

Resource Teacher: Literacy (RTLit)

Cluster Group: Masterton (Whakaoriori)

Host School: Douglas Park School

The RTLit will be based at a particular host school and will be employed by the board of trustees of that school to work in an itinerant role on behalf of a designated cluster of schools.

Purpose of the position

The role of the RTLit is to provide itinerant, specialised literacy support for year 0-8 students with high literacy needs. The role will include teaching children directly and indirectly modelling and demonstrating effective practices, strategies, or techniques for teachers so that:

- children receive appropriate literacy programmes on an ongoing basis
- teachers can use the skills they have acquired with these students and others with similar needs.

The role will include regular tutoring and/or supervision so that:

- a child is tutored by the RTLit on a regular basis
- following a period of regular tutoring, the child's programme is taken over by the school's personnel, with the RTLit adopting a monitoring role until the child is discharged.

Work relationships

The RTLit will:

- be accountable to the principal of the host school on behalf of the cluster schools
- be a member of the management committee
- work with staff and/or children in the designated cluster of schools
- liaise with students' families in collaboration with the school leadership and classroom teachers
- in collaboration with the school leadership and classroom teachers, liaise with other appropriate agencies and educational professions
liaise and work collaboratively with other RTLit at meetings and conferences, regionally and nationally, for professional development.

Key tasks

Identifying needs and maintaining workload

The RTLit will:

- use appropriate diagnostic assessment tools to determine the specific needs of students accepted on their roll
- use this data to make recommendations as to the most appropriate literacy intervention programmes to meet the children's needs and, where necessary, work with the school leadership and classroom teachers to provide a literacy programme for children who are most at risk in the acquisition of literacy
- maintain a workable caseload of children and teachers as determined by the management committee, taking into account the level of involvement required for each child and teacher and the experience of the RTLit, or refer students to a more appropriate service, for example, vision specialist/testing, ESOL programmes, speech-language therapists, RTLBs, or other professional services.

Advisory tasks

The RT: Lit will:

- provide advice and support to school leadership and classroom teachers in order to maintain the learning gains achieved by the child following an intervention programme and/or address literacy learning for children with serious literacy difficulties when part of the regular classroom programme
- monitor progress and help teachers to adapt literacy programmes as necessary to facilitate success for children with serious literacy difficulties
- provide in-service training on topics related to literacy difficulties for the staff of cluster schools
- in conjunction with classroom teachers, work with whānau and parents and/or other agencies to facilitate the educational achievement of children identified as requiring the services of the RTLit.

Literacy intervention tasks

Where appropriate, the RTLit will work with individual children and their teachers, when the resources of the school have been unable to provide and implement an appropriate programme to resolve the child's literacy difficulties, by:

- providing intensive, specialised teaching with the child for a specified period that, in most instances, will not exceed a maximum of thirty weeks or 45 sessions ; or
- resolving the difficulties by providing immediate advice to the classroom teachers and school leadership that completes the intervention; or
- providing a programme of advice, guidance, and support, including teaching demonstrations, for a specified period, to help the classroom teacher.

Host-school-related tasks

The RTLit will:

- report regularly to the principal of the host school and the management committee, detailing work they have undertaken so that the board of trustees of the host school can be assured it is fulfilling its responsibilities under the Memorandum of Agreement
- work in conjunction with any school's literacy leaders, classroom literacy initiatives, or interventions such as Reading Recovery that are operating in schools
- submit an annual written report to the Ministry, in the format provided, that describes and provides a statistical analysis of work undertaken throughout the year
- adhere to the RTLit professional standards.

Cluster-related tasks

The RTLit will:

- work flexibly among a designated cluster of schools as agreed to by the management committee
- submit an annual written report to the cluster that describes and provides a statistical analysis of work undertaken throughout the year in the cluster
- in conjunction with the management committee, establish operational procedures consistent with the agreed policies of the committee and the needs of the cluster. This may include the development and use of a Memorandum of Understanding between the referred student's school and the RTLit. The purpose of the agreement is to contribute towards ensuring there is role clarity for working collaboratively and cohesively towards providing effective systems and practices for accelerating the progress of the target student/s accepted onto the RTLit roll.

Person specification

General knowledge and skills

The successful application should have:

- New Zealand teacher registration and a current practising certificate
- a successful classroom teaching background
- a sound knowledge of The New Zealand Curriculum Framework/Te Marautanga o Aotearoa.

Literacy-specific knowledge and skills

The successful applicant should have:

- the ability to identify, implement, and evaluate a range of educational and management approaches for classroom programmes to meet the literacy needs of children who have serious difficulties
- the ability to develop and monitor individual programmes for children with serious literacy difficulties (for which Reading Recovery training is an advantage)
- assessment skills for the evaluation of literacy achievement
- the ability to work with staff, whanau and families, and other agencies in the designated cluster of schools and to help them with the literacy education of children who have serious difficulties.

Professional skills

The successful applicant should have:

- a high level of consultative and collaborative skills
- strong interpersonal and communication skills to allow for effective and comprehensive consultation and teacher support and for effective interaction with the school leadership, parents and caregivers
- the ability to access and use information and communication technologies and materials to enhance and support literacy intervention programme
- a commitment to biculturalism, to meeting the needs of children from different cultures, and to providing services that are culturally appropriate
- the ability to meet the professional standards for an experienced teacher
- a current driver's licence and a willingness to use their own vehicle and be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred on work-related business
- an RTLit Diploma or intention in the first year to enrol in a University course to complete one.

Training requirements:

All RTLits employed by the host school must have completed a training course approved by the Ministry, or commence one within one year of their appointment, or have been granted exemption by the Secretary of Education.

The course is a compulsory component of conditions of service for all RTLits.

Approved courses will provide for flexible course delivery across New Zealand through a mixture of brief regional block courses, online interactive learning and discussion, and practical, child-based assignments. For RTLits with graduate status, four graduate-level papers must be completed in the first three years of appointment as an RTLit. For RTLits without graduate status, two 300-level papers and then two diploma-level papers must be completed in the first three years of appointment.

Exemptions from training:

All RTLits employed by the host school must complete an approved professional training course except where an exemption to the training has been granted to the RTLit by the Secretary of Education.

RTLits with higher qualifications in literacy may apply for an exemption or partial exemption from the training. These RTLits will be supplied with full course information by the Ministry and any further explanation they may require to make a decision to apply to be exempt from the training.

The relevant higher qualifications will be considered on a case-by-case basis and could include:

- a New Zealand master's degree in education, completed after 1998, including at least two papers (or the equivalent if completed by thesis) in literacy learning
- a master's degree in education from overseas, deemed by NZQA to be equivalent to a New Zealand master's degree, completed since 1998, including at least two papers (or the equivalent if completed by thesis) in literacy learning
- a masters' degree in education, in progress, with at least two papers in literacy learning completed.

Supervision and study leave:

RTLits are linked through email systems into study groups, and professional supervision is provided. Each semester, they are required to attend some block courses.

While RTLits are training, they are entitled to be released for half a day per week for study leave during term time.

Qualifications:

Each RTLit's qualifications will be considered by the training provider(s) before enrolment in the course at either graduate or postgraduate level.

Depending on the entry level, the papers will lead to either a postgraduate diploma or a postgraduate certificate. The course content will be the same in either case, but the academic requirements will differ.

Training costs:

The Ministry of Education will pay the tuition fees for the approved course.

Course materials and resources associated with the course are made available through the training provider and are to be used for study and with teachers and children in schools.

From time to time, RTLits will need to travel to block courses. Approved travel and accommodation expenses will be reimbursed by the Ministry of Education.

Each RTLit position will be supplied with a laptop for their training. These laptops remain the property of the host school and move to the new host school when this changes. Each RTLit may be supplied with a laptop computer and appropriate technical support and software as part of the Laptops for Teachers scheme.