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ADHARTAS A DHÈANAMH

OBAIR CHRUAIDH



LITERACY STRATEGY

Updated January 2026

Contents

- 1.1 Purpose
- 1.2 What is Literacy
- 1.3 Our School Values at the Heart of Literacy
 - 1.3.1 Integrity – *An Fhìrinn*
 - 1.3.2 Ambition – *Adhartas a Dhèanamh*
 - 1.3.3 Perseverance – *Obair Chruaidh*
- 1.4 Young People as Literate Learners
- 1.5 Literacy Across Learning at Sgoil Lionacleit
- 1.6 National and Professional Context
- 1.7 Raising Standards in Literacy
- 1.8 Supporting Gaelic in Literacy at Sgoil Lionacleit
- 1.9 UNCRC and Sustainable Development Goals
- 2. Pedagogy
 - 2.1 Consistency of Practice
 - 2.2 Roles and Responsibilities in Literacy
 - 2.2.1 Teachers of English and Literacy
 - 2.2.2 Teachers of All Other Subjects
 - 2.3 Teaching – A Whole-School Approach to Literacy
 - 2.4 Out of Class Learning and Homework
 - 2.5 Feedback to Support Literacy Progress
- 3. Collaboration and Literacy Across Learning
 - 3.1 Literacy Techniques and Approaches
 - 3.2 Reading Across the Curriculum
 - 3.3 Writing Across the Curriculum
 - 3.4 Vocabulary Development
 - 3.5 Speaking and Listening
 - 3.6 Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG)
 - 3.7 Writing Conventions and Layout
 - 3.8 Transfer of Literacy Skills Across the Curriculum
- 4. Planning and Assessment
 - 4.1 Data-Led Planning
 - 4.2 Milestones for Complex Learners
 - 4.3 Inclusion, Participation and Equity in Literacy
 - 4.4 Curriculum for Excellence
 - 4.5 Curricular Benchmarks

Tha an sgoil a'cur luach air:

AN FHÌRINN

ADHARTAS A DHÈANAMH

OBAIR CHRUAIDH

4.6 National Qualifications

4.7 Assessment

4.7.1 Short-Term Assessment

4.7.2 Long-Term Assessment

Purpose

The purpose of our whole-school literacy strategy:

- to develop, maintain and improve standards in literacy across the school;
- to promote consistency of practice in reading, writing, listening, and talking across all subjects;
- to indicate areas for interdisciplinary collaboration that enhance literacy development;
- to support the transfer and application of pupils' literacy skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum.

What is Literacy

Literacy is a skill which involves confidence and competence in reading, writing, listening, and talking. It requires the ability to understand and use language to interpret, create, and communicate ideas and information across a range of contexts. Literacy supports thinking, learning, and communication, both in academic settings and in life beyond school. Young people can be supported in acquiring these skills through a focus on subject-specific language, structured opportunities for discussion, and a clear emphasis on reading and writing across all areas of the curriculum. The outcome should be young people who are articulate, reflective, and confident in using literacy skills with increasing independence.

Our School Values at the Heart of Literacy

To ensure our values meaningfully drive practice, each value is underpinned by **explicit, auditable actions**. These actions allow leaders and staff to evaluate consistency, impact and alignment with **HGIOS4 core Quality Indicators**, and to ensure that literacy is embedded as a **whole-school responsibility** across all subject areas.

Our Literacy Strategy is rooted in our core values:

Integrity – An Fhìrinn

We act with honesty, fairness and consistency in how we develop literacy across the school.

Key actions to support literacy

- Apply agreed whole-school literacy approaches consistently across all subjects (e.g. shared terminology, writing expectations, feedback language).
- Make literacy demands explicit within lessons so learners understand what effective reading, writing, listening and talking look like in each subject.
- Use literacy data (CAT, SNSA, working levels, class-based evidence) appropriately to identify need and inform planning.
- Ensure literacy expectations are equitable across faculties, avoiding unnecessary variation or lowered expectations.

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- Promote Gaelic language and literacy meaningfully across learning and the wider life of the school.
- Engage in moderation activities to support shared understanding of literacy standards and progression.

What this looks like in practice

- Faculty and lesson planning showing explicit literacy expectations
- Moderation records and professional dialogue notes
- Learner work sampling across subjects
- Literacy tracking data and analysis
- Learning walk evidence and learner voice

HGIOS4 alignment

- **QI 2.3 – Learning, teaching and assessment**
- **QI 2.2 – Curriculum**
- **QI 3.2 – Raising attainment and achievement**

Ambition – Adhartas a Dhèanamh

We hold high expectations for all learners to develop confident, transferable literacy skills for learning, life and work.

Key actions to support literacy

- Plan regular, purposeful opportunities for reading, writing, listening and talking within all subject areas.
- Explicitly teach and reinforce subject-specific vocabulary and disciplinary literacy.
- Provide appropriate challenge through increasingly complex texts, tasks and communication demands.
- Encourage learners to explain, justify and evaluate their thinking verbally and in writing.
- Use feedback to support improvement in clarity, structure, vocabulary and accuracy.
- Provide enrichment opportunities that promote literacy, such as presentations, leadership roles, interdisciplinary learning and competitions.

What this looks like in practice

- Assessment evidence demonstrating literacy progression
- Examples of extended writing and structured discussion across subjects
- Feedback samples showing literacy-focused improvement guidance
- Records of learner participation in literacy-rich activities
- Learner reflections and attainment data

HGIOS4 alignment

- **QI 2.3 – Learning, teaching and assessment**
- **QI 2.2 – Curriculum**
- **QI 3.2 – Raising attainment and achievement**

Perseverance – Obair Chruaidh

We recognise that literacy development requires sustained, inclusive support over time.

Key actions to support literacy

- Use a clear **plan–do–review** approach for literacy interventions and targeted support.
- Scaffold literacy tasks appropriately (e.g. writing frames, sentence starters, vocabulary support) to ensure access for all learners.
- Track literacy progress over time rather than relying on single assessment points.
- Encourage redrafting, reflection and improvement as part of everyday literacy practice.
- Work collaboratively with Support for Learning and pastoral staff to remove barriers to literacy engagement.
- Maintain support and high expectations even where progress is slow or learning needs are complex.

What this looks like in practice

- Literacy intervention plans and review notes
- Tracking and monitoring records over time
- Evidence of adapted or extended support strategies
- Learner feedback on confidence and engagement
- Staff evaluation and reflection records

HGIOS4 alignment

- **QI 2.4 – Personalised support**
- **QI 3.1 – Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion**
- **QI 3.2 – Raising attainment and achievement**

Young people should:

- Have a broad and secure vocabulary and the ability to understand and use subject-specific terminology appropriately;
- Read fluently and with understanding, drawing inferences, summarising, and analysing information from a range of texts;
- Read for pleasure and self-enhancement;

Tha an sgoil a'cur luach air:

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- Write clearly and coherently for a range of purposes and audiences, organising ideas effectively and using appropriate structure and tone;
- Communicate ideas and opinions verbally and in written form with confidence, clarity, and respect for others' views;
- Listen actively and respond to questions and viewpoints thoughtfully;
- Use literacy skills to interpret and evaluate information critically, including digital and multimedia sources;
- Check the accuracy of their own work, including spelling, punctuation, grammar, and clarity of meaning;
- Engage in extended discussion and collaborative learning activities to explore and develop ideas;
- Apply these literacy skills confidently across all curricular areas and real-life contexts.

Literacy across learning is important to us at Sgoil Lionacleit as it:

- Supports achievement in all curricular areas, underpinning attainment and lifelong learning.
- Strengthens connections between departments, encouraging collaborative and collegiate approaches to teaching.
- Enables pupils to understand how literacy supports learning across contexts and prepares them for life beyond school.
- Enhances communication skills, increasing opportunities in further education, employment, and personal development.
- Promotes critical thinking, creativity, informed decision-making, and active participation in society.

The importance of literacy across learning is also highlighted in several key documents:

“Literacy includes the ability to read, write, listen and talk, and to use language in different ways. Literacy is fundamental to all areas of learning, as it unlocks access to the wider curriculum. Being literate increases opportunities for all aspects of life, lays the foundations for lifelong learning and work, and contributes strongly to the development of all four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence.”
Literacy and English: Principles and Practice (Education Scotland)

“In the strongest examples, staff and young people have a shared understanding of the importance of literacy, how it is embedded across the curriculum, and what specific skills are being developed and applied in different subjects.”
HMIE Thematic Inspections and Literacy Review Reports

“A shared and consistent approach to literacy across the school is essential. Learners must be able to transfer and apply their literacy skills confidently in different contexts. All practitioners have a responsibility to support the development of literacy, regardless of subject area, and should make explicit links to reading, writing, listening, and talking.”
Building the Curriculum 1: Literacy across learning

“Shared planning of meaningful literacy experiences helps children and young people see the relevance of language and communication in real-world contexts. High-quality learning depends on integrating the development of key literacy skills with their application in relevant and engaging ways.”

Realising the Ambition: Being Me

“Whether or not a child enjoys reading is more important to their educational success than their family background.” *Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)*

Raising Standards

Raising standards in literacy across our school cannot be solely measured by improved test results or attainment data. It is equally important to evaluate pupils’ ability to transfer and apply literacy skills—reading, writing, listening, and talking—across subject areas and real-life contexts. Confidence in communicating ideas, interpreting texts, and expressing opinions is as vital as technical accuracy. Pupil voice activities and sampling of written and spoken work will be key methods for evaluating the effectiveness of our whole-school literacy practice.

There are specific roles across the school which are central to ensuring this strategy is effective and embedded in everyday practice. The Senior Leadership Team is fully committed to the implementation and ongoing evaluation of literacy as a whole-school responsibility. This includes ensuring time is protected for cross-curricular/IDL collaboration and maintaining the momentum of inter-departmental planning. Strengthening these connections helps to reduce unnecessary duplication of teaching efforts and creates more coherent, engaging learning experiences for pupils.

Supporting Gaelic in Literacy at Sgoil Lionacleit

The *Advice on Gaelic Education: Secondary Stages* highlights the importance of young people “**using Gaelic to participate in, and contribute to, the life and ethos of the school.**”

At Sgoil Lionacleit, we recognise that Gaelic is a core part of our school’s identity and cultural heritage. As part of our whole-school literacy strategy, we are committed to enhancing the use and visibility of Gaelic across all literacy experiences—reading, writing, listening, and talking.

We aim to support pupils’ development in literacy by incorporating Gaelic meaningfully throughout the curriculum. This includes the use of Gaelic vocabulary and expressions in classroom displays, written materials, and spoken interactions, both in Gaelic-medium and English-medium contexts. Staff are supported to gain confidence in integrating Gaelic into literacy activities, fostering a bilingual learning environment that values and promotes the language.

This approach contributes to our wider goal of embedding Gaelic across all areas of learning, reinforcing its role as a living language and deepening pupils’ cognitive, cultural, and linguistic awareness. In doing so, we support both *Scotland’s National Gaelic Language Plan* and our local authority’s commitment to strengthening Gaelic within education.

UNCRC and SDG Statement for Our Literacy Strategy

Our whole-school Literacy Strategy is grounded in the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We uphold **Article 28** (the right to education) and **Article 29** (education should develop each child's personality, talents, and abilities to the fullest) by ensuring every learner has access to high-quality literacy education that is inclusive, enriching, and empowering.

In support of the Sustainable Development Goals, our strategy particularly reflects:

- **SDG 4 – Quality Education:** Promoting inclusive and equitable lifelong learning opportunities through strong literacy foundations.
- **SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities:** Closing attainment gaps by supporting all learners in developing confident communication skills.
- **SDG 5 – Gender Equality:** Ensuring that literacy education enables all young people, regardless of gender, to succeed and express themselves.

By embedding literacy across the curriculum, we aim to equip learners with the communication, comprehension, and critical thinking skills essential for success in learning, life, and work. This empowers them to contribute meaningfully to their communities and to participate as informed, articulate global citizens.

Pedagogy

Consistency of Practice

Education Scotland and national literacy guidance recommend that teachers of English and teachers of all other subjects collaborate on shared strategies to ensure a consistent, coherent approach to literacy development across the curriculum.

In particular, the following principles are recommended:

Teachers of English and Literacy should:

1. Be aware of the literacy demands—reading, writing, listening, and talking—across other subjects and provide support to colleagues to ensure consistent approaches to spelling, grammar, vocabulary development, and reading strategies.
2. Offer guidance on appropriate expectations of learners and highlight common difficulties that may arise with various aspects of literacy at different stages and levels.
3. Liaise with subject teachers to ensure that pupils develop the necessary literacy skills in time for when they are required in other curricular areas.
4. Use examples, texts or tasks from other subjects to demonstrate cross-disciplinary relevance and reinforce transfer of skills.

Teachers of subjects other than English should:

1. Ensure familiarity with subject-specific literacy conventions, such as writing styles, terminology, and expectations for structured responses, and encourage pupils to apply these accurately.

2. Be aware of expected literacy standards and potential challenges faced by learners in reading comprehension, extended writing, and effective communication.
3. Share information about when particular literacy skills (e.g., report writing, evaluating sources, synthesising information) will be required in their subject areas.
4. Provide contextualised opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their literacy skills, and share examples of these with English/literacy colleagues to promote reinforcement across subjects.

Teaching – Whole School Approach to Literacy Involves:

- Regular, well-planned tasks or mini-lessons that practise key literacy skills relevant to learning within each subject.
- Using a **retrieval-based approach** to reinforce vocabulary and key concepts.
- Including **short writing or discussion tasks** to develop expression and clarity of thought.
- Supporting pupils to **articulate their ideas clearly**, using subject-specific vocabulary.
- Planning with **prior knowledge and individual support needs** in mind.
- Considering **literacy responsibilities** within the wider curriculum.
- Providing **time for staff to collaborate** on literacy-rich learning experiences.
- Providing **appropriate resources** to support reading comprehension, extended writing, and discussion skills (e.g., scaffolds, sentence starters, glossaries).
- Embedding **literacy tasks within real-life contexts**, such as formal letters, blog posts, reports, and presentations.
- **Engaging parents and carers** by arranging workshops or sharing strategies to support reading and writing at home.
- **Raising the profile of literacy** through purposeful opportunities across subjects (e.g., persuasive writing in Science and report writing in Geography)
- **Displaying vocabulary, sentence structures, and reading strategies** in classrooms and corridors to reinforce consistent literacy messaging.
- Organising **whole-school themed weeks** (e.g. Book Week Scotland) to celebrate literacy and foster engagement.
- Hosting **school-wide literacy competitions**, such as writing contests, spelling bees, or reading challenges which can feed into house points system.

Out of Class and Homework

Young people are encouraged to engage with literacy beyond the classroom through a variety of meaningful tasks that promote reading, writing, listening, and talking in everyday life:

- Prepare for assessments by reviewing core texts, practising timed writing, and reviewing model responses.
- Complete activities that use the home context, such as writing a formal letter or email, keeping a journal, or creating a shopping list or set of instructions.

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- Read regularly for enjoyment and information—this could include novels, newspapers, online articles, blogs, or magazines.
- Play word games, complete crosswords, or work on spelling and vocabulary puzzles.
- Practise spelling, grammar, and punctuation through short, focused activities.
- Take responsibility for completing homework tasks on time and seek support when needed.
- Revise and annotate notes and previous written work regularly, focusing on structure, language, and feedback.

For highly able learners, enrichment may include (note that these activities are not exclusive to highly able learners):

- Engaging in writing competitions, extended reading projects, or research tasks.
- Exploring advanced vocabulary and literary analysis tasks (e.g. through National Literacy Trust, BBC Bitesize challenges).
- Leading or contributing to school-based literacy initiatives such as book clubs, debating societies, or pupil-led blogs.

Feedback

Feedback during literacy tasks should:

- **Be timely** – provided as close to the learning moment as possible to support improvement.
- **Be specific** – focus on the quality of writing, clarity of ideas, structure, vocabulary, and use of language rather than only surface-level corrections.
- **Use consistent literacy language** – such as terms related to genre, tone, audience, and purpose, which are transferrable across subjects.
- **Be actionable** – help pupils understand what they did well, what needs improvement, and how they can progress in their literacy skills.
- **Be delivered in varied formats**, including verbal, written, peer, and self-assessment.
- **Be growth-oriented** – recognise effort, creativity, and improvement over time, not just accuracy.
- **Be tailored to the individual**, reflecting their stage of development, learning style, and wider needs as a learner.

Our Areas of Collaboration

Literacy Techniques and Approaches

If required, staff training can be arranged on the range of literacy strategies used across subjects to maintain an ethos of collaboration and consistency in developing reading, writing, listening, and talking. While pupils may approach tasks in different ways, a consistent emphasis on clarity, structure, and purpose should be encouraged. All staff should support learners to become confident and fluent communicators, while guiding them toward the most effective strategies for comprehension and expression.

Reading Across the Curriculum

When planning reading activities, staff are encouraged to consider the following:

- a) Can pupils access and interpret the text independently, or is scaffolding required?
- b) Is the type of reading task (e.g. analysis, summarising, inference) aligned with literacy progression?
- c) Do pupils understand the purpose of reading in this context—e.g. to inform, evaluate, or respond?
- d) Are the reading strategies being taught transferrable across subjects?
- e) Do pupils need explicit instruction on how to approach and navigate texts (e.g. skimming, scanning, annotation)?
- f) Is there support for pupils who need differentiated reading materials or additional vocabulary instruction?
- g) Are pupils encouraged to connect what they read to prior knowledge and other curricular areas?

When using reading tasks in class, please ensure:

- Pupils are guided through active reading strategies such as questioning, predicting, clarifying, and summarising.
- Subject-specific reading demands (e.g. science reports, historical sources, technical instructions) are broken down and modelled.
- Pupils are supported to engage with both print and digital texts, developing critical literacy skills.
- Tasks focus on the interpretation of meaning and the purpose of language choices, not just surface-level understanding.
- Pupils have access to digital reading tools, if required, such as Natural Reader

Writing Across the Curriculum

All staff should support pupils in developing written communication, with shared approaches to planning, structuring, editing, and presenting ideas. Pupils should:

- Use consistent frameworks (e.g. paragraphs, headings, introductions/conclusions).
- Understand the expectations of different writing genres (e.g. report, essay, review, analysis, reflection).
- Receive clear guidance on grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- Be supported to redraft and improve written work, using peer and teacher feedback.

Vocabulary Development

Literacy leads and English teachers will continue to emphasise vocabulary instruction across the school. All staff are encouraged to:

- Display key words and phrases in classrooms.
- Explicitly teach new vocabulary in context and across domains.
- Use word families, prefixes/suffixes, and etymology to support word understanding (e.g. "graph" = to write/draw, "auto" = self).
- Regularly review vocabulary using retrieval tasks such as flash cards, quizzes, and games.

- Discuss subject-specific words that have different meanings in other contexts (e.g. “evaluate,” “analyse,” “reflection”).
- Encourage the use of sophisticated and precise vocabulary appropriate to the task and audience.

Pupils should become confident in the meaning and application of subject-specific terms to support comprehension and communication. For example, understanding the word *evaluate* should trigger an expectation of critical analysis, not simply explanation.

Speaking and Listening

Opportunities for pupils to develop talking and listening skills across subjects should include:

- Structured group discussions and debates.
- Formal presentations.
- Questioning strategies that promote deeper thinking.
- Using film presentations/animations to sum up ideas
- Listening activities with clear outcomes (e.g. summarising, responding, note-taking).
All staff should model high-quality verbal communication and encourage respectful dialogue and active listening.

Spelling, Punctuation, and Grammar (SPaG)

SPaG should be supported consistently across the school by:

- Highlighting and correcting common errors.
- Providing feedback that supports improvement.
- Encouraging pupils to proofread and edit their work.
- Using agreed whole-school common marking codes to reinforce expectations.

Writing Conventions and Layout

Teachers across departments should:

- Reinforce structured writing formats, such as PEEL (Point, Evidence, Explanation, Link), in extended answers where appropriate
- Encourage pupils to maintain jotters or folders with examples of well-structured writing.
- Promote clarity, paragraphing, and use of connectives to support logical progression of ideas.

Transfer of Skills

“It is vital that as the skills are taught, the applications are mentioned and as the applications are taught the skills are revisited.”

At Sgoil Lionacleit, English and literacy specialists deliver core reading, writing, listening, and talking skills through structured, interactive teaching. This often follows a clear lesson sequence—e.g. connect to previous understanding, model, practise, apply—and includes references to how literacy is relevant and essential in all subject areas. Other teachers then build on this foundation, helping pupils to apply these literacy skills in diverse and meaningful contexts.

The transfer of literacy skills across the curriculum requires deliberate planning and collaboration. Learners can sometimes struggle to recognise that the same literacy skills—such as summarising, evaluating, structuring arguments, or interpreting information—are being used in different subjects, simply presented in varied formats. For example, writing a report in Science draws on the same structural and stylistic features as a report in Social Subjects.

Strong liaison between departments is essential to ensure pupils can confidently transfer their literacy skills. Where applicable, staff can use shared terminology and frameworks (e.g. PEEL and success criteria) to reinforce the consistency of approach.

English teachers are committed to supporting other departments in identifying key skills and planning when and how these should be introduced or revisited. Starter activities in other subjects are ideal moments to rehearse key skills—such as vocabulary recall, sentence structure, or comprehension strategies—just before they are required in subject-specific tasks.

By creating intentional links between literacy instruction and its application across learning, we support pupils in becoming confident communicators, analytical thinkers, and effective learners in all contexts.

Planning and Assessment

Data-Led Planning

Our whole-school literacy strategy is grounded in a robust, progressive approach to data-led planning, ensuring that all learners receive targeted support, challenge, and opportunity for growth in reading, writing, listening, and talking. Transition data from primary, including **P5 Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT) scores**, **P7 Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA)**, and **P7 teacher-assessed working levels**, provides essential insight into each learner's starting point and informs early interventions to maintain continuity and progression in literacy.

Upon entry to secondary, **S1 CAT scores** offer a fresh diagnostic perspective, allowing triangulation with transition data and supporting the identification of learners who may benefit from targeted literacy support or extended challenge. These insights inform flexible grouping and help shape differentiated approaches to reading comprehension, writing skills, and oral language development across departments.

Throughout the Broad General Education (BGE), **teacher-assessed working levels in literacy** are tracked termly from **S1 to S3**, allowing staff to monitor progress, measure the impact of interventions, and adjust

planning responsively. Data includes both formative and summative assessments, capturing performance across a variety of literacy contexts, including subject-specific writing, group discussions, and independent reading tasks.

At the end of S3, **SNSA literacy data**, along with departmental assessment evidence, acts as a benchmark to guide progression into the Senior Phase. This supports robust curricular decisions, the selection of appropriate presentation levels, and personalised support strategies that reflect each learner's profile.

This layered, responsive approach ensures that all planning—at classroom, department, and whole-school level—is informed by a deep understanding of each pupil's literacy attainment, development, and potential.

Milestones for Complex Learners

Milestones are key indicators of progression and development, especially for young people with severe and complex additional support needs. For learners who are not yet able to meet any of the benchmarks within **Early Level Literacy**, it remains essential to track and monitor their growth, celebrating every step of progress.

While many young people will begin working within the Early Level Experiences and Outcomes, others may continue to develop their literacy skills at a **pre-early stage**. For these learners, milestones provide a meaningful framework to capture the development of foundational literacy skills—such as engagement with books, responses to spoken language, early mark-making, or intentional communication.

Milestones help teachers track progression in ways that reflect each learner's unique needs and strengths. Planning remains based on the **Curriculum for Excellence Experiences and Outcomes**, ensuring that the approach is **learner-centred, inclusive, and responsive**. It promotes dignity, celebrates difference, and ensures all young people are supported to communicate and connect with the world around them in the ways that are most meaningful for them.

This approach reinforces our commitment to **equity and inclusion**, ensuring that literacy planning and support recognise and respond to the full spectrum of learners within our school community.



To be included **all** young people need to be and feel:

- Present

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- Participating
- Achieving
- Supported.

In terms of Literacy, we will achieve this by:

- **Building positive, respectful relationships** with all pupils to create a safe environment for communication and expression.
 - **Using a range of multimodal literacy approaches**—including visual, auditory, digital and tactile resources—to support understanding.
 - **Promoting a growth mindset** towards reading, writing, listening, and talking, including regular reflection on progress and next steps.
 - **Encouraging collaborative tasks** such as group writing, peer editing, shared reading, and discussion-based activities.
 - **Supporting pupils to explain and justify their ideas**, whether in speech or writing, to deepen understanding and confidence.
 - **Providing engaging and relevant texts**—including stories, articles, digital media, and personal narratives that reflect pupils' interests and lived experiences.
-
- **Offering constructive, process-focused feedback** that highlights strengths and provides clear, achievable next steps.
 - Providing opportunities for reading for pleasure and enjoyment
 - **Maintaining high expectations for all learners**, ensuring each pupil experiences appropriate **pace, challenge, and success** in literacy.
 - **Actively encouraging participation**, whether through reading aloud, sharing ideas, or responding to texts.
 - **Scaffolding literacy tasks** where necessary (e.g. using writing frames, vocabulary banks, sentence starters) to support access and achievement.
 - **Using consistent literacy terminology and routines** across subjects to build confidence and familiarity.
 - **Collaborating with Support for Learning** to identify and implement the most effective supports for individual pupils.

Curriculum for Excellence

Experiences and Outcomes are a set of clear and concise statements about young people's learning and progression in literacy. They are designed to support the planning of learning and the assessment of progress across all stages of schooling, from early to senior levels. These statements reflect the central importance of reading, writing, listening, and talking across all aspects of the curriculum.

Benchmarks provide clarity on the national standards expected within each area of literacy at every level. They outline clear lines of progression and describe what learners need to know and be able to do to

achieve success and move confidently to the next level. Benchmarks are used to support consistency in **teachers' professional judgements**, ensuring high expectations, continuity, and progression for all learners.

Together, Experiences and Outcomes and Benchmarks ensure that literacy planning and assessment are aligned with national expectations, and that learners are supported in developing the essential communication skills needed for life, learning, and work.

Curricular Benchmarks

Curricular benchmarks are central to our literacy strategy in **S1–S3**, offering clear and progressive expectations that promote **consistency, high standards, and equity** across the Broad General Education. These benchmarks support teachers in planning coherent literacy experiences that build on prior knowledge while preparing learners for the demands of the Senior Phase.

In practice, staff use the **literacy benchmarks** to identify key learning intentions for each unit of work, ensuring alignment with national standards. Benchmarks inform the development of success criteria, formative assessment tasks, and differentiated resources that support learners at all stages. For example, when teaching persuasive writing or reading for analysis, staff refer directly to **Second and Third Level benchmarks** to structure learning activities that develop depth, clarity, and accuracy in communication.

In both **tracking and moderation**, benchmarks provide a shared professional language and framework for dialogue. Teachers engage in **regular moderation activities**—within and across departments, and with associated primary schools—to ensure consistent interpretation of achievement of a level. Evidence gathered from classwork, pupil dialogue, assessments, and written responses is evaluated against benchmark statements to support **robust, evidence-based judgments** of progress.

Through the structured use of benchmarks, our literacy strategy ensures that every learner experiences a **high-quality, coherent, and ambitious curriculum** with a clearly defined progression pathway from early secondary into the Senior Phase.

National Qualifications

SQA is one of the four partner national organisations involved in the Curriculum for Excellence. The SQA has joined with Universities Scotland, QAA Scotland and the Scottish Government to create the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework or SCQF. Every Scottish qualification—from N1 – N4 which are allocated a level and credit value within this framework, which all partners have agreed to recognise.

National 1-4 are assessed internally and moderated via subject networks and are subject to regulation by the SQA. National 5 courses and above can also have a number of internal assessments (again linked to our internal moderation policy), followed by an externally marked exam.

Assessment

Short-term assessments

The key purpose of assessment should be to help students understand where they are in their learning; supporting them to know what they are secure with in terms of their knowledge, understanding and skills and helping them identify areas to develop. However, assessment can also:

- allow learners to reflect on learning over time
- be used to find out where students are before they start something new
- help teachers reflect on their pedagogy
- help teachers to develop a better understanding of the student as a learner
- help to identify learning issues to support the planning of strategic interventions
- provide a basis for a meaningful dialogue with students, parents/carers and other stakeholders, such as school leaders, Education Scotland, about students' progress.

Progress in literacy may look very different from one student to the next, from one class to the next and from one school to the next. Developing literacy is not necessarily linear, and is intrinsically linked to curriculum design and the interplay between knowledge acquisition, conceptual understanding and the development of skills.

Although short-term assessments may provide evidence that students are secure with recent learning, this is only part of the bigger picture. A collection of short-term assessments is unlikely to give an accurate picture of progress; it may mask issues linked to relative strengths within different topic areas or skills. The use of strategic longer-term assessments will contribute to a clearer picture of progress but this needs to be timed appropriately and reflect the key learning to be assessed.

Long-term Assessments

At Sgoil Lionacleit, our literacy strategy is underpinned by a commitment to **robust long-term assessment practices** that support sustained progress and responsive planning. Long-term assessments enable us to **track literacy attainment and development over time**, ensuring that interventions remain **timely, targeted, and evidence-informed**.

Using a range of data sources—such as **SNSA literacy assessments** (P7 and S3), **CAT scores** (P5 and S1), and **ongoing working level judgments from S1 to S3**—we are able to build a detailed and evolving profile of each learner's literacy journey. These data points inform both **individualised support strategies** and **whole-school approaches** to raising literacy attainment.

Our long-term assessment model is closely aligned with the **Curriculum for Excellence Benchmarks**, ensuring consistency in expectations and progression. It also supports **effective transitions** between key stages, helping learners to move confidently from primary into secondary, and from the Broad General Education into the Senior Phase with the literacy skills required for success in learning, life, and work.