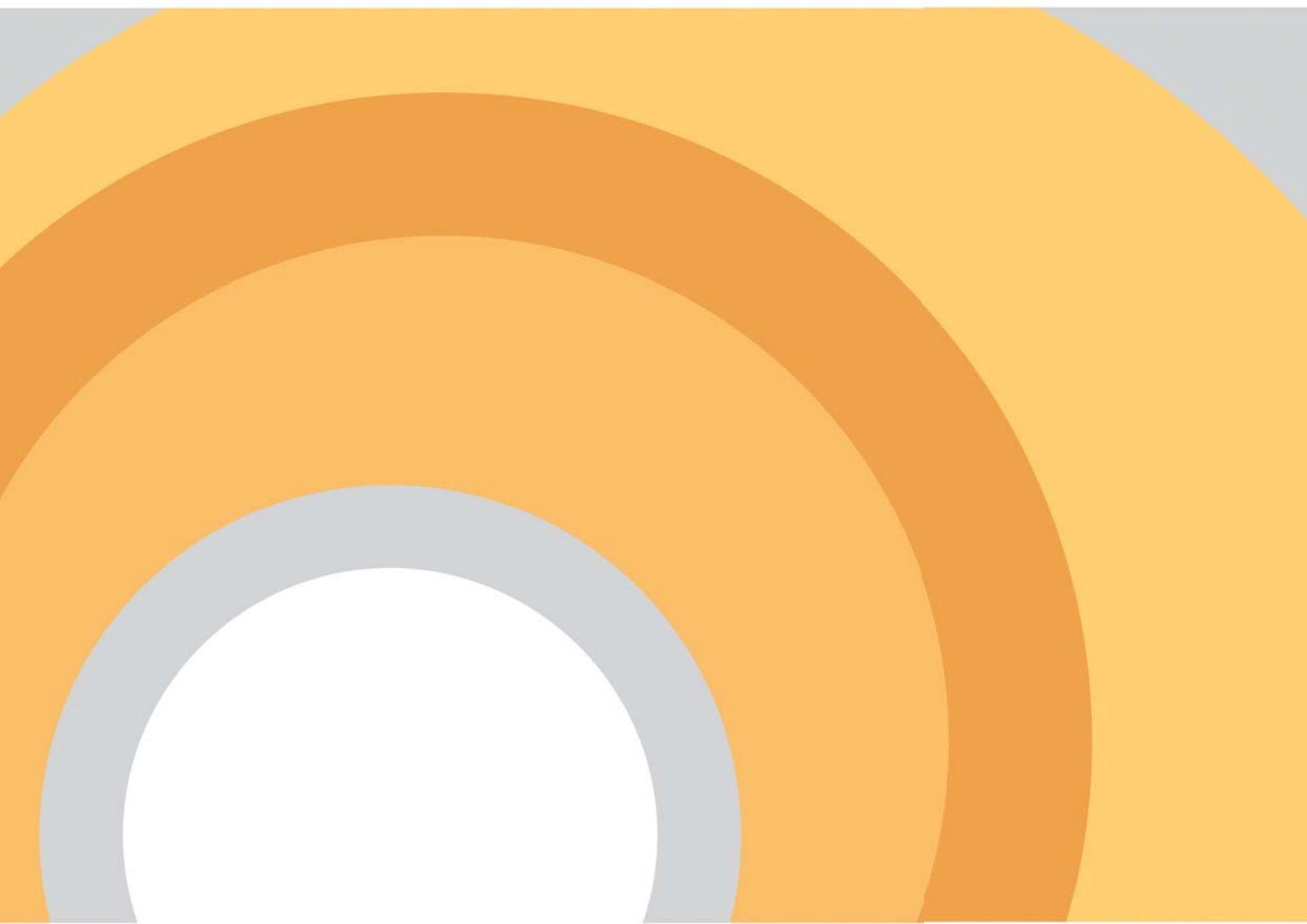


National Policy and Strategy for the Attainment of Core Competences in Primary Education



Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education
January 2009



Ministry of Education,
Culture, Youth and Sport

**National Policy and Strategy
for the Attainment of
Core Competences
in Primary Education**

Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education

January 2009

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Special thanks go to the following service providers for their help and inspiration in the formulation of this document:

- within the Department for Curriculum Management and eLearning: the Curriculum Centre, the eLearning Centre, the Complementary Service and the Specific Learning Difficulties Service;
- within the Foundation for Educational Services: the Hilti, Nwar and Id f'Id Programmes;
- the Literacy Centre within the Faculty of Education.

Foreword by the Director General, Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education

This policy invites us all to give renewed attention to the challenges surrounding the acquisition of core competences by all learners. There are good reasons why we consider literacy, eLiteracy and mathematics at the core of a quality education. These form the foundations on which a quality education is built. Although much debate surrounds attempts to define quality education, there is consensus that quality must be seen in the light of how a society defines the purpose of education. For us, the cognitive development of learners remains a priority within quality education. This policy attempts to address basic aspects of cognitive development which are essential for all learners.

Let us remind ourselves that the journey to quality education begins with a national consensus at policy level and a robust long-term commitment to achieve excellence. At this point in time, when we talk of Malta developing as a centre of excellence in education in the context of the 2015 Vision, it is morally indefensible to justify that children still leave the primary cycle of compulsory education without mastery of these essential competences. These competences are a right in themselves, essential as tools and critically important for development within a knowledge society.

I am confident that this document provides a solid basis to recommit ourselves to the mastery of the core competences in literacy, eLiteracy and mathematics for all our learners. I hope that it provides a comprehensive reference to assist the work of decision makers within the Colleges and schools and practitioners in their contact with learners who together shape the well-being of our community. We know that investment in education must be measured against how well it serves to expand access to education and to improve learning for all children. Let us work together to implement and refine this policy and thus ensure that all learners gain access to the curriculum and become lifelong learners.

This document is to be activated with immediate effect during scholastic year 2008-09. During the first year, the content is to be evaluated within each individual College and school and feedback from all is expected to reach the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education by the end of June 2009. This feedback will be analysed during the summer break of 2009 and the policy and strategy will be finalized before the beginning of the scholastic year 2009-10. In particular, the checklists presented in Appendices A, B and C need to be tried and tested with learners in our schools. It is evidence collected over the scholastic year that will help us finalize these formative tools at this point in time. The policy in its totality will also need to be evaluated on a regular basis and be modified, as necessary, to meet emergent needs and realities. Feedback, comments and queries are to be sent to the following email address: skola@gov.mt

Dr Grace Grima
7th January 2009

Executive Summary

- a) The Director General DQSE appointed a Working Group to formulate a National Policy and Strategy that would ensure the universal mastery in the first years of compulsory schooling of three Core Competences: bilingual Literacy, eLiteracy and Numeracy.
- b) The aims of the Working Group were:
- to ensure that by the end of the primary cycle of compulsory educational experience in Malta, all learners will have mastered the required Core Competences in fulfillment of their potential;
 - to this end, to develop a National Policy and Strategy for the acquisition of these Core Competences by the end of Year 3 and for the provision of intervention when required, to enable all learners to access the full curriculum and become lifelong learners.
- c) Both the Policy and Strategy fall within the wider national commitment towards a lifelong learning orientation to all schooling and education.
- d) The National Core Competences Policy considers:
- Criteria related to the role of school stakeholders: school administrators, teachers, parents, learners, the local community:*
- Colleges and schools need to recognize and celebrate best practices already in place.
 - Colleges and schools need to ‘own’ the Policy and their Action Plans.
 - Teachers need to ‘own’ the Policy and Action Plans in order to implement them effectively.
 - Teachers must be provided with adequate and on-going support, including continuous professional development.
 - Parents need to ‘own’ the Policy and Action Plans.
 - Parents need to be trained to contribute effectively to the Policy and Plans.
 - The voice of the learners needs to be present in both the Strategy and the Action Plans.
 - Networking between Colleges and schools (both state and non-state) is to be promoted.
 - The local community needs to be involved through a process of information and feedback.

Criteria related to the role of entities servicing schools:

- The present institutional ‘front-line’ Core Competences service provision needs to be rationalized.
- Coordination is essential in both planning and provision by ‘front-line’ Core Competences service providers.
- Coordination is essential between the ‘front-line’ service providers and the ‘second-line’ service providers.
- Coordination is essential between community-based organizations and Colleges and schools.

Criteria related to day-school provision:

- It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that all learners master the Core Competences during their primary cycle of education.
- The teaching and learning processes of the Core Competences need to be reviewed.
- Alternative learning programmes need to be developed.
- Individual learning plans need to be developed by the class teacher where appropriate.
- Actions need to address societal contributors of Core Competences deficit such as gender, age, social class, poverty, home environment and ethnicity.

Criteria related to after-school and family-based provision

- Schools need to recognize and celebrate good practice in family learning that is already in place from the earliest years.
- After-school provision has an important function, but it can never replace school-based learning and teaching.
- After-school provision is normally of a definite nature.
- Community-based provision strengthens the capacity of the local community to support families.

- After-school and community-based provision strengthens the role of the local school as a community learning centre.
- Actions need to address societal contributors of Core Competences deficit such as gender, age, social class, poverty, home environment and ethnicity.

Criteria related to monitoring and review

- A Core Competences Benchmark needs to be developed.
 - The Action Plans need to have inbuilt school-led assessment and evaluation procedures.
 - Teachers need to be action-researchers.
 - The Colleges need to develop and ensure the implementation of College-based Core Competences Action Plans.
 - In the non-State sector, schools will be invited to participate in the development and implementation of Core Competences Action Plans.
 - The DQSE will have an ongoing external support, monitoring and evaluation function.
- e) The Policy provides working definitions for baseline literacy, eLiteracy and numeracy for the purposes of this document. In this context, eLiteracy is a learning medium for literacy and numeracy.
- f) The Policy then proposes Core Competences checklists for Maltese and English literacy, eLiteracy and numeracy at Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 levels, through which teachers will be able to identify learners who have not achieved the Core Competences Benchmark and therefore require special assistance.
- g) The National Core Competences Strategy takes an ADDITIVE as well as a TRANSFORMATIVE approach.
- h) The Strategy has the following priorities:
- the prevention of attainment deficit in Core Competences through EARLY SUPPORT;
 - the EARLY IDENTIFICATION of Core Competences attainment deficit;
 - the INTEGRATION into mainstream teaching;
 - the INTERVENTION with respect to Core Competences attainment deficit in early primary.
- i) The Strategy has a clear parental involvement agenda. Strategies and interventions related to the four priorities of the Strategy may therefore be school-based or community-based, with co-operation and co-ordination between stakeholders. Criteria for the identification of such strategies and examples of good practice are proposed.
- j) The Strategy implies a rationalisation of the present range of service provision available to schools and Colleges, to ensure greater equity and effectiveness. It is proposed that:
- the responsibility for effective teaching and learning rests with the Colleges and schools;
 - the DQSE becomes the entity responsible for providing support and quality assurance with respect to the development of Action Plans and the attainment of the Core Competences in the schools;
 - the relevant services of the FES¹ and the Literacy Centre² are therefore transferred to or subsumed by the DQSE;
 - the FES strengthens its role as service and technical support provider in parental lifelong learning and afterschool services, to the extent that these are part of the Core Competences strategy, and offers its services to the Colleges and schools in collaboration with the DQSE;
 - the Literacy Centre strengthens its role in terms of provision of research, resources development and training services to the DQSE;
 - the present SpLD³ is transformed into a National Core Competences Support Service.

¹ Foundation for Educational Services

² Previously the Literacy Unit, Faculty of Education, University of Malta.

³ Specific learning Difficulties Services

- k) The National Core Competences Policy and Strategy must help animate the dynamic balance between central structures, the Colleges and individual schools.
- l) It is proposed that the Strategy has a number of cycles. The first cycle will be implemented in five phases from 2008 to 2012. Other cycles may be required according to the outcomes of the first cycle.
- m) The Strategy is intended to serve as a basis for Action Plans developed by the individual Colleges and schools. An example of a school-based Action Plan is given in Appendix E.

1. Formation and Remit of the Working Group

On 6th March 2008 the Director General of the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education set up a Working Group with the following terms of reference:

1.1 Aims:

The Background of the setting up of this Working group was:

- the overall emphasis of the ‘For all Children to Succeed’ Reform towards a quality education for all;
- the National ICT Policy and the eLearning Strategy;
- the focus on educational attainment in the National Reform Programme;
- the UNESCO aim of universal literacy by 2015;
- the present administration’s 2015 agenda that includes enhanced educational achievement;
- 2008 being the U.N. International Year of Languages.

The aims of the Working Group were:

- to ensure that by the end of the primary cycle of compulsory educational experience in Malta, all learners will have mastered the required Core Competences in fulfillment of their potential;
- to this end, to develop a National Policy and Strategy for the acquisition of these Core Competences by the end of Year 34 and for the provision of intervention when required, so as to enable all learners to access the full curriculum and become lifelong learners.

For the purposes of this proposal, ‘Core Competences’ are defined as basic bilingual literacy, eLiteracy and numeracy, as explained in Appendices A to C. In this context, eLiteracy is a learning medium for literacy and numeracy.

1.2 Objectives:

With respect to the National Policy

- determining the aims and goals of the policy;
- determining the general roles and complementarities of the various stakeholders in the policy;
- proposing a working definition of basic literacy, eLiteracy and numeracy attainment from Years 1 to 3.

With respect to the National Strategy

- proposing a Core Competences framework which is signposted with indispensable educational experiences;
- proposing an ongoing methodology and related tools that give valid, reliable, timely and personalised information on the state of attainment and mastery of the Core Competences at the key stages of Maltese compulsory education;
- proposing timelines for phased implementation;
- proposing an integrated approach for the acquisition of the Core Competences that includes the following four components:
 - Early Support
 - Early Identification
 - Integration
 - Intervention

in terms of working with the whole range of stakeholders, at school⁵ and College⁶ level.

⁴ Throughout the document, Year 3 refers to the state schooling equivalent.

⁵ Throughout this document, the term ‘Schools’ refers to both state schools within a College and to non-state schools.

⁶ Throughout this document, the term ‘Colleges’ always refers to the state sector networks of secondary and feeder primary schools established by law in June 2006.

1.3 Group Membership

The Working Group was composed of:

- Grace Grima, Director General, Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education, *Chairperson*;
- Sandro Spiteri, Principal, St Margaret College *Working Group Coordinator*;
- Leonard Grech, Assistant Director, Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education;
- Anna Maria Gilson, Education Officer – Mathematics;
- Carmelo Ellul, Head of Department – Mathematics;
- Christine Firman, Coordinator Specific Learning Difficulties Service;
- Christine Cachia Enriquez, eLearning Support Teacher;
- Tania Gatt, eLearning Support Teacher.

2. A Core Competences Policy for Colleges and Schools

2.1 Core Competences in the National Curriculum

The need for a Core Competences policy for Colleges and schools arises from the National Curriculum⁷ itself. The Curriculum places the need for attainment of Core Competences in a prism of contexts; Core Competences are fundamental to the development of a sense of self (p. 51), to communicate with the world around us as consumers (p. 57) and through the media (p. 58) and to participate fully in the world of work (p. 61). The development of communicative competence (p. 67) is, indeed, central to the requirement of the National Curriculum for schools to develop a language policy (p. 79).

Other key perspectives enshrined in the National Curriculum that are relevant to the present document are:

- the central role of parents⁸ (p. 44) and the community (p. 89) in the learning process;
- the importance of early identification of educational needs (p. 76);
- the inclusion of all children in an effective differentiated teaching and learning environment (p. 36);
- a combination of formative and summative assessment (p. 37);
- the role of the school as a community learning centre (p. 89).

The need for a Core Competences policy was also highlighted in the results of the first and second National Literacy Surveys⁹ carried out by the Literacy Unit¹⁰. The Surveys indicated that certain geographical regions and social categories needed more support than others and that this attention needed to be in the form of both coordinated and focused early intervention as well as remediation.

The proposed Core Competences policy and strategy fall within the wider national commitment towards a lifelong learning orientation to all schooling and education.

2.2 Defining Core Competences, Policy, Strategy and Action Plan

The final recommendation regarding Key Competences¹¹ and lifelong learning approved by the European Parliament¹², whilst acknowledging that the key competences are all equally important, states that:

“Competence in the fundamental basic skills of language, literacy, numeracy and in information and communication technologies (ICT) is an essential foundation for learning, and learning to learn supports all learning activities.” (L394/14)

The term ‘competences’ refers to knowledge, skills and attitudes.

⁷ Ministry of Education (1999).

⁸ ‘Parent’ in the present document is understood as the significant, long-term adult carer of the child and includes looked-after children.

⁹ Mifsud et al. (2000) and Mifsud et al. (2004).

¹⁰ Now the Literacy Centre, Faculty of Education, University of Malta.

¹¹ The eight key competences are:

- i. communication in the mother tongue;
- ii. communication in foreign languages;
- iii. mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology;
- iv. digital competence;
- v. learning to learn;
- vi. social and civic competences;
- vii. sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; and
- viii. cultural awareness and expression.

¹² Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning’, Official Journal of the European Union, L394/10-18, 30-12-06.

The purpose of the present document is to focus on these “fundamental basic skills” or Core Competences, namely: bilingual literacy, eLiteracy and numeracy. Although science is also considered a core competence within the EU educational context, this area is being considered in a separate forthcoming document to be circulated by the DQSE. The remit of the Working Group is therefore to propose a policy and a strategy that give special attention to the attainment of basic English and Maltese literacy skills as well as basic eLiteracy and numeracy skills in the early years of primary education for all learners in fulfillment of their potential.

In this document the **Policy** is a set of criteria that underpins the Strategy and which emerges from the principles and beliefs enshrined in the National Curriculum. The overarching criteria of the proposed Policy are given below in section 2.3, while the competence-specific Policy aims and objectives are given in Chapters 3 to 5.

The **Strategy** recommends general guidelines for ways of implementing the Policy. The proposed Strategy is given in Chapter 6.

The **Action Plans** are to be developed and ‘owned’ by the various Colleges and schools. They present an integrated and comprehensive set of concrete actions. They are based on a situational analysis, including strengths and needs, of the target school/s, and are intended to reach specific audiences and goals. Action Plans have definite timelines and expected outcomes, which are expressed and evaluated in terms of performance indicators.

An Action Plan is therefore not simply an account or conglomeration of all services and practices presently in place. It may critically appropriate these services and strategies both as a point of entry and of departure and thereby strengthen, transform, and add to them as required. An example of a school-based Action Plan developed on the basis of the National Strategy is given in Appendix E.

2.3 The Core Competences Policy

The purpose of the Policy is to ensure the attainment of the specific Core Competences in mainstream education. To achieve this we need to look at:

- the role of school stakeholders: school administrators, teachers, parents, learners, the local community;
- the role of service providers apart from schools;
- criteria related to day-school provision;
- criteria related to after-school and community-based provision;
- criteria related to the monitoring and review of the strategy;

2.3.1 *Role of school stakeholders: school administrators, teachers, parents, learners, the local community:*

- a) **Colleges and schools need to recognize and celebrate best practices already in place.** Further plans with respect to the attainment of Core Competences need to be scaffolded on the basis of this positive experience.
- b) **Colleges and schools need to ‘own’ the Policy and their Action Plans.** Indeed the Action Plans need to be a concrete response to requests made by the Colleges and schools, and need to be integrated into the respective School Development Plans.
- c) **Teachers need to ‘own’ the Policy and Action Plans in order to implement them effectively.** They will only implement effectively what they understand, are willing to try and come to personally and professionally believe in.
- d) **Teachers require adequate and on-going support, including continuous professional development,** with respect to planning, implementing and reviewing the relevant components of the Core Competences Action Plan.
- e) **Parents need to ‘own’ the Policy and Action Plans.** Parents need to form part of the development, implementation and review of both the Strategy and Action Plans.
- f) **Parents need to be trained to contribute effectively to the Policy and Plans.** Parents have to be able to access such training.

- g) **The voice of the learners needs to be present** in the development, implementation and review of both the Strategy and Action Plans.
- h) **Networking between Colleges and schools (both state and non-state) is to be promoted** to pool resources, experience, expertise and training on Core Competences, and to jointly implement the Action Plans.
- i) **The local community needs to be involved through a process of information and feedback** with respect to the development, implementation and review of both the Strategy and Action Plans.

2.3.2 *Role of entities servicing schools:*

- a) **The present institutional ‘front-line’ Core Competences service provision needs to be rationalized:** although in the past the present providers – the Complementary Service, the SpLD Service, the Literacy Unit and the FES – have done sterling work individually and at times collaboratively, the next step for greater equity and effectiveness in service provision is the rationalization of these services.
- b) **Coordination is essential in both planning and provision by ‘front-line’ Core Competences service providers:** once this rationalization has taken place, coordination between the providers needs to go beyond sharing of information, respect for boundaries and joint activities; the providers need to synergize and scaffold resources and expertise in terms of a unified goal-oriented programme of action.
- c) **Coordination is essential between the ‘front-line’ service providers and the ‘second-line’¹³ service providers** that impinge on Core Competences attainment such as: the Let Me Learn Programme, the Thinking Skills Programme, the School Psychological Service, the S.E.N.T. Team, Learning Support Assistants and the school/local libraries services.
- d) **Coordination is essential with community-based organizations** that are providing Core Competences support provision in the community.

2.3.3 *Day-School provision:*

- a) Without prejudice to the rights and responsibilities of parents in terms of their involvement in their children’s educational entitlement, **it is the responsibility of the school to ensure that all learners master the Core Competences during their primary cycle of education**, to be able to access the full curriculum and become lifelong learners.
- b) **The teaching and learning processes of the Core Competences need to be reviewed.**
- c) **Alternative learning programmes need to be developed** for learners below the Core Competences Benchmark¹⁴; such programmes aim to upskill these learners to the level of the standard syllabi as quickly as possible.
- d) **Individual learning plans (ILPs¹⁵) need to be developed by the class teacher** where appropriate, especially in mixed-ability contexts and where there is appropriate extra help, such as an LSA in the classroom.
- e) **Actions need to address societal contributors of Core Competences deficit** such as gender, age, social class, poverty, home environment and ethnicity.

2.3.4 *After-school and family-based provision*

- a) **Schools need to recognize and celebrate good practice in family learning that is already in place from the earliest years.** Further plans with respect to the role of family learning in the attainment of Core Competences need to be scaffolded on the basis of this positive experience.

¹³ The terms ‘front-line’ and ‘second-line’ are used exclusively in the present context of Core Competences provision.

¹⁴ See 2.3.5 a).

¹⁵ Individual Learning Programmes, or ILPs, are different from IEPs. IEPs are developed by LSAs in collaboration with the class teacher with the support of the school administration and the INCO, and relate exclusively to statemented children. ILPs are more informal and flexible, and represent the personalisation of a particular lesson plan or episode and/or its expected outcome for a particular non-statemented child according to set criteria.

- b) **After-school provision can never replace school-based learning and teaching**, but if used appropriately it can reinforce school-based learning and teaching by providing different learning contexts to reach the same attainment targets. This is true both for school-based provision by state institutions such as the FES, as well as provision by CBOs¹⁶.
- c) **After-school provision is normally of a definite nature** with the explicit aim of helping the child and/or the family acquire the necessary competences to learn successfully in the school context, thus no longer requiring after-school support. However, in certain circumstances such as latch-key children and significantly weak parental support, after-school provision may take on a complementary role to school provision.
- d) **Community-based provision strengthens the capacity of the local community to support families** in family literacy, home-school links and parental lifelong learning, that lead to increased Core Competences attainment.
- e) **After-school and community-based provision strengthen the role of the local school as a community learning centre**, or as a key node in a community learning network, in line with the National Curriculum.
- f) **Actions need to address societal contributors of Core Competences deficit** such as gender, age, social class, poverty, home environment and ethnicity.

2.3.5 Monitoring and review

- a) **A Core Competences Benchmark needs to be developed.** This is the level below which eight-year old learners (Year 3) need personalized support in the form of Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) in order to ensure the attainment of such competences by the end of the primary cycle.
- b) **The Action Plans need to have inbuilt school-led assessment and evaluation procedures** that are both formative and summative, and that gather evidence to gauge perceptions of learning and real learning gains.
- c) **Teachers need to be action-researchers** on the effectiveness of the Core Competences Action Plan, and key stakeholders in its further elaboration on the basis of experience and results.
- d) In the State sector, **Colleges need to develop and ensure the implementation of College-based Core Competences Action Plans**, and to support schools within the College in such implementation.
- e) In the non-State sector, **schools will be invited to participate in the development and implementation of Core Competences Action Plans.**
- f) **The DQSE will have an ongoing external support, monitoring and evaluation function** to ensure the development and effectiveness of the Core Competences Action Plan.

¹⁶ Community-Based Organisations

3. The Literacy Aims of the Core Competences Policy

3.1 Defining Literacy

Appropriate literacy skills contribute to the individual's well being and personal development as well as to the country's economic and social development. Becoming literate is a complex activity that involves a range of skills which are required in a variety of contexts. Definitions of literacy are various and reflect the changing demands of society and the consequent increases in levels of expectancy (EFA Global Monitoring Report¹⁷; Mifsud, 2005). The International Adult Literacy Survey (1994/99) defined literacy as:

“using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals and to develop one's knowledge and potential.”

<http://www.csu.nisra.gov.uk/survey.asp106.htm>¹⁸

For the purposes of this document literacy is defined as the ability to express oneself confidently in Maltese and/or English, to read meaningfully and to use the written word for the purposes of communication so as to access the full curriculum and thus lead to the mastery of the key competences for lifelong learning.

This document does not critically review the issue of bilingualism or indeed multilingualism since there is a Curriculum Review under way. The definition of literacy is therefore provisionally limited to the basic competences required to ensure effective access to the full curriculum in Malta today by a Maltese native language speaker.

3.2 The Literacy Aims of the Policy

The literacy aims of this policy are the following:

- to ensure learners develop their ability to express themselves adequately and coherently by means of the spoken and written word;
- to target all learners both in terms of learning styles and levels of competence;
- to ensure that learners are provided with up-to-date appropriate resources for the development of their full literacy potential;
- to offer learners every opportunity to look upon reading and writing as enjoyable and pleasurable activities;
- to reinforce the basic skills of the Core Competences by using the commonalities within each area for the purposes of extension and elaboration (e.g. sequencing skills in literacy, eLiteracy and numeracy);
- to offer teachers professional development and the possibility of sharing of good practice.

¹⁷ UNESCO (2005)

¹⁸ Accessed on 29.07.2008

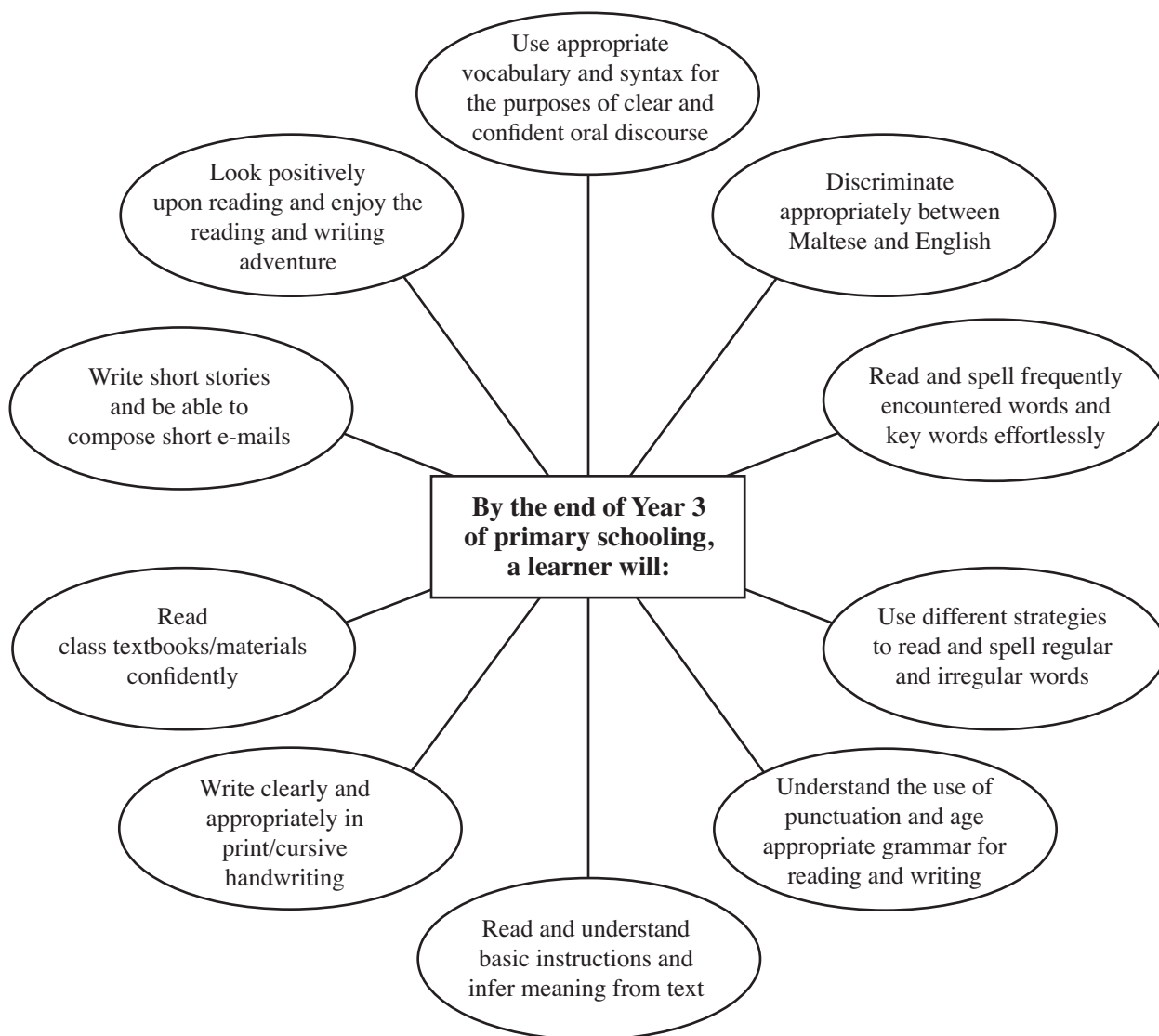


Figure 3a
Summary of Literacy Attainment Targets at end of Year 3

Appendices A and B present the Core Competences Checklists Maltese and English respectively for literacy at Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 levels. As explained earlier, they are based on the communication needs of a Maltese native speaker. These checklists are further elaborations of the attainment targets summary given above, up to a basic competence level. Teachers may use these checklists as a tool to assist them in recording which learners are experiencing difficulty in the mastery of specific competences. Teachers can thus provide focused support. The Year 3 checklists are expected to become aligned on the basis of evidence from its use in the Colleges as a Core Competency Benchmark for bilingual literacy for Maltese native speakers.

4. The eLiteracy Aims of the Core Competences Policy

4.1 Defining eLiteracy

Information and communications technologies (ICTs) affect every aspect of our everyday lives. Rapid changes in society incurred by technology have also redefined our concept of literacy. Literacy today includes:

“...the ability to read and interpret media (text, sound, images), to reproduce data and images through digital manipulation, and to evaluate and apply new knowledge gained from digital environments.”

(Jones-Kavalier & Flannigan, 2006, p.8)

eLiteracy, an essential element in lifelong learning, includes possessing the ability to use digital technology, communication tools and networks to locate, evaluate, use and create information. This enables users to develop new social and economic opportunities.

For the purpose of this document eLiteracy emphasises the use of digital technologies to explore other areas of the curriculum. Learners will primarily develop their eSkills incidentally and indirectly, while engaged in curricular learning activities. This enables them to effectively access the full curriculum in order to master the full range of key competences for lifelong learning.

4.2 The eLiteracy Aims of the Policy

The eLiteracy aims of the policy are the following:

- to enable learners to become aware of digital resources and select appropriate technologies to carry out specific tasks;
- to help learners develop a positive attitude towards digital technologies;
- to equip learners with eCompetences so as to engage in eLearning initiatives to become lifelong learners;
- to develop active learning opportunities through appropriate, personalized and differentiated activities.

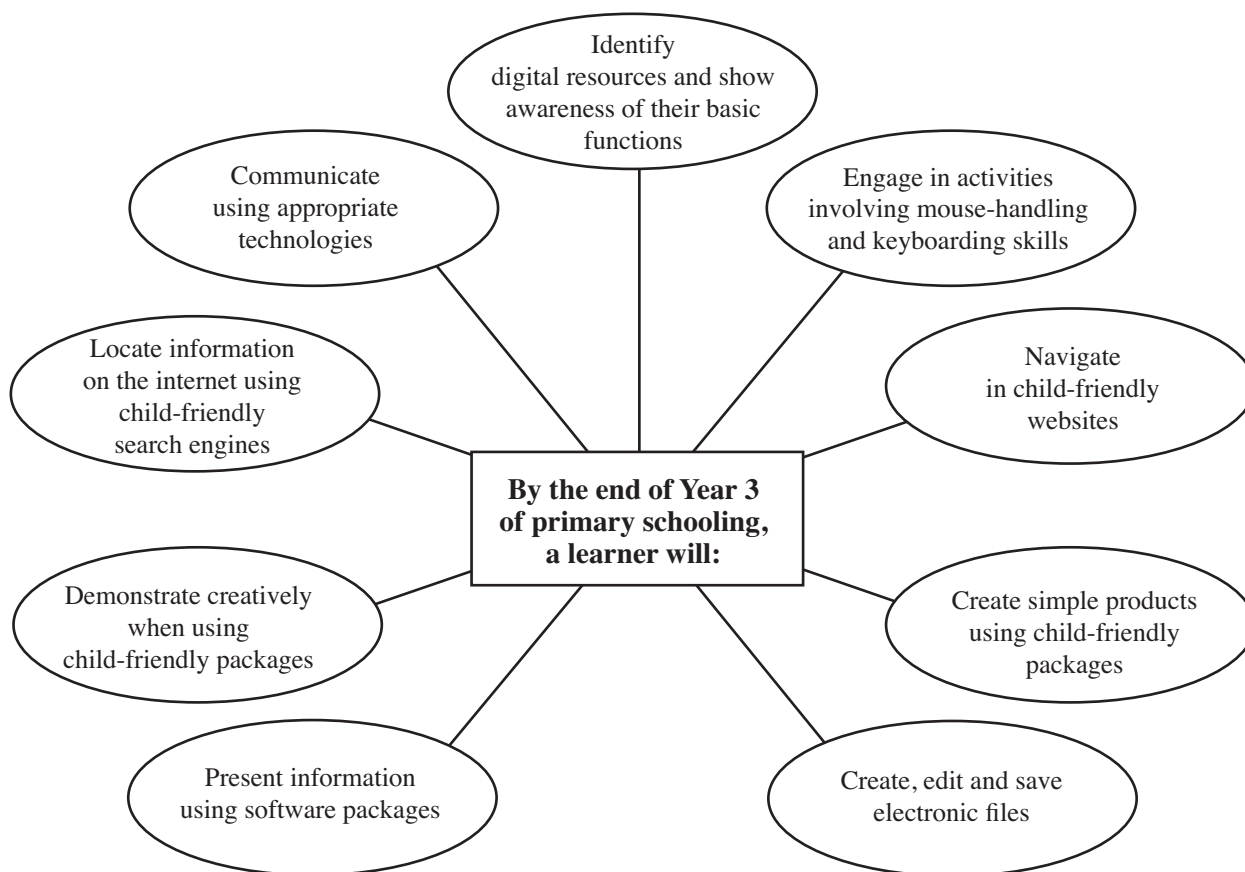


Figure 4a
Summary of eLiteracy Attainment Targets at end of Year 3

Appendix C presents the Core Competences Checklists for eLiteracy at Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 levels. These checklists are further elaborations of the attainment targets summary given above, up to a basic competence level. Teachers may use these checklists as a tool to assist them in recording which learners are experiencing difficulty in the mastery of specific competences. Teachers can thus provide focused support. The Year 3 checklist is expected to become aligned on the basis of evidence from its use in the Colleges as a Core Competency Benchmark for eLiteracy.

5. The Numeracy Aims of the Core Competences Policy

5.1 Defining Numeracy

The British National Numeracy Strategy¹⁹ uses the word ‘numeracy’ to emphasise competence at abstract number skills and relations as well as to include data handling and measurement.

“Numeracy is a proficiency which involves confidence and competence with numbers and measures. It requires an understanding of the number system, a repertoire of computational skills and an inclination and ability to solve number problems in a variety of contexts. Numeracy also demands practical understanding of the ways in which information is gathered by counting and measuring, and is presented in graphs, diagrams, charts and tables.”

(National Framework for teaching Mathematics, 1999, p.4)

For the purpose of this document numeracy is understood as the ability to work through Mathematics so as to effectively access full compulsory education curriculum in order to master the full range of key competences for lifelong learning in Mathematics.

5.2 The Numeracy Aims of the Policy

The numeracy aims of this policy are the following:

- to develop a positive attitude towards mathematics so that children enjoy learning the subject in an interesting and attractive manner;
- to enable learners to confidently use correct mathematical language and vocabulary;
- to enable learners to express themselves mathematically and to converse about the subject meaningfully;
- to enable learners to develop clear logical and sequential thinking;
- to ensure that every learner acquires a strong foundation in basic mathematical skills;
- to equip learners with skills that will enable them to apply problem solving strategies to real and unfamiliar situations both in and outside the school.

¹⁹ For the full list of texts referred to with respect to Mathematics, please refer to the References section at the end of this document.

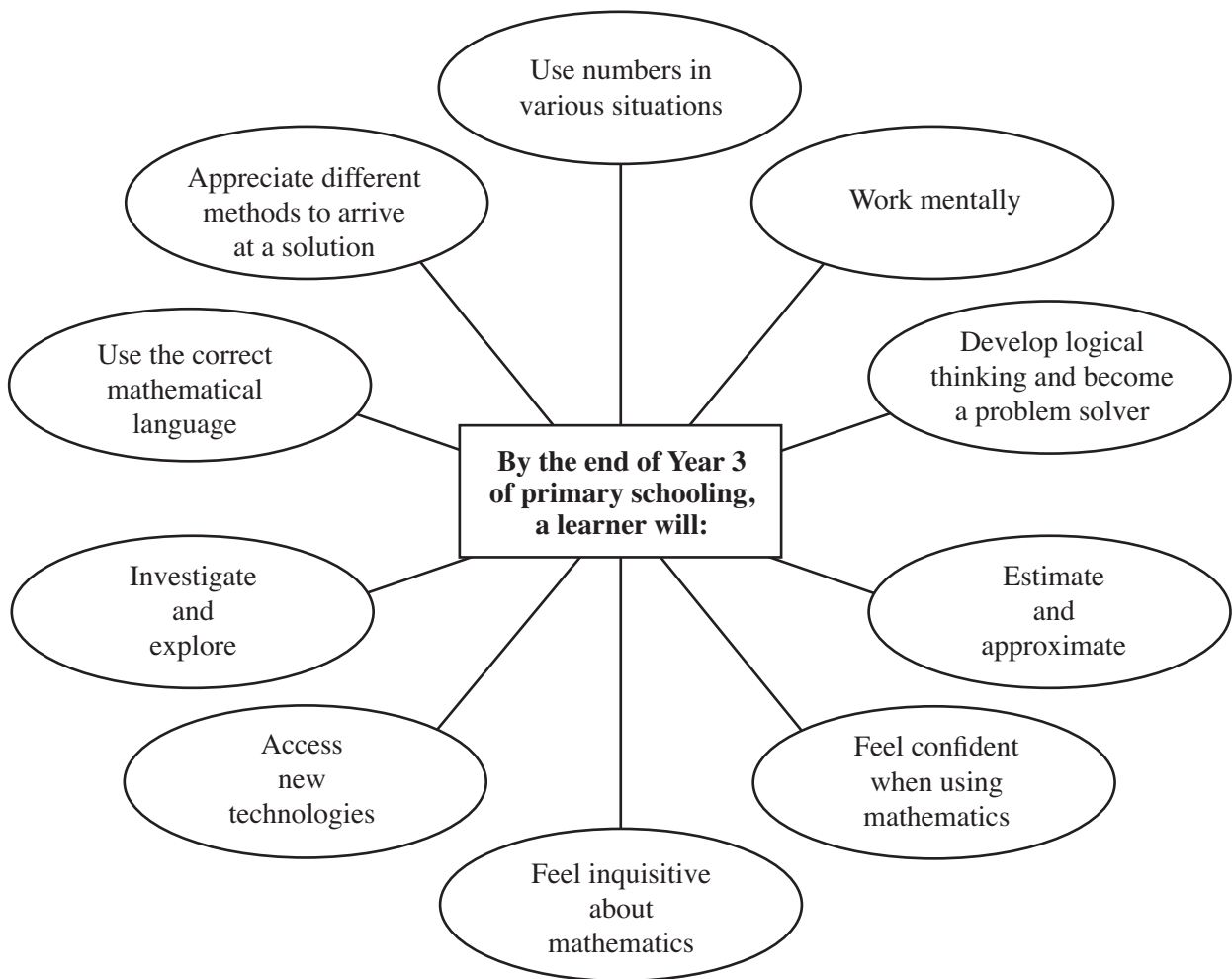


Figure 5a
Summary of Mathematics Attainment Targets at end of Year 3

Appendix D presents the Core Competences Checklists for numeracy at Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 levels. These checklists are further elaborations of the attainment targets summary given above, up to a basic competence level. Teachers may use these checklists as a tool to assist them in recording which learners are experiencing difficulty in the mastery of specific competences. Teachers can thus provide focused support. The Year 3 checklist is expected to become aligned on the basis of evidence from its use in the Colleges as a Core Competency Benchmark for numeracy.

6. A Core Competences Strategy for Colleges and Schools

6.1 A Framework for the Core Competences Strategy

The purpose of the Strategy is to build upon successful initiatives already in place in individual schools and Colleges, to address the lacunae in present provision and to make proposals at College and school level aimed at the attainment of the selected Core Competences by all learners. The Strategy then leads to the formulation of College- and/or school-based Action Plans. An example of a school-based Action Plan is given in Appendix E.

The Strategy uses both an ADDITIVE as well as a TRANSFORMATIVE approach:

- **Additive approach:** adding services to provision already in place; most after-school provision falls in this category.
- **Transformative approach:** assisting schools and Colleges in reviewing and rethinking their schooling practices, with the main emphasis on teaching/learning strategies and home-school links.

Taking into consideration the indications in the National Curriculum and the Literacy Surveys as analyzed in section 2.1 of this document, the Core Competences Strategy has the following priorities:

- the prevention of Core Competences attainment deficit through EARLY SUPPORT at kindergarten and early primary levels, that includes strong school-home-community links, as well as proven methodologies and practices prior to and during schooling;
- the EARLY IDENTIFICATION of Core Competences attainment deficit in the lower primary, that includes systematic screening, needs assessment and development as well as the implementation of individual learning plans where necessary;
- the INTEGRATION into mainstream primary level teaching and learning of strategies, methodologies and practices that sustain and enhance Core Competences attainment for all;
- INTERVENTION, in the short and medium term, of specific strategies for the attainment of Core Competences in primary classes, that includes a synergetic web of proven differentiated and individual learning strategies and methodologies that are implemented in the classroom, the home and the community.

The four priorities of the Strategy are realized not only through teacher-led actions at school, but also through actions within the community. Thus the four priorities of the Strategy each have a school-based and community-based component, which together form a framework for the Action Plans:

**Table 6.1
Core Competences Action Plan Framework**

	<i>School-based Provision</i>	<i>Community-based Provision</i>
Early Support		
Early Identification		
Integration		
Intervention		

6.2 A rich and varied toolkit of strategies

It is not the intention of this Strategy to promote a particular approach in literacy, eLiteracy or numeracy to the exclusion of all others. The underlying principle should always be to teach the learner, not the method. Indeed, the preferred scenario is for teachers to have in hand a multiplicity of approaches, and to select their teaching/learning methods according to the learning style and needs of each individual learner in their classroom. This may imply levels of knowledge and upskilling in teachers as well as types of learning environments that may not presently be in place but are being planned.

The direction of this Strategy is therefore to suggest ways of proceeding to the mastery of Core Competences that are enlightened by the latest research and practice and therefore would be prioritized especially where intervention for reluctant learners is required. At the same time, the Strategy strongly recommends that such practice is added to the teacher's already rich and varied toolkit. Teachers would use the appropriate tool at the appropriate time.

What makes a strategy effective? This is a contentious and highly subjective question. We need to move away from an 'objectivist' perspective of a strategy as a stand-alone predetermined package of resources and approaches that are implemented across all levels without taking into consideration individual needs. It is true that experience and research indicate that particular strategies work better with particular learners in particular situations. However in the final analysis the teaching/learning dynamic, which is unique for each teacher-learner pair and unique also for the particular circumstance in which this pair is interacting, is an inextricable component of the efficacy of a particular strategy. In other words, a dedicated, experienced and effective teacher can make work practically any strategy s/he believes in so as to achieve some degree of learner mastery. Added to all this, the constructivist approach to learning puts the emphasis more on the active construction of meaning by the learners themselves.

This is not to imply that everything is acceptable. Current research and practice indicate that multi-sensory approaches, whether they are applied to literacy, eLiteracy or numeracy, tend to resonate with a wider group of learners than other strategies precisely because they cater for a variety of learning styles. At the same time it is also true that an experienced teacher needs to use as wide a variety of approaches as possible so as to ensure that all learners remain engaged with appropriately challenging tasks as each new skill is being mastered.

6.3 School-based Provision: Suggested Teaching/Learning Strategies

Integrating all the Key Competences

Although the present focus at this stage is on the three core competences of bilingual literacy, eLearning and numeracy, the softer skills of learning to learn, initiative and entrepreneurship should at all times inspire teachers' methodology and approaches. These softer skills will help students to become more independent, lifelong learners which is also one of the aims of the present document. Moreover, where possible the other key competences, namely science and technology, social and civic competences, and cultural awareness and expression should implicitly be integrated in the pedagogical material. In this way whilst focusing on the core competences, we would not be losing sight of the holistic education that is every student's entitlement.

Literacy

The teaching of literacy particularly the teaching of reading has for long been controversial (see Adams 1990). While one school of thought has advocated the whole word method another movement has posited strongly that the teaching of phonics is all effective. However, if children are exposed solely to the whole-word method excessive 'barking at print' may result. Alternatively, mere phonics may lead to slow, dull, laborious reading which could deprive children from any pleasure in reading. Consequently, it is the skillful interplay of the two methods which could contribute to the development of literacy in each of the languages. Given that most children in Malta are exposed to Maltese and English concurrently, albeit in different contexts and to different degrees, it is necessary to ensure that the teaching of literacy takes into consideration the differences in the orthography (see Ziegler & Goswami, 2006; Firman 2007) and the relevance of using strategies which highlight such differences. As already discussed in section 6.2, multisensory teaching/learning (an approach which incorporates all sensory modalities) can be considered a key component in the teacher's toolkit with respect to the basic requisites for early literacy development.

The concept of literacy should also take into account the primary role played by the spoken language. The purposeful development of pupils' spoken language, even in the mother tongue, is separate from, and a condition to, mastery in the other components of literacy. Such development is crucially dependent on the kind of oral activities that they are exposed to. For this reason, pupils should be placed in various situations, through different occasions, where it becomes important for them to communicate. This entails

that learning to talk is not just a matter of learning how to construct sentences but of learning how to engage with other people, to respond to what they say, to influence what they think and do, in other words, 'to make meanings' (Barnes 1990).

eLiteracy

In this document, eLiteracy is understood exclusively as a preferred medium for the teaching/learning of other content areas, including literacy and numeracy. The eCompetences referred to in Appendix C are not meant to be taught in isolation, but acquired incidentally while learners are engaged in meaningful curricular activities. However, it is acknowledged that a minimum amount of direct formal and/or non-formal instruction may be required, according to the learning styles and needs of the learners.

Numeracy

The recent reform in the teaching of mathematics through the introduction of new calculation strategies is already starting to reap positive results. These strategies help the learner:

- develop a sense of the size of a number and where it fits in the number system;
- sharpen mental methods of calculations and hence become more accurate and efficient;
- make sense of number problems and select the operations required to arrive at a solution;
- explain methods and reasoning through the use of correct mathematical language;
- make estimations and judge whether an answer is reasonable;
- make predictions from graphs, diagrams, charts and tables;
- understand and develop problem solving skills.

6.4 Community-based Provision: Suggested Support Programmes

Community-based programmes can be largely divided into two categories:

- family support programmes;
- wider community initiatives.

6.4.1 Family support programmes

Research and practice²⁰, in Malta as well as abroad, has shown clearly that:

- greater parental involvement in children's education leads to greater attainment;
- the earlier this involvement starts, the greater the children's attainment.

As has been made clear in the Policy section of this document, the emphasis on parental involvement is not intended to shift the onus of core competence attainment from schools to families. This document reaffirms the role of parents as advocated in the National Curriculum. A number of tried-and-tested family support programmes are being proposed for possible inclusion in the College- or school-based Action Plans. Their common features are that they:

- target families directly;
- are interactive;
- have inbuilt flexibility to allow for increased parental involvement and adaptation as the programme progresses;
- include a recognition and celebration of what the parents already know and are therefore not deficit-based;
- have the potential to lead to parental empowerment and lifelong learning.

Of course, there is a wide range of other programmes that can be utilized, adapted or developed. However it is recommended that any family support programme that is included in an Action Plan should have the five features mentioned above.

²⁰ Refer to: Basic Skills Agency (1998); Bastiani (2002); Borg and Mayo (2001); Camilleri et al. (2005); Hannon (2003); Hornby (2000); Redding (1997); Spiteri and Camilleri (2007); Spiteri (2008); Sultana (1994); Wolfendale and Topping (1996).

- a) **Book Sacks:** The mother or parents of each newborn are given a small sack or bag of 0-3 year books and the family members are all enrolled in the local library free of charge. In post-natal classes they are shown how to use these books with their newborn and how to make best use of the library once this first set of books has been exhausted. This input is reinforced during mandatory health checks during the child's first years of life. This method of introducing all families to books was found to be highly effective in the UK. In Malta a limited version of this approach has been attempted by local publishers with kindergarten children in collaboration with Local Councils.
- b) **Story Bags:** Story bags can be used with children of pre-school age right up to age 8 or 9, depending on circumstances. They contain a central story book which provides the theme and other reading or picture books and an eBook software package related to this central theme. It also has artefacts and/or puppets or toys from the main story which the young readers can manipulate to help them animate and visualize the story sequence and characters. Story Bags can be bought ready made, but are often more effective if made by the family for its own use. The Foundation for Educational Services (FES) has developed courses and resources to teach parents how to make their own Story Bags. Some schools in Malta have even encouraged parents to develop story bags for the school library so that the learners will have access to a wide range of bags to take home and go through with their parents.
- c) **Ongi Ongi Ongella Programme:** This programme was developed by the FES to help parents appreciate the informal teaching and learning through play that takes place in kindergarten classrooms. The programme invites parents to observe a learning episode organized by the Kindergarten Assistants and to interact with their children during this time. Afterwards, participating parents discuss how they can best support the learning process through parallel activities at home. The programme includes the training and support of the Kindergarten Assistants involved. Due to this experience, some schools in Malta have now incorporated this approach into the learning and teaching process and have focused on home-school links at kindergarten level.
- d) **Klabb Hilti:** Klabb Hilti is a type of family literacy programme²¹ developed by the FES. A typical programme runs for one term, one or two sessions are organized weekly. Parental participation is mandatory. Each Hilti session is built around creative self-expression activities with in-built literacy and/or numeracy as well as parent capacity building objectives. Each session has a joint learning episode during which parents and children work together and practise new skills and strategies. Before and/or after this episode during the same session the parents and children are grouped separately to process the learning that has taken place throughout the session in order to strengthen the curriculum of the home and support parents' own lifelong learning. Klabb Hilti has proven to be an effective early support strategy in many state primary schools and has been adapted for use in the non-state sector and in collaboration with sports entities.
- e) **Paired/Shared Reading:** These strategies can provide parents with simple and effective ways of supporting young readers without overwhelming them. Paired/shared reading takes place at the preferred pace of the learner, who is thus in control of this specific support that can be provided on the child's request, by the parent. This training can be given through short courses and has been provided by the Literacy Centre, the FES, non-state schools and others. The Specific Learning Difficulties Service (SpLD) has adapted this technique to include phonological awareness training and more extensive parental involvement and has documented very tangible progress and outcomes.²²
- f) **Paired reading for dyslexic children:** The SpLD Service has been innovative in the area of Paired Reading and adapted techniques to cater more specifically for the needs of dyslexic learners while enhancing the opportunities of other struggling readers. Parents have been trained in the development

²¹ There is a range of definitions of family literacy, that between them incorporate all the family support initiatives mentioned here. Klabb Hilti follows the 'bridge to adult empowerment' model. The content in family literacy programmes can focus both on literacy and numeracy or other content as requested. For a more detailed discussion on this topic please see: Camilleri et al. (2005).

²² See Firman, Francica and Grech, 2001; Grech, 2005.

of phonological awareness together with strategies for recalling irregular or ‘tricky’ words. Moreover, parents have also been trained to be positively supportive, to reflect on their own responses, to select the appropriate reading materials and thereby to extend their child’s motivation to read. In turn children have reacted enthusiastically to the regularity of the activity and to maintaining daily records. Tangible progress and outcomes²³ have been recorded.

- g) Structured multisensory teaching:** Intensive structured multisensory teaching programmes have led to the significant improvement of struggling and /or dyslexic readers. The SpLD Service has organized a number of courses for dyslexic individuals which regularly confirm the effectiveness of such teaching. Moreover, the monitored individual gains recorded by the SpLD team have highlighted the value of multisensory teaching in reducing literacy difficulties and extending literacy opportunities. Furthermore, the training of teachers and support assistants in multisensory techniques to regularly target individual needs has contributed to the learners’ improvement and fostered renewed interest in reading.²⁴
- h) Homework Clubs:** Broadly speaking, there are two types of Homework clubs. The first is a homework help club often organised by schools, Local Councils and NGOs. Though such clubs may have elements of parental involvement, the homework support given is not coordinated with the school teachers who have assigned the homework. These clubs can provide effective support, but may lack the possibility of feedback to the day-school programme. Homework clubs as developed by the FES are organized in close collaboration with the base school. Homework club tutors effectively work on implementing the learning programme of the school teacher by ensuring comprehension and mastery of homework that is specifically assigned for the Club sessions. Such Homework Clubs also include an element of parental involvement to promote dissemination of such strategies at home.
- i) Family Writing Activities:** These may include one-off evening, day or weekend events, and are organized by the Malta Writing Programme within the FES, the St James Cavalier Centre for Creativity and some schools, amongst others. They can also take the form of clubs which are sometimes organized in collaboration with schools or Local Councils. Writing clubs may run over a duration of five to ten sessions, During these activities, both parents and children are encouraged to write about their own personal interests using different genres and to give and receive feedback on their writing. Participants learn to appreciate and make best use of the process of writing in themselves and in others whilst parents also learn how to best support their children as writers.

Other programmes with similar features may also be considered:

- j) Family eLearning Club:** This club aims to provide parents and children with the opportunity to explore eLearning facilities. Parents and children can browse the internet to explore set topics and use appropriate software packages to create printed and digital resources. This club will empower learners with eCompetences which will enable them to become ICT leaders for their peers in class. It will also develop the school’s eLearning culture and enhance parental involvement. Parents will be encouraged to access the school website to keep up-to-date with current events and initiatives. Parents may be provided with relevant websites to access at home to consolidate learning activities carried out during the club.
- k) ICT Writing Club:** Learners meet to engage in creative writing activities using different software packages. These include the creation of different genres of writing, including thematic websites, electronic books and electronic newsletters. These can then be uploaded on a website to provide learners with an opportunity to publish their work online. eLiterate parents can be involved in the running of this club.

²³ See Firman, Francica and Grech, 2001; Grech, 2005.

²⁴ For example: Specific Learning Difficulties Service (2006) and (2008).

- l) **Hands-on Mathematics Activities:** Colleges and schools can organise ‘hands-on’ activities for young learners and their parents. These activities would target learners at both ends of the spectrum, i.e. both those who are already finding difficulty coping with mathematics, as well as those who are gifted and talented in the subject. These activities are chosen to encourage parents to help their children practise using mathematical calculation strategies in an innovative and fun way.
- m) **Specialised libraries:** Three specialised reference and/or lending libraries are available with respect to literacy. The most established is the SpLD library which offers a range of reading materials which are specifically designed to cater for the needs of learners encountering difficulties. Books normally have shorter sentences, fewer pages, larger font and initially more restricted vocabulary. Such reading material contributes to boosting the learner’s confidence and self-esteem thereby renewing motivation. Moreover, books of a low reading age but high interest level have often enticed parents to extend their own literacy skills. Books on tape/DVD are also contributing considerably to literacy development. The library is also furnished with a considerable number of multisensory programmes and manipulatives which have been of much interest to schools and Colleges when building up their own resources. The FES has also developed an extensive professional reference library with a special focus on parental empowerment, schools as community learning centres, home school links and family literacy. Finally, a fully updated and extensive teachers’ literacy resource library was set up some years ago within the National Curriculum Centre by what was then the Department for Curriculum Management in collaboration with the Literacy Unit.

6.4.2 Wider community initiatives

Wider community activities are organized by schools and by entities within the local community, such as Local Councils, community-based organizations and NGOs. Although these activities cannot be considered as first-line initiatives in a Core Competences Action Plan, they can have a positive supportive role as part of a well-structured Action Plan. Examples of such activities include:

- a well-stocked and well-organised **local library** with reading activities and access to the internet;
- accessible **child minding facilities** to allow parents to take part in family support programmes. For example, the FES offers training programmes for child minders and coordinates their services to third parties as one way of helping towards parental lifelong learning;
- **formal parental skills training** through *ad hoc* courses on diverse issues such as literacy attainment, internet safety, the new calculation strategies and general educational development, which lead to greater parental input in their children’s educational development. Many such courses have been organized by schools, Education Officers, the eLearning Centre and the Literacy Unit, amongst others.
- **interactive training for parents** enables parents to better understand the needs of the child encountering specific difficulties in literacy development. The SpLD Service regularly organizes meetings, seminars and other activities. Such sessions give parents the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the needs of their child and empower them with practical ‘hands-on’ strategies. Group work, in relation to the child’s level of ability, offers parents the opportunity to develop familiarity with advocated techniques. Moreover, the SpLD Service annually organizes a 5-day seminar which gives parents clear insights into the nature of support required by the child in the home environment. Such seminars contribute to supporting both the parent and child and enhance motivation and enthusiasm.
- **non formal parental skills training** through modelling by parent peers, such as in ‘Home Start’ organized by Appoġġ, in which parent volunteers are trained to demonstrate good parenting practices to parents of at-risk families, in the latter’s own home environment.
- the **coordination and training of parent volunteers** to provide services to the school community that can support the Core Competences Action Plan. Such training is provided by some schools, the AKS²⁵ and the Parent Leaders’ Forum amongst others;
- provision of **Id f’Id Courses:** These courses are organized by the FES in collaboration with the requesting school. A team of parent helpers is first identified, and FES tutors help the parent helpers team identify a topic that is of interest to many parents in the community and to develop a four- or five-session interactive course to address this topic. The FES tutor trains the team to co-lead the course and to have specific roles in its delivery. Thus an Id f’Id course is not only beneficial to the parents who

²⁵ Assoċjazzjoni Kunsilli Skolastiċi

participate, but it is also a training and lifelong learning opportunity for the organizing team. It also gives the hosting school the opportunity to work with this team of parents to develop further a home-school links policy.

- the **training of Parent Leaders** from amongst parent volunteers and parent helpers mentioned above so as to effectively reach out to parents and other adults in the community. The FES runs courses for Parent Leaders in collaboration with the AKS and the Parent Leaders' Forum.

6.5 Assessing Learning in the Core Competences

The 2007 Government-MUT Collective Agreement recognized the use of cumulative profiles and portfolios as a key learning assessment tool. The profile templates annexed to the Agreement make specific reference to the Core Competences. Once such tools are implemented successfully, they will become effective instruments to gauge learners' growing mastery in these areas.

For teachers to be able to make informed judgements in relation to the updating of students' profiles and portfolios, they need to continuously make use of informal assessments which can take a wide variety of formats.²⁶ The present document is proposing a set of checklists as tools to be used from Year 1 to Year 3 (Appendices A-C). The purpose of these checklists is to guide teachers to informally assess learners' ongoing progress in the mastery of the Core Competences. As a result, teachers will be able to adapt their teaching strategies to individual needs, styles and levels of competence. Teachers may wish to develop and implement Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) as long as they are fully integrated into the teaching and learning process of the whole class. Some strategies that can be used in this context include:

- use of structured multisensory teaching programmes;
- use of tactile approaches to reinforce all auditory and visual approaches;
- introduction of stimulating reading materials and mathematical activities which offer learners the possibility of reinforcing what they have already been taught;
- software which encourages learners to reinforce what they have learnt during literacy and Mathematics.

This does not exclude the use of additional school-based and/or community-based support in the form of Early Support and Integration. Indeed Colleges and schools may wish to develop and implement Action Plans with some or all of the components mentioned in this document for implementation in one or all of Years 1, 2 and 3, so as to ensure core competence mastery by Year 3.

Additionally, the attainment targets in the Year 3 checklists constitute the Core Competences Benchmark. This Benchmark does not in any way replace the statutory syllabi or indicate the expected standards for all learners. Rather, attainment below this level of mastery indicates that personalized support needs to be formalized in the form of focused ILPs that form part of a school-based or College-based Action Plan, in order to ensure the attainment by all of such competences by the end of the primary cycle. Therefore, attainment below the Year 3 core competence Benchmark triggers the compulsory development and implementation of Action Plans that have a strong Intervention component and that include ILPs for the identified learners.

Throughout Year 3, teachers may use the Year 3 checklists to evaluate the focused support given so far so as to take the necessary action. Moreover, during the third term Year 3 teachers should use the Year 3 checklists to ascertain if those learners who they think are still lagging behind in Core Competences mastery are actually falling below the Benchmark. These Year 3 teachers should then undertake a handing-over exercise with the following year's Year 4 teachers. This exercise allows the year 4 teachers to plan accordingly before the beginning of the following scholastic year²⁷.

²⁶ These may range from non-participant observation of behaviour to the consideration of oral or written responses.

²⁷ This proposal assumes that deployment policy will be reviewed so that Year 4 teachers are confirmed before the end of the scholastic year.

It goes without saying that when teachers identify early on through their own informal assessment systems those learners who need to be referred for more detailed assessment, they are expected to take interim steps to ensure that the teaching/learning is as effective and personalized as possible for the particular learner.

Colleges and schools will be able to access the technical assistance services of the DQSE and the DES to formulate, fulfil and review their Action Plans. The form such technical assistance can take is proposed in section 6.6 of this document.

6.6 National technical support framework

For the targets of the Strategy to be reached the present range of service provision available to Colleges and schools needs to be rationalised to ensure greater equity and effectiveness. It is to be noted that the proposals made below constitute the envisaged scenario at the end of a complex change process. This change process is discussed in section 6.7.

6.6.1 In the state school sector

- The responsibility for effective teaching and learning rests with the Colleges and schools.
- The DQSE becomes the entity responsible for providing support and quality assurance with respect to the development of Action Plans and the attainment of the Core Competences in the schools.
- The relevant services of the FES and the Literacy Centre²⁸ are therefore transferred to or subsumed by the DQSE.
- The FES strengthens its role as service and technical support provider in parental lifelong learning and after-school services, to the extent that these are part of the Core Competences strategy, and offers its services to the Colleges in collaboration with the DQSE.
- The Literacy Centre strengthens its role in terms of provision of research, resources development and training services to the DQSE, as requested by the DQSE.
- The present SpLD Service, whilst retaining its functions that go beyond the present document, is transformed into a National Core Competences Support Service.

This National Core Competences Support Service has a three-tiered structure;

- **At school level:** The role of Complementary Teachers is re-engineered so that each state primary school has the services of its own Core Competences Support Teacher, each according to its needs. The role of this Support Teacher is primarily to work closely with classroom teachers in developing, adapting and implementing a range of teaching/learning strategies to ensure effective differentiated learning within the classroom with special reference to the Core Competences. The Support Teacher also works closely with classroom teachers in developing, implementing and reviewing Individual Learning Programmes (ILPs) with respect to Core Competences for particular learners. Another function of the Support Teacher is to work with particular groups of learners within or outside the classroom setting as part of those learners' ILPs. The Support Teacher also works in collaboration with the College INCO²⁹.
- **At school level:** The present day LSAs are further trained to enable them to take on the added role of class-based Core Competence Classroom Assistants according to school exigencies.
- **At College level:** A Core Competences Head of Department is selected for each College, and is accountable to the Principal. The position description of this Head of Department includes:
 - coordinating the school-based Core Competences Support Teachers in the fulfillment of their role;
 - synergising coordination between Support Teachers in schools within the same College;
 - providing technical support for the assessment of learners and for the development, implementation and review of ILPs with respect to Core Competences;
 - assisting in the organisation of awareness and training for parents in this area;
 - generally ensuring that the Core Competences strategy is being implemented and fulfilled at College level.

²⁸ Previously the Literacy Unit, Faculty of Education, University of Malta.

²⁹ Inclusion Coordinator

The Core Competences Heads of Department are to be sufficiently trained and equipped so as to successfully filter the vast majority of requests for Core Competences support. They would receive regular professional support and training from the National Core Competences Support Service, for example through regular meetings.

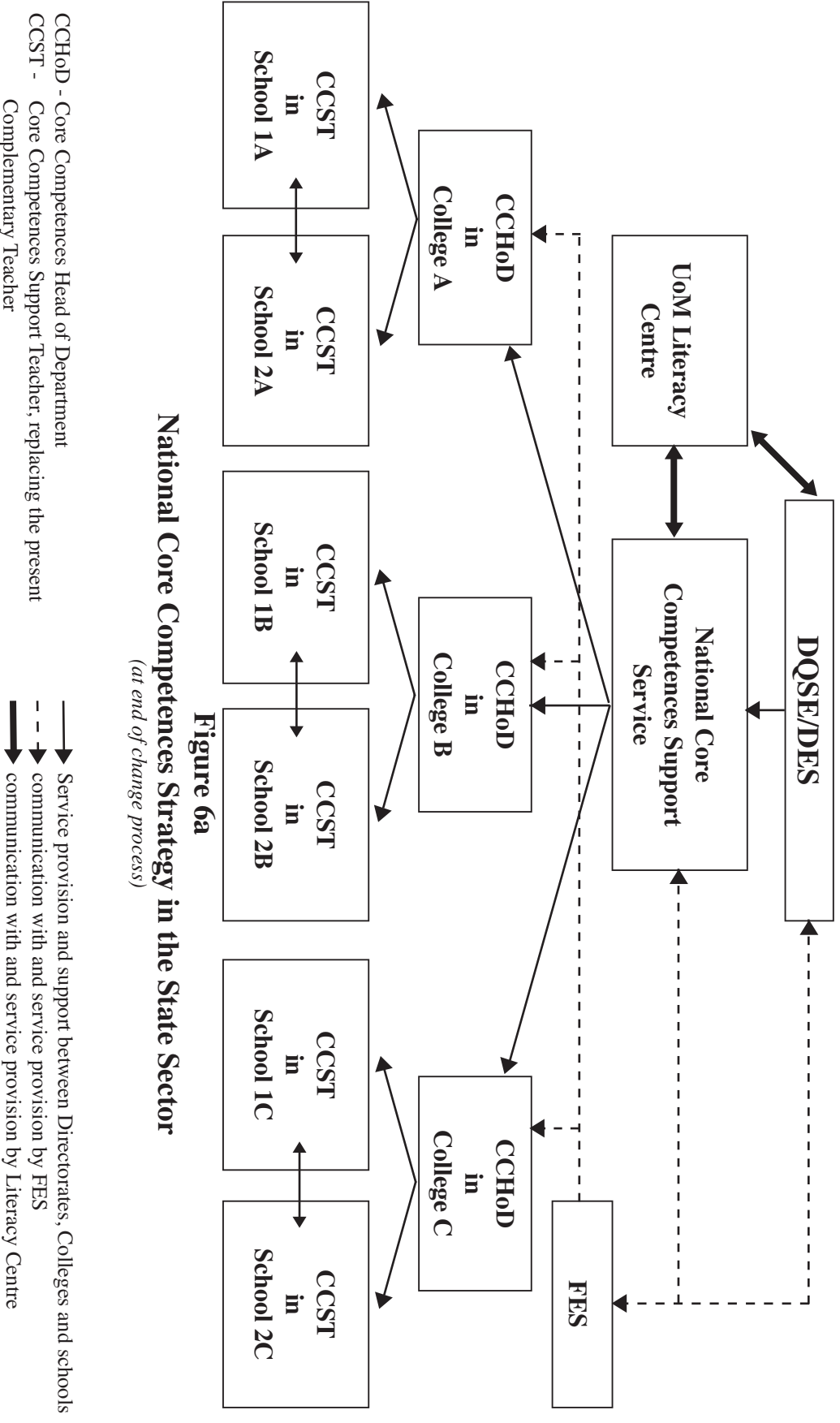
- ***At National level:*** The National Core Competences Support Service is to have a core team of appropriately qualified staff that offer effective professional support and ongoing training to the College-based Core Competences Heads of Department and, through them, the school-based Core Competences Support Teachers. The National Service would also advise on addressing Core Competences needs related to complex conditions, as well as on parental support and training. It would also develop, disseminate, test and review specific programmes and resources in this area.

This proposal is illustrated by Figure 6a.

6.6.2 In the non-state school sector:

In the non-state sector, the DQSE would retain its quality assurance role. The National Core Competences Support Service would have a technical support role subject to specific parameters and guidelines set by the Directorates. Non-state schools would also be encouraged to collaborate between themselves and with state schools within the College they are situated in so as to synergize services and maximise effectiveness. The FES would also offer its services to the non-state sector, subject to specific parameters and guidelines set by the Directorates. The Literacy Centre would retain its indirect technical support role through its services to the DQSE.

This proposal is illustrated by Figure 6b.



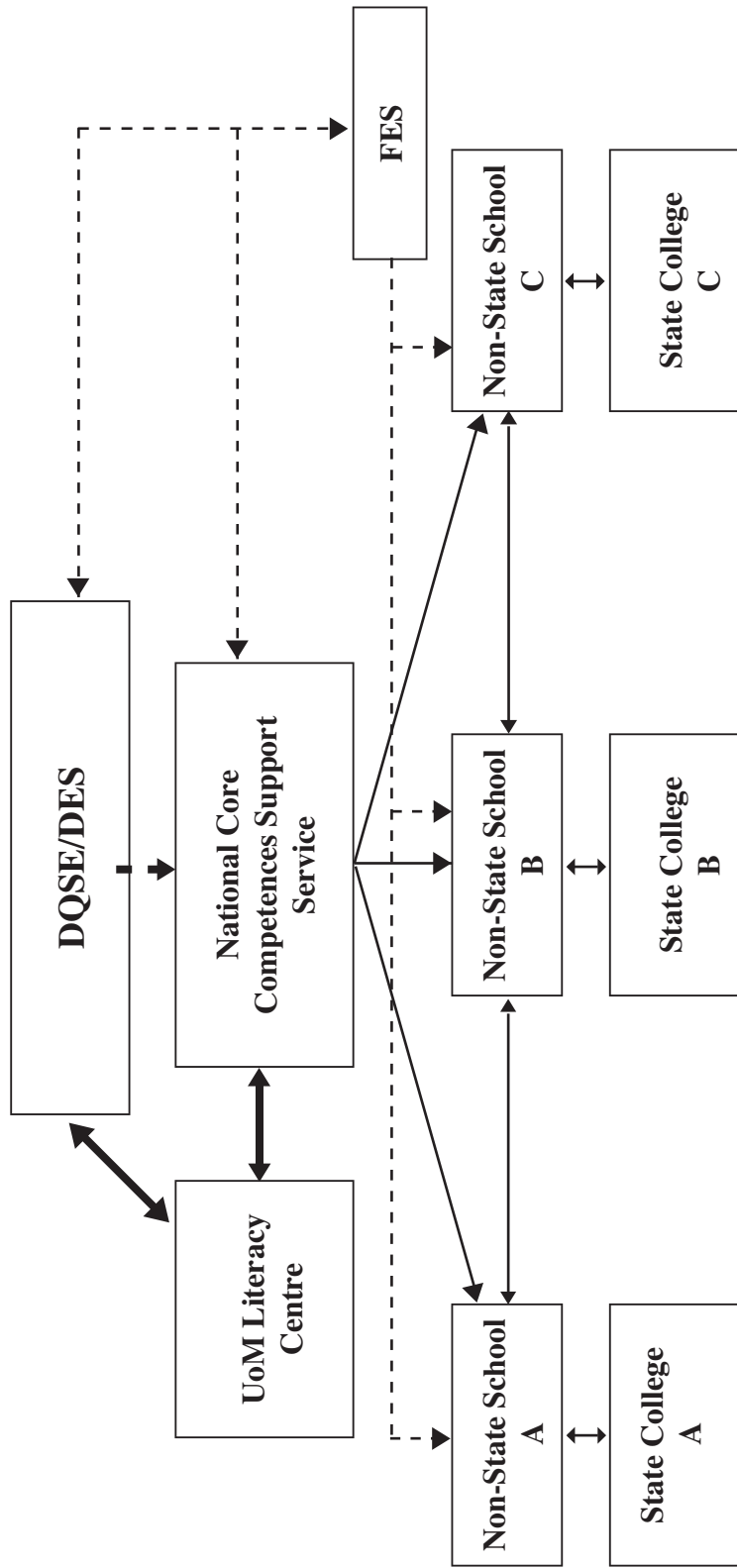


Figure 6b
(at end of change process)
National Core Competences Strategy in the Non-State Sector

- Communication between Directorates and Service
- - communication with and service provision by FES
- - communication with and service provision by Literacy Centre
- Service provision and support between Directorates, schools and Colleges

6.7 A dynamic balance between the central, College and school levels

As already stated, this document is being presented within the context of the national reforms in compulsory education. These centre on the formation of the state Colleges, and the setting up of the two Directorates that give support, guidance and direction to the Colleges on the basis of standards and targets.

The National Core Competences Policy and Strategy must therefore help animate the dynamic balance that is being set up between central structures, the Colleges and individual schools. On the one hand as stated in section 6.6.1 the onus for action and fulfilment of targets must rest with the individual schools under the guidance of the College Principal, making best use of the synergies that the College makes possible. On the other hand the DQSE needs to be proactive in having services and resources in place to assist schools, whilst ensuring that the targets set by the schools are in line with national priorities and that they are actually fulfilled. Schools need to feel that they are at one and the same time:

- **expected** to achieve high standards and results in terms of Core Competence mastery;
- **free** to explore and adopt strategies and structures to achieve such standards and results;
- **guided** and **supported** to achieve such standards and results;
- **accountable** to their achievement.

The ultimate guarantor that such a dynamic balance between central structures, the Colleges and individual schools is achieved and sustained in terms of the Core Competence Policy and Strategy is the Director General for Quality and Standards in Education.

There are a number of actions that the centre structures, such as the National Core Competences Support Service proposed in section 6.6.1 can execute to proactively support schools in the development and implementation and their Core Competences Action Plans. Such actions may include:

- a) through in-house development and/or in collaboration with the Faculty of Education, University of Malta developing and offering training for teachers of Years 1 to 3 aimed to help participants:
 - develop familiarity with checklists and screening procedures,
 - discuss and determine grouping procedures and identification of learner needs,
 - extend awareness and evaluate recent teaching programmes/resources/software,
 - build up a ‘shared’ and more personalised focused bank of resources;
- b) allocating CCSTs³⁰ to all schools according to the school needs;
- c) allocating additional annual financial support and/or ensuring that schools prioritise such expenditure from impressed and/or school funds to provide each class with colourful, fresh and appropriate literacy and Mathematics materials and software for the further development of core competences;
- d) meeting CCHoDs³¹ on a monthly basis to review progress, work on the development of targets and undergo continuous professional development;
- e) offering training in specific tasks to *Core Competences Support Assistants*.

6.8 A multi-stage strategy

The National Core Competences Strategy needs to be implemented in cycles, so as to ensure the right balance between immediate action to reach as many at-risk learners as possible while giving Colleges and schools adequate time and support to develop their Action Plans. It is envisaged that the first cycle will be composed of five phases as explained in Table 6.2.

³⁰ Core Competences Support Teachers

³¹ Core Competences Heads of Department

Table 6.2
First Cycle of the National Core Competences Strategy

Phase 1	<p><i>September 2008 – March 2009:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DQSE disseminates the National Core Competences Policy and Strategy for general feedback. • The Core Competences checklists are piloted in schools. • First phase of setting up of National Core Competences Service. • DQSE assists Colleges and schools piloting the Core Competences checklists to develop and implement literacy-related Action Plans with integrated elearning strategies. • Colleges and schools trained in developing Core Competences Action Plans.
Phase 2	<p><i>May – September 2009:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DQSE adapts and adopts Core Competences Policy and Strategy including checklists according to feedback received.
Phase 3	<p><i>October 2009 – September 2010:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Competences Policy and Strategy becomes operational. • Second phase of setting up of National Core Competences Service. • The Core Competences Support Teachers are trained. • Colleges and schools present three-year Core Competences literacy-related Action Plans. • DQSE develops a train-the-trainers programme to increase mathematics technical support and to further strengthen literacy support.
Phase 4	<p><i>October 2010 – September 2011:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DQSE supports Colleges and schools in fine-tuning their Action Plans. • DQSE develops and implements interim process evaluation to gauge progress in attainment due to National Strategy. • Interim process evaluation results presented to the Ministry
Phase 5	<p><i>October 2011 – September 2012:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results of the three-year Core Competence Action Plans of Colleges and participating non-state schools presented to Government. • Comprehensive review of the first cycle of the National Core Competences Strategy, in view of launch of second cycle based on gap analysis included in the review.

Appendix A – Maltese Literacy Core Competence Checklists from Years 1 to 3

Year 1 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in Maltese Literacy and are expected to:		
Competence	Example	
Mlt.Y1.01	respond confidently and actively to instructions and show ability to implement requests	
Mlt.Y1.02	ask questions appropriately	
Mlt.Y1.03	participate in oral activities both in small groups and in the whole class situation	
Mlt.Y1.04	relate short stories about a set of pictures or about personal interests	
Mlt.Y1.05	listen and respond to short stories and rhymes positively and with interest	
Mlt.Y1.06	orally identify rhyming words in short poems	
Mlt.Y1.07	be aware of the difference between a letter and a word both visually and aurally	e.g.: show me a word 'mejda' show me the letter 'm'
Mlt.Y1.08	understand the implications of beginning, middle and end through the sense of touch	show the child <i>pictures</i> of a sequenced activity – ask which picture is at the beginning, end, middle
Mlt.Y1.09	Identify <i>first</i> and <i>last</i> sounds in spoken words	say the word 'dar' ask the child to identify the <i>first sound</i> and the <i>last sound</i>
Mlt.Y1.10	orally segment and count the syllables in a word	show the child <i>pictures</i> of frequently encountered nouns e.g.: 'zartun' – say the word, can he identify the syllables within the word
Mlt.Y1.11	blend the sounds in monosyllabic words to produce target words	ask the child to listen to the sounds e.g.: /s/ /p/ /a/ /g/, reflect upon it and produce the target word 'spag'
Mlt.Y1.12	orally identify and count sounds in words	say the word 'ballun' – get the child to repeat the word and ask him to identify each sound he hears - ie: 5 sounds

Year 1 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in Maltese Literacy and are expected to: (cont.)

	Competence	Example
Mlt .Y1.13	orally manipulate sounds in words	e.g.: ask child to remove the <i>first sound</i> from his name (common objects) ask the child to substitute the first sound of his name (and common objects) with another sound
Mlt .Y1.14	orally segment words with initial blends	e.g.: 'klieb' = /kl/
Mlt .Y1.15	associate a letter sound with a symbol and a concept	
Mlt .Y1.16	associate words with pictures, i.e. does s/he understand that a different sound leads to different word meanings	e.g.: ask the child to match pictures of words which illustrate 'tar' and 'mar'
Mlt .Y1.17	confidently read and write regular consonant-vowel-consonant – vowel words and other words of regular structure	e.g.: mara, fama, e.g.: mejda, marru, kasha
Mlt .Y1.18	decode the irregular (sight) words used regularly within the classroom situation	e.g.: jiena, hemm, għandi
Mlt .Y1.19	have appropriate pencil grip form letters appropriately	ask the child to copy a series of unrelated letters
Mlt .Y1.20	write correctly the irregular or 'tricky' words used within the classroom situation	
Mlt .Y1.21	use space between words	
Mlt .Y1.22	recognise and write own name	
Mlt.Y1.23	read accurately and confidently unseen reading books of average class level without making more than 5 errors	e.g.: ask the child to read from <u>a book which is not part of the class reading scheme</u> but which targets the average level of the class

Year 2 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in Maltese Literacy and are expected to:

Competence		Example
Mlt .Y2.01	follow and implement more than one command / instruction	
Mlt .Y2.02	use short-term memory to recall pictures / sentences / poems	
Mlt .Y2.03	relate a coherent story in response to a set of pictures in sequence	
Mlt .Y2.04	use language appropriately to express needs and to play and communicate with peers in non-structured situations	
Mlt .Y2.05	orally identify rhyme in spoken words	
Mlt .Y2.06	orally segment bisyllabic and polysyllabic words into syllables	e.g.: can the child identify and count the syllables in such words as 'widna' or 'madwarna'
Mlt .Y2.07	orally identify and count sounds within words	e.g.: 'posta' = 5 sounds
Mlt .Y2.08	orally substitute and manipulate sounds within words	e.g.: say the word 'ballun' and ask child to change 'b' into 'g'
	blend sounds effortlessly to identify target words	e.g.: /h/ /e/ /l/ /u/ - helu
Mlt .Y2.09	start to develop familiarity with some basic rules which govern word spelling and word reading	e.g.: the root words
Mlt Y2.10	read with ease monosyllabic and polysyllabic words in isolation and in context	e.g.: swar, xadina, cikkulata
Mlt Y2.11	read compound words in isolation and in context	e.g.: minħabba, hawnhekk
Mlt .Y2.12	decode confidently the high frequency words usually used in the classroom situation	e.g.: hawn, fuq, għal, biex
Mlt .Y2.13	understand that individual words are contributing to a whole sentence	e.g.: can the child match a sentence to a picture indicating understanding of the group of words
Mlt .Y2.14	write legibly using upper and lower case	
Mlt .Y2.15	write simple sentences with both high frequency and regular words	e.g.: Jiena xtrajt ġelat tal-frawi

Year 2 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in Maltese Literacy and are expected to: (cont.)	
	Example
	Competence
Mlt .Y2.16	write a few sentences / short paragraph in logical sequence in response to a picture sequence
Mlt Y2.17	understand and make use of basic punctuation when writing a sentence
Mlt .Y2.18	use appropriate tonality to show understanding of the function of inverted commas and exclamation marks when reading
Mlt .Y2.19	read accurately and confidently and comprehend the story of unseen reading materials of average class level without making more than 5 errors
Mlt Y2.20	infer meaning from text and predict outcomes
	e.g.: can the child give his own ideas as to what will happen next or how he would behave in the particular text related situation.

Year 3 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in Maltese Literacy and are expected to:

Competence	Example
Mlt .Y3.01 use short-term memory to recall sentences, anecdotes, poems, songs, rhymes etc	
Mlt .Y3.02 relate a story in response to a set of pictures or in relation to an event which took place recently	
Mlt .Y3.03 use language to express him/herself adequately to interact with others	
Mlt.Y3.04 identify and manipulate sounds in the various positions within a word	
Mlt Y3.05 develop strategies to decode unfamiliar words	i.e. can the child segment and blend syllables of unfamiliar words to decode target word e.g: 'kullimkien' 'friegħi'
Mlt Y3.06 read, <i>without hesitation</i> regular frequently encountered monosyllabic and polysyllabic words	e.g: 'missiema', 'zarbuna', 'galilhom'
Mlt Y3.07 blend the sounds effortlessly to decode an unfamiliar regular words so as to reach target word	e.g.: /fl/ /u/ /s/ = flus
Mlt Y3.08 understand the concept of ' <i>past actions</i> ' through the aural/oral modalities	
Mlt .Y3.09 Identify the letter 'gh' and 'ie' in words as single units for the purposes of word reading and to be aware of the silent h in words	i.e.: is the child able to read words including -gh- 'ie' and -h- Gheneb, għalqa, hena, bieħ
Mlt .Y3.10 be familiar with the use of 'gh' and 'h' when writing high frequency words	i.e. għasfur, hawn, hekk
Mlt .Y3.11 be aware of the different ways to form the plural	i.e.: laringa = laring, kelb = klieb
Mlt .Y3.12 read and write out verbs in the past tense in a context.	e.g.: Il-gimgha l-ohra morna l-Imdina.
Mlt .Y3.13 ask and respond to basic questions in writing	
Mlt .Y3.14 transform and extend simple sentences to complex and compound sentences	i.e.: can the child write more elaborate sentences which include conjunctions such as : u, imma, wara, imbagħad, waqt li, hekk kif

Year 3 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in Maltese Literacy and are expected to: (cont.)	
	Example
Mlt .Y3.15	show comprehension of paragraphs via written answers
Mlt .Y3.16	read and comprehend basic rubrics and instructions
Mlt .Y3.17	write a short paragraph /short story
Mlt Y3.18	appreciate the role of punctuation when reading both sentences and paragraphs.
Mlt .Y3.19	read and understand <i>unseen reading books</i> , of average class level, without making more than 5 errors (fluency and understanding are of utmost importance)
Mlt Y3.20	understand and elaborate on what has been read in books aimed at the average 7-year-old
	e.g.: għaqqad l-istampa mal-ittra
	i.e.: capital letter, full stop, question mark, exclamation mark, comma, speech marks
	e.g.: can the child read passages from a book which is not part of the class reading scheme
	i.e.: be able to respond to questions about text, predict events and infer meaning

Appendix B - English Literacy Core Competence Checklists from Years 1 to 3

Year 1 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in English Literacy and are expected to:		
	Competence	Example
E.Y1.01	follow basic instructions	
E.Y1.02	understand and respond to basic questions	
E.Y1.03	show developing ability to express basic needs in his/her L2	
E.Y1.04	orally produce some sentences about him/herself	
E.Y1.05	listen and respond to short stories and rhymes positively and with interest	
E.Y1.06	use short term memory to recall rhymes and short sentences	
E.Y1.07	be aware of the difference between a letter and a word both visually and aurally	e.g.: show me a word i.e.: 'cat' show me a letter i.e.: 'c'
E.Y1.08	understand the implications of beginning, middle and end through the sense of touch	show the child <i>pictures</i> of a sequenced activity – ask which picture is at the beginning, end, middle
E.Y1.09	identify <i>first</i> and <i>last</i> sounds in spoken words	say the words 'cat' ask the child to identify the <i>first sound</i> and the <i>last sound</i>
E.Y1.10	orally segment a word into syllables	show the child <i>pictures</i> of frequently encountered nouns e.g.: 'puppy' – say <i>the word</i> , can he identify the syllables within the word
E.Y1.11	identify the onset and rime in words	eg: spot 'sp' 'ot'
E.Y1.12	blend the sounds in monosyllabic words to produce target words	e.g.: can the child listen to the sounds e.g: /p/ /i/ /n/ , reflect upon them and produce the target word 'pin'
E.Y1.13	orally identify and count sounds in words	say the word 'rain' – get the child to repeat the word and ask him to identify each sound he hears - ie: /r/ /ā/ /n/.

Year 1 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in English Literacy and are expected to: (cont.)	
Competence	Example
E.Y1.14 orally manipulate sounds in words	e.g.: ask child to remove the <i>first sound</i> from his name (common objects) ask the child to substitute the first sound of his name (and common objects) with another sound
E.Y1.15 identify and write blends both in isolation and in words	e.g: ask the child to decode the sound /st/ in isolation ask the child to write the letters which correspond to the sound ask the child to write the first two sounds of a word e.g.: ‘stop’
E.Y1.16 recite the alphabet sequence begin to associate a letter name with a symbol	
E.Y1.17 make the appropriate association between the letter name, sound and corresponding symbol	e.g.: ‘a’ /a/ ‘a’
E.Y1.18 associate words with pictures, i.e. does s/he understand that a different sound / letter leads to different word meanings	e.g. ask the child to match pictures with words
E.Y1.19 confidently read and write regular consonant-vowel-consonant words confidently read and write words with initial and final blends confidently read and write words with basic word patterns	e.g.: pig, run trap, camp
E.Y1.20 decode the irregular (sight) words used regularly within the classroom situation	e.g.: said, was, he,
E.Y1.21 have appropriate pencil grip form letters appropriately	ask the child to copy a series of unrelated letters
E.Y1.22 write correctly high frequency words used within the classroom context	
E.Y1.23 use space between words	

Year 1 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in English Literacy and are expected to: (cont.)

Competence		Example
E.Y1.24	recognise and write own name	
E.Y1.25	attempt to guess at spelling in an attempt to express himself adequately.	Encourage the child to write freely without being restricted by spelling conventions
E.Y1.26	read accurately and confidently unseen books of average class level without making more than 5 errors	i.e.: ask the child to read from a book he has never seen but which targets the average level of the class

Year 2 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in English Literacy and are expected to:		Example
	Competence	
E.Y2.01	follow and implement one command / instruction at a time	
E.Y2.02	use short-term memory to recall pictures / sentences / poems	
E.Y2.03	relate a story in response to an illustration / a set of pictures in sequence	
E.Y2.04	use language appropriately to express needs and to communicate with peers in structured situations	
E.Y2.05	orally identify rhyme in both written and spoken words	
E.Y2.06	orally segment bisyllabic and polysyllabic words into syllables	e.g: can the child identify and count the syllables in such words as 'funny', or 'butterfly'
E.Y2.07	orally count the number of sounds within words	e.g: 'love' /l/ /u/ /v/
E.Y2.08	orally identify the different kinds of vowels (i.e.: short and long) within words	e.g: /a/, /ai/ trap, train
E.Y2.09	orally delete the final sounds of word	Eg: cramp = cram; mend = men
E.Y2.10	read and write some long vowels appropriately	e.g: o – e, oa, bone, coat
E.Y2.11	start to develop familiarity with some basic rules which govern word spelling and word reading	e.g.: ca, co, cu and ki, ke ce, ci, cy
E.Y2.12	read compound words in isolation and in context	e.g: sunshine, playtime
E.Y2.13	identify 'bits' which have been added on to the words, i.e.: can the child identify the BASE word?	e.g: sing ing , shop s , sad ly
E.Y2.14	read with ease regular monosyllabic and bisyllabic words in isolation and in context	E.g.: tent / kidnap
E.Y2.15	decode confidently the high frequency words usually used in the classroom situation	e.g: water, mother,

Year 2 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in English Literacy and are expected to: (cont.)

Competence		Example
E.Y2.16	understand that individual words are contributing to a whole sentence	i.e. can the child match a sentence to a picture indicating understanding of the group of words
E.Y2.17	understand the function of inverted commas and exclamation marks in reading	
E.Y2.18	write legibly using upper and lower case	
E.Y2.19	write simple sentences with both high frequency and regular words	e.g.: I have a black dog.
E.Y2.20	R ecite all the alphabet sequence and be confidently aware of the association between the letter names / sounds / symbol	
E.Y2.21	write a few sentences / short paragraph in logical sequence in response to a picture sequence	
E.Y2.22	understand and make use of basic punctuation when writing a sentence	Note if the child uses capital letter and full stop and question mark correctly
E.Y2.23	use context to interpret meaning and predict events in single sentences / paragraphs	e.g: can the child associate the concept of 'swimming' with summer a present with Christmas / birthdays
E.Y2.24	read accurately and confidently and comprehend the story of unseen reading materials of average class level without making more than 5 errors	
E.Y2.25	infer meaning from text and predict outcomes	i.e.: can the child give his own ideas as to what will happen next or how he would behave in the particular text related situation.

Year 3 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in English Literacy and are expected to:		Example
Competence		
E.Y3.01	use short-term memory to recall sentences, anecdotes, poems, songs, rhymes etc	
E.Y3.02	identify and manipulate sounds in the various positions within a word	eg: can the child identify the sound before the end of the word 'lost' - can he produce the word lost
E.Y3.03	relate a story in response to a set of pictures or in relation to an event which took place recently	
E.Y3.04	use language to express him/herself adequately to interact with others	
E.Y3.05	understand the concept of ' <i>past actions</i> '	
E.Y3.06	read, without hesitation, a further extended list of high frequency and irregular words	
E.Y3.07	identify and read the more complex word patterns, have developed awareness of the silent letters 'b', 'k' 'h'	e.g. 'ea', 'igh', 'cian', 'ture', 'tion', climb, knife, hour
E.Y3.08	use knowledge of the alphabet sequence for the different contexts (e.g.: dictionary, directory, class lists)	i.e: quartiles of the alphabet
E.Y3.09	appreciate that different kinds of information can be acquired through reading	i.e.: instructions, timetables, etc
E.Y3.10	understand the implications of comparative and superlative adjectives	Eg: Fatter – fattest
E.Y3.11	form confidently the plural of the different word endings and irregular words	
E.Y3.12	read and write out verbs in the past tense and have awareness of the sounds of 'ed' in its different environments	e.g.: helped, oiled, handed.
E.Y3.13	write / respond to basic questions	

Year 3 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in English Literacy and are expected to: (cont.)

Competence		Example
E.Y3.14	transform and extend simple sentences to complex and compound sentences	e.g.: <i>The man fell</i> The fat man with a big pimple on his nose fell into the mud.
E.Y3.15	spell correctly core sets of more advanced irregular words, and know how to tackle unfamiliar words	
E.Y3.16	show comprehension of paragraphs via short written answers	
E.Y3.17	read and comprehend basic rubrics and instructions	e.g.: complete the following, add the following numbers
E.Y3.18	write a short paragraph/short story	
E.Y3.19	appreciate the role of punctuation both when reading sentences and paragraphs.	i.e. capital letter, full stop, question mark, exclamation mark, comma, speech marks
E.Y3.20	identify the 'bits' which have been added on to the root word	e.g.: sad ness , fast er
E.Y3.21	read and understand <i>unfamiliar reading books</i> , of average class level, without making more than 5 errors (fluency and understanding are of utmost importance)	i.e.: can the child read passages from a book which is not part of the class reading scheme
E.Y3.22	understand and elaborate on what has been read in books aimed at the average 7-year-old	i.e.: be able to respond to questions about text, predict events and infer meaning

Appendix C - eLiteracy Core Competence Checklists from Years 1 to 3

Year 1 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in eLiteracy and are expected to:		
	Competence	Example
ICT.Y1.01	Labelling. Use key pieces of information to describe objects.	Identify and label everyday ICT devices located in the classroom and home such as televisions, video recorders, microwaves, washing machines, toys and computer components such as the mouse, keyboard, monitor, speakers, microphone, CD/DVD-ROM drive, CD/DVD-ROM and printer.
ICT.Y1.02	Classifying. Use simple criteria to divide groups of objects and identify and describe objects by keywords.	Discuss basic functions and controls of the above ICT devices and differentiate among devices according to their function such as a printer which enables us to print work created on the computer.
ICT.Y1.03	Recognise that everyday devices respond to signals, and make simple choices when using devices.	Associate changes on a TV screen when buttons on a remote control are pressed; associate changes in function when different buttons of a cassette or video recorder are pressed; associate changes on a computer monitor with mouse movement.
ICT.Y1.04	Engage in computer activities to acquire basic mouse handling skills and start to develop familiarity with the computer keyboard.	Engage in simple mouse-handling activities which require hand-eye co-ordination skills and that help the learners to develop the following ICT skills: mouse movement, selecting, clicking and dragging objects. Mouse movement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move the mouse vertically and horizontally. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ http://www.noddy.com/funtime/games/en/star_catcher.html Mouse clicking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Click at random on the screen. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ http://pbskids.org/teletubbies/everwhere.html ○ http://www.bbc.co.uk/freebies/bigandsmall/fun (paint area)

Year 1 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in eLiteracy and are expected to: (cont.)

	Competence	Example
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select a particular area on the screen where to click. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ http://www.noddy.com/funtime/games/en/tessies_garden.html • Click and hold the mouse button pressed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ http://www.noddy.com/funtime/games/en/pop_baloons.html • Click on large objects on screen to achieve a desired output. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ http://pbskids.org/teletubbies/peekaboo.html • Point and click to achieve an outcome. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ http://pbskids.org/teletubbies/animals.html ○ http://www.barney.com/uk/festivalGame.html • Point and click on items as prompted. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ http://web.educastur.princast.es/proyectos/nea/nea_english ○ http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/rolymo/livingroom/games/counting.shtml ○ http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/balamory/games/embedded_games/copy_spencer.shtml • Click to select a colour and click to paint the desired area in that colour. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ http://www.barney.cim/uk/birthdayGame.html ○ http://www.coloring-page.com/online-games/ ○ http://www.thecolor.com/ ○ http://www.myfreecolouringpages.com/online_coloring.htm ○ http://www.squiglyplayhouse.com/ArtsAndCrafts/OnlineColouring/Dragging • Click and drag objects on a screen. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ http://www.scholastic.com/clifford/playsandcastle/game.htm ○ http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/rolymo/livingroom/games/dressingup.shtml <p>Mouse and keyboard input</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a combination of mouse and keyboard input. Associate changes on the screen with keyboard entry and start to locate keys more confidently. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/teletubbies/funandgames/sucky_slurpy/ ○ http://kids.aol.com/KOL/2/KOLJrGames/FlashHolder/lost-letters

Year 1 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in eLiteracy and are expected to: (cont.)

	Competence	Example
		<p>Use of navigation keys and spacebar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the arrow navigation keys or the spacebar to control object movement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/balamory/games/embedded_games/garden.shtml ○ http://www.co.uk/freebies/tweenies/gametime/fetchandspell • Use the arrow navigation keys to follow a given route. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/fullscreen/comeoutside/fun/farm.shtml ○ http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/balamory/games/embedded_games/balamory_bus.shtml
ICT.Y1.05	The computer can be used to represent real or fantasy situations.	Use a paint package to create a representation of a scenario. Understand that they can make choices and select different ICT tools to create scenes. Understand that their decisions can produce different outcomes.
ICT.Y1.06	Communicating ideas using ICT.	Use child -friendly packages to type words/phrases and insert relevant stamps. Understand that pictures provide information and that words can convey further information.

Year 2 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in eLiteracy and are expected to:

	Competence	Example
ICT.Y2.01	Be aware of different means of communication and select the appropriate device according to a specific purpose.	Communicate using technological devices such as telephones, mobile phones and cassette recorders by pressing the relevant buttons carrying graphic symbols for basic instructions. Show awareness that the mobile phone, radio and television, compact discs and DVD players are all means of communication in today's world.
ICT.Y2.02	Know that information is conveyed by some of the icons in computer software.	Respond to simple on-screen messages and prompts that include simple buttons/symbols such as 'Start', 'Next', 'Exit', selecting a particular activity from a menu, clicking on 'No' or 'Yes' buttons to determine whether to leave the activity or restart it, write their names when prompted. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/balamory/games/embedded_games/archie_game.shtml
ICT.Y2.03	Be aware that computer activities allow users to make choices and that different decisions result in different outcomes.	Reacting to computer prompts may start a particular activity, play an animation, play a sound, end a game, etc. Accessing different buttons/links in websites enable users to access different activities such as songs, stories, activities, games, etc... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> http://www.barney.cim/birthdayGame.html http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/balamory/ <p>Double clicking on the desired software icon to open a software package. Accessing drop-down menus available in open ended software packages to be able to make choices such as saving and printing their work when using child-friendly software packages.</p>
ICT.Y2.04	The computer allows the user to print out onscreen creations.	Are capable of using printing facilities when these are represented by an icon. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> http://www.noddy.com/funtime/games/en/rainbow_maker.html http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/balamory/games/embedded_games/colour_and_stick.shtml

Year 2 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in eLiteracy and are expected to: (cont.)

	Competence	Example
ICT.Y2.05	Be aware that ICT is a means of communication such as in emailing.	Use a website feature, such as filling in a simple form and clicking on the Send button, to send an email. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.scholastic.com/clifford/read/postcards/post/postcard_cliff.asp • http://www.emailsanta.com/email_santa.asp • http://www.nahb.org/coloringbook
ICT.Y2.06	Select and use different techniques to communicate ideas through pictures.	Exhibit creativity when using child-friendly paint packages using a variety of tools to pictorially achieve a predetermined goal. Vocally explain their choices and describe strategies used.

Year 3 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in eLiteracy and are expected to:

	Competence	Example
ICT.Y3.01	Discuss their experience of using ICT.	Talk about encounters with various forms of communications technology within the home environment and discuss the advantages of using these devices.
ICT.Y3.02	Labelling. Key Pieces of information can be used to describe objects.	Identify and label computer peripherals. Example: a headphones, a microphone, a scanner and a pendrive amongst others.
ICT.Y3.03	Know that certain conventions are applied in presenting information.	Alter the look of text to create an effect for a particular purpose. Use different font types, sizes and colours to convey different pieces of information when using open-ended software packages and discuss the purpose of different text styles as a way to convey meaning.
ICT.Y3.04	Use ICT to organise and present information suitable for an audience.	Describe how they use particular software features to present ideas and information. Realise that different software packages are used to communicate according to specific purposes. For example desktop publishing packages can be used to create brochures and posters.
ICT.Y3.05	Know that information can be presented in a variety of forms and ICT can be used to communicate and handle information in a variety of ways.	Be aware of the facilities offered by ICT to record and present information graphically. Learners can use paint packages to create block graphs and pictograms with the help of the Line and Rectangle tools and the Rubber Stamps.
ICT.Y3.06	Appreciate the advantages of using ICT to create products and review, modify and evaluate work as it progresses.	Demonstrate understanding that ICT can be used to develop their writing by amending text. Load a required software programme and retrieve a saved document (when using child-friendly software packages). Insert, copy, cut, paste and delete text.

Year 3 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in eLiteracy and are expected to:		(cont.)
	Competence	Example
ICT.Y3.07	Present and share ideas using a multimedia authoring program.	Recognise that some software packages use a combination of sounds, text, pictures and video to communicate information.
ICT.Y3.08	Show an emergent awareness that computers can be used to collect information in different forms from a variety of sources.	Use appropriate search techniques and develop research skills to locate information and decide which information is appropriate for their work. Use simple search engines such as http://www.dibdabdo.com/ and http://kids.yahoo.com/ . Retrieved information can include text, graphics, sound/music, animations or videos.
ICT.Y3.09	Consider and compare different methods of communication.	Be aware that ICT enables us to communicate more efficiently using email and that email can be used to send messages over distances to gather, exchange and develop information. Use the Schoolnet email facility to read, write, reply to and send simple email messages.
ICT.Y3.10	Recognise some of the conventions used to communicate information.	Be aware of email netiquette when writing an email. Avoid using caps lock when writing an email message as this implies that you are shouting. Writing one's name at the end of an email message as not to send an anonymous email message.
ICT.Y3.11	Use ICT to create sounds.	Experiment with sound recording using a cassette recorder and software packages. Recognise graphical symbols on buttons used to record and playback recordings. Compare the buttons on sound recording software packages with those on a cassette recorder. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/bigandsmall/fun (photo frames area)
ICT.Y3.12	Understand that movies are a means of conveying information.	Understand that digital animation is created by placing a series of pictures in sequential order through simple activities such as: www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/balamory/games/embedded_games/edie_safari.shtml With help compile a short movie by taking digital photos using a webcam and a software package such as StopMotion Pro.

Year 3 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in eLiteracy and are expected to: (cont.)

	Competence	Example
ICT.Y3.13	Show emergent awareness that eLearning technologies such as video conferencing software and webcams enable us to communicate with others not within our immediate surroundings using audio and video.	Engage in synchronous communication to collaborate with others so as to gather, exchange and develop information. Participate in online quizzes or share ideas and opinions about a selected topic currently being discussed in class.

**Open-ended, child-friendly packages currently available in Primary State Schools and suitable for this particular year group are Kid Pix Studio Deluxe, TuxPaint, PhotoStory 3 and Print Shop Essentials II.*

Appendix D - Numeracy Core Competence Checklists from Years 1 to 3

Year 1 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in Mathematics and are expected to:	
M.Y1.01	count forward up to 10 and backward from 10 to zero and count reliably up to 10 everyday objects
M.Y1.02	recognize that 'zero' exists and means 'none'
M.Y1.03	make simple estimates
M.Y1.04	count in twos from 0 to 20 and in tens from 0 to 100
M.Y1.05	begin to use the vocabulary associated with addition and subtraction in practical activities
M.Y1.06	recognize the numbers from 0 to 10 and then up to 20
M.Y1.07	say the number that is one less/more than any given number (restricted to 1 to 20)
M.Y1.08	order a set of numbers to at least 10
M.Y1.09	begin to relate the addition of doubles to counting on. E.g. $6 + 5 = 5 + 5 + 1 = 11$
M.Y1.10	begin to sort and name the following solids: cube, cuboid, cylinder and sphere
M.Y1.11	begin to sort and name the following flat shapes: circle, triangle, square and rectangle and use a composition of them to create a picture or pattern
M.Y1.12	begin to understand and use the vocabulary of time and learn to read the time to the hour
M.Y1.13	begin to know the days of the week in order
M.Y1.14	recognize and recreate simple patterns
M.Y1.15	begin to develop mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems. E.g. If I buy 7 oranges and eat 5 of them, how many do I have left?
M.Y1.16	sort coins, including the €1 coins, and use them in role play to pay with

Year 2 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in Mathematics and are expected to:

M.Y2.01	count forward up to 20 and backward from 20 to 0 and count reliably up to 20 everyday objects
M.Y2.02	count on and back in ones from any small number and in tens from and back to zero
M.Y2.03	compare two numbers and say which is more or less and also give a number that lies between them
M.Y2.04	say the number that is one or 10 less/more than any given number (restricted to 1 to 30)
M.Y2.05	give a sensible estimate of a number of objects
M.Y2.06	order a set of numbers to at least 20 and position them on a number line
M.Y2.07	know by heart all the pairs of numbers that make up 10 and the corresponding subtraction facts
M.Y2.08	know by heart all the pairs of numbers that make up 5 and the corresponding subtraction facts
M.Y2.09	use known number facts and place-value to add/subtract a pair of numbers mentally within the range 0 to at least 20 including bridging through 10
M.Y2.10	begin to use and understand the vocabulary related to length, mass and capacity as well as be able to compare two lengths, masses or capacities
M.Y2.11	know the days of the week and the seasons of the year in either English or Maltese
M.Y2.12	read the time to the hour on analogue clocks
M.Y2.13	use everyday language to describe features, such as number of faces, edges and corners of familiar 3-D (cube, cuboid, cylinder and cone) and number of sides and corners of 2-D shapes (square, rectangle, circle, triangle and pentagon)
M.Y2.14	solve problems by sorting and classifying
M.Y2.15	start to use mental strategies to solve simple problems set in 'real life', money or measurement contexts, using counting, addition, subtraction, halving/doubling
M.Y2.16	work out how to pay an exact sum using smaller coins

Year 3 Learners at this stage should acquire the following Core Competences in Mathematics and are expected to:	
M.Y3.01	count, read, write and order whole numbers to at least 100, from and back to zero
M.Y3.02	know what each digit represents (including 0 as a place holder)
M.Y3.03	describe and extend simple number sequences (including odd/even numbers, counting on or back in ones or tens from any two-digit number, etc)
M.Y3.04	round numbers less than 100 to the nearest 10
M.Y3.05	understand that subtraction is the inverse of addition
M.Y3.06	know by heart all addition and subtraction facts for each number to at least 10
M.Y3.07	use knowledge that addition can be done in any order to do mental calculation more efficiently
M.Y3.08	understand the operation of multiplication as repeated addition or as describing an array
M.Y3.09	know and use halving as the inverse of doubling
M.Y3.10	know by heart facts for the 2, 5 and 10 multiplication tables
M.Y3.11	estimate, measure and compare lengths, masses and capacities, using standard units; suggest suitable units and equipment for such measurements
M.Y3.12	read a simple scale to the nearest labelled division, including using a ruler to draw and measure lines to the nearest centimetre
M.Y3.13	use the mathematical names for common 3-D (cube, cuboid, cylinder, sphere, cone and pyramid) and 2-D shapes (square, rectangle, circle, triangle, pentagon, hexagon); sort shapes and describe some of their features (number of faces, edges, corners)
M.Y3.14	read, on an analogue and a 12-hour digital clock, the time to the: hour and half hour
M.Y3.15	know the days of the week and the months of the year in order in either English or Maltese
M.Y3.16	use mathematical vocabulary to describe position, direction and movement
M.Y3.17	use mental strategies to solve simple problems set in 'real life', money or measurement contexts, using counting, addition, subtraction, halving/doubling and be able to explain methods and reasoning orally
M.Y3.18	recognise all coins and begin to use €:c notation for money and use them in 'real life' situations to find a total and give change

Appendix E

An Example of a School-Based Core Competences Action Plan Framework

1. Preamble

In line with the Strategy itself, the Action Plan example being presented here does not include all conceivable actions that could be undertaken by all stakeholders in the area of Core Competences. It does not, for example, include all the examples of strategies and programmes mentioned in Chapter 6 of this document. Neither does it include:

- the daily classroom teaching and learning practices;
- initiatives that individual schools may take such as Book Week and upgrading of the library, etc.;
- provision taken normally and independently by CBOs in the locality, such as homework help by volunteers.

Such a comprehensive account of all service provision would blunt the focus of this Action Plan. This is to highlight how the networking between stakeholders involved within a particular school would bring about **value-added** measures and concrete coordinated support that would not have otherwise been possible.

The Action Plan has four interlocking components that correspond to the four priorities of the Strategy:

- Value-added action related to prevention of basic skills deficit through **early support**;
- Value-added action related to **early identification** of basic skills deficit;
- Value-added action related to the **integration** of teaching and learning strategies to counter basic skills deficit;
- Value-added action related to **intervention** of basic skills deficit.

Each component of the Plan indicates actions with respect to:

- School-based provision;
- Community-based provision.

Each type of provision includes a number of Actions. Each Action is described briefly in terms of its intended audience and its outcomes. The possible parameters of each Action (number of sessions, number of programmes etc.) are also given, as well as the expected direct beneficiaries.

It is worth noting that although reference is made to voluntary parental participation in some of the actions, this does not in any way imply that any part of this strategy needs to rely on voluntary participation for implementation. Whilst such participation is always welcome and brings great benefit to the persons and the community involved, care must always be taken that the quality and reliability of voluntary participation is underpinned by professional support.

Section 6 gives a summary of these Actions. Section 7 gives a suggested timeline over a typical scholastic year.

2. Early Support

Table E1

	<i>Actions to PREVENT Core Competence Deficit</i>	<i>Action Parameters</i>	<i>Direct Beneficiaries</i>
School-Based Provision	<p>1. Family literacy courses³³ in collaboration with KG2As and KG1As. KGAs and parents learn how to enhance home-school links. Pupils improve pre-literacy/pre-numeracy and social skills. KGAs remain working with pupils, and support staff work with parents, who also have joint session and time for processing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3-day training of all KGAs - 1 family literacy course = One 2-hr session per week for one term. - All KG families invited to participate - 1 course per term per primary school - First KG2, then KG1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All KGAs in College - All KG families in College
	<p>2. School makes arrangements for KG2As and KG1As to attend Core Competences training course provided by DQSE.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All KGAs in College
	<p>3. School makes arrangements for CCTs³⁴ to attend Core Competences training course provided by DQSE.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All CCTs in College
	<p>4. School makes arrangements for CCSAs³⁵ to attend Core Competences training course provided by DQSE.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All CCSAs in College
	<p>5. Core Competences training course with emphasis on multi-sensory approaches, for Yrs 1-3 teachers. Includes INSET at start and finish, demo lessons, regular informal follow-up meetings, provision of resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Starts and ends with compulsory 3-day inset - monthly support through demos, follow-up etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All Yrs 1-3 teachers in College

³³ As already explained in section 6.4.1, ‘family literacy’ refers to a particular methodology rather than a focus on literacy skills; the content can be literacy, numeracy or anything else as requested by participants.

³⁴ Core Competences Support Teachers

³⁵ Core Competences Support Teachers

<i>Actions to PREVENT Core Competence Deficit (cont)</i>	<i>Action Parameters</i>	<i>Direct Beneficiaries</i>
6. Core Competences attainment information, training and follow-up programme for Yrs 1,2,3 parents, in tandem with Action 5. Includes information meeting, training programme, provision of resources, follow-up meetings for ongoing review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All Yrs 1-3 parents in College
7. Child-minding Course for parents to enable the College and the community to provide child-minding facilities for activities aimed at parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 24-hour programme in weekly 2-hr sessions, and practicum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 15-25 parent participants
8. Parental training and empowerment Courses in all College communities to upskill parents with respect to contributing to their children’s educational development and their own lifelong learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5-session course - Co-delivered by identified parent leaders and support staff - 1 course per year per school - One or more courses to include different learning styles component - Nominal fee charged to cover childcare costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 80-160 parent participants
9. Library Assistants Course held in collaboration with Local Councils: Library Assistants supported in providing family reading services in local libraries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 12-session course - Regular informal meetings and visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8-15 library assistants
10. Book Sack ³⁶ donation to each family with new-born child, followed up with basic information on how to use books with the newborn. Training provided by trained midwives or trained parent volunteers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funded in collaboration with Local Councils and local publishers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Newborn children and parents
11. Pre-Kindergarten Parent and Child Club, run by trained parent volunteers in collaboration with primary school Councils. Regular play-and-discuss sessions according to parental demand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can be in short bursts of, say, three sessions, or regular weekly feature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre-kindergarten parent and child pairs

Community-Based Provision

³⁶ Contents can be literacy and/or numeracy based.

3. Early Identification

Table E2

<i>Actions to IDENTIFY Core Competence Deficit</i>		<i>Action Parameters</i>	<i>Direct Beneficiaries</i>
School-based Provision	Components of Actions 2, 3, 4, 5.		
	12. Training of staff on identification of specific learning needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional Development day - College-based INSET 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers of Yrs 3,4
Community-Based Provision	Components of Actions 6 and 7.		
	13. Parent training and empowerment courses in all communities to upskill parents with respect to helping to identify their children's basic skills needs and their own lifelong learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5-session course - 1 course per year per school - some courses include reference to different learning styles - nominal fee charged to cover childcare costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 80-160 parent participants
	14. College sets up Team to identify families at risk of social exclusion and with higher risk of educational failure, identified for example through learners' absenteeism patterns and develops school-community response to these families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In collaboration with Appogg, Access and similar service providers within the College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identified families

4. Integration

Table E3

<i>Actions to INTEGRATE Core Competence Practices</i>	<i>Action Parameters</i>	<i>Direct Beneficiaries</i>
Components of Actions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.		
15. Supporting KGAs to become reflective practitioners with respect to the teaching and learning implications of Actions 1 and 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular informal meetings with KGAs, and training using appropriate slots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All KGAs in College
16. Supporting CCSTs to become reflective practitioners with respect to the teaching and learning implications of Action 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular informal meetings with CCSTs, and training using appropriate slots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All CCSTs in College
17. Supporting CCSAs to become reflective practitioners with respect to the teaching and learning implications of Action 4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular informal meetings with CCSAs, and training using appropriate slots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All CCSAs in College
18. Supporting Year 1-3 teachers to become reflective practitioners with respect to the teaching and learning implications of Action 5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular informal meetings with Years 1-3 teachers and training using appropriate slots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All Years 1-3 teachers in College
Components of Action 10.		
<p>Community-Based Provision</p> <p>19. Scheme encourages teachers to visit after school learner and parent support programmes discuss implementation, and apply in class.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 observation and discussion sessions after school, one follow visit at school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participating teachers, with special reference to early years teachers

5. Intervention

Table E4

	<i>Actions to INTERVENE to counter Core Competence Deficit</i>	<i>Action Parameters</i>	<i>Direct Beneficiaries</i>
<p>School-based Provision</p>	<p>Components of Actions 2, 3, 4, 5.</p> <p>20. Intensive intervention programme for Yr 4 learners identified as requiring individualized support for Core Competences attainment</p>	<p>- Intensive in-class and out-of-class intervention with special focus during 1st term of Year 4</p>	<p>- CCSTs and class teachers</p>
	<p>Components of Action 8.</p> <p>21. Nwar after-school services cater for all College primary schools</p>	<p>- Children aged 8-13 - Children referred by school, agencies, Ministry, educ. services - 1 tutor to two families - needs assessment, ILP and pre- and post-testing - one course = two 1 hr sessions per week for one semester - service extended until targets reached and pupils can work well within classroom setting</p>	<p>- Circa 35 families serviced per year</p>
<p>Community-Based Provision</p>	<p>22. ICT Writing Club with parallel children and parent components for identified families whose children need to strengthen ICT skills but do not have severe needs</p>	<p>- Children aged 8-13 - one 2-hour session once a week for 12 weeks</p>	<p>- Circa 24 families</p>
	<p>23. Family Writing Club with parallel children and parent components for identified families whose children need to strengthen literacy skills but do not have severe literacy needs (e.g. can write a paragraph, albeit with incorrectly, but not to JL standard)</p>	<p>- Children aged 8-13 - one 2-hour session once a week for 12 weeks</p>	<p>- Circa 24 families</p>

6. The School Core Competences Action Plan Example in the Strategy Framework

The Table below summarizes the actions in the School Core Competences Action Plan example according to the Strategy framework explained in Section 2.3. Actions in italics have already been mentioned in another sector of the framework but would be relevant also to the second sector.

Table E5

	<i>School-based Action</i>	<i>Community-based Action</i>
Early Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family literacy courses in collaboration with KG2As and KG1As Core Competences training course for KGAs Core Competences training course for CCSTs Core Competences training course for CCSAs Core Competences training course for Yrs 1,2,3 teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core Competences attainment information, training and follow-up programme for Yrs 1,2,3 parents Child-minding Course to provide child-minding facilities for activities aimed at parents Parental training and empowerment Courses Library Assistants Course Book Sack donation to each family with new-born child Pre-Kinder Parent and Child Club
Early Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training of staff on identification of specific learning needs <i>Training for Years 1,2,3 teachers, KGAs, CCSTs, CCSAs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent Training courses to upskill parents to identify their children's basic skills needs and their own lifelong learning Families at risk of social exclusion and with higher risk of educational failure identified and a school-community response developed. <i>Multisensory training for Years 1,2,3 parents</i> <i>Childminding Course</i>
Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting KGAs to become reflective practitioners Supporting CCSTs to become reflective practitioners Supporting CCSAs to become reflective practitioners Supporting Years 1-3 teachers to become reflective practitioners <i>Family Literacy Courses for KGAs and KG parents</i> <i>Training for Years 1,2,3 teachers, KGAs, CCSTs, CCSAs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scheme for teachers to view after-school student and parent support programmes and to implement in class. <i>Parent Training courses</i>
Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intensive intervention programme for Yr 4 learners identified as requiring individualized support for Core Competences attainment <i>Training for Years 1,2,3 teachers, KGAs, CCSTs, CCSAs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nwar Centre catering for all College primary schools ICT Writing Club with parallel children and parent components for identified families Family Writing Club with parallel children and parent components for identified families <i>Parent Training courses</i>

7. Action Plan Timeline

The Table below gives an indication of the timeline for the Action Plan example in this Appendix, with Actions spread over a typical scholastic year. Dark grey refers to school-based actions and light grey refers to community-based actions.

Table E6

Action No.	Action	Term 1			Term 2			Term 3			Summer		
		Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept
1	Family literacy courses with KG2As and KG1As												
2	Core Comp. training for KGAs												
3	Core Comp. training for CCSTs												
4	Core Comp. training for CCSAs												
5	Core Comp. training for Yrs 1-3 teachers												
6	Core Comp. training for Yrs 1-3 parents												
7	Child-minding Course for volunteer												
8	Parental training and empowerment Courses												
9	Parent Volunteer Library Assistants Course												
10	Book Sack donation												
11	Pre-Kind Parent and Child Club												
12	Training of staff to identify learning needs												
13	Parent training courses for identification of needs												
14	Team to work with social exclusion families												
15	KGAs become reflecting practitioners												
16	CCSTs become reflecting practitioners												
17	CCSAs become reflecting practitioners												
18	Years 1-3 teachers become reflecting practitioners												
19	Scheme for teachers to visit support programmes												
20	Intensive intervention for identified Yr 4 learners												
21	Nwar after-school services												
22	ICT Writing Club												
23	Family Writing Club												

Appendix F

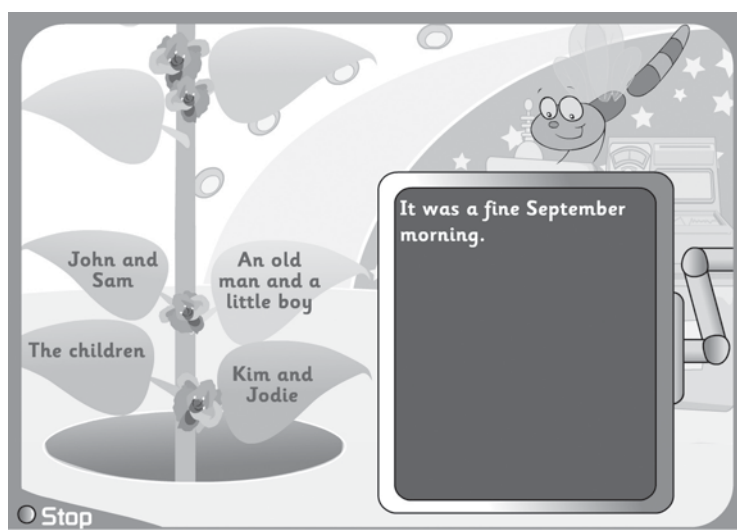
Examples of Websites with Applications across the Core Competences

eLiteracy is not a subject in itself; it is a medium for the teaching and learning of other subjects. Digital technologies are to be used to explore areas of the curriculum such as literacy and numeracy. Browsing the internet one may find a number of educational sites with games and activities that target a number of Core Competences. The following are some examples of how learners can develop their eSkills incidentally and indirectly while interacting with digital devices and enjoying themselves in activities related to literacy and numeracy. All games shown are available freely in the internet. The Core Competences targeted in these sample activities have been referred to by making reference to the checklists of Appendices A to C.

1. Connecting eLiteracy and Literacy Targets

Story Plant

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/starship/english/storyplant.shtml>



Literacy

E.Y2.19 Write simple sentences with both high frequency and regular words.

E.Y3.18 Write a short paragraph / short story.

eLiteracy

ICT.Y2.03 Respond to prompts that include simple buttons/symbols such as 'Start', 'Close Window'.

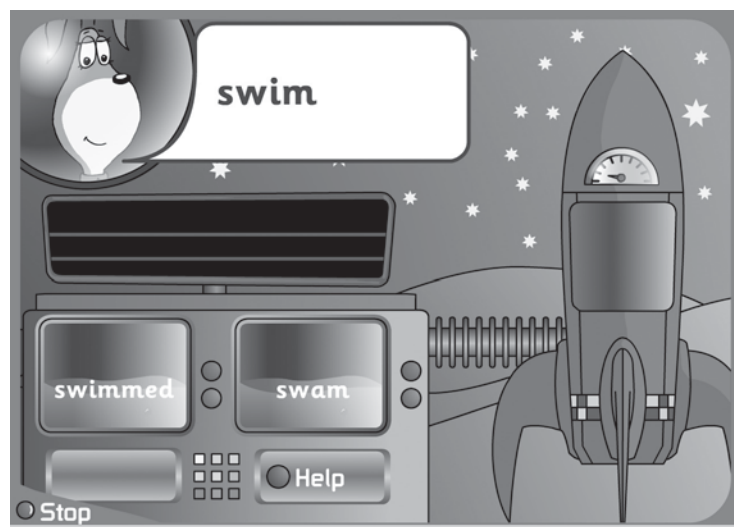
ICT.Y2.04 Awareness that the user's decision will determine the computer's next action (decision to view full screen or not, with/without sound) and making choices (read, Start new story, Print).

ICT.Y1.05 Clicking on particular areas on the screen to achieve an output and point and click on items as prompted.

ICT.Y1.05 Are capable of using printing facilities when these are represented by an icon.

Starship

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/starship/english/blastrocket.shtml>



Literacy

E.Y.3.12 Read and write out verbs in the past tense and have awareness of the sounds of 'ed' in its different environments.

eLiteracy

ICT.Y2.04 Awareness that the user's decision will determine the computer's next action (decision to view full screen or not, with/without sound), Again button to restart activity.

ICT.Y1.05 Selecting a particular area on the screen and clicking on it.

ICT.Y2.03 Respond to prompts that include simple buttons/symbols such as 'Start', 'Close Window', 'Again', 'Help'.

ICT.Y1.05 Are capable of using printing facilities when these are represented by an icon.

ICT.Y3.06 Awareness that the computer can retain scores for record-keeping purposes.

ICT.Y2.03 Awareness of Help facilities offered by ICT.

Make a Word

<http://www.starfall.com/n/make-a-word/an/load.htm?f>



Literacy

E.Y1.09 Identification of first and last sounds (an extension of the skill)

E.Y1.19 Decoding regular words

eLiteracy

ICT.Y1.05 Click and drag objects on the screen.

ICT.Y2.03 Respond to prompts that include simple buttons/symbols such as 'Next' (Forward button to continue working similar activities), 'Exit' (Close button).

ICT.Y1.05 Are capable of using printing facilities when these are represented by an icon.

Wet, Soap, Rinse & Dry

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/bobinogs/games/gamespage.shtml>



Literacy

E.Y1.08 Building up a sequenced activity

eLiteracy

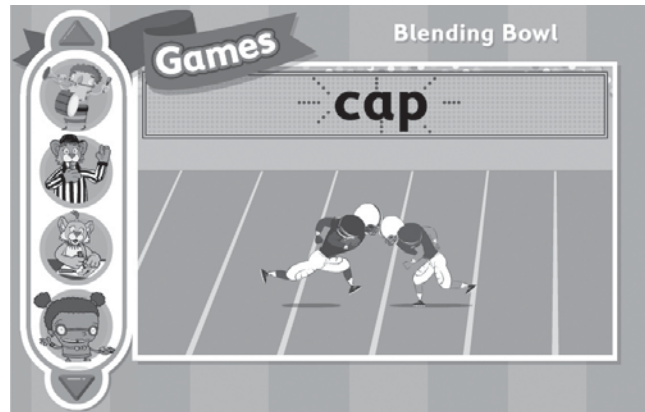
ICT.Y1.05 Pointing at a requested area on the screen and clicking on it.

ICT.Y2.03 Respond to prompts that include simple buttons/symbols such as 'Close'.

ICT.Y1.05 Are capable of using printing facilities when these are represented by an icon.

Blending Bowl

<http://pbskids.org/lions/games/blending.html>



Literacy

E.Y1.12 Blend sounds in monosyllabic words to produce target words (an extension of activity).

E.Y1.19 Confidently and effortlessly read regular words.

eLiteracy

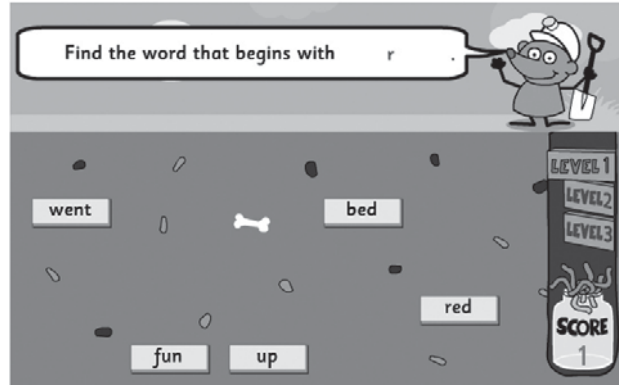
ICT.Y2.03 Respond to prompts that include simple buttons/symbols such as 'Play' (to start the activity), 'More ___' (back button to restart the activity), 'New game' (forward button) to choose a different category).

ICT.Y2.04 Awareness that the user's decision will determine the computer's next action eg selecting the player will determine the subsequent activity.

ICT.Y1.05 Pointing at a particular area on the screen and clicking on it.

First Sounds Game

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/laac/words/dg2.shtml>



Literacy

E.Y1.09 Identification of sounds in words (an extension of the activity)

E.Y1.11 Identify and write blends both in isolation and in words.

eLiteracy

ICT.Y3.05 Learn to stop interacting with the computer and wait for it to load the activity).

ICT.Y2.04 Awareness that the user's decision will determine the computer's next action eg selecting the activity level.

ICT.Y1.05 Selecting, pointing and clicking on a particular area on the screen.

ICT.Y2.03 Respond to prompts that include simple buttons/symbols such as 'Next' (to continue the activity).

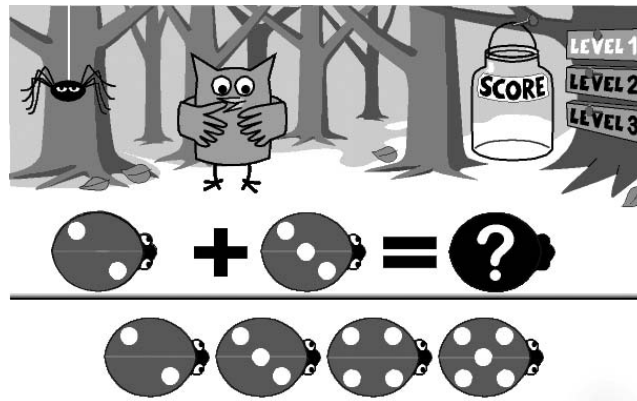
ICT.Y3.06 Awareness that the computer can retain scores for record-keeping purposes.

2. Connecting eLiteracy and Numeracy Targets

Count Hoot

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/laac/numbers/chi.shtml>

Help Count Hoot in a number game by choosing from the three different levels offered Addition / Subtraction / Addition and Subtraction



Mathematics

M.Y1.01: Count forward up to 10 and backward from 10 to zero and count reliably up to 10 everyday objects.

M.Y1.05: Begin to use the vocabulary associated with addition and subtraction in practical activities.

M.Y2.09: Use known number facts and place-value to add/subtract a pair of numbers mentally within the range 0 to at least 20 including bridging through 10.

eLiteracy

ICT.Y2.04 Awareness that the user's decision will determine the computer's next action e.g. selecting which activity to carry out (addition, subtraction, addition and subtraction) and then also selecting the activity level, and once completing the activity deciding whether to work out the same level again or the next level.

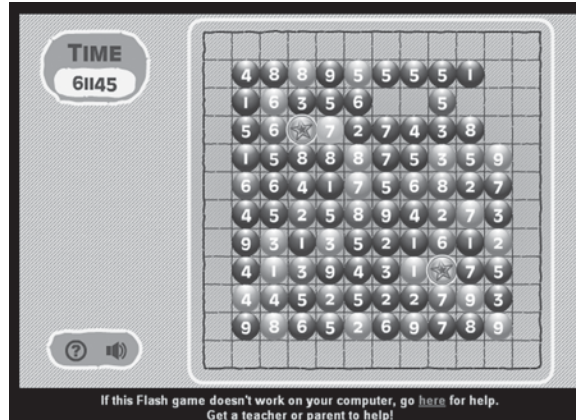
ICT.Y1.05 Engage in computer activities to acquire basic mouse skills (Selecting, pointing and clicking on a particular area on the screen.)

ICT.Y3.06 Awareness that the computer can retain scores for record-keeping purposes.

Number Twins

<http://www.coolmath-games.com/0-numbers-twins/index.html>

Click on a pair of numbers that make up 10 until you clear the entire grid.



Mathematics

M.Y2.07: Know by heart all the pairs of numbers that make up 10 and the corresponding subtraction facts.

eLiteracy

ICT.Y2.03 Respond to prompts that include simple buttons/symbols such as 'Start', 'Play Again', 'Home'.

ICT.Y2.04 Awareness that the user's decision will determine the computer's next action e.g. selecting whether to play with or without sound.

ICT.Y1.05 Engage in computer activities to acquire basic mouse skills (Selecting, pointing and clicking on a particular area on the screen.)

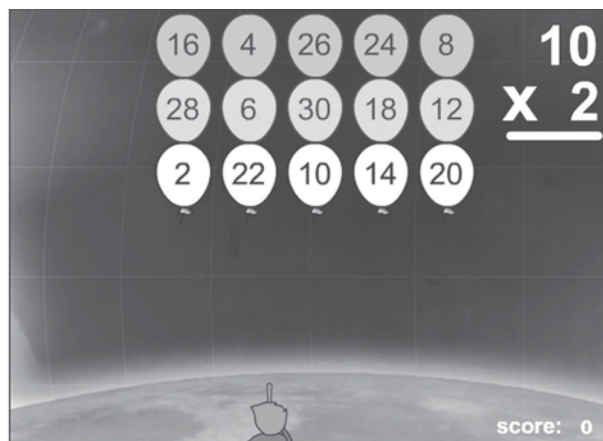
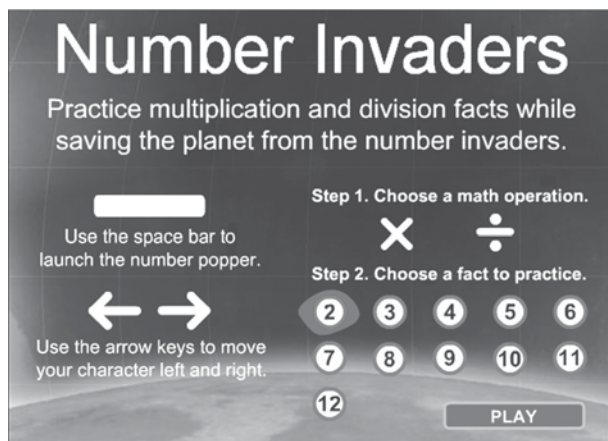
ICT.Y3.06 Awareness that the computer can retain time elapsed for record-keeping purposes.

ICT.Y2.03 Awareness of Help facilities offered by ICT.

Number Invaders

http://www.mathplayground.com/balloon_invaders.html

Shoot the invading balloons by recalling multiplication facts of a table of your choice.



Number Invaders - Multiplication and Division

The Number Invaders are descending upon the innocent inhabitants of a distant planet. Help Trevor keep the Number Invaders a safe distance away. You'll need instant recall of math facts and a steady hand to win this game!

Mathematics

M.Y1.09 and MY3.09: Begin to relate the addition of doubles to counting on.

M.Y2.07: Know by heart for the 2 and 10 multiplication tables.

eLiteracy

ICT.Y2.03 Respond to prompts that include simple buttons/symbols such as 'Play' and 'Play Again'.

ICT.Y2.04 Awareness that the user's decision will determine the computer's next action e.g. selecting which math operation to practice (multiplication or division) and then also selecting the digit to work with.

ICT.Y1.05 Engage in computer activities to acquire basic mouse skills (Selecting, pointing and clicking on a particular area on the screen.)

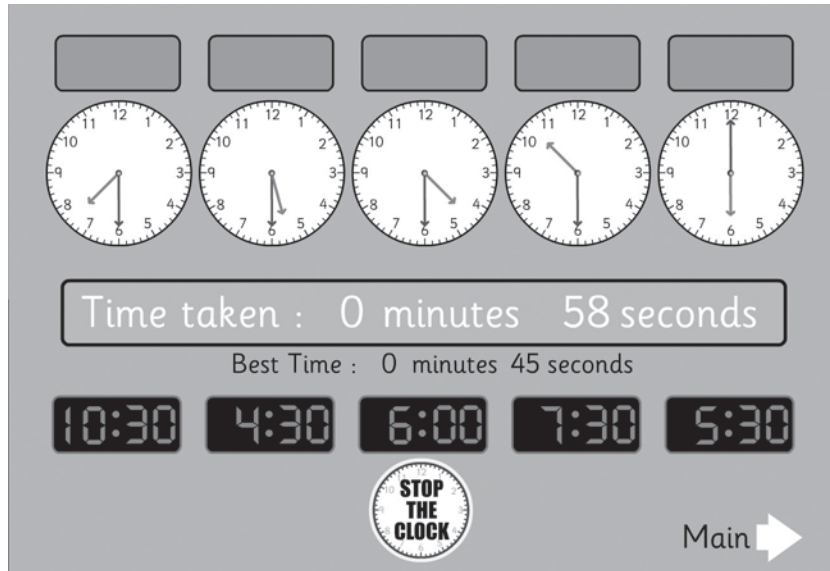
ICT.Y1.05 Engage in computer activities to acquire basic keyboard skills (use of spacebar and left and right navigation keys).

ICT.Y3.06 Awareness that the computer can retain scores for record-keeping purposes.

Reading Time

<http://www.oswego.org/ocsd-web/games/StopTheClock/sthec1.html>

Drag the correct half hour (or quarter hour) time in the matching position.



Mathematics

M.Y3.14: Read, on an analogue and a 12-hour digital clock, the time to the: hour and half hour.

eLiteracy

ICT.Y2.03 Respond to prompts that include simple buttons/symbols such as 'Play' 'Try Again' and 'Main'.

ICT.Y2.04 Awareness that the user's decision will determine the computer's next action e.g. stopping the clock to record one's time to terminate the matching activity.

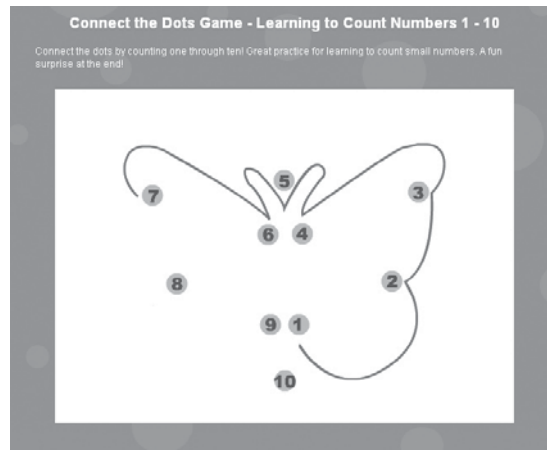
ICT.Y1.05 Engage in computer activities to acquire basic mouse skills (dragging skills).

ICT.Y3.06 Awareness that the computer can retain scores for record-keeping purposes.

Connecting Dots

http://www.abcya.com/connect_the_dots_butterfly.thm

Click on the dots sequentially to build up a picture



Mathematics

M.Y1.01: Count forward up to 10 and backward from 10 to zero and count reliably up to 10 everyday objects.

eLiteracy

ICT.Y2.04 Awareness that the user's decision will determine the computer's next action e.g. selecting which number to click next to complete the butterfly picture.

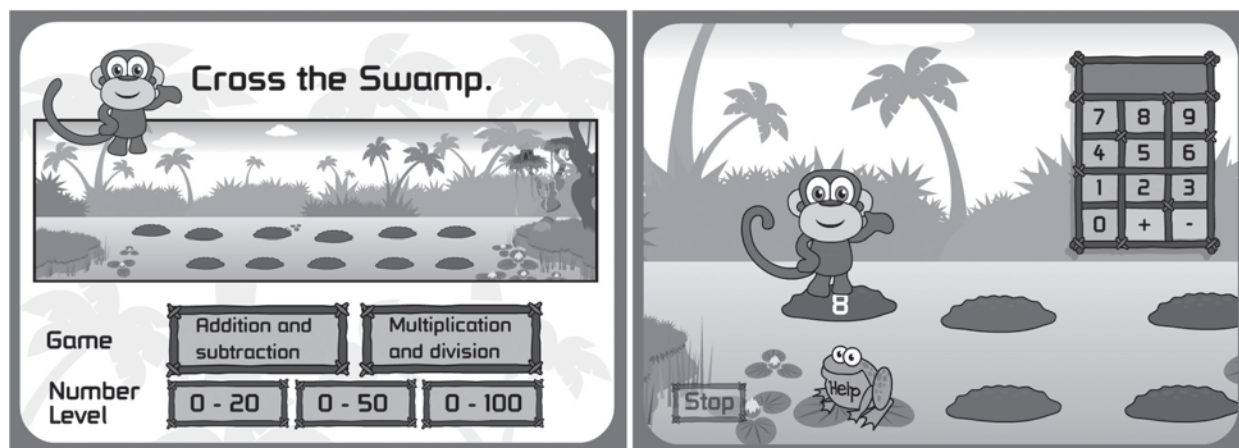
ICT.Y1.05 Engage in computer activities to acquire basic mouse skills (Selecting, pointing and clicking on a particular area on the screen.)

ICT.Y2.03 Respond to prompts that include simple buttons/symbols such as 'Close'.

Problem Solving: Cross the Swamp

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/starship/maths/crosstheswamp.shtml>

Help Little Ron jumping from log to log to cross the swamp. You are given a choice of number game and level. Select a log to jump on and decide how to get to the number on the new log. Is it by adding or subtracting? And how much must I add or subtract.



Mathematics

M.Y2.09: Use known number facts and place-value to add/subtract a pair of numbers mentally within the range 0 to at least 20 including bridging through 10.

M.Y3.17: Use mental strategies to solve simple problems set in 'real life', money or measurement contexts, using counting, addition, subtraction, halving/doubling and be able to explain methods and reasoning orally.

eLiteracy

ICT.Y2.04 Awareness that the user's decision will determine the computer's next action (deciding to view full screen or not, playing the game with/without sound, selecting the game level and the math operation to practise (addition and subtraction or multiplication and division) and deciding whether to play again or print once the game is completed.

ICT.Y1.05 Engage in computer activities to acquire basic mouse skills (Selecting, pointing and clicking).

ICT.Y2.03 Respond to prompts that include simple buttons/symbols such as 'Stop', 'Play Again' and 'Print Out'.

ICT.Y2.03 Awareness of Help facilities offered by ICT.

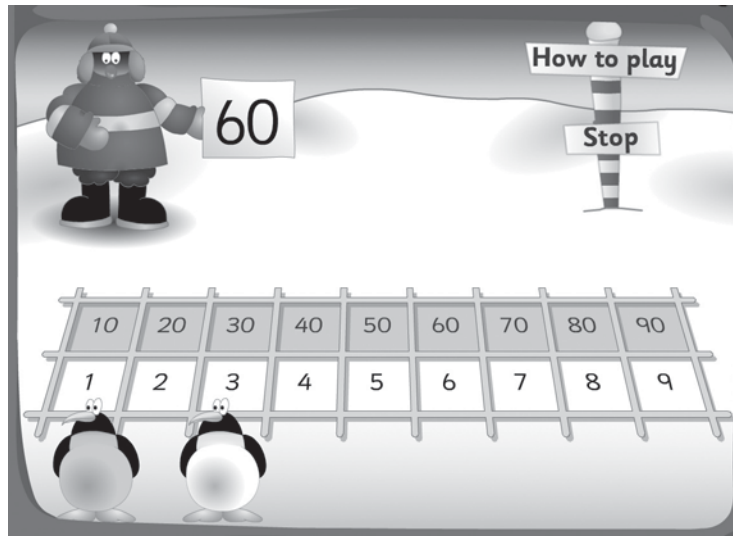
ICT.Y3.06 Awareness that the computer can retain scores for record-keeping purposes.

ICT.Y1.05 Are capable of using printing facilities when these are represented by an icon.

Place Value: Place the Penguin

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/starship/maths/placethepenguin.shtml>

Help Dave drag the penguins on the tens and units place value to make up the number he show you.



Mathematics

M.Y3.02: Know what each digit represents (including 0 as a place holder).

eLiteracy

ICT.Y2.04 Awareness that the user's decision will determine the computer's next action (decision to view full screen or not,) and then also selecting which level to play and once the activity is completed decide whether to play again or print results.

ICT.Y2.03 Respond to prompts that include simple buttons/symbols such as 'Stop', 'Play Again' and 'Print Out'

ICT.Y2.03 Awareness of Help facilities offered by ICT.

ICT.Y1.05 Engage in computer activities to acquire basic mouse skills (dragging the penguins).

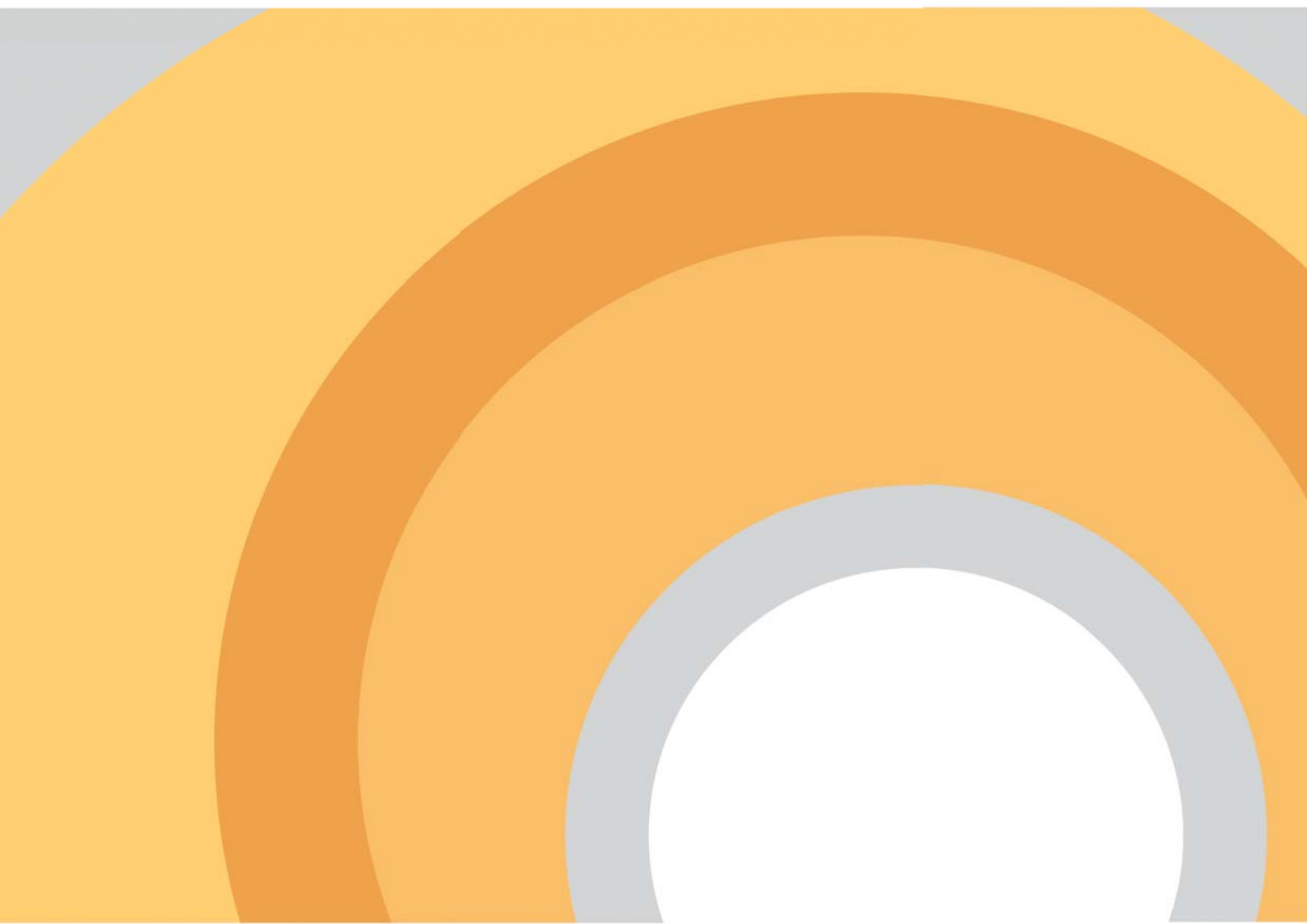
ICT.Y3.06 Awareness that the computer can retain scores for record-keeping purposes.

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