

Excellence in Literacy Quality Mark Framework

The Excellence in Literacy quality mark, from the Institute of Education, aims to help primary schools improve the quality of literacy provision and literacy outcomes for all learners. The self-evaluation framework seeks to be responsive to the character and individuality of schools in different contexts, whilst illustrating aspects of practice which successful schools have in common.

This quality mark recognises that schools are involved in on-going cycles of review and improvement and offers school leaders:

- guidance to specifically evaluate literacy provision for all learners and in particular to review provision for those learners struggling to develop literacy skills at the normal rate
- a self-evaluation tool and an award process that will support communication with stakeholders and inspectors about successful provision in schools achieving the award
- access to evidence-based programmes, current research and case studies of effective practice in literacy provision
- membership of an international online community of school leaders aiming to share practice, systems and professional development in literacy provision
- a model of an auditing system which can be applied to other areas of school development

Further information: www.excellenceinliteracy.co.uk

Access to a dedicated section of the website with further resources and support materials, links, blogs and case studies, is available for schools registering as members.

Contact:

For further information about how to register for the Excellence in Literacy quality mark, please contact the International Literacy Centre:
ilc@ioe.ac.uk

Benefits of using the Excellence in Literacy Framework:

- A tool to support in-depth analysis of your current literacy provision. The Excellence in Literacy quality mark involves intensive evaluation by school leaders and staff and independent accreditation from the Institute of Education.
- A strong evidence-base to help you to communicate with stakeholders, governors and inspectors about your successful literacy provision. The quality mark is awarded through the independent expertise of the International Literacy Centre, part of the Institute of Education, a world leading educational organisation. 'Self-evaluation provides the basis for planning, development and improvement in schools. Inspection takes full account of, and contributes to, a school's self-evaluation. Schools may present a brief written summary of their self-evaluation to inspectors.' (The Ofsted Framework for School Inspection, published - Jan 2014)
- A written report which supports your own self-evaluation and links with your school development plan.
- A plaque and use of the Excellence in Literacy Quality Mark on your printed materials and website, indicating your success to current and prospective learners, parents and partners.

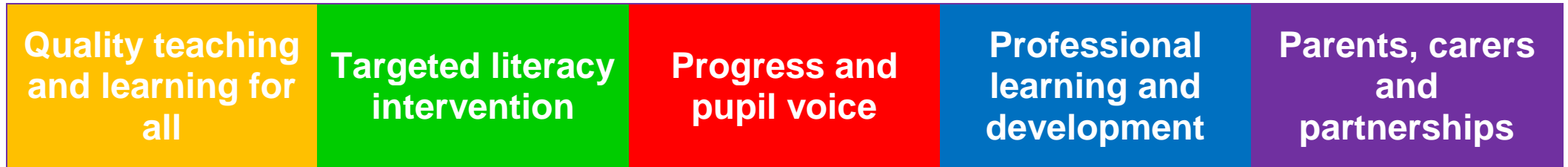


Contents

Structure of the Excellence in Literacy Quality Mark	3
The self-evaluation process – Vision, Systems and Evaluation	4
The Excellence in Literacy Quality Mark framework	5
Guidance for working with the self-evaluation framework	21
Timeline and award verification process	22

Structure of the Excellence in Literacy Quality Mark Framework

The framework has five connected areas of effective literacy provision



Each area incorporates five 'CLEAR' strands of regular activity, in which schools will normally be engaged during cycles of review and development:

1. **C**ommunication
2. **L**eadership
3. **E**vidence-based decision-making
4. **A**ssessment and monitoring
5. **R**esourcing

Against each of the five areas of provision and five CLEAR strands, a school can evaluate literacy provision and outcomes and provide evidence and exemplification. Areas for development, which are identified during the self-evaluation process, can be addressed before making an application for verification of the award of the Excellence in Literacy Quality Mark.

There is no time frame imposed on the self-evaluation – a school may have effective practice in place in all areas and achieve the award quite quickly. Alternatively, the process may take longer and involve the development of new systems, support through professional development or re-organisation and evaluation of provision. Schools may freely use the Excellence in Literacy self-evaluation framework independently, to contribute to school development, or choose to apply for external validation for the quality mark.

The self evaluation process – Vision, Systems and Evaluation

Schools vary in their approaches and systems and how they articulate their vision for students. However, there are common elements and practices in schools with successful practice and outcomes in literacy. Robust school systems are the route for transfer of goals into practice and effective schools engage in a constant review and evaluation. The self-evaluation framework for the Excellence in Literacy Quality Mark offers support to review and develop:

Vision for excellence in each key area – what will successful practice look like and what can we achieve?

Systems and approaches – how do we go about achieving our goals?

Evaluation and evidence gathering – how do we know how well we are doing and what we need to change or improve?

The examples offered in the framework are an indication of the practice that would be expected in schools which achieve the Excellence in Literacy Quality Mark. Those in bold print are essential and must be in place to be considered for an award.

The framework also has built-in flexibility to allow schools to identify additional good practice and to present their evaluation and evidence for consideration. It is responsive to the character and individuality of schools, whilst aiming to exemplify positive practice.

A critical marker of effectiveness considered in the award, will be how well a school fosters the progress of all learners which is also a key element of the latest Ofsted Framework. This includes those learners facing the most challenge and with the lowest attainment patterns in literacy.

The framework does not impose a way of approaching the self-evaluation - a school is invited to decide how best to involve staff and parents/carers in considering what results in good outcomes for students, along with what could improve and how that might be achieved.

Schools may decide to carry out initial evaluation and development in one particular area such as 'Parents, Carers and Partnerships' or in one particular strand such as 'Leadership'.

Quality teaching and learning for all

Vision for excellence

The school provides carefully matched learning opportunities to ensure that every child is able to creatively engage with the curriculum at the appropriate level and pace. Learners enjoy learning and are able to demonstrate their literacy skills across all subject areas. A variety of evidence-based teaching approaches and groupings ensure equity of access. All teachers have consistently high expectations and aspiration for all learners. Drawing on excellent subject knowledge, teachers plan astutely and set sufficiently challenging tasks based on systematic, accurate formative assessment of learners' prior skills, knowledge and understanding. They use well judged and often imaginative teaching strategies that, together with sharply focused and timely support and intervention, match individual needs accurately. All staff aim to foster learners' love of reading and writing and the school has a strong culture of literacy based on a foundation of language development. The school has a positive climate for learning in which pupils are engaged and interested, demonstrating positive attitudes to literacy learning.

School systems

Communication

- **There is a well-communicated policy for the teaching of literacy in the school and consistency to the policy is regularly reviewed, updated in conjunction with monitoring for consistency of application across the school.**
- **A consistent approach is taken to develop progression through the literacy curriculum from Foundation Stage to the end of KS2.**
- **Teachers have opportunities to collaborate on planning and moderation of assessment judgments (including cross-phase moderation), ensuring consistency of opportunity for all learners.**
- **Feedback is used consistently to improve both learning and teaching** (for example, feedback from learner to teacher and teacher to learner).
- **Language enrichment is fostered in encounters with adults in all aspects of school life, both in class and in incidental daily encounters, such as meal times and in the playground, and through special events.**
- **Assemblies, concerts and newsletters / other publications showcase learners' literacy skills offering purposes for literacy learning.**
- The school website showcases examples of learners' literacy skills and creativity. These act as models of aspiration for all students and indicate typical practice to parents.

Leadership

- **The HT and SMT engage fully in the provision for literacy and are committed to their role in leadership of literacy throughout school.**
- **Teaching provided for lower attaining learners is of an excellent quality. In class, teachers regularly teach all learners in guided reading / writing / talking and phonics groups. Lower-attaining learners are not predominantly taught by teaching assistants.**
- **Key leaders regularly observe literacy provision and negotiate potential areas for development with teachers, putting in place relevant professional development opportunities.** These might include team-teaching, coaching, lesson study or school/key stage training.
- **Key leaders monitor planning in conjunction with progression and consistency of practice and expectations throughout the school.**
- Key leaders focus relentlessly on improving teaching and learning through provision of professional development, coaching and mentoring.
- In addition to whole class teaching of reading, all learners access additional reading, writing and phonics instruction in guided groups led by both teachers and teaching assistants.
- The SMT monitors class teaching of literacy to ensure there is a consistently high percentage of good or outstanding provision for learning.

Evidence-based decision-making – classroom practice

- **All those with responsibility for teaching literacy access and collect up to date assessment information and refer to it in planning and talking about provision and learners' progress, including pupil progress meetings.**
- **Teaching approaches and learning opportunities are based on formative analysis of the learning needs of particular groups and individuals.**
- **Learners receive clear and regular feedback about what they do well and what they need to do next to continue to be successful with literacy skills and are given set time to act on the feedback.**
- **A systematic synthetic phonics programme is used consistently across the school in a multisensory manner to enable all learners to blend and segment effectively and apply these skills in reading and spelling.**
- **The writing process is actively taught at whole class and group levels.**
- **Digital media are integrated in learning approaches and outcomes.**
- **Learners in F Stage and KS1 rapidly build up banks of words they can read and write automatically and are able to read a varied range of age-appropriate texts fluently.**
- Guided group teaching is used effectively in all classrooms to fine-tune teaching to specific needs in reading, writing, speaking and listening and to facilitate effective assessment for learning.
- Learners are well supported to become independent and with opportunities for choice of texts and ways of responding through talk, reading and writing.

Assessment and monitoring

- **Opportunities for formative assessment for learning are purposefully planned within sequences of learning.**
- **Teachers are able to evidence individual pupil progress in order to plan next steps for teaching (for example, evidence of progress in text reading and writing is available to give clear feedback to learners and to report to parents).**

- **Teachers are able to make secure judgements about learners' reading abilities and match books well to their needs at an instructional level to teach reading skills and at an easier level to build up reading mileage.**
- **Learners are involved in assessing their own progress.**
- **Assessment judgments are regularly moderated.**
- Standardised tests (for example, NfER, Salford, YARC, PhAB) are used appropriately and by SENCO / teachers who have been trained to use and interpret them accurately.
- Teachers are confident in making secure judgements about the phonics phase where each child is working and use this information to inform teaching based on the application of phonics knowledge in reading and writing.
- Assessment evidence is used to differentiate learning access through a variety of design; by task, by outcome and by level of support (for example, running records used to organise groups for guided text reading, to ensure both level of decoding challenge and levels of comprehension are considered).

Resourcing

- **An inviting library is well-stocked with quality books and linked resources which encourage reading for pleasure.**
- **There are tempting book displays throughout the school, including in classrooms and an obvious profile about the importance placed on reading.**
- **High quality resources for guided and individual reading are organised according to level of difficulty** (for example by using book Bands where readers are still developing skills) **and/or thematically.**
- **The classroom learning environment clearly communicates the importance of literacy and is well-resourced and used independently by learners.**
- **Materials and lesson resources are in good order, fit for purpose and available in sufficient quantity.**
- **Learners have opportunities to use a range of digital media and applications as learning tools for literacy.**
- **Specific events are organised to promote and celebrate literacy** (for example World Book Day, writer's events etc).

Potential sources of evidence:

- Records of lesson observations by HT/SMT; Literacy subject leader/Phase leader; Ofsted
- Target-setting data for learners; tracking; IEPs
- Formative and diagnostic assessment outcomes and examples of pupils meeting individual improvement targets
- Evaluation of intervention outcomes and monitoring from observations of intervention delivery - Pre and post intervention assessment data for learners given additional support
- Planning and work scrutiny notes and development areas / action plans
- Displays of learners' work
- Examples of literacy planning indicate professional knowledge and progression and planning within class teams shows alignment

- Positive marking of learners' work and clear targets for improvement
- Records of teacher/teaching assistant planning meetings
- Record of Teacher Leader visits to a Reading Recovery teacher and record of the Reading Recovery teacher's colleague visits
- Reports to parents and feedback from parents
- Notes of meetings with parents / parents' observations e.g. of intervention / Reading Recovery lessons / other communications with parents e.g. homework and/or reading record books to which both parents and staff contribute
- Images and borrowing records of the school library
- Information provided on school website (for example termly learning focuses in each class, school events and trips, homework activities and links to useful websites, examples of learners' work)
- Newspaper or web-based articles about the school relating to literacy provision (for example International Poetry Day activities)
- Curriculum planning documents and professional development records including how digital media is used as a learning tool
- Planning and budget for special literacy events. Photographs or news reports/newsletters celebrating the events, including writing by learners about their experiences during the event

Targeted literacy intervention

Vision for excellence

For those learners/groups identified as needing additional support to meet age-related expectations, the school provides appropriate, time-limited, evidence-based intervention. The SENCO/Literacy Manager/Intervention Manager/Reading Recovery teacher has expertise in and manages a range of evidence-based literacy interventions. There is a clearly stated expectation, owned by all staff, that learner receiving intervention will make between two and four times the normal rate of progress. Intervention lessons are high quality, pleasurable experiences for learners where self-esteem is raised along with literacy outcomes. Learners are able to apply new knowledge and skills in class lessons.

School systems

Communication

- **Interventions used in the school are documented, recognised and agreed and provision is updated each year depending on need. There are clear rationales for their adoption, including evidence of effectiveness and guidelines for their target groups, purpose and expected outcomes.**
- **Class teachers know the expected outcomes from different intervention programmes. They monitor the application of learners' new skills in the classroom and make appropriate adjustments to class groupings and book levels for guided work as learners make accelerated progress.**
- **Parents of learners receiving literacy intervention are invited to observe lessons and are supported to work with their child during the intervention period on homework activities and reading practice on familiar texts.**
- **Learners have take-home tasks from intervention sessions and parents are supported to help learners in completing this homework. Where this is difficult because of particular circumstances, similar support is offered from teaching assistants/learning mentors and/or older siblings or buddies during school time.**
- The school policy on additional literacy support approaches is shared on the school website.
- Information about the specific school provision / description of programmes for learners needing additional support is shared on the school website.

Leadership

- **The current SEN Code of practice is followed in allocating additional literacy support and resources.**

- **The SMT in conjunction with other key staff regularly reviews the learning needs of learners falling below age-related expectations in literacy, deciding how best to allocate existing resources** (for example, audit of learner needs, programmes which specific adults have been trained to lead, teaching spaces, timetabling etc) **in each term. Gaps in provision which have implications for further investment and professional development are noted.**
- **Governors receive and review an annual report on the outcomes of the school provision and cost effectiveness of literacy intervention.**
- **The SMT allocates time for class teachers to liaise with teaching assistants and /or Intervention teacher/ Reading Recovery teacher/ learning mentors involved in leading intervention programmes, to review pupil progress and make connection with class provision.**
- Teachers have regular opportunities to observe learners from their class participating in intervention lessons.

Evidence-based decision-making

- **Selection of intervention programmes/approaches is based on evidence of outcomes which must lead to acceleration of at least twice the rate of average progress in the class, in order for learners to catch up.**
- **Interventions are delivered with fidelity to the goals, content and timescales of the particular programmes.**
- **Literacy interventions are monitored in terms of cost-effectiveness and successful outcomes for learners.** This evidence may be from external sources (for example KPMG indicates the most cost effective literacy intervention for the lowest attaining learners in KS1 is Reading Recovery) or school based evidence of cost-effectiveness of targeted interventions led by teaching assistants.
- **Intensive early intervention is used to offer learners the best opportunity to catch up, before the learning gap widens.**

Assessment and monitoring

- **Pupil tracking, in conjunction with effective and accurate assessment quickly identifies learners falling behind in literacy learning and action is taken to provide the appropriate support as quickly as possible.**
- **Pre and post-intervention assessment data are used to monitor efficiency and quality of chosen interventions and to report to parents on pupil progress.**
- **The SMT / SENCO / Reading Recovery teacher regularly monitors the quality of delivery of intervention programmes and supports improvement through coaching.**
- **The continued progress of any pupil who has received an intervention programme is monitored and included on the pupil tracking system. Any sign of progress stalling is addressed through discussion in pupil progress meetings and action is planned to address the needs of the pupil.**
- Where Reading Recovery is in place in a school, the accredited Reading Recovery teacher carries out (and enters on the national data site) the follow up assessments at 3 month and 6 month intervals to ensure gains are sustained as learners move into KS2.
- Reading Recovery teaching, where provided, is quality-assured through observation by an accredited Teacher Leader in conjunction with the Headteacher.

Resourcing

- **A provision map indicates how staffing and other resources including working space, resources and funding (for example, pupil premium/SEN funding) will be used each term, to offer intervention programmes relevant to the target group of learners.**
- **Learners only receive additional literacy intervention, if their needs cannot be met by excellent class provision.**
- **Teachers and teaching assistants delivering literacy intervention programmes have received quality initial training / professional development from accredited specialist professionals.**
- **Dedicated teaching spaces are identified and timetabled to provide suitable learning environments for literacy intervention programmes.**
- **The relevant resources for each intervention programme are made available as part of the provision map.**

Potential sources of evidence:

- School policy documents on intervention provision
- Information on school website about use of the Pupil Premium
- Intervention provision map
 - Learners needing intervention
 - Resourcing including allocation of funding, adult support, learning space, materials
 - Setting up and monitoring of intervention programmes
 - Updated needs analysis and pupil targeting for support
 - Professional development skills and needs analysis
- Records of individual learner's progress in literacy in both class and intervention showing impact of provision on outcomes.
- National Reading Recovery annual report and school Reading Recovery data report.
- IEPs for individual learners
- Communication booklets (for example, between class teachers / Reading Recovery teacher and parents)
- Pupil progress meeting reports
- Records of responses from parents to additional support for their learners
- Intervention data and case studies for individual learners (for example, pre and post Talking Partners oral language and writing assessment information; Reading Recovery annual report; case study of buddy reading programme; data on impact of Inference Training)
- Professional development records for staff leading intervention programmes
Records of monitoring of quality of intervention provision, attendance of learners and staff leading the intervention (for example, if an intervention is designed to be delivered daily for ten weeks, how many sessions out of 50 have actually been delivered, what were the reasons for non-delivery and how can such issues be addressed?) Responses to any issues (for example support with attendance or review of timetabling to ensure key staff are available to lead the programme. Notes on quality of delivery and targets for improvement / allocation of mentoring
- Costs of intervention resources and training/professional development

Progress and pupil voice

Vision for excellence

The school has high aspirations for every learner and will not tolerate failure in literacy. Most learners make age-related progress evidenced by sound methods of moderated teacher assessment. Learners who are supported by intervention make accelerated progress¹. Progress is expected both over time and within a series of lessons. All staff know about learners' progress and no child slips through the network of planned support. The school is confident in making appropriate provision for any learners who are falling behind based on assessment of their needs and knowledge of evidence-based practice in literacy difficulties. Learners can talk about their own literacy learning and what they need to do to improve in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

School systems

Communication

- **A simple policy indicates the school's goals for learners' progress and the approaches used to monitor progress are communicated to and understood by learners, staff and parents.**
- **Regular pupil progress meetings are held to review and set targets for all learners, while those at risk of falling behind are identified on at least a termly basis.**
- **When pupil progress is below national/age-related expectations, further focused assessment takes place to aid selection of appropriate and evidence-based intervention.**
- **Teaching staff, learners and parents are aware of next steps in learning for every child in conjunction with pupil progress meetings, parent information meetings and SEN reviews where appropriate.**
- **Parents know how the SEN Code of Conduct is followed and resourced in the school.**
- **Learners' work and effort is highly valued** (for example whole-school celebration of writing displays or as part of a celebration assembly). **Learner-teacher interactions are positive and affirming and continually communicate high expectations; learners are praised for effort made as well as attainment; learners' work is displayed attractively and used for further learning by other learners; celebrating the successes of lower attaining learners is given a high profile in order to raise motivation and self esteem.**

¹ For example, for Key Stage 1 learners in Reading Recovery programmes, this will be four to five times the normal rate and in other interventions, should be at least twice the rate of progress of average learner in the class.

- **Learners know about and receive feedback on what they do well in literacy. They can talk about what they need to do to improve their reading and writing, including more than surface level skills such as sounding out in reading or spelling, or better handwriting. They can act on feedback and are given allocated time to do so.**
- Pupil progress meetings may focus on an evidence-base / evidence portfolio to justify an assessed level – with a focus on specific children, as well as the general class or cohort evidence.

Leadership

- **Leaders and managers at all levels demonstrate an ambitious vision for the school and have high expectations for what every learner and teacher can achieve.**
- **Leadership of literacy provision is devolved with shared responsibility for all learners and clear roles for all staff.** (For example, the SMT is responsible for pupil tracking, provision mapping and monitoring outcomes of observations and data analysis by middle leaders. Class teachers are responsible for pupil progress at class level and for reporting in pupil progress meetings and to parents.)
- **The current SEN Code of Practice is followed and the school acknowledges and responds to the needs expressed by learners and parents.**

Evidence-based decision-making

- **School leaders know about the expected outcomes of a range of intervention programmes which aim to address difficulties with reading, writing, speaking and listening and use this evidence to build sound provision.**
- **The leadership team's predictions of pupil progress, as measured by moderated baseline and key stage assessments, is accurate.**

Assessment and monitoring

- **Most learners are reading and writing at age-related expectations at the end of each key stage.**
- **Pupil data in the public domain indicate that literacy progress of learners is at least in line with statistically similar schools, if not better.**
- **A robust tracking system is in place which includes regular teacher assessment, outcomes of national assessment and pre and post-intervention outcomes. Tracked data is an accurate reflection of learners' abilities as readers and writers.**
- **Teacher assessment of reading and writing is accurate and there is regular moderation of teacher assessment judgements.**
- **Almost all learners are making expected or more than expected progress, relative to starting points.**
- **Follow-up assessment for any learners supported by intervention programmes is monitored to check that gains are maintained.**
- **Learners are prepared for the next stage of their education.**
- Any sign of progress stalling is addressed first by targeted teaching in guided group work by class teachers.
- If targeted group teaching is not sufficient to meet the needs of a child, a short term intervention programme is considered and provision is discussed in the pupil progress meeting.

Resourcing

- **Funding which the school receives in particular grants** (for example Pupil Premium, SEN funding) **is used to target learners for additional support and provision. Cost-effectiveness of decisions made about using the funding can be verified.**
- **The school website is used to communicate to parents and other stakeholders about the use of such funding.**
- **A school database indicates the teachers and teaching assistants who have specialist training in SEN and intervention programmes and is used to inform an annual provision map and identify further professional development needs.**

Potential sources of evidence:

- Pupil tracking system; target setting data for learners; individual/group education plans
- Policy documents for literacy teaching and learning, special educational needs, use of Pupil Premium, literacy intervention
- Analysis of learner outcomes in Foundation stage and KS1/2 - Attainment over time in relation to national standards & in similar schools; areas of strength & weakness compared to national norms; Progress data between key stages; trends over time.
- Progress data for particular groups (for example FSM, More able learners, BME, Non-FSM, travellers, boys/girls); Ofsted data dashboard
- Phonics phase tracking and phonics screening check data
- Assessment for Learning - ongoing formative assessment, Assessing Pupil Progress or more current processes, guided reading assessment records, writing moderation records
- Data from annual summative assessments such as tests, national assessments, floor standards and progress measures
- Reports to governors on learner progress
- Reading Recovery annual national report and school's own data report for Reading Recovery
- Pre and post intervention data for particular learners
- Records of discussion with learners; scrutiny of work samples; lesson observations and discussion with leadership team; curriculum plans
- Records of pupil progress meetings
- Evidence of application of reading, writing and spoken literacy skills in other subject areas.
- IEPs for individual learners; records of responses from parents to additional support for their learner
- Reading Recovery learners' programme data
- Other intervention data and case studies for individual learners
- Cost-effectiveness measures linked to intervention provision
- Classroom assessment records; moderation reports
- Communication systems used to inform all members of staff of actions for particular learners
- School improvement partner / LA reports; Ofsted reports; reports to Governors and parents on learners' progress
- Information provided on school website and through written information/events for parents

Professional learning and development

Vision for excellence

A high value is placed on continuous professional learning, reflective analysis and self-evaluation to develop teachers' pedagogy and literacy subject knowledge. A planned professional development programme ensures that all adults understand the core theoretical principles of teaching and learning underpinning their work. Theory is linked with practice through ongoing collaborative classroom-based professional development and learning led by school staff and external specialists. Adults leading literacy intervention programmes have accessed quality training and receive on-going mentoring linked with observation and quality assurance. Continuing professional development impacts both teaching and learning.

School systems

Communication

- **Teachers and teaching assistants have regular opportunities to update / refresh literacy subject knowledge.**
- **Professional development sessions are planned to cater to both individual needs and school priorities, calling on both internal and external expertise.**
- **Teachers and teaching assistants and other relevant staff have input into the selection of professional development priorities and offer feedback about their learning and further needs.**
- **Every staff member has a clear job description which includes their responsibility and contribution towards developing and improving learners' literacy skills.**
- Critical friends (for example, school leaders from other schools; LA colleagues; external consultants) offer potential focuses for professional development.
- Collaboration with other schools facilitates planning and provision of professional development.

Leadership

- **School leaders engage in professional development along with teachers and also teach classes and groups to trial/demonstrate approaches or participate in lesson study or coaching.**
- **Professional development in school is balanced to include responses to whole school literacy priorities and individual needs of groups of teachers and teaching assistants.**

- **Professional development is not limited to one-off sessions – any development activity is embedded in on-going class practice with opportunities to trial new approaches, reflect and adapt, then make links with theory in further sessions** (for example, collaborative work by class teachers in one key stage to improve the teaching of guided reading for targeted groups of learners).
- **Governors are well-trained and knowledgeable about literacy provision, including literacy intervention.**
- The literacy manager, SENCO or Reading Recovery teacher lead professional development for teaching assistants and offer mentoring to improve the planning and delivery of literacy interventions.

Evidence-based decision-making

- **Research-informed PD enables teachers to make sound professional judgements on the basis of what works in a particular school setting for particular learners.**
- **All those involved in teaching understand the role of observation, formative assessment and feedback in teaching and learning.**
- Teachers have opportunities to observe and collaborate on literacy teaching with teachers from other classes/ schools.

Assessment and monitoring

- **The SMT links performance review with professional development through shared observation, feedback, and feed forward to improve teaching and learning.**
- **Knowing how to support vulnerable learners is built into professional development and staff review/performance management.**
- **There are informal and planned opportunities for critical reflection on practice** (for example, groups of teachers engage in lesson study with a particular focus or the year one class teacher may observe the Reading Recovery teacher taking a guided reading session with the lowest attaining group and they discuss how to support independent word solving strategies in other areas of the literacy curriculum).
- Class teachers are regularly released to observe literacy intervention sessions for learners in their class and to discuss progress of the learner with the teacher or teaching assistant delivering the intervention.

Resourcing

- **Access is provided for professional development led by external specialists to enrich staff expertise** eg enrolment in MA programmes in literacy development; training for staff leading literacy intervention; ongoing CPD for the Reading Recovery teacher; leadership and coaching for the literacy subject leader etc
- **The school is growing its own expertise through extended and intensive professional development with practical focuses** (for example ,the literacy manager leads professional development for colleagues on guiding reading; the Reading Recovery teacher leads professional development on the use of running records for formative assessment; the SENCO leads PD eg on reading comprehension support for learners with Autistic Spectrum Disorders;).
- **Appropriate funding is allocated to professional development in the school budget and the outcomes of investment in professional development are reviewed.**
- **Appropriate time and support is given to staff to trial and embed new practices following professional development activity.**

- The SENCO / Reading Recovery teacher is timetabled across the term/year to enable them to provide planned professional support, mentoring, quality assurance with all those involved in early literacy provision.

Potential sources of evidence:

- Professional Development records – access to Professional Development for all staff and evaluation of the impact on practice
- Professional development plan matched to the school development plan/Literacy subject leader's plan, to learning priorities and pupil progress and the school's self evaluation
- Register and evaluation of staff participation in school based, local area, school partnership and accredited academic courses and professional development activity
- Planning / records of content of school-based professional development
- Evaluations from internal professional development such as class-based lesson study / action research / collaborative plan, teach, evaluate cycles
- Evaluations from externally-led professional development for individuals or groups of teachers
- Monitoring and feedback timetable and notes from observation of class and intervention teaching which reflect on how teachers have responded to professional development
- Outcomes of learning walks
- Report to governors about outcomes and impact of professional development
- Performance review target achievement and professional development put in place to support achievement of targets
- Records of Reading Recovery teacher's attendance at IPD / CPD and quality assurance visits from Reading Recovery Teacher Leader
- Comments from Ofsted reports
- Teachers' action research or learning in MA modules

Parents, carers and partnerships

Vision for excellence

The school aims to work in collaboration with parents and carers as partners in their child's learning pathway and clearly demonstrate and communicate shared high aspirations for learners. Parents and carers feel welcome in the school and know how to approach school staff for information and advice. Parents know learning focuses at each year level and the expected outcomes of any intervention are made clear. The school works with parents and carers to develop an understanding and appreciation of their child's language and literacy needs, and actively assists the parents' ability to support their child's learning.

The school also builds effective working partnerships with local and national organisations and with other schools, to enhance or broaden school-based expertise. A goal is to place the school at the centre of the community and to draw on what parents can offer as well as supporting their continued growth in understanding about their child's literacy learning.

School systems

Communication

- **Literacy policy is readily available to parents/carers and governors and is easy to understand.**
- **The school's policy on working with parents and carers is clearly documented and readily available.**
- **There are a wide variety of opportunities for two-way communication with parents - informal conversations in the playground, parent evenings, homework record books and reports, to which both staff and parents contribute.**
- **Communications from teachers to parents are non-threatening, easy to understand and avoid jargon and acronyms.**
- **Parents' opinions and knowledge of their learners are valued in conversations with school staff.**
- **The school website offers information and support for parents about the literacy curriculum (NC 2014), literacy policy, activities and home learning and is regularly updated.**
- **All parents know about termly focuses for literacy learning and expected outcomes for learners.**
- **Parent volunteers (who may be supporting by listening to learners reading) are well-briefed and supported by a named member of staff.**
- **Written communication may be available in home language if other than English, where possible and strategies may be in place to communicate with parents who have literacy difficulties.**
- **There are a wide variety of ways of encouraging parents into school in volunteer and observer roles.**
- **Parents of learners new to the school, receive induction into the school's policy and practices in the teaching and learning of literacy.**

Leadership

- **Named members of the school team have designated roles in parent liaison and all parents know who they are and how to make contact.**
- **The leadership team collate and respond to viewpoints of parents from surveys, meetings and informal contact.**
- **Effective partnerships with relevant local and national bodies and other schools/experts help the school to examine and continually improve literacy practice.**
- **The school has a system/database for capturing information about contacts with parents and use this information to plan further ways to engage parents and track impact of parental involvement on pupil progress.**

Evidence-based decision-making

- **Parents are involved in decision-making about SEN provision and the selection of evidence-based literacy intervention to address learners' individual needs.**
- **Use of and response to written reports to parents and homework record books (for example, home reading diaries) is reviewed to ensure these are fit for purpose.**
- **Information collected about parental engagement is correlated with data on achievement of learners to evaluate the impact of parental engagement.**
- **The school draws on 'critical friends' to help identify development areas.**
- **The leadership team systematically seeks parental feedback on the work of the school, how welcoming and supportive they find the environment and other ways in which they would like to engage with the school.**

Assessment and monitoring

- **Parents are involved in setting targets for their child's literacy learning and know how to support them to work towards the targets.**
- **Parents are informed when learners are selected for intervention support and ways of supporting learner at home during the intervention are modelled and discussed.**
- **Parents are invited to observe their child in literacy intervention lessons and to discuss progress with the intervention teacher/ SENCO.**
- **Teachers regularly share good news about learners' achievements and progress with learners, parents and colleagues (for example in conversations, meetings, assemblies, postcards and certificates sent home).**

Resourcing

- **Positive home-school relationships are supported by regular tasks that are designed for each learner's attainment and to increase parental support for pupil learning.**
- **A well-stocked library is a space shared with parents and used by parents with their children.**
- **Home visits and mentoring is available to parents.**

- **Parent skills are drawn into the school where possible to enhance the literacy curriculum.**
- **Support is provided for literacy in the home such as sessions on introducing books and supporting talk, reading and writing at home.**
- **The school offers innovative and non-threatening ways to support the literacy learning of parents, where this is appropriate and involves external organisations to extend the range of what the school can offer.**
- Provision may be made for parents who do not have access to home computers to access school resources.
- There may be specific activities to engage fathers in sharing literacy activities with their children.
- There are opportunities for progression for parents in their own literacy learning e.g. from learning basic literacy skills to gaining qualifications; from volunteering to moving into TA roles.

Potential sources of evidence:

- Records of attendance at parent evenings / information evenings /open mornings/ workshops and courses (including progression from one level to another);parents observing lessons; parents volunteering in school or offering demonstrations (for example, of a personal skill); parent discussions with teachers and senior staff; attendance at parent/teacher meetings; unsolicited letters, emails and other communication including complaints and how they were resolved
- Evaluation of response to school events from parents/carers and future planning
- Links between increased parental engagement and improved pupil progress evidenced by data on parental participation
- Parental feedback on the work of the school, how welcoming and supportive they find the environment and other ways in which they would like to engage with the school
- Views of parents including those shown by Parent View – an online questionnaire for parents (Ofsted Framework for school inspection 2014); school based surveys gathering information about how well-informed parents feel about the literacy curriculum and teaching approaches; response on school website forum; evaluations from courses/workshops; key points arising in parent focus groups which are representative of all parents
- Photographs
- Records of celebration events

Excellence in Literacy Quality Mark - Guidance for working with the self-evaluation

Approach the self-evaluation in the way that is most meaningful to your school context, practice and goals. Consider whether you will begin to work on particular areas of the framework such as Quality Teaching and Learning for All or on key strands such as Leadership or Communication across the whole framework. Key themes in your school development plan may indicate your priorities.

Download the self-evaluation framework, which can be used as a working document. Decide who will be involved in the self-evaluation of your chosen area/s, how this will be done and the time and resources needed. The self-evaluation process itself may become a form of professional development as colleagues work together to review literacy provision.

For each essential criterion, briefly indicate your evaluation and the relevant evidence/link. Then identify any additional supporting criteria relevant to your school practice and the relevant evidence/link. Evaluation statements are likely to be robust if supported by evidence from more than one source and cross references can be made across the document to save any repetition. Concise responses are preferred over lengthy description. Adapt the vision statements to match your particular school goals.

Note any necessary actions or development areas, who will be involved and what resources will be needed. These are the areas where you will plan for further action before applying for an award of the quality mark.

Consider whether evidence can best be represented through a brief description in the self-evaluation, a link to web-based material such as data, newsletters etc or whether it will be showcased in the visit by the assessor.

Verification of the award will take place at two points in the year – at the end of the autumn and summer terms.

To allow time to arrange and complete a verification visit, you will need to send in your documents as follows:

- For verification by the end of the autumn term: **4th October**
- For verification by the end of the spring term: **28th January**
- For verification at the end of the summer term: **5th May**

Timeline and verification process

There are five stages to the process for applying for and verifying an award for the Excellence in Literacy Quality Mark:

Stage 1: School self-evaluation

Stage 2: Desktop review of school self-evaluation and evidence by assessor, with feedback about strengths and areas for development or action prior to verification of the award

Stage 3: Verification visit from appointed assessor

Stage 4: Final report to school from the assessor

Stage 5: Award panel reviews both school self-evaluation and verification report and accredits schools to be awarded the quality mark

Stage 1: School self-evaluation

- a) The self-evaluation form can be downloaded from the Excellence in Literacy website or obtained by contacting ilc@ioe.ac.uk.
- b) Case studies and further information to support the self-evaluation process will be available from the website.
- c) Complete the background and context information for the school.
- d) Consider which key members of staff need to be involved in the self-evaluation and plan how to organise that involvement.
- e) Align the vision statements in each of the 5 areas with your school's vision and goals.
- f) For each of the 5 areas of the framework, investigate and evaluate your current practice, providing evidence for the essential criteria and adding additional examples and evidence as needed.
- g) Provide evidence examples for each of the standards to demonstrate the current practice in meeting the standards. Quality and depth of evidence is preferred over quantity.
- h) For each area of Excellence in Literacy, consider whether additional actions are needed where you have identified areas for further development.
- i) When action has been taken that brings your self-evaluation in line with the standards for the award, submit the evaluation and evidence. Submitting the form electronically will allow web-links to be inserted eg for school website pages, DfE data, Ofsted reports etc

Stage 2: Desktop review by an accredited assessor

- a) A written response will be made by the assessor, suggesting any further actions or evidence needed by the time of the verification visit.
- b) The assessor will contact the named person in the school to arrange the most convenient time for a visit and to agree timings and which members of staff and the school community will be involved.

Stage 3: Verification visit from an accredited assessor

- a) Visits will typically require a half day depending on school size and should include a discussion with the HT and SMT, observation of whole class and literacy intervention teaching, scrutiny of pupil tracking including outcomes from literacy intervention and in-school quality assurance processes including feedback from parents and any other relevant evidence.
- b) Timings and activities will be agreed in advance between the school and the assessor.

Stage 4: Final report

- a) The assessor will prepare a final report with recommendations to both the school and the Award Panel.
- b) This may include any other actions which the school has decided to take following the visit, in order to achieve the quality mark.

Stage 4: Award panel reviews both school self-evaluation and verification report

- a) The award panel will meet twice a year, to make decisions about the award of the Excellence in Literacy Quality Mark.
- b) Schools will be notified of the outcome before they close for the end of the term.
- c) Schools achieving the award will be given licence to use the Excellence in Literacy Quality Mark on their correspondence and website and will be able to purchase a wall plaque displaying the school status as holder of the quality mark.

Awards will be deemed to be current for three years. After this period, schools may apply to update their award for a further three years using the process indicated here.

It is anticipated that involvement in self-evaluation of the key areas will continue as a normal part of the continuous review of school practice and that key actions precipitated by changes in need, staffing or provision will be included in the school development plan. Good practice, case studies and professional development opportunities will be promoted through the Excellence in Literacy Quality Mark website, within the membership area for schools joining our professional learning community.