

Whole-School Literacy and Numeracy Guidelines
‘Shared understandings and high expectation of students’

Using these Guidelines

- This resource is designed to support whole-school planning for literacy and numeracy.
- It has been designed to encourage discussion and critical reflection by principals and teachers about high quality literacy and numeracy teaching and learning that supports improved student outcomes.
- The resource identifies six key areas around which planning decisions are made.
- It includes focus questions intended to guide discussions and decision-making.

Whole-School Literacy and Numeracy Guidelines

Whole-school literacy and numeracy planning

The Department's *Plan For Public Schools 2008-2011* seeks success for every student. Whether students leave school well prepared for their future, is very much dependent upon their attainment of high standards of literacy and numeracy. The features of sound literacy and numeracy teaching practices have been identified through research including State and national inquiries. When sound literacy and numeracy teaching practices are systematised within schools, and teachers have access to the support they need to implement these practices, the benefit to students is likely to be greater.

These draft *Whole-School Literacy and Numeracy Guidelines* are intended to support schools to establish a systematic approach to teaching literacy and numeracy in order to improve outcomes for all students. Strategic whole-school literacy and numeracy planning requires engagement with the Principles of Teaching and Learning from the *Curriculum Framework* and critical questions regarding, teacher beliefs, standards of achievement, student progress, teaching practices and resources.

It is a process that involves ongoing monitoring and reflection on what's working and what needs to be reviewed. It is about being aware of the diverse needs of students, focusing on the progress of each student and taking appropriate action to improve students' literacy and numeracy learning. Whole-school literacy and numeracy planning will also facilitate the effective coordination of literacy and numeracy resources to ensure coherence and alignment with school targets.

Research

Research into school and classroom effectiveness in relation to student outcomes consistently identifies the importance of a consistent whole-school approach to teaching literacy and numeracy. The *National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy December 2005* recommended:

'all education authorities and school leaders examine their approach to the teaching of literacy and put in place an explicit, whole school literacy planning, monitoring and reviewing process in collaboration with school communities and parents.'

This view was also supported by the Western Australian Literacy and Numeracy Review Taskforce (2006) with a recommendation to *'develop the capacity of leaders to implement whole-school approaches to plan, monitor and evaluate progress towards literacy and numeracy targets'*.

Hill and Crevola (1999) draw attention to a number of research studies that tell us that while there is significant difference between schools in their achievements of literacy standards the greatest variation is among classes within schools. They maintain that *'if this internal variation could be minimised and all classes brought up to the level of the most effective, dramatic improvements in outcomes could be achieved.'*

Research by Hill, Rowan and Ball (2005) revealed that mathematical knowledge required for teaching goes beyond that captured in measures of mathematics courses taken or basic mathematical skills. It entails a specialised knowledge ... often referred to as 'content pedagogic knowledge.' Ensuring that teachers in all classes have the pedagogic content knowledge required for all students to achieve high standards of numeracy is therefore central to whole-school numeracy planning.

Definitions

Literacy is the ability to read, write and use written language appropriately in a range of contexts, for different purposes, and to communicate with a variety of audiences. Reading and writing, when integrated with speaking, listening, viewing and critical thinking, constitute valued aspects of literacy in modern life'. (DEETYA, 1998,p.7).

Numeracy is the ability to effectively apply mathematics in everyday, recreational, work and civic life, and is vital to the quality of participation in society. (Mathematics Syllabus 2007)

Planning for literacy and numeracy

The *Draft Whole-School Literacy and Numeracy Guidelines* identify six focus areas for effective planning for literacy and numeracy. Planning decisions will be underpinned by the *School Review Framework* that describes an effective school. It is intended that schools use the focus questions to guide discussions and decision-making. The Guidelines will support schools to align their whole-school planning, monitoring and evaluation processes with literacy and numeracy targets and effective use of resources.

FOCUS FOR PLANNING

Pedagogy

A shared understanding of effective instructional approaches, class routines, organisation and class management is central to a systematic, whole-school approach to teaching and learning literacy and numeracy. Teachers need opportunities to discuss teaching strategies and examine findings from rigorous, evidence-based research on strategies shown to be effective in enhancing the literacy and numeracy development of all students. They should also consider different organisational structures that maximise literacy and numeracy learning in classrooms. It is important that all staff are supported through professional learning and resource materials in implementing a range of classroom practices and strategies in response to individual student needs.

Standards and Targets

The *Outcomes and Standards Framework* describes Achievement Targets for English and Mathematics for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. The National Benchmarks for Literacy and Numeracy describe a minimal acceptable standard for students in Years 3, 5, and 7. It is essential that whole-school approaches to literacy and numeracy are informed by evidence from both teacher judgements and external testing. Through critical analysis of student performance data, group, class and school targets can be determined. Diagnostic monitoring assessment tools should also be used to determine incremental improvement and identify future learning goals for students.

Beliefs

Effective planning for literacy and numeracy improvement requires a shared understanding of the *Curriculum Framework Principles of Teaching and Learning* and the pedagogy required to support students in moving forward with their learning. Whole-staff discussions about beliefs, data, expectations, teaching practices, grouping, individual student needs and time allocation are an essential part of developing a coherent whole-school approach. The establishment of a culture of working together in collaborative teams to understand the data, determine targets and plan strategies, is central to effective planning.

Identification, Intervention and Case Management

The school plan will outline whole-school processes used to identify, support and monitor students not making adequate progress with literacy and numeracy. It is important that all staff are engaged in ongoing critical analysis of data to identify students at risk of not achieving designated standards. Use of diagnostic monitoring tools to screen groups of students and identify those in need of additional support is an essential part of this process. Plans should indicate how time is allocated for teachers to interrogate data and engage collaboratively in planning support for individuals and groups in the context of mainstream programs.

Leadership and Professional Learning

Effective leadership and coordination of whole-school planning for literacy and numeracy employs processes that facilitate shared knowledge, responsibility and ownership of school programs and strategies. Every teacher is encouraged to take responsibility for improved student performance in literacy and numeracy. Planning for professional learning is linked to student improvement priorities. Collaborative teams are established to develop a systematic, coherent approach to planning, teaching, monitoring and assessing literacy and numeracy learning.

Community Partnership

The establishment of strong community partnerships is important for the development of a shared vision for literacy and numeracy achievement. The Plan will identify processes put in place to develop and maintain productive partnerships with parents and outline any partnerships established with community volunteer associations or universities. It will describe opportunities for information sharing to ensure parents have a clear understanding of their children's progress in literacy and numeracy, and how they are being supported through the school's programs. Two-way communication is emphasised so that parents have opportunities to share their knowledge about their children.

FOCUS AREA BELIEFS	Focus Questions Learning conversations Decision-making	Actions <i>'What we are doing?'</i>	Evidence to support <i>'How we are going?'</i>	Resources <i>What resources are available?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>personnel</i> • <i>materials</i>
Shared beliefs and understandings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student learning & teaching • Literacy learning & teaching • Numeracy learning • Knowledge of students • Instructional practices • Response to difference and diversity • Supportive environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do we believe about how our students learn best? • What do we value and emphasise in our teaching of literacy & numeracy throughout the school? • Do we believe that all students can be successful learners of mathematics? • How do we respond to difference & diversity? 			
Our students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural and linguistic background • Literacy achievements • Numeracy achievements • Impacts on student learning • Students at educational risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is our understanding of our students' cultural & linguistic backgrounds? • How does our knowledge of our students' cultural & linguistic backgrounds inform our literacy and numeracy teaching? • Have we critically analysed school data to develop understandings of students' literacy & numeracy progress? • Have we identified students whose literacy and numeracy progress is of concern? • Have we identified students who may be at risk of not making sustained progress at different transition points: e.g. Years K-1, 3-4, Years 7-8? 			

FOCUS AREA STANDARDS AND TARGETS	Focus Questions Decision-making Learning conversations	Actions <i>'What we are doing'?</i>	Evidence to support <i>'How we are going?'</i>	Resources What resources are available? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>personnel</i> • <i>materials</i>
Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement Targets • Teacher judgements • External testing • Moderation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What aspects of literacy & numeracy are being assessed? • What evidence is collected? • How is critical analysis of data (school/class) facilitated? i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher judgements including the use of the <i>Outcomes and Standards Framework</i> - Analysis of Western Australian Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (WALNA) data • How are diagnostic monitoring tools used to support <i>decision-making</i>? e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literacy Net - Numeracy Net - First Steps Maps - English as a Second Language/English as a Second Dialect Progress Maps (ESL/ESD) -Kindergarten-Pre-primary Profile • How do we ensure consistent & comparable judgements? 			
Targets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline data • Data analysis • Class targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is baseline data used to determine targets? • What are the school targets? e.g. 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group targets • School targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - percentage of students attaining Western Australian Government School Achievement Targets increased - percentage of students below the benchmarks decreased - incremental improvement for every student (use of diagnostic tools). 			
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FOCUS AREA PEDAGOGY AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT	Focus Questions Decision-making Learning conversations	Actions <i>'What we are doing'</i>	Evidence to support <i>'How we are going'</i>	Resources <i>What resources are available?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>personnel</i> • <i>materials</i>
Classroom Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balanced literacy and numeracy programs • Uninterrupted literacy and numeracy learning blocks • Allocation of time for mathematics teaching and learning • Literacy and numeracy teaching and learning within all learning areas • Scaffolding learning • Recognition of difference • Grouping of learners • Time allocation • Opportunities to observe and practise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we plan for a balanced approach across all aspects within each English and mathematics outcome? • How is an uninterrupted literacy and numeracy learning block embedded in daily classroom practice? • How do we allocate sufficient time for mathematics teaching and learning? • How is literacy and numeracy teaching and learning incorporated into other learning areas? • How do planning decisions recognise difference? • How are student groupings determined? • Do all students have the opportunity to learn individually, in small groups and with the whole class? 			
Instructional Approaches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent approaches • Evidence-based • Systematic practice • Explicit instruction • Focused questioning • Focus on developing understanding rather than short-term recall or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we achieve consistency in teaching practice from year to year and across phases of schooling? • How are lessons structured to scaffold learning? • How do we use explicit instruction to address the 			

<p>memorisation of procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of difference • Use of data to inform practice • Use of data to refine practice • Use of information and communication technologies 	<p>specific learning needs of students?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we maintain students' focus on the mathematical purpose of lessons? • How do we give students opportunities to choose methods and materials to work mathematically across the outcomes? • How do we know that the language and literacies of mathematics are specifically taught? • To what extent does teaching practice reflect recognition of difference? • How do we ensure learning experiences provide opportunities for connection and challenge? • Do students have the opportunity to discuss their own and others strategies? • How is data used to refine practice? • How are information and communication technologies used to enhance learning? 			
<p>Monitoring and Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic monitoring and assessment • Evidence gathered • Diagnosis • Use of data to focus instruction and address students needs • Use of data to inform future planning at the classroom and school level • Feedback to students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What processes are in place to ensure systematic monitoring and assessment of student progress? • What evidence do we gather? • How is evidence used to determine students' specific learning needs? • How to we raise student 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Curriculum Framework Assessment Principles</i> 	<p>awareness of assessment criteria?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we guarantee that students receive supportive, timely and relevant feedback? 			
<p>Resources - Support Staff e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Getting it Right</i> teacher • Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer • Aboriginal Education Specialist Teacher • Learning Support Coordinator <p>Resources (material)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of texts • Instructional level • Print-based, electronic, digital • Responsive to difference and diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What support staff are in the school to assist teachers? • On what basis are support staff allocated to classes? e.g. student data, year level • How are support staff assisted in developing the knowledge and skills required for their role? • How are texts selected to support students' literacy learning? • If used, have mathematics texts been selected on the basis of meeting specific learning needs? • How are manipulative materials used to support students' learning? • Do texts selected take into account students' level of development, cultural and linguistic background and interests? • Do students have ready access to calculators and other materials? 			

FOCUS AREA LEADERSHIP, COORDINATION AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING	Focus Questions Decision-making Learning conversations	Actions <i>'What we are doing'</i>	Evidence to support <i>'How we are going'</i>	Resources <i>What resources are available?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>personnel</i> • <i>materials</i>
Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared responsibility • Collaborative and reflective practice • Literacy coordinators • Numeracy coordinators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we share knowledge, responsibility and ownership of school programs and strategies? • What processes are in place to support collaboration and reflection? 			
Coordination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy and numeracy coordinators • mentors/coaches • Collaborative teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are literacy and numeracy coordinators supported? e.g. time, professional learning • How are collaborative teams supported? 			
Professional Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priorities • Whole staff • Phase of schooling • Workshops • In class • networks • Mentoring/coaching • Professional reading • Research • University compacts • Action learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we determine our professional learning needs? • How do our priorities for professional learning match school priorities for student improvement in literacy and numeracy? • Are there specific phase of schooling requirements? • How are professional reading and action learning encouraged and supported? 			

FOCUS AREA CASE MANAGEMENT	Focus Questions Decision-making Learning conversations	Actions <i>'What we are doing'</i>	Evidence to support <i>'How we are going'</i>	Resources <i>What resources are available?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>personnel</i> • <i>materials</i>
Identification of at risk students and groups Early identification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On entry assessment • Pre primary profile • Literacy Net screening P-3 • Numeracy Net screening P-3 • Target setting Years 4-7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Years 3, 5 & 7 WALNA data • Literacy Net screening 4-7 • Numeracy Net screening 4-7 • Target setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does analysis of our data show? • How has 'on entry' data informed planning? • What evidence do we draw on when using Literacy and Numeracy Nets to screen students? • What 'lines of inquiry' emerged from our WALNA data? 			
Monitoring tools e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-primary profile • Literacy Net • Numeracy Net • Marie Clay Concepts of Print • Running records • Phonemic Awareness assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What decisions have we made regarding use of these tools? e.g. timeline • How are staff supported in using these tools? e.g. time, professional learning, resources 			
Individual and group intervention plans (Documented Plans) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of data • Consultation and collaboration • Planning for individuals • Planning for groups • Catering for diverse needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What areas of need have emerged for individuals and groups? • How are individuals and groups supported through our mainstream program? • How do our intervention plans recognise student diversity? 			

FOCUS AREA COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS	Focus Questions Decision-making Learning conversations	Actions <i>'What we are doing'</i>	Evidence to support <i>'How we are going'</i>	Resources <i>What resources are available?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>personnel</i> • <i>materials</i>
Parents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing information (two way) • Mutual obligation • Expectations • Involvement • Working together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we build shared understanding and trust and respect between partners? • What opportunities are provided to share information with parents? • How do we encourage parents to share knowledge of their children's literacy and numeracy development? • How do we encourage and maintain productive partnerships with parents? 			
School Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement • Information provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we involve our school council in setting directions? • How is information provided about progress against whole-school literacy and numeracy targets? 			
Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared vision • Partnerships • Providing information • Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do we have any community partnerships in place? e.g. universities, local businesses, libraries • What information is provided to partners? • How are partners involved in planning? • What opportunities exist to use community expertise in literacy and numeracy programs? 			