

# **SPEAN BRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL EARLY INTERVENTION POLICY**

## **Rationale**

The Early Intervention initiative began with concerns about the low standards of literacy and numeracy of pupils from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and was expanded into all schools to access effective ways of developing literacy and numeracy attainment and achievement.

Our school has seen the direct benefits of a nursery education and is building on this using the training and strategies gained from the Early Years Intervention Programmes.

## **Aims**

- To raise the attainment and achievement of all primary school children and establish a climate of high expectation.
- To promote partnership with parents throughout their child's education.
- To actively involve parents in the acquisition of their children's literacy and numeracy skills through explaining the methods used to teach literacy and numeracy and providing advice and materials for use at home.
- To recognise, value and build on the prior knowledge and learning that children bring to school.
- To give children the chance to play an active role in their own learning.
- To respect the children's efforts and give generous praise whilst challenging them to be self-critical and evaluate their own efforts.

Programmes of literacy and numeracy have been found to be more effective if they:

- Take account of children's existing knowledge and understanding
- Utilise their natural enthusiasm and curiosity for the world around them
- Recognise the importance of aural, oral and practical experience in the acquisition of language and mathematical skills and understanding
- Use a variety of teaching approaches
- Provide regular opportunities to practice skills and consolidate learning in a variety of ways
- Establish a climate of high expectations in terms of achievement and presentation
- Promote the partnership of parents in their children's education

(See Rationale in *The Highland Council Programme of Study – Early Years* for further advice for teachers)

## **Staff**

Early Stages staff, Support for Learning staff and the Head Teacher have undergone Early Intervention training.

Our classroom assistant works mainly with the Primary 1 and 2 classes, providing considerable support for the teacher and children by working with individuals and small groups using the Early Intervention strategies.

Following Early Intervention recommendations regarding the deployment of staff, the Learning Support Teacher is timetabled to work for the majority of her time with the children in the Early Stages who are experiencing difficulty in early literacy and numeracy.

## **Parents**

Parents are informed of Early Intervention strategies during parent workshops and information evenings. They are given guidance on activities and strategies they can use to help their children at home. Nursery and Early Stages children take story bags and activity packs home on a regular basis. Highland Council has produced a CD Rom titled '*Supporting the role of parents*'. This offers valuable advice on how schools can work with parents to raise children's achievement.

## **Teaching Context and Methodologies**

Teachers recognise the importance of aural, oral and practical experience in the Early Years in the acquisition of language and mathematical skills and understanding. It is essential to provide a variety of contexts relevant to the child for their learning to be meaningful and effective.

Teachers use a variety of teaching methods and vary their approach to suit the children's needs and capabilities.

Direct teaching is frequently used to introduce a new concept and this is followed by structured practice in the newly acquired skills and knowledge to consolidate their learning.

Children are encouraged to 'have a go'. Their efforts are praised and they are encouraged to evaluate their own work.

The teacher plans for short daily practice in writing and mental number, with further experiences been given through games and a variety of structured activities.

Children are encouraged to explore and organise their ideas through discussion with adults and their peers.

Practical applications are preferred to work sheets and workbooks although some recording is necessary.

## **Assessment**

The Early Years teachers work closely with the Nursery staff and 'before and after' data is collected for the children's individual profiles, to help assess the children's ongoing development needs. Aspects of individual children's profiles that have not been completed in the Nursery are transferred for completion in the primary one class. The Early Years Easy Screen (EYES) baseline assessment is carried out in the first term of primary 1.

## **Support for Early Intervention**

We are using many of the Early Intervention strategies in the Middle and Upper stages, e.g. more direct and interactive teaching. The North Lanarkshire Writing Project and Peter Patilla Mental Maths ideas are examples of these, and are used throughout the school.

The Highland Council has published and distributed to schools an excellent document called *The Highland Council Programme of study - Early Years*, which will prove to be an invaluable guide and reference document for supporting the strategies of Early Intervention in the future. The Highland Council CD Rom *Supporting the Role of Parents* also provides advice for working with parents.

*The Highland Literacy Project* also supports Early Intervention

## **Monitoring and review**

There is regular monitoring by senior staff of the Early Intervention programme both through direct classroom monitoring and tracking of children's progress. We also review its effect on pupils' learning and review the resources we require to implement the strategies. We look at the effectiveness of Early Intervention when we audit aspects of Learning and Teaching within our School Development Plan cycle.

## **Staff Development and Review**

New staff to the Early Years can apply to the Education Authority for inclusion on any literacy and numeracy courses that are running or being planned for the future. However as a school we need to ensure that the good practice continues to be implemented and developed within the school through on-going in-school Staff Development. It is hoped that the Authority will provide further training on extending Early intervention strategies into middle and upper stages of the school in the near future.