



Castle Tower School

Post Primary Literacy Policy

Date Ratified by Board of Governors	
Review Date	2027

Castle Tower welcomes pupils aged 3-19 who face a wide range of barriers to learning. Educational opportunities are provided within our Nursery, Primary, Secondary and Post 16 departments.

Our Vision

Vision:

To be a leading light in special education through educating, nurturing and inspiring all our school community.

Mission:

Castle Tower School is committed to creating a community which:

- Ensures everyone is safe and included
- Always learns
- Promotes independence and resilience
- Celebrates achievements
- Looks forward with hope to the future

Everything we do is driven by our core values:

- Child-centred
- Nurturing
- Fun
- Team work
- Inclusive
- Independence

Our Ethos

Castle Tower strives to create a caring community in which every member feels valued, supported and happy. All staff work to maintain an ethos in which fairness, tolerance, compassion and forgiveness permeate all relationships within the school community. High standards of respect, self-discipline, commitment and sensitivity are sought and everyone is encouraged to set and achieve the highest personal, academic and social goals. The safety, welfare and development of everyone in our school community is of paramount importance to all staff and Governors.

At Castle Tower, there is continued development of the quality of the teaching and learning environment. Resources are used efficiently. Opportunities are created for learning in co-operative and interactive settings. Pupils are presented with challenging as well as stimulating teaching and learning opportunities. Staff at Castle Tower seek close working relationships with other providers and services throughout each stage of our pupil's education and through the transition stage to further education and life after school.

Rationale

We aim to provide a supportive, stimulating, and secure environment where children are encouraged to express themselves and where their contributions are valued. We will provide for the language development of pupils and will develop their ability to use language to think, to explore, to recognise and to communicate their ideas.

We, as a staff, recognise that children are entitled to teaching which will maximise their literacy skills. We will ensure that children, irrespective of ability, will be given the opportunity to develop to their full potential.

Aims

The aims of our literacy policy are:

- To maintain and improve the general standard of literacy in Castle Tower School.
- To develop literacy skills, essential for adult life.
- To identify pupils who are experiencing difficulty and to take specific actions to meet these needs.
- To enable pupils to express and communicate meaning in spoken language, listening to and interpreting what others say and matching style and response to audience, context and purpose.
- To provide pupils with a range of relevant and purposeful opportunities to develop their ability to read, understand and engage with various types of text for enjoyment and learning.
- To enable children (where appropriate) to communicate using written language effectively by making and shaping text appropriately, according to context, purpose, reader, or audience.
- To enable children to recognise and develop the thinking and problem-solving skills necessary for success in literacy and learning.

Self-esteem

Self-esteem is one of the most important elements in determining whether pupils will become effective learners. Learning is nurtured in a positive and stimulating environment where every pupil has the potential to achieve success.

- Create a sense of achievement and enjoyment of language
- An ambiance, that it's ok to make mistakes
- Opportunities to collaborate with each other
- Reflect, consider others opinions-developing compassion and empathy
- Generate fun and exciting learning experiences
- Active learning
- Provide situations for self-assessment

Role of the Teacher

In the teaching of literacy the teacher should be:

- A facilitator: setting up a well-resourced environment, creating opportunities, organising purposeful activities and enabling children to develop literacy skills.
- A model: providing examples of good language and exhibiting an appreciation of language consequently fostering positive attitudes towards literacy.
- An advisor: intervening at key points to support and further the process.

- An observer: watching, monitoring and recording the development of literacy skills.
- An assessor: evaluating and assessing the development of skills in literacy.

Talking and Listening

Rationale

Talking and listening are fundamental skills upon which the educational development of our children depends. Through the development of oral and aural skills, they learn about language and this equips them to demonstrate and refine their learning.

Our overall aim is for our children to become efficient language users. This will be achieved by devoting time, energy, and resources to the development of oral communication. Through purposeful interaction with teachers, children will be provided with experiences that develop their skills and their thinking.

The Classroom Environment

We will create a secure and warm environment, which stimulates interaction. In addition, to the incidental periods of talk that occur daily within the classroom, planned opportunities will be organised for the children to talk. Children will regard this talk as an integral part of their work. We will ensure that all children will be included in, and given opportunities to, participate in this work. We as a staff recognise that purposeful talk will facilitate learning and develop important social and communicative skills.

Teaching Approaches and Organisation of Learning

Opportunities will be given for children to talk as individuals, in pairs, as members of a small group and as members of the class. The teacher will be aware of the need to vary the composition of groups and the roles within groups.

In their planning teachers will consider the need for planned talk in all areas of the curriculum.

Teachers will provide experiences and activities to promote a wide range of types of talk.

At all times teachers should see themselves as models for their pupils' language.

Teachers will provide opportunities, whereby the children use drama strategies to make meaning and engage in a range of creative and imaginative role-plays.

Across the curriculum teachers will use questioning, as a means, to develop and extend their pupils' thinking.

Reading

Rationale

Our aims are that our children will learn to read, will enjoy a wide variety of texts, and where appropriate will become independent readers.

Resources

The school has a well-stocked library and pupils can select from books of varying interest and degrees of difficulty.

Through ICT further opportunities occur to use programs and the internet to enhance literary skills.

Listening centres will provide children with opportunities to listen, read along with and enjoy texts.

A range of teaching approaches are used to meet the individual learning needs of the pupils in the class.

Writing

Rationale

Our aim is that our children will develop the ability to write effectively at a level appropriate to their learning needs.

Teaching Approaches and Classroom Environment

Teachers use a variety of teaching approaches to meet the individualised learning needs of the pupils in their class. This information is used to inform and design the classroom environment to meet these needs.

Responding to Writing

At Castle Tower, we as a staff we value the children's writing efforts. We interact with the children as they are engaged in their writing activities to provide help and support.

Cross-curricular Approach & Connected Learning

Literacy skills are embedded throughout the curriculum. Careful planning ensures connected learning in Literacy incorporates topics and themes across a range of subjects.

Assessment

The purpose of assessment is to record progress, to facilitate planning and to enable evaluation of learning. Wherever possible both qualitative and quantitative data are employed to support and develop pupil learning.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Planning, teaching, learning and assessment are monitored at various levels by the co-ordinator in order to enable the evaluation of practice against performance and to facilitate changes that will lead to improvement.