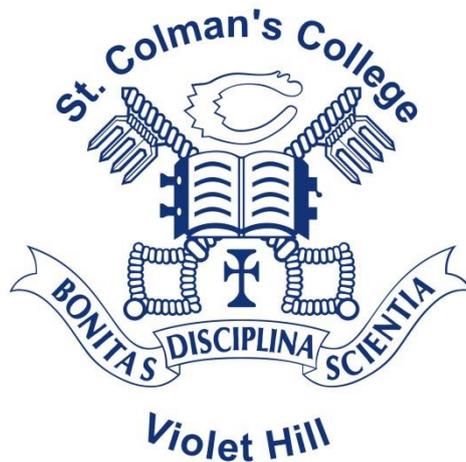# ST. COLMAN'S COLLEGE

# VIOLET HILL



# Whole school policy:

## *'Literacy'*

**Date of Policy:  Oct 2013**

**Last Reviewed:     Sept. 2016**

**Reviewed by:       R Boyle**

**Next Review:       Sept. 2017**

**CONTEXT:**

The stated vision of the Department of Education for N Ireland (DENI) is 'To ensure that every learner fulfils his or her potential at each stage of his or her development.' (DENI 2010).

This has been enunciated in the overall aim of the N Ireland Curriculum (DE 2008), which says, 'The N Ireland Curriculum aims to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives.'

The School Improvement policy document, 'Every School a Good School,' (DENI 2009) has outlined indicators of what will be recognised as effective performance under four headings:

- **Child centred provision**
- **High quality teaching and learning**
- **Effective Leadership**
- **A School connected to its local community**

**'Count, Read: Succeed'** A strategy to Improve Outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy(2011) states that 'A solid foundation in literacy and numeracy is essential to ensure they (young people) can contribute effectively to the economy and society and live fulfilling lives.'

The aims of the strategy are to:

1. Support teachers and school leaders in their work to raise overall levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy among young people; and

2. Narrow the current gaps in educational outcomes.

**Link to 'Every School a Good School'**

http://www.deni.gov.uk/esags_policy_for_school_improvement_-_final_version_05-05-2009.pdf

**INTRODUCTION AND AIMS:**

**Rationale:**

At Saint Colman's College, we believe that pupils' literacy skills, that is their ability to talk, listen, read and write effectively, for purpose and audience is the key to educational progress, to social integration and to personal development and happiness. This policy document will outline the strategies and approaches we will support and develop in order to ensure that each child becomes equipped with the necessary language knowledge, understanding and skills.

We aim for a "co-ordinated and effective cross-curricular emphasis on literacy that supports all teachers in recognising and exploiting opportunities to support the development of literacy through their teaching."
*"A Strategy for Raising Achievement in Literacy and Numeracy – Consultation Document"*

This policy document will outline the strategies and approaches we will support and develop in order to ensure that each pupil becomes equipped with the necessary language knowledge, understanding and skills.

## Definition:

**Literacy** is the ability to read and use written information and to write appropriately and legibly, taking account of different purposes, contexts, conventions and audiences. It involves the development of:

> ➢ **An integrated approach to the acquisition of talking, listening, reading and writing skills across the curriculum;**
> ➢ **Knowledge that allows a speaker, writer and reader to use language appropriate to different social situations;**
> ➢ **Formal and informal language across all areas of social interaction; and**
> ➢ **The ability to read, understand and use information in multiple formats and platforms, including traditional print and on-screen material.**

> **('Count Read: Succeed' Pgs 2-3)**

'Every School a Good School' defines literacy as 'the ability to read and use written information and to write appropriately and legibly for a range of purposes, within a range of contexts and for a variety of audiences. It also involves the integration of talking, listening and critical thinking with reading and writing and includes the knowledge that enables a speaker, writer and reader to recognise and use language appropriate to different social situations. Literacy permeates and develops learning in all areas of the curriculum, formal and informal and all areas of social interaction and development.'

**('Every School a Good School', DE, June 2009)**

All teachers are teachers of literacy. As such, the staff of St.Colman's College are committed to developing literacy skills in all of our pupils, in the belief that it will support their learning and raise standards across the curriculum, because:

- Pupils need vocabulary, expression and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of subjects;
- Reading helps us to learn from sources beyond our immediate experience;
- Writing helps us to sustain and order thought;
- Language helps us to reflect, revise and evaluate the things we do, and on the things others have said, written or done;
- Responding to higher order questions encourages the development of thinking skills and enquiry;
- Improving literacy and learning can have an impact on pupils' self-esteem, on motivation and behaviour. It allows them to learn independently. It is empowering.

## Policy Aims:

1. To promote literacy as an essential life skill to enable young people to develop as individuals and contributors to society;

2. To promote positive attitudes towards Literacy among pupils and staff;

3. To ensure the involvement of all departments in the promotion of literacy across all subjects;

4. To ensure that Literacy remains a key priority on the School Development Plan and as a result must continue to be a priority at all levels within school, classroom, department and whole school;

5. To create a shared accountability, with progress in literacy tracked to ensure improvement is achieved and maintained;

6. To increase teachers' understanding of the contribution which Literacy can make to each curriculum area;

7. To employ a range of teaching strategies and styles to meet the needs of all learners;

8. To ensure that the central place of the class teacher in relation to literacy is recognised and supported;

9. To encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning;

10. To ensure the English Department takes a leading role in the promotion and development of Literacy across all subjects;

11. To require and support any Department that is not making adequate provision for the promotion of literacy to put clear actions in place to address weaknesses.

## CHILD CENTRED PROVISION:

'A clear commitment exists to promoting equality of opportunity, high quality learning, a concern for individual pupils and a respect for diversity'

(Every School a Good School, June 2009)

We aim to ensure through effective learning and teaching the needs of all pupils are met and they reach their full potential in English.

The following indicators from 'Every School a Good School' will be reflected in our approaches:

➤ Decisions on planning, resources, curriculum and pastoral care reflect at all times the needs and aspirations of the pupils within the school;

➤ A clear commitment exists to promoting equality of opportunity, high quality learning, a concern for individual pupils and a respect for diversity;

➤ A school culture of achievement, improvement and ambition exists with clear expectations that all pupils can and will achieve to the very best of their ability;

➤ Effective interventions and support are in place to meet the additional education and other needs of pupils and to help them overcome barriers to learning; and

➤ There is a commitment to involve young people in discussions and decisions on school life that directly affect them and listen to their views.

### Curriculum Provision:

The Curriculum is delivered using the requirements in the N. Ireland Curriculum for Language and Literacy. There are 5 classes in each year group at Key Stage 3 and 7 classes at Key Stage 4. Within each class, work is differentiated based on the range and ability of the pupils and in order to ensure that all learning types are catered for i.e. auditory, visual and kinaesthetic.

Planning is carried out in order to promote literacy throughout the curriculum. It is a key part of school strategic planning and essential to create links between the School Development Plan, professional development and date collection.

Long term planning involves learning intentions within manageable blocks of time across each term for each year group.

Medium term planning covers a period of time ranging from a month to six weeks. The process for this planning is a development from short term planning.

Short term planning is completed for each week with the learning intentions identified, assessment opportunities decided upon, and success criteria agreed. Learning intentions will be planned for reading, writing talking and listening. **(Planning for Literacy template attached in Appendix 2)**

**Key Stage 3 Curriculum Provision:**

We intend that, by the end of Key Stage 3, a pupil will be able to:

- Read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding;
- Use their skills in talking and appropriately listening to explore, articulate and extend their understanding of texts; have the oral confidence and skills to speak to different audiences and to listen;
- Have the ability to formulate the right questions independently;
- Be able to orchestrate a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual) to monitor their reading and correct their own mistakes;
- Understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately;
- Have fluent and legible handwriting;
- Use ICT technologies selectively and appropriately to assist research and problem solving;
- Use ICT technologies and multi- media to enhance learning and presentation of work;
- Know, understand and be able to write in a range of fiction and poetry genres, and be familiar with the ways in which those genres are constructed;
- Understand the conventions of different non-fiction text types and be able to use these conventions confidently as readers and writers;
- Display competence in study skills generally note-taking, locating information, appropriate selection, comparison and evaluation;
- Have an extended technical vocabulary with which to discuss and evaluate their reading and writing;
- Use language appropriate to different social situations.

**Key Stage 4 Curriculum Provision**:

At Key Stage 4, these skills and capabilities will be developed as teachers should enable pupils to develop skills in:

- communicating meaning, feelings and viewpoints in a logical and coherent manner;
- making oral and written summaries, reports and presentations, which take account of audience and purpose;
- participating in discussions, debates and interviews;
- interpreting, analysing and presenting information in oral, written and ICT formats;
- Exploring and responding, both imaginatively and critically, to a variety of texts.

**Literacy Strategies and Support:**

We aim to ensure that all pupils reach their full potential in English according to their individual abilities. We identify which pupils are underachieving and those with SEN, in order to take steps to improve their attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

- Baseline Position identified in September of year 8 (PIE 11). Analysis and comparing of data from Midyis to set targets and identify underachievement

- GL NGRT will be carried out with those identified as needing additional reading support

- All subject teachers will also make a professional judgement in the first term as to which pupils will benefit from additional literacy support and forward this information on to the literacy coordinator. This judgement will be made based on class work, homework and the assessment 1 result

- Support will be provided to students on a weekly basis through a mentoring programme with year 13 and 14 students.

- In class a range of strategies such as questioning, group work, individual task completion, extended activities, peer and self evaluations will be used to ensure that pupils are challenged

- A range of resources including access to the library, the literacy section on the VLE and i-pad (current year 8-10 pupils) will be used to enhance learning and available to support all departments

- Parents will be updated on literacy initiatives and ways to help their child improve literacy by email, group call, letter and a literacy section on the college website and the VLE that will include practical advice on how parents can help their son with his literacy. Parents will be invited to participate in home reading programmes

- Classroom assistants will work closely with the SEN co-ordinator, literacy co-ordinator and subject teacher to assist the pupil with focused and differentiated class work, projects, homework and literacy resources

- Pupils will be praised and their achievements acknowledged and celebrated by displaying this work completed both in class through the mentoring scheme and on the college website

- Review of each year group- cross referencing of results

## HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING:

'Assessment and other data is used to effectively inform teaching and learning across the school, in the classroom and to promote improvement.'

(Every School a Good School, June 2009)

### Teaching and Learning Strategies:

Class teachers use a wide range of teaching strategies including effective questioning, self and peer assessment, group work, ICT and individual work to develop pupils' Literacy skills.

"Teachers, drawing on their professional expertise, will use a variety of teaching strategies including whole-class teaching, co-operative small group work and individual work, differentiated where appropriate"

(Count, Read: Succeed paragraph 5.3).

The following indicators from ESaGS will be reflected in the College's approaches:

- ➢ A broad and relevant curriculum is provided for pupils;

- ➢ Teacher are committed and enthusiastic, enjoying a positive relationship with their pupils;

- ➢ An emphasis on literacy exists across the curriculum;

- ➢ Teachers reflect on their own work and the outcomes of individual pupils;

- ➢ Assessment is used to inform teaching and learning across the school and in the classroom to promote improvement;

- ➢ Self evaluation is carried out by teachers to sustain self improvement;

- ➢ Having high expectations for all pupils and sharing these with pupils and their parents;

- ➢ Employing effective, high-quality teaching practice;

- ➢ Addressing underachievement as soon as it emerges, set targets and identify actions to be taken within a time frame (see appendix 1);

- ➢ Undertaking robust tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress, in particular to identify any emerging underachievement (see appendix 1);

- ➢ Engaging with and reporting to parents, including through the annual pupil report.

**Literacy Initiatives across the Curriculum:**
- All subject teachers have and use the St Colman's College literacy mat in their classroom;
- Green Pen Policy for peer and self assessment in literacy;
- Developing a presentation and marking code;
- Posters displaying key terms in classrooms;
- Learning plan- booklet of key terminology from each department for KS3 and KS4 (on college website and VLE);
- Clear targets identified by each department focusing on the promotion of literacy;
- Evaluations completed by HoDs
- VLE and website- section for literacy and used as a shared area for pupils and teachers to access
- Speaking Competitions;
- Debating Club;
- Writing Competitions- 'Tell the Future' story writing competition for junior students and senior students, 'The Bailie Gifford Young Writers' competition' and the 'T.E. Utley Memorial Essay Prize';
- Reading Week/ Readathon;
- World Book Day;
- Year Assemblies;
- Speakers from a variety of backgrounds and subject areas;
- Quizzes- Credit Union Quiz;
- Special events such as visiting speakers, writers, story-tellers (connected to the wider community);
- Mentoring Support Programme;
- Collaborating with the 'Gifted and Talented Coordinator' and English HoD to celebrate success in literacy through stories on the school website;
- Collaboration with the Environmental Coordinator in public speaking competitions.

**Strategies:**

**Talking and Listening:**

Talk is our main means of communication in everyday life and is fundamental to the development of understanding. It is only by teaching pupils the skills associated with Talking and Listening within a variety of curriculum contexts by meaningful and relevant activities that teachers can ensure that students will become literate in the true sense of the word, and that they will enjoy language and communication in all their forms. All lessons depend upon oral as well as written communication. The teacher explains, questions, describes, organises and evaluates in the classroom and does this mainly by talk. It is the responsibility of all staff at Saint Colman's College to foster these skills in their pupils so they can use speech appropriately and listen actively. The former includes being able to adjust ways of speaking clearly and effectively according to the audience, context and purpose. The latter involves skills of concentration and sensitivity to the speaker's viewpoint.

**Approaches to Talking and Listening:**

The strands of talking, listening, group discussion and interaction and drama pervade the whole curriculum. Oral language should be recognised as the *primary mode of language* and hence should receive a central emphasis and focus in all areas of the curriculum and in the life of the school. Pupils are encouraged to listen attentively and to speak clearly, confidently, fluently and appropriately for a variety of different audiences and purposes. We will develop talking and listening:

- Within the classroom, formally and informally;

- Using whole class discussions, groups, pairs or individual presentations both in junior and senior school;

- Use of effective questioning by the teacher- open questions;

- Public Speaking Competitions throughout the year (connected to the wider community);

- Debating Club;

- School Council promotion for junior and senior pupils.

**Reading:**
Reading allows pupils access to countless avenues of and sources of knowledge. It equips them with the ability to understand the ideas of others in the past, present and future and can be an enjoyable experience. Perhaps most important of all, reading develops pupils' potential as learners. Fluent reading is the product of a complex combination of knowledge, skills and understanding. All readers, from the apprentice reader to the experienced readers, have to use and integrate various kinds of information in order to create meaning from text. Reading is an active process in which the reader makes sense of messages encoded in writing by making connections between what is read and what is already known. Making judgements about what is read is also a part of the process. The ability to respond critically to what is significant in a text develops as readers gain experience of a wide variety of texts. We want our students to enjoy reading, to be able to use their reading to help them learn and to develop increasing confidence and competence.

**Approaches to Reading:**

An emphasis must be placed on the importance of comprehension skills and strategies, which must be developed and encouraged from the beginning. The pleasure and enjoyment of reading should be fostered in the language lessons, across the curriculum and beyond the classroom. Involvement of the parents can be critical in this context. We will develop reading through:

- Resources within departments- books, kindles, i-pad;

- Mentoring Support Programme;

- Strategies to encourage and stimulate an enjoyment of reading including encouraging use of the library, tailoring selection of books within the English department to interest males ;

- Reading Week embedded within the English department- charity 'Readathon';

- Encouragement of using the school library and local town library (connected to the wider community);

- Regularly updating parents on ways to help their child improve his literacy and encourage reading though home- school liaison and parent information correspondence- section on website, using group call, letters and information evening (connected to the wider community)


### Writing:

Many lessons include and depend on written communication.  Writing development is recursive. Pupils do not learn particular features of written language once and for all at a specific stage. They should therefore be encouraged to behave as independent writers throughout their school career. They should be expected to compose written work from Year 8, gradually developing the range and extent of their writing. Teachers will, therefore, have diverse roles to play in the development of independent writers. They will need to be observers, facilitators, modellers, readers and supporters. In particular, all teachers will need to address writing development as well as subject content. We want our students to develop increasing confidence and competence in writing so that they are able to:

- Write in a widening variety of forms for different purposes e.g. to interpret, evaluate, explain, analyse and explore;
- Write coherently about a wide range of topics, issues, ideas and incidents, organising text in ways which help the reader;
- Craft their writing, showing an improved control of grammatical structure and of a differentiated vocabulary;
- Develop ideas and communicate meaning to a  reader using wide-ranging and technical vocabulary and an effective style, organising and structuring sentences grammatically and whole texts coherently;
- Present their writing clearly using accurate punctuation, correct spelling and legible handwriting;
- Know when and how to plan, draft, redraft and proof-read their work;
- Apply ICT and understand the principles of authoring multi-media texts.

### Approaches to Writing:

There will be many opportunities for writing which will be varied across all learning areas.  There must be an emphasis placed on accuracy in written communication; spelling, punctuation and grammar.  Pupils will be encouraged to transfer skills throughout learning areas and subjects.

We will develop writing through:

- Modelled writing- using other writers as stimulus material;

- Shared writing- working in pairs;

- Guided writing- writing frames for differentiation and pupils with SEN;

- Independent writing- individual class work and homework;

- Integrating the College literacy mat into lessons on a regular basis;

- Developing a marking code;

- Use of the VLE to provide writing support- includes booklets and resources to aid SPG;

- Literacy Mentoring Programme to support writing development;

- Extended writing opportunities- Junior and Senior Writing Competitions;

- Examining a variety of writing forms- personal narratives, poetry media scripts, letters, advertisements, reports, articles, leaflets, speeches, discursive essays in a range of subjects- History, Geography, Religion, HE, Science;

- Posters displaying key terms in all classrooms;

- Develop Phonics and spellings- pupils can spell accurately commonly used words and a number of unfamiliar words- key terms booklet for both KS3 and KS4 for all subject areas;

- Expect high standard of presentation in most of students' finished writing;

- Provide good models of particular kinds of writing;

- Provide dictionaries, glossaries and lists of appropriate subject vocabulary and encourage students to use them;

- Parents' workshop on improving writing.

Encouraging pupils to **think it, say it, write it and read it aloud** when developing their writing encourages them to recognise the links between talking and writing e.g. reading as a writer and writing as a reader.

## Implementation Across the Curriculum

Successful implementation of this literacy policy is dependent upon the extent to which we:

- Take account of the needs of all students, with regard to ethnicity, ability and social and cultural factors;

- Value students' language achievements including those in languages other than English and dialects other than standard English;

- Structure lessons appropriately in ways that support and stimulate language development;

- Show how learning objectives for students are to be achieved;

- Recognise how resources will be organised and used to support this teaching.

In these contexts some of the following activities take place:

Talking and Listening:

- exploring and describing events, activities and problems, exploring and developing ideas with others;

- reporting back to a wider audience in order to consolidate ideas and understanding;

- asking questions as well as answering them;

- speculating, hypothesising and imagining;

- planning, organising and reviewing activities;

- investigating and solving problems collaboratively;

- evaluating experiences and reflecting on learning;

- talking at length and adopting the 'expert' role.

Reading:

- read and follow written instructions;

- read and engage with narratives of events or activities;

- follow up their interests and read texts of varying lengths;

- question and challenge printed information and views;

- read with understanding descriptions of processes, structures and mechanisms;

- read and explore ideas and theories.

Writing:

- learn how to sift and select, and take notes from text and read to locate and relocate information;

- learn how to scan for overall meaning and scan for key points, words and phrases;

- use reading to research and investigate from printed words and moving images ICT texts

- make notes from a variety of sources - printed word, moving images and ICT texts;

- use writing to plan organise and record;

- write logs and journals in order to clarify thoughts and develop new understanding;

- plan, draft, discuss and reflect on their writing;

- learn the conventions of different forms of writing in different subject areas e.g. by using

- use writing frames and providing clear models for writing;

- write at appropriate length, sometimes briefly;

- write collaboratively with other students;

- present some writing for display or publication;

- scaffolding pupils' writing;

- widening the audience for pupils' writing;

- widening the range of forms used for pupils' writing;

- supporting the drafting process;

- making pupils aware of the criteria for marking writing;

- making writing a more collaborative process.

### Literacy Across the Curriculum

1. All departments have contributed to a literacy booklet of key terminology for KS3 and KS4.
2. All departments have set targets for J1 to S2 so that literacy is embedded and promoted in their subject.
3. All departments are promoting literacy through the modes of reading, writing, talking and listening, evident through a range of activities.
4. All teachers in all departments have copies of a St Colman's literacy mat for use in the classroom to ensure focus on SPG and raising literacy standards.
5. There will be a new literacy focus each term.
6. Departments will employ the whole school marking code in subject areas: Subjects set benchmarks for literacy in lessons- pupils listen and speak thoughtfully/ thinking time when asked questions, the quality of presentation, using a wide range of punctuation, writing in paragraphs and high quality spelling, pupils speak in full sentences.
7. Departments will implement the Green Pen Policy across the curriculum for peer and self assessment of Literacy.
8. Classrooms will have a literacy notice board applicable to the relevant subject area e.g. displaying key terminology.
9. Colleagues from a range of subject areas will join a Literacy Committee.

### The Effective Use of ICT

ICT is used to support learning and teaching in Literacy lessons and across the curriculum. This enables the promotion of flexible lessons, remote learning, anytime access, blended learning, independent / autonomous learners. There will be opportunities to use ICT to support teaching and learning in Literacy, which will be planned for and used as appropriate.

ICT will be used to support and motivate those pupils who have become disengaged with traditional methods of learning. The use of ICT includes the VLE, IWB, computer suites and i-Pad.

There is also the provision of supervised ICT facilities before, during and after school for all pupils. Pupils in J1 to J3 have an iPad to enhance engagement and learning.

**'We know that among those at greatest risk of educational underachievement there are many who face barriers to learning' ESaGS (2009)**

### Assessment and Target Setting:

**Key Stage 3:**

The school collates a range of Literacy Assessment Data including Reading Ages, Key Stage 2 Results, GL Progress in English Test Results, NGRT, Midyis, summative and formative assessments and Christmas and Summer results.

GL Standardised Testing
All Year 8 pupils will be tested using the GL Progress in English (PIE) Tests. The test will occur at the beginning of Year 8 (PIE 11). Those identified will be tested again at the end of the academic year, following procedures put into place to support and improve their literacy throughout the year.

The result of PIE 11 will be analysed and those recognised as needing additional support in SPG will complete the GL NGRT in reading and the Blackwell spelling test. The results will be analysed and intervention strategies (home reading programme, mentoring, WAT intervention programme) will be put in place.

The results of PIE 11 will be analysed in conjunction with the non- verbal result from the Midyis test. Those with a difference of ten marks will be identified and strategies to support them will again be implemented and monitored.

There are 4 summative assessments throughout the year. In addition there are many opportunities for formative assessment in the classroom. This focuses departments on the effective use of data to inform teaching, identify underachievement and learning interventions. SIMS is used to consistently manage and analyse data and track pupils' progress.

**Current Targets for Key Stage 3:**

100% of pupils achieve Level 4 and above in KS3 Communication

90% of pupils achieve Level 5 and above in KS3 Communication

20% of pupils achieve Level 6 and above in KS3 Communication

2% of pupils achieve Level 7 and above in KS3 Communication

In order to set targets for raising standards of literacy that are realistic, managed, attainable time bound and reviewed, departments will complete a departmental audit that will have a direct link to improved educational outcomes and experiences for pupils. It is a reflective process, involving all the staff community in a professional process to identify those aspects of school life which are successful or excellent and those where improvement is required. The process will then be supported by objective data and other evidence (SIMS and assessment data tracking)
This will then assist the process of departmental development planning by providing a tool for the Literacy Coordinator in conjunction with subjects Heads, SENCO to audit the place of Literacy in the college and to help set priorities for the next phase in development and future action planning.

**Assessment and Reporting at KS3:**

Assessment plays a key role in helping schools improve outcomes. Knowing how each pupil is performing allows teachers to implement strategies to help individuals improve. This in turn promotes improvement at class level, then at school level, allowing the school to set meaningful and challenging targets in its School Development Plan. Summative assessment plays an equally important role. It allows schools to monitor the progress of individual pupils, keeping parents and pupils informed about their progress, particularly at important key stage transitions.

The key role of literacy across the curriculum is emphasised through the cross-curricular skill of Communication. Communication, Using Mathematics and Using Information Communications Technology (ICT) are the bedrock skills through which young people access knowledge. These skills are developed across the curriculum and are the responsibility of all teachers. Emphasis is placed on transferring, applying and 'using' skills effectively throughout the curriculum. These skills are supported by the wider opportunities now provided for pupils to develop other important skills in their role as citizens, including cultural and mutual understanding, thinking skills and personal capabilities, and employability. It is important that teachers of all subjects help to develop and promote pupils' literacy skills through a whole-school approach.

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to develop Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities and to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through language lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

They will:

- encourage pupils to use their visual, auditory and kinaesthetic channels for better learning

- use of a range of active learning strategies in the classroom, including drama strategies, group tasks

- Ensure effective questioning by the teacher and pupils.

Communication is central to the whole curriculum. Children should be able to communicate in order to express themselves socially, emotionally and physically, to develop as individuals, engage with others and contribute as members of society. The modes of communication include talking and listening, reading and writing. However, effective communication also includes non-verbal modes of communication, wider literacy and the use of multimedia and ICT technologies which may combine different modes.

From September 2012, statutory assessment of the cross Curricular Skill 'Communication' at KS3 will take the form of teacher assessment with moderation. Teacher assessments will be carried out using the statutory Levels of Progression.

The English Department will engage in the process of internal standardisation which is a collaborative process by which teachers consider work produced by each Year 10 pupil and, using pre-determined criteria, reach a common agreement on standards as being typical of work at a particular level.

A level will be awarded to each pupil for Communication – this will be the outcome of a holistic assessment of pupil performance in Communication based on evidence the outcomes of the three modes – Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening. At least two of the modes of Communication need to be assessed at or above the level to be awarded.

In the first two years of the statutory assessment arrangements for Communication and Using Mathematics, schools will be moderated by CCEA in one skill during the first year (2012/13) and the other skill in the second (2013/14); therefore, after two years, all schools will have been moderated in both these skills. From 2014/15, each school will be moderated in one skill each year, on a rolling programme.

In March each year, the English Department will submit outcomes to CCEA indicating the awarded levels for all pupils in Year 10.

If Communication is being moderated by CCEA, the English Department will submit evidence of a stratified sample of pupil work (pupil portfolios) for external moderation. Each pupil's portfolio should contain 4 pieces of work and should address the two main components of the Cross-Curricular Skill – 'Reading and Writing'. One of the samples must be an approved CCEA Assessment Task.

CCEA will provide feedback to schools in advance of reporting outcomes to parents. After levels have been finalised, parents will receive the annual report indicating the level awarded Communication with written comments.

Communication assesses pupils' ability to communicate efficiently in Reading, Writing and Talking and Listening. The requirements for Communication are set out below.

Across the curriculum, at a level appropriate to their ability, pupils should be enabled to develop skills in:

**Talking and Listening**

1. listen to and take part in discussions, explanations, role plays and presentations;

2. contribute comments, ask questions and respond to others' points of view;

3. communicate information, ideas, opinions, feelings and imaginings, using an `expanding vocabulary;

4. structure their talk and speak clearly so that ideas can be understood by others;

5. adapt ways of speaking to audience and situation;

6. Use non-verbal methods to express ideas and engage with the listener.


**Reading**

1. read a range of texts for information, ideas and enjoyment;

2. use a range of strategies to read with increasing independence;

3. find, select and use information from a range of sources;

4. understand and explore ideas, events and features in texts;

5. Use evidence from texts to explain opinions.

**Writing**

1. talk about, plan and edit work;

2. communicate information, meaning, feelings, imaginings and ideas in a clear and organised way;

3. develop, express and present ideas in a variety of forms and formats, using traditional and digital resources, for different audiences and purposes;

4. Write with increasing accuracy and proficiency.


Link to Levels of Progression in Communication:

http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk/docs/skills_and_capabilities/cross_curricular_skills/new_levels/Communicatio n/Communication_levels1-7.pdf


**<u>Key Stage 4:</u>**

**<u>Targets:</u>**

**90% of pupils achieve 7+ A\*-C grades at GCSE (including Maths and English)**
**95% of pupils achieve 7+ A\*-C grades at GCSE**


KS4 pupils are tested in the modes of **Talking and Listening, Reading and Writing.**

**<u>Approaches to Talking and Listening</u>**

The strands of talking, listening, group discussion and interaction and drama pervade the whole curriculum. Oral language should be recognised as the ***primary mode of language*** and hence should receive a central emphasis and focus in all areas of the curriculum and in the life of the school. Pupils are encouraged to listen attentively and to speak clearly, confidently, fluently and appropriately for a variety of different audiences and purposes. We will develop talking and listening:

- Within the classroom, formally and informally;
- Using whole class discussions, groups, pairs or individual presentations;
- Use of effective questioning by the teacher- open questions;
- Public Speaking Competitions throughout the year (connected to the wider community);
- School Council promotion;
- Assemblies.

### Approaches to Reading

An emphasis must be placed on the importance of comprehension skills and strategies, which must be developed and encouraged from the beginning. The pleasure and enjoyment of reading should be fostered in the language lessons, across the curriculum and beyond the classroom. Involvement of the parents can be critical in this context. We will develop Reading through:

- Resources within departments- Books, Kindles, iPads;
- Wider reading: fiction, non-fiction, poetry, drama;
- Strategies to encourage and stimulate an enjoyment of reading including encouraging use of the library, tailoring selection of books within the English department to interest male students;
- Reading Week embedded within the English department;
- Encouragement of using the local town library (connected to the wider community);
- Special events such as visiting speakers, writers, story-tellers (connected to the wider community);
- Regularly updating parents on ways to help their child improve his literacy and encourage reading though home- school liaison and parent information correspondence- section on website and a parent's information evening on making subject choices

### Approaches to Writing
There will be many opportunities for writing which will be varied across all learning areas. There must be an emphasis placed on accuracy in written communication; spelling, punctuation and grammar. Pupils will be encouraged to transfer skills throughout learning areas and subjects.

We will develop writing through:

- Modelled writing- using other writers as stimulus material;
- Shared writing- working in pairs;
- Guided writing- writing frames;
- Independent writing- individual class work and homework;
- Extended writing opportunities- continuation of story, alternative novel ending;
- Examining a variety of writing forms- personal narratives, poetry media scripts, letters, advertisements, reports, articles, leaflets, speeches, discursive essays;
- Pupils displaying confidence in matching writing to audience and purpose and presenting information effectively using an appropriate style;
- Phonics and spellings- pupils can spell accurately commonly used words and a number of unfamiliar words;
- Pupils confidently using a range of punctuation and accurate grammar on most occasions

Encouraging pupils to **think it, say it, write it and read it aloud** when developing their writing encourages them to recognise the links between talking and writing e.g. reading as a writer and writing as a reader.

### Assessment:
At the beginning of Year 11 each pupil is awarded a target grade in all subjects based on data such as Key Stage 3 results, previous assessments from tracking on SIMs and teacher professional judgment; this grade will be used as a benchmark to identify pupil attainment and progress. Teachers will use six standardised department assessments at identified times throughout the academic year. Recorded marks on SIMs will be used by all departments to monitor pupil attainment and identify underachievement. Intervention strategies will be initiated for those pupils who have been identified as underachieving in a number of subject areas.

**External Assessment:**
Pupils complete a number of modules at the end of S1, January of S2 and the Summer of S2.

**EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP**

The SLT and the Literacy Coordinator are responsible for the management of the Literacy Strategy in St Colman's College.  Miss Roisin Boyle (Literacy Coordinator) will lead the Literacy development through the implementation of the Literacy Strategy and Action Plan. Heads of Departments are responsible for ensuring that they embed Literacy in their subject area Scheme of Work and encouraging members of the Department to implement the use of Literacy in their everyday teaching.  The Literacy Coordinator will promote and coordinate Literacy across the curriculum.  English teachers will continue to be primarily responsible for developing an understanding of key terms/rules; however literacy **must** be supported in all subject areas.  All members of staff, therefore, have a responsibility to develop and promote literacy within their subject area.

The Literacy Coordinator and members of the English Department will be available to work with departments as necessary to help promote Literacy.

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

**SLT:**
The Senior Leadership Team has an overall responsibility for developing effective practices within the school for Literacy.  The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Monitor, evaluate and review the whole school Literacy policy, and associated policies;
- Identify key priorities in Literacy as outlined in the School Development Plan which includes relevant professional training;
- Ensure the school meets all statutory requirements in relation to Literacy across all Key Stages;
- Develop effective procedures to fully utilise relevant assessment data from Primary Schools to allow ease of transition between Key Stages 2 and 3;
- Analyse assessment data e.g. Key Stage 3, GCSE and GCE results to monitor pupil attainment and progress against whole school Literacy targets;
- Ensure assessment systems are effective and disseminate data throughout the school to facilitate self evaluation and target setting;
- Present assessment data to Governors and External Agencies e.g. DENI, CCMS, SELB;
- Lead whole school Target Setting ensuring effective procedures for the identification of underachievers and initiate support strategies to raise pupil attainment;
- Ensure consistent whole school approach towards assessment, recording and reporting;
- Monitor, evaluate and review the whole school Literacy Strategy in line with school policy and statutory requirements.

**Literacy Coordinator:**
- Consult with Governors, SLT, HOD's, SENCO, ICT Coordinator and External Agencies (including CCEA, DENI);
- Provide leadership, guidance and direction for the delivery of Literacy across the curriculum;
- Encourage improved standards, understanding and competence in Literacy;
- Take a lead in Literacy Policy development in consultation with the Curriculum VP;
- Devise the whole school Literacy Action Plan and ensure the actions are fully implemented in consultation with Hods;
- Continue to explore and review new literacy;
- Purchase Literacy resources and share with relevant departments;
- Coordinate the implementation of  Literacy related projects between relevant departments;
- Manage and organise of teaching strategies, interventions, additional personnel, materials;
- Evaluating and ensuring the provision of appropriate in-service training for staff;
- Monitor baseline position, target-setting and evaluation;
- Keeping up to date with recent initiatives and research and advise colleagues appropriately;

- Ensure continuing personal professional development.

**Head of English:**

- Provide leadership, guidance and direction for the delivery of English/Communication within the department and across the curriculum;
- Devise, implement and monitor department policies in line with the whole school policy;
- Coordinate the introduction and implementation of the Communication Assessment and Reporting arrangements in school;
- Effectively use assessment and whole school data, both internal and external, to facilitate target setting and self evaluation within their department;
- Identify relevant training opportunities for department members in relation to aspects of Literacy/Communication;
- Develop effective department Literacy strategies for those pupils who have Special Educational Needs;
- Collate and analyse relevant formative and summative assessment data within the English Department and report to the Principal and SLT in relation to all aspects of assessment when required.

**Heads of Department:**

- Devise, implement and monitor the Departmental Literacy Policy in line with the whole school policy;
- Ensure Literacy is embedded in their subject area Scheme of Work and encourage members of the Department to implement the use of Literacy in their everyday teaching;
- Effectively use assessment and whole school data, both internal and external, to facilitate target setting and self evaluation within their department;
- Identify relevant training opportunities for department members in relation to aspects of Literacy;
- In consultation with the English Department, develop effective department Literacy strategies for those pupils who have Special Educational Needs;
- Collate and analyse relevant formative and summative assessment data within the department and report to the Principal and SLT in relation to all aspects of assessment when required.

**Subject Teachers:**

- Implement the whole school and department Literacy Policies;
- Track pupil progress using Sims, formative and summative assessments (assessments 1-5)
- Promote meaningful opportunities for pupils to develop Literacy within their subject area;
- All teachers make effective use of assessment for learning in literacy. Pupils participate in assessment with reference to agreed learning intentions, success criteria and identification of areas for improvement;
- Effective teaching strategies are used which take account of progression in skills, are used to address the literacy and learning needs of a range of ability groups;
- English teachers will have a key role in helping to set standards in Literacy; however all teachers are teachers of literacy and must take responsibility for raising standards.

**SENCO:**

- Ensure statutory requirements are met to support pupils on the SEN register during external examinations;
- Monitor and evaluate the performance of pupils on the SEN register, reporting to parents and other stakeholders at set times throughout the year;
- Lead whole staff training in relation to assessment arrangements for special needs pupils;
- Working with other staff, develop and support appropriate assessment arrangements for pupils on the SEN register and liaise with other staff, identify pupils with Special Educational Needs and assess their specific Literacy needs.

## LINKS TO THE WIDER COMMUNITY

**Community Links:**

**'Good relationships that facilitate engagement and communication between the School and its parents and the wider community that it serves'**

(Every School a Good School, June 2009)

St Colman's College has established quality, sustainable links with the local Primary and Post Primary Schools, local businesses and community groups. These links develop a collaborative learning culture which enhances the curricular and extra curricular opportunities and the learning and teaching experience of pupils in all key stages. We have contributed to the development of an enterprise culture, in line with current government policy exemplified through the CEIAG, STEM and curriculum provisions at Key Stages 4 and 5.

**Parents:**

- Annual Parent Teacher Meetings (Terms 1 to 3);

- Annual Report to Parents;

- Group Call;

- Parental Surveys;

- Parents' Association Meetings;

- Open Day;

- Delta Meetings;

- Literacy Area on school website- includes literacy policy and resources; parent's information evening;

- School VLE/Twitter – resources for parents to use at home to support their son's literacy development;

- Religious Liturgies.

**Primary Schools:**
- Established links with primary school teachers to discuss the KS2 and KS3 Curriculum and the transition between KS2 and KS3;

- Primary School Visits in January of each year;

- Primary School Activity Days;

- The Primary Science Outreach Programme.

**Post Primary Schools:**

- Collaboration with 16 local post primary schools including the Southern Regional

College (SRC) through the ALC.

- Head of English and Literacy Coordinator shares good practice with other English Departments in the SELB area;

- Staff Development: English Department share good practice with other English Departments in Area Learning Community- links made with St Mary's High School, St Paul's Bessbrook, and St Joseph's Newry.

**Extended Curriculum/ Local Community:**

- Newry and Mourne Council

- Charities- SVP

- Local media and newspapers

- Newry parish

**Outside Agencies:**

- CASS

- CLG

- SVDP

**Related Whole School Policies:**
This policy is set within the broader school context of curriculum and as such should be implemented in conjunction with the following policies:

- **Curriculum Policy:**

The curriculum in St. Colman's is everything that the College offers pupils by way of learning experience and opportunity, planned in the context of trying to meet individual needs.
In accordance with our College aims, the curriculum that we offer enables each pupil to realise his full potential and to develop all of his interests and talents. It is designed to ensure that there is breadth and balance at each of the Key Stages and, with continuity and progression, to facilitate the student's acquisition of the life skills and competences necessary for the world of work.
We aim to ensure that the individual student's needs, both now and in the future, are at the core of everything we are about as an educational establishment. We seek to do this by fostering a sound educational partnership between the College, parents and the wider community, a partnership which strengthens and secures the safe and caring educational experience afforded to our pupils and promotes not just their intellectual and academic development, but also their spiritual, emotional and physical growth/well-being.

- **Assessment Policy:**

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. The precise details of assessment arrangements are contained within the Whole School Policy on Assessment, The teachers in St. Colman's College have high expectations of their pupils providing them with a purposeful, supportive and safe environment in which to learn. Assessment is an integral part of the learning process in St. Colman's College

with the pupils' work being regularly assessed in order to guide and encourage learning. Each department has a clear policy for consistent marking to allow the pupils to reflect on and improve their achievements. The Teaching and Learning Policy and the Assessment policy is reviewed annually and assessment strategies are under constant review.

- **SEN Policy:**

St Colman's College intends to provide a broad, balanced but differentiated curriculum in such a way so that each pupil will be allowed to realise his full potential. We are committed to catering for the needs of all pupils especially those whose needs are deemed special. It is the College's philosophy that the early identification of the pupil whose progress differs considerably from that of his peers (including those pupils that would be deemed Gifted and Talented) is essential and unless the pupil has severe complex needs then he will benefit more from a differentiated curriculum in a normal classroom environment rather than in separate provision. The College is committed to a policy of inclusion, one in which the Learning and Teaching, attitudes and well-being of all children matter, including those identified as having a Special Educational Needs. It is also central to our thinking that all pupils in St Colman's are valued equally and Special Educational Needs pupils are not viewed as a separate entity but as part of the whole school community.

- **ICT Policy:**

Curriculum:
○ use of VLE by all Curr. Depts. within the school
○ use of SIMS for recording / tracking pupil assessment throughout the year
○ use of SIMS for timetable / rota / exam entries / results analysis / etc.
○ online storage / collaboration of Minutes, resources, etc. for Curriculum teams
○ use of WELB web portal for mapping cross-curr. skills and capabilities
○ use of Google Forms for auditing Curriculum development needs

- **Numeracy Policy:**

The purpose of the Numeracy policy is to facilitate the raising of attainment through:
● Addressing a wider audience than the Mathematics Department;
● Ensuring that staff is aware of the teaching approaches associated with numeracy;
● Identifying the roles each member of staff has in the promotion of numeracy;
● Setting out principles which should enhance the quality of teaching and learning;
● Assisting Areas of Study to include references to numeracy in their documentation.

**Monitoring, Evaluation and Review:**

As Literacy Coordinator, Miss Boyle is responsible for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the promotion of Literacy across the curriculum. The whole school Literacy Policy and Action Plan will be reviewed and if necessary revised on an annual basis in line with statutory requirements. Miss Boyle will report annually to the Principal/ Curriculum VP on the development and progress of Literacy based on the success of the Action Plan and targets set and complete an evaluation, focusing on the strengths and targets to inform future action planning.

- Heads of Departments will ensure that Literacy is incorporated in schemes of work;
- Heads of Department will ensure that their department's Literacy Action Plan has been revised in line with whole school policy;
- The Literacy Coordinator will be responsible for evaluating the progress of whole school approaches to Literacy;
- The Literacy Coordinator will be responsible for reporting progress under this policy to the Principal/ Curriculum VP on an annual basis

**Appendix 1:**

**Tackling Underachievement**

In Saint Colman's College, it is the responsibility of all teachers to tackle underachievement. There are five strands to tackling underachievement:

- **High Quality Teaching and Learning (first teaching)** in the classroom. All teachers will have high expectations for all pupils, will employ effective, high- quality classroom teaching practice and undertake tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress. Teachers will use a variety of teaching strategies and differentiate where appropriate. There will be a personalised approach to learning.

- **Addressing Emerging Underachievement**: Intervention- address underachievement as soon as it emerges in the classroom by identifying pupils who are failing to fulfil their potential, and intervene as soon as possible. Intervention will include setting targets and identifying actions that are time bound and reviewed, to meet the needs of each pupil.

- **Addressing Continuous Underachievement:** Additional school support will be sought when after several cycles of review and support, the pupil is still underachieving, the extent of the underachievement has increased, there has been an increase in the degree of special educational or pastoral needs of the pupil. Intervention will be sought within the school from the relevant pastoral support team (form teacher, year head, SENCO, pastoral VP) or subject specific team (Literacy coordinator, head of department, curriculum VP). The support will be time bound and reviewed at the end of the process. Additional assistance, actions and targets will be set and monitored.

- **Addressing Continuing Underachievement with external help:** the school will seek external support from a number of sources: SELB (Dr Aidan Lennon), Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS) providing a comprehensive record of the support the pupil has received so far and evidence that the pupil is still not meeting the targets set.

- **Meeting the needs of a pupil after a non- statutory assessment through the SEN framework:** external support and resources will be identified in addition to the school- based provision already in place. The class teacher supported by SLT will continue to be responsible for meeting the needs of the pupil.

**Appendix 2:**

**Planning for Language and Literacy**        **DATE:**            **CLASS:**

Learning Intentions:

Assessment Opportunities/Success Criteria:

Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities:

Teaching Approaches/Learning Experiences (talking and listening, modelled, shared and guided)

Independent experiences including differentiation (individual, paired, small group)

EVALUATION/FORWARD PLANNING