using stencils, alphabet cards and lines / shapes to draw
Making books – individual or group book
Encouraging children to use mark making tools appropriately and effectively through modelling
Large sheets/ wallpaper to write and make marks on the floor and the mark making walls (writing wall)

Mathematics
Writing numerals
Writing down shape names
Writing lists of children who have had turns with games

Book Corner / Listening Corner
Seeing print in different forms – large texts, small texts, texts from different cultures
Written word conveys meaning

Home Corner
Providing a variety of tools to make marks
Making resources for a focus i.e. menu's, price lists etc.

Resources brought in the home corner with writing – soap powder boxes, cereal packets, calendars, newspapers, magazines, Eid/Diwali/Christmas Cards

Outdoors
Providing a variety of writing media and materials to make marks
Making plans, lists, tickets, luggage labels, passports, number plates
Make good use of chalk and chalk board
Painting outside with water on a variety of surfaces using brushes, squeezy bottles

Dry/Wet Sand
Drawing in the wet / dry sand
Encourage children to make a resource to use in area depending on focus
Encouraging fine motor skills

Snack / Cookery Area
Draw and write ingredients and recipes, shopping lists
Write name on list e.g. if they have had a snack
Ticking or writing name to indicate preferences
Adults as a role model

Office Area
Provide a variety of tools and materials to encourage writing
Lists of names, booking appointments, imaginative filling in of application forms Children's registers which contain names and photos
Using resources as models to base their mark making on i.e. alphabet, number charts, atlases

Water Area
Experiments and charts – make marks indicating whether materials would float or sink
Making marks with water on a surface

Small Construction / Large Construction
Provide a variety of writing tools and materials
Labelling models
Books about construction which encourage children to make marks
Map making and plans
Number plates, destination boards, traffic signs
Lists of names
Lists of what to take on a journey

Paint Area
Provide different types of writing tools
Use of body parts to make marks e.g. fingers, hands
Encourage children to write names on their pictures
Painting letter shapes
Encourage children to hold writing tool correctly and gain increased control

Scrap Materials / Collage
Providing a variety of tools and materials to make marks
Encourage children to observe the writing on packets / boxes, labelling on trays etc.

Playdough / Clay
Making marks in clay / play dough using appropriate equipment
Activities to develop fine motor skills

Wood Work
Use of appropriate writing tools to write on different surfaces
Writing name, numerals on their models
Activities developing fine motor skills

Music / Sound Area
Music Notation – using crochet and quavers or making musical patterns using own symbols
Drawings of instruments with names written underneath