

St. Winifred's Catholic Primary School

English Policy



Agreed by the Teaching and Learning Committee: March 2022

Review Date: March 2023

MISSION STATEMENT

At St Winifred's Catholic Primary School:

- We nourish a happy, safe and supportive school community in which every individual is welcomed, valued and respected for being unique
- We inspire a search for excellence by offering the best possible learning environment
- We provide a Christ-centred education, helping our children to develop and grow in faith and teaching them to promote the Gospel values of love of neighbour, fairness and forgiveness, both in school and in the wider community.

St Winifred's Catholic Primary School

English Policy

Rationale

It is our policy to provide equality of access for all our children, to a broad and balanced curriculum. English provides the main instrument for learning throughout the school curriculum and for communicating and integrating in everyday life, therefore the literacy experiences which we provide for our children must:

- recognise and build on the experiences which children bring from home;
- enable each child to deepen their understanding of themselves and the world in which they live;
- aim to develop fluency, confidence, skills and understanding; and
- enable each child to develop an appreciation of the enjoyment to be derived from literacy.

Aims and Intent

The overarching aim for English in the National Curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The National Curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- develop a respect and appreciation of their own language and that of others;
- develop the stamina and skills to write at length and encourage a love of writing;
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- enables children to write with accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar;
- increases the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work; and
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas

Broad Guidelines- Implementation of National Curriculum 2014

We use the National Curriculum in England as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programmes of study for English. The National Curriculum in England details what we must teach across Key Stages. Each year's overview defines what genres are taught to ensure that there is an appropriate balance and distribution of text types across each term and year group.

In the National Curriculum for 5 - 11 year olds, English is developed through four key areas:

- Spoken Language
- Reading – Word Reading & Comprehension
- Writing – Transcription & Composition
- Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar & Punctuation

The Early Years Foundation Stage

English in Early Years is based upon the statutory framework and the Early Learning Goals - Literacy and communication and language. Communication, language and literacy depend on learning and being competent in a number of key skills, together with having the confidence, opportunity, encouragement, support and disposition to use them. This area of learning includes communication, speaking and listening in different situations and for different purposes, being read a wide range of books and reading simple texts and writing for a variety of purposes.

To give all children the best opportunities for effective development and learning in communication, language and literacy, teacher should give particular attention to:

- Providing opportunities for children to communicate thoughts, ideas and feelings and build up relationships with adults and each other
- Incorporating communication, language and literacy development in planned activities in each area of learning;
- Giving opportunities to share and enjoy a wide range of rhymes, music, songs, poetry, stories and non-fiction books
- Giving opportunities for linking language with physical movement in action songs and rhymes, role play and practical experiences
- Planning an environment that reflects the importance of language through signs, notices and books
- Providing opportunities for children to see adults writing and for children to experiment with writing for themselves through making marks, personal writing symbols and conventional script
- Providing time and opportunities to develop spoken language through conversations between children and adults, both one-to-one and in small groups, with particular awareness of, and sensitivity to, the needs of children for whom English is an additional language, using their home language when appropriate

Speaking and Listening

The National Curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically.

Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers should therefore ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills.

Children should be provided with a wide variety of experiences, where they can encounter a range of audiences and activities which are designed to develop competence, precision and confidence in speaking and listening.

We place a high value on talking with and listening to our children. English lessons are planned to include use of talk partners, drama, debate and discussions.

Reading

Reading is a skill essential for life and at St Winifred's we want every child to leave school as a competent reader with a love of books. Children need to see adults loving books, so school staff are encouraged to share their love of reading with the children.

The programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of two dimensions:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading)

Whole-class Guided Reading

In Year 2 and KS2, teachers read with children a range of texts focusing on comprehension and specific features in relation to objectives and content domains.

For Guided Reading, we use The Literary Leaves program, which is part of The Literacy Curriculum scheme. The Literary Leaves are a suite of book-based comprehension resources for Y2-Y6, designed to support teachers with the teaching of reading, using whole books, rather than extracts. This book based approach ensures that there is a consistent, cohesive pedagogy across the school.

Each Literary Leaf (session) focusses on a particular skill or two, ensuring that children secure these deeply. Guided Reading takes place at least three times a week, outside of the Literacy lesson and work is recorded in a Guided Reading work-book.

In EYFS and KS1, children take part in small group reading as part of the Little Wandle, Letters and Sounds Revised phonics scheme. Please refer to the Phonics policy.

Independent reading

Children engage in independent, sustained reading. It provides an opportunity for pupils to read and enjoy a range of texts and to apply reading strategies. Each class has a dedicated, exciting reading area containing a range of books and text types for children to access independently. Every class should have a range of books including:

- Poetry / plays
- Fiction – the choice of books reflects the spread of interest and reading abilities across the class, for example picture books, graphic novels, etc
- Non-fiction – as wide a range as possible, including plenty linked to the subject areas being studied
- Books from a range of cultures and covering a range of themes are interwoven through all collections

EYFS, KS1 and KS2: Children are heard reading independently by an adult or their peers on a regular basis, changing their books when required. Targetted readers should be heard at least twice a week. Children work their way through the stages according to their ability, progressing to reading literature of their choice (checked for suitability by an adult where necessary). Children in EYFS and KS1 accessing phonics will also have a decodable phonics book, in-line with their current Little Wandle, Letters and Sounds Revised phonics reading group book.

Reading for pleasure

Reading for pleasure is a vital part of every child's educational entitlement. Developing a love of reading has huge benefits for children, contributing to pupils' educational achievement across the curriculum in addition to providing a lifetime of enjoyment.

Every class across the school is read to by an adult on a daily basis, fostering a love for reading through exposing the children to high quality literature.

To encourage children's enjoyment of reading, each classroom should have an attractive book area, containing a range of rich and stimulating texts; fiction, non-fiction and children's own made books.

Children have access to a bright, well-resourced library. There is a wide range of fiction, non-fiction, poetry and reference books. During lunchtimes it is staffed by an adult who facilitates the borrowing of books by children. Classes should use the library in their allocated time slots for referencing, choosing own books or sessions to read the class book aloud.

Children are encouraged to read regularly at home – 10 minutes a day in KS1 and 20-30 minutes in KS2. Children must keep a record of their reading and, in KS2, complete reading activities/tasks in their reading journal.

Children experience a wide range of reading activities in class including shared reading, reading circles, quiet reading, listening to stories, writing, making and sharing own books etc. and group reading.

Each class is paired with another from a different year group for buddy reading where children take turns reading to each other. This develops talking and listening skills in both sets of children.

Parents are supported and encouraged to read with their children regularly and to help with reading in classes thus involving them in the process of supporting their child's developing enjoyment and achievement

Writing

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

As a school we follow The Literacy Curriculum scheme. The Literacy Curriculum is a complete, book-based approach which immerses children in a literary world, creating strong levels of engagement to provide meaningful and authentic contexts for learning. In some year groups core texts from the Centre for Learning in Primary Education (CLPE) have been chosen, and programmes of study are adapted to be inline with the core principles of the Literacy Curriculum.

We use curriculum maps across the school to ensure progression and continuity.

Teachers establish the purpose and audience for writing and make teaching objectives explicit to pupils so they know why they are studying a particular text type, the kind of writing activities they need to undertake and what the expected outcome will be.

Children's writing includes a variety of text types for example: narratives; explanations; descriptions and comparisons; diary writing; newspaper reports; instruction texts, report writing; argument and persuasion; play scripts and poetry. Through these, children are taught to:

- develop the stamina and skills to write at length
- write with accurate spelling and punctuation
- use grammar correctly
- increase their ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work
- plan, draft and edit their writing to suit the purpose and audience
- use computing as a literacy medium for presenting work and manipulating text

They experience a wide range of writing activities in their classrooms:- book making, story writing, reporting events, creative writing, recording information, poems, rhyming families etc. Emphasis is given to developing a sense of audience, ensuring that writing is for a variety of real purposes, where possible.

As a school, we build in regular cross-curricular writing opportunities, using our rich and varied curriculum as an engaging stimulus for the children. We also use core texts from the Centre for Learning in Primary Education (CLPE), alongside The Literacy Curriculum.

Teachers use shared writing to model the writing process. This provides an opportunity for teachers to demonstrate writing, including the thought processes that are required. This is also the time when children are given the opportunity to discuss, verbalise and refine ideas before committing to print. With knowledge of text type from shared reading sessions, children should be able to generate a list of features that they would expect to use in any writing genre about which they have learned

Shared reading and writing provide a context for discussion and demonstration of grammatical features at word level, sentence level and text level. Teachers encourage 'talk for writing' as an integral part of the process.

Children should be given the opportunity for a range of independent writing activities which clearly link to whole class writing objectives. Children should be given the opportunity to self-assess and peer-assess writing.

Children write in pencil in Early years, KS1 and lower KS2 and in pencil or pen in Upper KS2.

Spelling

Spelling is developed through:

- The systematic teaching of phonics in EYFS and KS1 using the Little Wandle, Letters and Sounds revised scheme (Please refer to the Phonics Policy)
- The teaching of spelling strategies in Year 2 and KS2 using the Spelling Seed scheme (part of the Literacy Curriculum)
- Regular dictionary and thesaurus work
- Use of word banks and spell checks
- Focussing on subject specific vocabulary across all areas of the curriculum
- Regular opportunities to identify and use spelling within a context

We send spellings home weekly throughout the school.

Handwriting

We use a standard style of handwriting throughout the school.

Children are encouraged, right from the start, to form a legible style, through patterning, tracing, copy writing and later drafting. They are shown how to form letters correctly, and are made aware from the beginning of upper and lower case letters - of ascenders and descenders, and finger spaces. Children see models of handwriting in their class - through shared writing and displays.

We follow the Penpals handwriting scheme from year 1 to year 6. Handwriting is taught in addition to the daily English lesson.

Special Educational Needs provision

Pupils identified as needing extra support in English will be given the appropriate help in the classroom. Providing for pupils with special educational needs should take account of each pupil's particular learning and assessment requirements and incorporate specific approaches which will allow individuals to succeed, such as using texts at an appropriate level of difficulty and planning for additional support. Children with Educational Health Care Plans are targeted with support outlined in those plans.

There are children of differing ability in all classes. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. During lessons, a range of strategies are used to ensure appropriate levelled learning takes place. We use teaching assistants to support some children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

Responding to Children's Writing

We have a whole school marking policy. In addition to this, children's independent writing is often marked and discussed 1:1 between the pupil and class teacher.

Conclusion

We strive to produce children who are fully literate and articulate, and are prepared for their secondary education and later life. As a school we are aware that all children are individuals and are entitled to a curriculum that best suits their needs. Through engaging lessons, we aim to foster a love of English and language and an enjoyment of learning. We challenge children of all abilities and in order to make good progress in all areas of the English National Curriculum. They are encouraged to have a growth mind-set and to develop the skills of perseverance and resilience. Through reading in particular, pupils are given a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually.

Reviewed: March 2022