Cloonanaha N.S., English Pléan Scóile 2022

The Primary Language Curriculum for English

**Rationale:**
The curriculum called the P.L.C. determines what we teach and how we teach.  As there will be new initiatives and programmes recommended to us by diverse advocates it is imperative to be always cognizant of the P.L.C. to ensure we deliver a complete and balanced literacy curriculum.

**Vision:**
We intend to ensure that all of our pupils read a level of English where they can have clarity of thought.  We intend to engender a positive attitude in our pupils to speaking, listening to, reading and writing English.

**Aims:**
Our overall aims are to enable children to:
Clarify their own feelings
Appreciate the value of speaking, listening, reading and writing.
Understand the conventions of oral language and be able to engage appropriately in various listener speaker relationships.
Listen actively in different situations for different purposes.
Develop competence and confidence in speaking, reading and writing.
Have a definite sense of the need to communicate clearly to ensure that your audience get the communications.
Be able to read independently.
Be able to write independently.
Enjoy language activity that enhances emotional, imaginative and aesthetic development through oral, reading, writing, listening and dramatic experiences.
Understand the conventions of written language and be able to engage appropriately in various reader/writer relationships.

**Primary Language Curriculum Planning Strands:**
The strands for all classes are: -
Oral language.
Reading.
Writing.

**Elements:**
The elements of essential language learning are: -
Communicating – Developing communicative relationships through language.
Understanding - understanding the content and structure of language.
Exploring and using – exploring and using language.
Communicating, understanding, exploring and using language are the elements of all language.  The elements are naturally interconnected.  The curriculum expounds further on these elements on pages 16 and 17.  The curriculum then guides us to develop competence in all the elements in the Learning Outcomes section.

**Learning Outcomes:**
Learning Outcomes describe the competencies in the different strands of oral language, reading and writing that children should achieve.  Page 19 of the P.L.C. gives an overview of the learning outcomes that facilitates the teacher cross referencing the elements and the strands.

Section 5 (i.e. The Learning Outcomes Section), facilitates the teachers looking at a strand for example; reading and checking what the pupils in their class should be learning.  The learning outcomes should be read, considered and used in concert with the teachers’ experience and expertise to decide “what children learn, the sequence in which they learn, the pace at which they learn and the activities and experiences through which they learn.” Circular 45/2019.
Blue chain links are speckled throughout the learning outcomes pages.  These blue chain links alert the reader to the obvious links between learning a first language and a second language, in our case Irish.
The teacher may decide to alert the children to the connections between the languages or simply to note the link themselves.

**Learning Outcomes** or Section 5 of the P.L.C. supports the teacher to “select what to teach and the best order in which to teach it.” (P.L.C. 5)

**The Primary Language Curriculum in Practice:**
Chapter 6 of the P.L.C. outlines the macro thinking that drives the learning supported by the P.L.C.  We have read and are aware of this chapter and the ideas it contains as knowledge of the ideas that language teaching and learning are founded on is essential if we are to support the “greater decision making at school and classroom levels” (Circular 26/2019) required to implement the P.L.C.
The importance of play in language acquisition is referenced on page 216.  We are aware of the importance of play for language acquisition and ensure that we provide for “play that is completely directed by the children; playful activities that are planned and led by the teacher; and times when the teacher and the children share play activity.”  (P.L.C. 6)

We are aware of cross-curricular literacy development and will use other subject areas to provide for “meaningful and critical application of language and literacy skills.”  (P.L.C. 6)

We are also very conscious of developing critical literacy encouraging our pupils to identify, analyse and possibly challenge perspectives offered in texts and in digital content.  We have a digital policy.  The skills needed to be digitally literate start with literacy itself and our Digital Learning Plan is connected to the P.L.C.  We are conscious that, “reading in the digital medium builds on reading skills acquired in a non-digital environment.”  (students, computers and learning. O.E.C.D. 2015)

**The P.L.C. Toolkit and Support Materials:**
The P.L.C. toolkit can be found at www.curriculumonline.ie/primarycurriculumareas/primarylanguages/primarylanguagetoolkit.
Having read chapter 6 and having studied how the P.L.C. is structured the P.L.C. toolkit is a great source of practical guidance and examples of the curriculum in action.

**Progression Continua:**
The progression milestones “describe in broad terms children’s language learning and development.”  (P.L.C. 6.2 version 1).  The progression steps “describe what children’s learning and development look like,” (P.L.C. 6.2 version 1).
These are reference guides that can be accessed to clarify how children acquire language.  Teachers can read and consider the progression continua to support planning cognizant that “it is not expected that class teachers would assess the progress of individual children using progression milestones.” (P.L.C. 7.2)

**Support Material for Teachers:**
These support materials are practical examples of how to deliver a lesson.  We recommend that all teachers read and consider these support materials as they demonstrate the P.L.C. in action.  We particularly recommend that newly qualified teachers spend considerable time considering these materials to see language teaching in action.  As the “toolkit will continue to be populated over time.”  (P.L.C. 7.3), the support material should be regularly reviewed.

**Teachers Individual Planning:**
Teachers write long-term and short-term plans. Special Education Teachers write their short-term plans on a fortnightly basis.

**Assessment:**
Assessment is provided for in our assessment policy and in our special Education Policy**.**

**Drama:**
We have a separate Drama Policy.  Drama, however, should not be separated from language learning.  We advocate that our teachers use the Drama and the P.L.C. policies in tandem.

**Conclusion:**
The P.L.C. is both a live document and a reference book.  Teachers refer to it to assess the merit of programmes or initiatives and to direct their own planning.  The support materials on line will be added to by the N.C.C.A. making the P.L.C. a live document.  We believe that the P.L.C. used on a whole school basis as we have provided for in this policy “supports teachers as skilled professionals with the autonomy to make key decisions about teaching and learning,” (Circular 45/2019) in Cloonanaha N.S.

Through acknowledging the experience, expertise and professionalism of teachers in facilitating them using their own discretion in preparing and planning lessons we maintain the collaborative culture between teachers that is necessary for a school to be effective.  We also promote the collaborative culture between schools and the Inspectorate, PDST, NCCA, NCSE, PDST, TUSLA, parents and the BOM that is necessary for schools to be effective.
This policy should be read with our Primary Language Curriculum for Gaeilge document.  The P.L.C. covers all language acquisition. Both policies need to be read to gain a full understanding of how we implement the P.L.C.

Reviewed on the 29/11/22

Signed: …………………………………………………………

 Mary Crawford (Chairperson)