



St Ethelbert's RCP **English Policy**

Love, Care, Share...

Love learning as friends;

Care for our community as neighbours;

Share our faith in Jesus as disciples.

This policy describes our aims and our practice in the teaching of English: speaking and listening, reading, writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar. It is defined by current national guidance on best practice, in-service training, staff discussion and professional judgement.

Intent

- ❖ To ensure that each child has the necessary language skill to communicate effectively using spoken English;
- ❖ To ensure that all children are able to read fluently by the end of Year 2;
- ❖ To provide a language rich environment that promotes a culture of reading and writing;
- ❖ To develop in pupils a love of books and high-quality literature that will not only support their learning across the curriculum, but also extend beyond the classroom environment and enrich their lives;
- ❖ To explicitly teach reading skills throughout the school that continually develop children's understanding and enjoyment of texts;
- ❖ To teach children the craft of writing in order to develop the confidence and skills to write well for a range of purposes and audiences;
- ❖ To teach the basics – spelling, grammar, handwriting and punctuation – well so children have all the necessary tools to become confident speakers, readers and writers;
- ❖ To foster in pupils the confidence, desire and ability to express their views and opinions both orally and in writing;
- ❖ To value and celebrate diversity in culture and language. We aim for all children to participate in mainstream lessons. Extra support is in place for children with SEND. This takes different forms. Wherever possible, children remain in whole class lessons and work is broken down into smaller steps with support from additional adults;
- ❖ To provide a range of resources that reflect the diversity of culture and language within our school community and the wider local community.

Speaking and Listening

At St Ethelbert's, we believe that speaking and listening form the foundations of all learning in English. The school participates in the Voice 21 Oracy Programme and so strategies are implemented across the curriculum to develop and promote effective speaking and listening.

In formal and informal situations, we create and facilitate opportunities for conversation, discussion and talk for learning. Effective, open-ended questioning is an important tool and we strongly encourage children to be inquisitive and to share their thoughts confidently and articulately in a supportive environment in which challenge is welcomed. Vocabulary is taught explicitly.

Implementation

- ❖ Questioning and taking risks with language;
- ❖ Presenting in front of an audience;
- ❖ Re-telling, role-play and drama productions ;
- ❖ Listening to, reciting, reading aloud and participating in stories, poems, rhymes and songs;
- ❖ Drama activities to enliven and enrich children's understanding of character;
- ❖ Talking about texts – opportunities for children to talk about and discuss their reading and writing;
- ❖ Debate;
- ❖ Collaborative work and reporting back following group work;

Reading

Our priorities are both the teaching of reading skills and the promotion of the enjoyment of literature, enabling children to become lifelong, confident readers. We endeavour to instil in children a love of literature and to this end, read to all children daily as we believe that exposure to high-quality literature is key to motivating children to read independently.

Phonics forms the basis of our teaching of early reading; each child in Reception, Year One and children that still require it in subsequent years receive a daily phonics input.

As children build fluency, comprehension skills become our main area of focus and questioning looks at skills such as re-telling, visualisation, summarising, inference, deduction and prediction.

Implementation

The teaching of reading

- ❖ The teaching of early reading skills begins in the Nursery, where children learn to love books through regular whole class, small group and individual reading sessions. This continues throughout the school.
- ❖ Phonics is taught systematically from Nursery, following the Supersonic Phonic Friends programme. Children have daily sessions commensurate with their stage of learning until they can read fluently.
- ❖ When children have completed basics 2 of SSPF, they are introduced to phonically decodable reading books, which they read individually to an adult at least twice per week.
- ❖ When the teacher deems it appropriate and when fluency is developing, children move onto objective-led group reading.
- ❖ Children are also read to daily from a wide range of fiction, non-fiction rhymes and poems. Language comprehension is developed in these sessions.
- ❖ In Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, a daily, whole class guided reading session takes place, during which children learn to read fluently and expressively and to comprehend what they read.

- ❖ Staff regularly assess children's progress in reading using the phonics tracker, LAPS and book bands, ensuring that children progress at a suitable rate.
- ❖ Those children who are not making adequate progress receive additional support.

Developing a love of reading

- ❖ Reading is an integral part of the wider curriculum and reading skills are modelled and taught in subject areas other than English.
- ❖ In addition, to reading scheme books, children choose 'real' books to take home to read solely for enjoyment.
- ❖ We have a dedicated library area in each classroom and class and corridor displays celebrating favourite books and authors.
- ❖ We have a well- stocked library that children access on a weekly basis.
- ❖ Children enjoy visits from authors.
- ❖ All class teachers are expected to read a story or part of a novel to their class every day.
- ❖ We have an annual school Book Fair

Children are expected to read every night at home, writing in their reading diaries to share ideas about books and to keep a record of what they are reading. This is monitored systematically by staff, who liaise directly with parents if it is not happening.

Writing

At St Ethelbert's, we strive to create an environment that will promote both reading and writing. Teachers carefully plan writing using the talk4writing approach, ensuring that there is a purposeful outcome to every unit of writing. Using this approach, children learn to recite good models of writing, which are usually written by the teacher and incorporate the sentence structures, grammar, punctuation and genre which need to be learned. The children then move onto innovations in which small features are changed, and finally to inventions which are completely original pieces of writing. In this way, all pupils learn to be confident writers, whilst learning key writing skills explicitly and systematically. Writing takes place daily within English lessons and in other lessons linked to the wider curriculum. Extended writing is encouraged and developed at all times.

An understanding of how to use grammar correctly, use relevant meta-language and identifying word classes and sentence types is taught both in the context of a piece of writing and explicitly in whole class work and through the reading of quality texts. Using LAPS for year groups, grammar is taught and planned to fit in with relevant genres of writing.

Implementation

- ❖ A purpose and audience for each piece of writing is decided from the outset;
- ❖ Writing is displayed in all classes and in the wider school environment;
- ❖ We provide stimulating first hand experiences e.g. trips and visitors
- ❖ Writing is taught as a sequential activity – planning, drafting editing and publishing
- ❖ Teachers provide regular helpful feedback through marking and verbal feedback at the point of writing
- ❖ Time is planned into lessons for children to respond to marking and feedback;
- ❖ We ensure progression in complexity of tasks year on year;
- ❖ We build stamina for writing by providing opportunities to write for extended periods;
- ❖ Peer marking is encouraged as an additional way for children to respond to writing.

Spelling

Understanding how to spell correctly is important in supporting children to organise their thinking around language. Knowing how to apply spelling rules and recognising key words is empowering for children. Spelling plays a significant part of standardised assessment and is taught throughout the school.

Implementation

- ❖ Key Stage One pupils are encouraged to 'have a go' in their first drafts and refer to class word banks when writing;
- ❖ Phonically accurate spelling is accepted in KS1, although common exception words are expected to be spelt correctly.
- ❖ We use the 2014 National Curriculum as a guideline as to which spellings should be taught in which year group.
- ❖ We use SSPF to teach spelling in KS1 and HeadStart spelling in Years 3-6.
- ❖ Spelling is taught explicitly and discretely during the English lesson
- ❖ From Year One, children are actively encouraged and taught to proof read their writing for spelling errors;

Handwriting

We place value on children taking pride and care over their work and handwriting is a key part of this. In the early years, there is an emphasis on the development of fine motor skills and we use a range of resources to practise these basic skills. This then moves into the development of correct letter formation, with a focus on both upper and lower case letters.

Implementation

- ❖ We use the Twinkl Handwriting scheme as the basis for our teaching;
- ❖ We take the view that handwriting should be taught little and often – at least 4 X 10 minutes in Key Stage One and 2 X10 minutes every week in Key Stage Two;
- ❖ We use cursive script and encourage children to join their writing as from the beginning of year three
- ❖ We award dojo points for neatness so that children are constantly focussed on developing the habit of neat writing;
- ❖ Extra handwriting groups occur in classes throughout the school, where the class team feel that additional handwriting support is needed.

Impact

The impact on our children is clear: progress, sustained learning and transferrable skills. By the end of KS2, the majority of our children have made considerable progress from their starting points in EYFS. With the implementation of the writing journey being well established and taught thoroughly in both key stages, children become more confident writers, who can manipulate grammar and punctuation skills. Our children are also becoming more confident readers and they realise the importance of reading for pleasure along with reading for information.

As all aspects of English are an integral part of the curriculum, cross curricular writing standards have also improved and skills taught in the English lesson are transferred into other subjects; this shows consolidation of skills and a deeper understanding of how and when to use specific grammar, punctuation

and grammar objectives. We hope that as children move on from us to further their education and learning that their creativity, passion for English and high aspirations travel with them and continue to grow and develop as they do.

Policy reviewed October 2024