

English Policy

St. James' C of E Primary School
ENGLISH

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Introduction

“The more that you read, the more things you know. The more that you learn, the more places you will go.”

Dr Seuss

Literacy is at the heart of all children's learning. The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes. It enables children both to communicate with others effectively for a variety of purposes and to examine their own and others' experiences, feelings and ideas, giving these order and meaning. It also enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as non-fiction and media texts. Because literacy is central to children's intellectual, emotional and social development it has an essential role across the curriculum and is fundamental to the overall development of the child, including their access to the curriculum in all its aspects.

At St. James' C of E Primary school we believe that literacy and communication are key life skills. Through the English curriculum, we will help children develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively through spoken and written language and equip them with the skills to become lifelong learners. We want children to enjoy and appreciate literature and its rich variety.

This policy outlines the aims, organisation and management for the teaching and learning of English at St. James' C of E Primary School. It is based on the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and the National Curriculum 2014.

Aims

At St. James' Primary school we strive for children to be literate. We aim to develop pupils' abilities within an integrated programme of Spoken Language, Reading and Writing. Pupils are given opportunities to interrelate the requirements of English within a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of English across the curriculum. There are many opportunities to consolidate and apply taught literacy skills through the school's thematic curriculum.

The aims of English are:

- *to enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners*
- *to encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard*
- *to enable children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands*
- *to develop children's abilities to reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used through a range of activities to develop spoken language*

- to develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge
- to encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers through contact with challenging and high quality texts
- to help children enjoy and engage with and understand a range of text types and genres
- to be able to write in a variety of styles and forms showing awareness of audience and purpose
- to enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction
- to increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work
- to develop powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness in all areas of literacy

Statutory Requirements

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum (2014). In Key Stage 1 and 2 the English curriculum is implemented using a cross-curricular approach to teaching and learning, and takes account of the statutory requirements of the programmes of study for English outlined in the National Curriculum 2014. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the EYFS Framework Handbook 2016 is followed and supported by Development Matters in the EYFS (2012) in implementing the statutory requirements of the EYFS.

Teaching and Learning in English

Early Years Foundation Stage

We teach English as an integral part of the school's work. In the EYFS, teaching is heavily weighted towards children acquiring a good knowledge of phonics and the application of this knowledge to a range of early reading and writing activities. Formal and informal opportunities for English are developed through daily routines and are linked to a theme where appropriate. All children are given the opportunity to talk and communicate in a range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their range of vocabulary and communication skills in every part of the curriculum. They have the opportunity to explore, enjoy, learn about, and use words and text in a range of situations, whilst becoming immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding. We do this through a daily session in which children experience a range of whole-class reading and writing activities, focused word or sentence tasks, and guided group and independent activities. Key skills are embedded and applied in other subject areas, promoting high quality writing across the curriculum.

Approaches to Spoken Language

Spoken language is fundamental to a child's development and permeates the whole curriculum. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. These oral skills are directly taught, modelled and sensitively encouraged in whole class and small group activities. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Opportunities across the whole curriculum are planned for and developed. Children regularly play an active part in presentations, topic talk, group discussions, debates and drama activities. They are also provided with opportunities to appreciate rhymes and poems and to recite some by heart.

Approaches to reading

Reading is taught through:

- whole class reading that develops listening skills, a love of story and reading for pleasure;
- shared reading that immerses children in the pattern of story and features of different non-fiction text types;
- guided reading that targets children's reading skills;
- individual/independent reading in school and daily reading at home. Parents are invited to make comments in reading records/logs;
- the reading environment;
- the school library – providing a range of reference and reading materials for children and teachers to access and borrow. This also supports our approach to teaching library and information skills.

Approaches to writing

We believe that writing should be a creative and developmental process both at a functional and imaginative level. The compositional and transcriptional skills are taught alongside the creative aspects. Immersion in reading, talk and preparation for writing is essential to the writing development process.

Writing is taught through:

- shared writing that is modelled by the teacher as the expert writer with contributions from the children;
- reading and analysis of a text type in order to become familiar with the features of a particular genre;
- the creation of a shared success criteria in order to focus teaching and learning of a particular text type;
- guided writing that targets children at the point of writing;
- opportunities for developmental/emergent writing (in EYFS and KS1);
- independent writing;
- the writing environment;
- WRITING CAFÉ – opportunities for creative extended writing

Periodically, lessons may be observed by the Senior Leadership Team or the English Subject Leader, and Governor visits take place throughout the year.

Curriculum Planning

Long and Medium term planning

In the EYFS, teachers ensure the coverage of the Communication and Language and Literacy areas of learning throughout the year. Planning is created in response to children's interests and needs, and therefore topics will change regularly depending on these factors.

Critical Pathways are used to support medium term planning across all subjects of the National Curriculum, and ensure coverage of key skills and appropriate topic links. They also highlight links to our 'curriculum drivers', Britishness and Global Diversity. The English aspect of the Critical

Pathway is planned by phase or year groups, *which gives opportunities for extended writing across the curriculum.*

In Key Stage 1 and 2 the planning structure is based on a theme or main text for each Key Stage Phase or year group. Throughout the year classes cover a wide range of genres including; narrative (plays and scripts), non fiction and poetry.

Short-term planning

In Key Stage 1 and 2 teachers short term planning takes the form of teaching sequences which focus on key texts and specific needs of the pupils. These teaching sequences identify key learning objectives and differentiation, including opportunities to deepen learning. Teachers evaluate weekly plans/teaching sequences by identifying children who have exceeded or not achieved expectations in order to inform future teaching and learning.

In the EYFS, teachers' plans cover two or three weeks and include learning objectives related to the Development Matters of the EYFS curriculum and teacher directed and child initiated activities. Assessment opportunities are also highlighted and are in line with the Early Learning Goals and EYFS profile.

Planning is monitored by the English Subject Leader and Senior Leadership Team.

Phonics and spelling

Phonics and spelling are taught as part of a coherent programme to ensure that children are able to read and write fluently. Phonics is taught explicitly in the EYFS, Key Stage 1 and where necessary in Key Stage 2.

In the EYFS and Key Stage 1, phonics is taught on a daily basis following the Letters and Sounds programme. Children are taught within class groups, with pupils working within the higher phases being taught within a targeted group.

In Key Stage 2, time is allocated each week for teaching and investigating spelling, as well as word level work linked to a related text in the main English session. Spelling lists as identified in the Appendices of the National Curriculum 2014 are used.

Handwriting

Handwriting and letter formation are taught explicitly throughout the school using the cursive script. *(For further detail, see Handwriting Policy)*

Cross-curricular English opportunities

Through the thematic curriculum, teachers seek to take advantage of opportunities to plan for pupils to practise and apply skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum. This provides purposeful opportunities for children to develop their spoken language, reading and writing skills across the curriculum. Links are highlighted in teachers' planning and evident through the children's work.

Computing and English

Computing is an important means of developing language use in the context of the modern world.

Opportunities to use ICT equipment in English are planned for and used as appropriate to enhance learning experiences and support effective teaching and learning. All classes have access to an interactive whiteboard and there is a laptop trolley and 30 Learnpads are timetabled and available for classes to use.

Assessment, recording and reporting

Assessment is regarded as an integral part of teaching and learning. It is the responsibility of the Class Teacher to assess all pupils in their class.

Day-to-day assessments

A variety of strategies are used to assess children's learning against key learning objectives. Assessments include the use of observation, skilful questioning, Assessment for Learning strategies and the marking/evaluation of children's work. Written or verbal feedback is given to help guide children's progress. Children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work and the work of others through self and peer-assessment.

Periodic assessments

SPTO tracking system is used to enable teachers to monitor the progress of every child in their class against National Curriculum key objectives in Key Stage 1 and 2 or Development statements and the Early Learning Goals in the EYFS.

The records of achievement for each year group are regularly updated and inform planning, track progress and highlight intervention needs.

Transitional Assessments

When pupils enter the EYFS, formal and informal observations take place and this information is used to complete the Early Excellence Baseline Assessment (EExBA) for each child. Transitional documents from pre-school settings are also considered. Observations occur frequently and judgements are made against the Development statements and Early Learning Goals for Communication and Language, Physical Development and Literacy. Information regarding children's attainment against the Early Learning Goals and The Characteristics of Effective Learning are shared with Year 1 teachers at the end of the school year.

Children undertake the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. GL Assessments are used at the end of EYFS to Year 5 for Reading, which also covers elements such as spelling and grammar. The children in Year 1 also undertake the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check.

The Governing Body

Regular reports are made to the governors on the progress of English provision and to the nominated English Governor.

Equal Opportunities

We value equal opportunities for all of our children and believe that all pupils should have access to the English curriculum regardless of gender, race, cultural background or any physical or sensory disability. Pupils are supported to make the greatest progress possible and we aim to ensure that all pupils reach their potential in English according to their individual needs. *(For further detail, see Equal Opportunities Policy)*

Monitoring and Review

This policy has been developed through discussion with teaching staff and governing body. Its implementation is seen as the responsibility of all teaching staff. Its use and effectiveness will be supported and monitored by the English Subject Leader on behalf of the Headteacher and Governors.

The policy will be updated in line with new initiatives and changes to the curriculum.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment and Record Keeping Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- EYFS Policy
- Handwriting Policy
- Gifted and Talented Policy