



LITERACY, NUMERACY & DIGITAL COMPETENCE

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

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What is Literacy?

Being 'literate' means you can speak, listen, read and write to a level that allows you to become engaged in the world around you. It's important for us to develop these skills so that we can:

- learn about different things;
- take advantage of opportunities that life may offer through digital technology; and
- play an active part in our community.

What is Numeracy?

Numeracy is the use of Maths in an everyday context.

- Being able to check a restaurant bill.
- Calculating how long a journey will take.
- Working out holiday spending money using an exchange rate
- Calculating how much carpet is needed for a room

Are all examples of numeracy skills.

What is Digital Competence?

Being 'Digitally competent' means having the ability to use ICT and digital skills in all aspects of life.

Digital competence is the set of skills, knowledge and attitudes to enable the confident, creative and critical use of technologies and systems. It is the skill set that enables a person to:

- Be a confident digital citizen
- Have the ability to interact and collaborate digitally
- Produce work digitally for different audiences and purposes
- Be confident in handling data and computational thinking (problem solving).

What is the problem?

Overall literacy levels are lower in Wales than in England despite a year on year improvement since 1999.

In a recent international survey looking at literacy, numeracy and science, 15 year olds in Wales lagged behind their counterparts in nations across the world.

The government's inspectorate of education and training, Estyn's 2010-11 Annual Report noted that:

"Children's reading and writing skills are not good enough in nearly a third of primary school"

So, we need to tackle the problem.

What will the Government do about it?

We will introduce a **National Literacy and Numeracy Framework** for all learners aged 5 to 14. This means:

- That all schools will have to make sure their pupils reach the expected level of literacy and numeracy every year.
- Support for teachers of every subject on how to teach literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.
- Reading and numeracy tests which will show how well learners are doing and if they need support.

Literacy

Tips and Advice for Parents

Here are just some of the things you can do with your child to help improve their reading skills:

- **Choose a quiet time**
Set aside some quiet time with no distractions; ten to fifteen minutes is usually long enough.
- **Make reading fun**
Make reading an enjoyable experience. As well as books, encourage your child to read magazines, comics, newspapers and the internet. Sit with your child. Try not to pressurise if he or she is reluctant. If your child loses interest then do something else.
- **Maintain the flow**
If your child mispronounces a word do not interrupt immediately. Instead allow time for them to correct it themselves.
- **Always be positive**
If your child says something nearly right to start with, that is fine. Don't say 'No that's wrong,' but 'Let's read it together' and point to the words as you say them. Boost your child's confidence with constant praise for even the smallest achievement.
- **Confidence is key**
Don't give your child a book that is too difficult. This can have the opposite effect to the one desired. Until your child has built up confidence, it's better to choose easier books that still maintain their interest.
- **Visit your Library**
It's a really cheap way of getting the latest books out.
- **Practice makes perfect**
Try to read with your child on most school days. 'Little and often' is best.
- **Communicate**
Speak to your child about reading in school, ask them questions so they know you are interested in their progress and that you value reading. Make sure they see you and other members of the family reading for pleasure.
- **Talk about the book**
Ask questions about the book, the pictures and the characters in it. What was their favourite character, how do they think the book will end? It is just as important for your child to understand and talk about it, as it is to be able to read it.
- **Variety is important**
Remember children need to experience a variety of reading materials, for example; picture books, hard backs, comics, magazines, poems and information books.

Year 7 Recommended Reading List: Gowerton School Library

Humorous books

Billy Bonkers – Giles Andreae
The Parent Agency – David Baddiel
Diary of a Wimpy Kid – Jeff Kinney
The World of Norm – Jonathan Meres
Middle School: Ultimate Showdown – James Patterson
Tom Gates: Everything's Amazing – Liz Pichon
Captain Underpants – Dav Pilkey
Dork Diaries – Rachel Renée Russell
Gangsta Granny – David Walliams

(Funny books are often the way in to developing a reading habit and there are usually a whole series of books to explore by the same author)

General Fiction

Girl With a White Dog – Anne Booth
Angel Cake – Cathy Cassidy
Cosmic – Frank Cottrell Boyce
Artemis Fowl – Eoin Colfer
Apple and Rain – Sarah Crossan
Wilderness – Roddy Doyle
Ingo – Helen Dunmore
Man of the Match – Dan Freedman
Tinder – Sally Gardner
The Dragonfly Pool – Eva Ibbotson
Skulduggery Pleasant – Derek Landy
Young Sherlock Holmes – Andrew Lane
Binny for Short - Hilary McKay
Dark Tales From the Woods – Daniel Morden
Outlaw – Michael Morpurgo
A Monster Calls – Patrick Ness
Midnight For Charlie Bone – Jenny Nimmo
The Seventh Tower – Garth Nix
Off Side – Tom Palmer

(Continued overleaf)

Tales of Terror – Chris Priestly
Percy Jackson & the Lightning Thief – Rick Riordan

The Great Blue Yonder – Alex Shearer
Emerald Star – Jacqueline Wilson
Elsewhere – Gabrielle Zevin

(Some of these authors have a number of titles on the library shelves and pupils often return for the next book by an author they have enjoyed.)

Graphic Novels

Coraline – Gaiman & Russell
Eagle Strike – Horowitz & Johnston
Baker Street Irregulars – Lee & Boulton
The Recruit – Muchamore & Edginton
Adventures of Hercules – Martin Powell
Percy Jackson & the Lightning Thief – Riordan & Venditti

(Books with a lot of illustrations can often engage the more reluctant readers)

Top tips for encouraging your teenager to read

Secondary school students who have a low reading age could face significant setbacks in later life. Even those who do not plan to attend college or university will need strong vocabulary and comprehension skills. In fact, recent research has shown that a mechanic's manual requires better reading skills than a standard university text.

Throughout their adult life, they are likely to need decode complex information such as mortgage forms and insurance documents. Your child needs to be literate and used to reading to function in today's world and you, as a parent, can encourage these skills.

Obviously, you want to make sure that your teenager grows into adulthood with all the skills he or she needs to succeed. There are many modern distractions that interrupt potential reading time and the following is a list of ways to encourage your teenager to occasionally turn off the television, stop playing video games or put their phone down to occasionally read.

1. Set an example. Let your kids see you reading for pleasure. Boys, in particular, can be influenced greatly by seeing male role models reading and talking about reading.
2. Read some books written for teenagers. Young adult novels can give you valuable insights into the concerns and pressures felt by teenagers. You may find that these books provide a neutral ground on which to talk about sensitive subjects.
3. Furnish your home with a variety of reading materials. Leave books, magazines, and newspapers around. Check to see what disappears for a clue to what interests your teenager.
4. Give teenagers an opportunity to choose their own books. When you and your teenager are out together, browse in a bookstore or library.
5. Build on your teenager's interests. Look for books and articles that feature their favourite sports teams, rock stars, hobbies or TV shows. Give a gift subscription to a special interest magazine.
6. View pleasure reading as a value in itself. Almost anything your teenager reads - including comics, menus, football league tables, maps and T.V. guides - help to build reading skills. Ask them to find you real and specific information from non-fiction sources to get them to use skimming and scanning skills
7. Make reading aloud a natural part of family life. Share an article you clipped from the paper, a poem, a letter, or a random page from an encyclopedia (without turning it into a lesson).
8. Use technology to your advantage. If you can afford to buy an e-reader or download books onto their mobile phone. This format appeals to many teenagers and is a readily available resource to use on public transport, in doctor's waiting rooms or on car journeys.
9. Buy into film adaptations. Some teenagers might feel more confident picking up a novel if they are already familiar with the plot. Find out what books are soon to be made into films so that they can be 'ahead of the game' in terms of popular culture.

Ages 11 - 18

Use the following websites as useful book guides:

www.booktrustchildrensbooks.org.uk/Teenage-Books/Recommended-reads

www.thebookbag.co.uk/reviews/index.php?title=Top_Ten_Teen_Books_That_Adults_Should_Read

www.firstnews.co.uk/subscribe

Useful websites Literacy

- wordsforlife.org.uk
- literacytrust.org.uk
- booktrust.org.uk
- twfcymru.com

Numeracy

How can you help;

Be positive about Maths;

- Try not to say things like “I can’t do maths” or “I hated maths at school”

We want your children to feel positive about Maths as a subject and to be able to reward them for the effort they put in.

Using number skills in everyday life

- When shopping
- When planning a trip
- Times of TV programmes
- Discussing Rugby / Scores

Work with your child using;

- MyMaths
- Numeracy Homeworks
- Use the practise material provided on the Year 7 Numeracy Guide
- Encourage the use of sumdog website to help with mental calculations

Recommended websites Numeracy

- [BBC Bitesize](#)
- [Mymaths.co.uk](#)
- [Sumdog.com](#)
- [Nationalnumeracy.org](#)

How can I keep up to date?

Keep a look out for any updates under the Literacy and Numeracy section of our school website. Posts will also appear via our facebook and twitter feeds.

Digital Competence

The Digital Competence Framework (DCF) was introduced to schools from September 2017 and was compulsory from 2020. The new curriculum explicitly states that Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Skills need to be embedded in their learning across all areas of learning. Almost all jobs in today's world will require some element of digital skills, therefore, these are essential for your child to learn.

Whilst we encourage your children to use technology to enhance their learning and digital skills it is still important that they are using it safely. The use of these modern technologies can put young people at risk within and outside school. Some dangers they may face include:

- Access to illegal, harmful or inappropriate images or other content
- Unauthorised access to / loss of / sharing of personal information
- The risk of being subject to grooming by those with whom they make contact on the internet
- The sharing / distribution of personal images without an individual's consent or knowledge
- Inappropriate communication / contact with others, including stranger
- Cyberbullying

At school we have many procedures in place to keep your child safe online, including firewalls and virus protection. But, how can you help keep your children safe whilst using technology at home?

e-Safety tips and Advice for Parents

Here are just some of the things you can do with your child to help improve their online safety:

- **Set parental settings and filters**
 - Be aware of what sites your children are visiting on the internet and use parental controls where appropriate. This will help to restrict their access to inappropriate websites and games that are not suitable for their age.
 - Set parental controls on your broadband – this can be done by contacting your provider.
- **Talk to your child**
 - Discuss with your child what they like to do online and what games they enjoy playing. By being interested this might encourage them to talk to you about all the sites they visit in the future.
 - Ask them if they are talking to friends online or through their gaming stations e.g. Xbox and who those friends are. You may be surprised that they are possibly talking to people they have never met.
 - Make it clear that they can talk to you about anything they may be concerned about at any time.
- **Keep your anti-virus software up-to-date**
 - Your anti-virus software can detect the latest virus infections and will quarantine them so they do not damage your computer or files. New viruses are created every day and so by updating regularly you will be protected.

- **Discuss information that should NOT be shared online, some examples include:**
 - Full name – first name is ok to use.
 - Personal information like telephone numbers and addresses.
 - If they are uploading pictures online – ask them to show you first and then you can decide if it is appropriate.
 - Never discuss meeting up with someone you have never met before.
 - What school they attend and outside clubs.
- **Sexting (taking naked pictures or texting inappropriate messages)**
 - Only allow webcams in the main family area of the house.
 - Make it clear that it is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to take or receive a sexual photo even if it is of themselves.
 - Explain that when the picture or message has been sent, it cannot be taken back.
 - Discuss the consequences of the picture/message getting into the wrong hands.
- **Never share passwords with anyone. Passwords should be made secure by:**
 - Adding capital letters
 - Adding numbers
 - Using symbols
 - Not making them obvious e.g. date of birth or name
- **Cyberbullying**
 - Encourage your child to talk to you or a teacher if they think they are being bullied and not to keep it to themselves.
 - Discuss the importance of not participating in bullying online and to be aware that they leave a digital footprint and therefore will get discovered!
- **Be aware of age ratings on games and social media sites**
 - Here are some common social media / apps that your child may want to use:

Site/App	Age rating
	18 or 13 with your permission
 WhatsApp	16+
	13+
	13+
 Snapchat	13+
 Instagram	13+

Websites for more information

Below are some useful websites that you can find more information of these topics:

Topic	Websites
General internet safety for parents	https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/ http://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers
Cyberbullying prevention	https://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/prevention/index.html https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/11_13/Need-advice/Cyberbullying/
Sexting	https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/sexting/ https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/Nude-selfies-a-parents-guide/
Social media guidance for parents	https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/Reporting-to-social-media-sites/
Using parental settings/filters on broadband	https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/Parental-controls/