



Background

Schools have become increasingly accountable for ensuring that effective literacy strategies and programs are in place to maximise students' learning opportunities and potential.

To demonstrate Dalkeith Primary School is providing students with the best possible chance of meeting National and State targets, our commitment to high expectations for student achievement has been documented following collaborative analysis and planning. The result of the articulation of this commitment in terms of the English outcome is a whole school literacy plan.

Rationale

The whole school literacy plan provides a coordinated approach to the teaching of literacy. It brings with it a change in the culture of literacy teaching at the school and strengthens our shared vision and beliefs in 'How children learn Best'. It ensures that 'teachers, administrators, parents, specialists, and students are all working in synergy to meet high expectations for student achievement' (Gordon and Donnon, p.1, 2003).

Beliefs

Effective planning for literacy improvement requires a shared understanding of the Curriculum Framework Principles of Teaching and Learning and the pedagogy required to support students in progressing their learning.

At Dalkeith Primary School a set of statements developed by staff on 'How Children Learn Best' provides shared common beliefs on teaching, learning and assessment.

- Children learn best when learning is inclusive and recognise and value different learning styles.
- Children learn best when they are involved in their own assessment, through a variety of relevant and ongoing strategies.
- Children learn best when teachers provide an exciting, innovative, enjoyable learning experience.
- Children learn best when they are provided with opportunities to negotiate their own goals within their learning journeys.

The whole school literacy plan provides teachers with the opportunity to explore and articulate expectations for each of the phases of learning, facilitating the notion of a seamless curriculum, rather than a set achievement for each year level.

Time for whole staff discussions and planning based around beliefs, research, data, expectations and individual student needs is essential in the development and operation of a whole school approach.

The culture Instructional and Pedagogical Leadership and an effective Professional Learning Team model are central to the success of the Whole School Literacy Plan at Dalkeith Primary School.

Focus for Planning



Pedagogy

A shared understanding of effective instructional approaches, class routines, organisation and classroom management is essential to an effective whole school approach to teaching literacy.

Through collaborative planning time, school development days, mentoring programs and professional learning opportunities, teacher's research and discuss teaching strategies and examine findings.

Organisational structures are developed both in classrooms and across the school to maximize outcomes of specific plans eg. cross setting.

Staff are supported through professional learning and performance management processes and resources are targeted to implement a range of classroom practices in response to student needs.

Standards and Targets

The Outcomes and Standards Framework describes the Achievement targets for English in years 3, 5 and 7. The NAPLAN national minimum standard for Literacy describes a minimal acceptable standard for students in years 3, 5 and 7.

Teacher judgement and external standardised data informs the whole school approach to literacy and through critical analysis of student data, individual, group, class and school targets are determined. Diagnostic monitoring through the use of Literacy/Numeracy Nets, Curriculum Manager, First Steps continua's and rubrics is used to determine student improvement and identify future learning goals.

Identification, Intervention and Case Management

The school plan outlines processes to identify, support and monitor students not making expected progress in literacy. The plan follows the school SAER policy.

Staffare, through Professional Learning teams, Performance Management, district student services support and LSC (Learning Support Coordinator) support, engaged in ongoing critical analysis of data to identify those at risk of not achieving expected standards.

The use of diagnostic tools to screen identified students is an essential part of the process and resources are employed in order for teachers to engage in collaborative planning to support both individual and groups in the context of the mainstream.

Leadership and Professional Learning

A collaborative approach to leadership and coordination of the whole school literacy plan provides opportunities to employ processes that facilitate shared knowledge, responsibility and ownership of school plans and strategies.

Every teacher is encouraged to and supported in taking responsibility for improved student performance in literacy. Planning for Professional Learning is linked to the school's strategic and operational plans that outline student improvement priorities.

The Professional Learning Teams develop systematic plans that reflect a coherent approach to teaching, monitoring and assessment in literacy learning.

Community Partnership

Strong community partnerships and a shared school vision provide for improved literacy outcomes. The plan outlines processes to maintain productive partnerships with parents, volunteers and the wider community.

The school provides opportunities for communication in both formal and informal, sharing information to ensure parents have a clear understanding of the literacy plans and processes their child is involved in and the progress their child is making.

Two-way communication allows parents the opportunity to share their knowledge about their children. Parents are strongly encouraged to take support literacy homework tasks, including modelling and listening to reading, supporting spelling and discussing written tasks.