

ST MARGARET'S COLLIER STREET CE SCHOOL

ENGLISH

POLICY

Review: February 2021

Agreed by Governors: March 2021

Next Review: March 2024

ST MARGARET'S COLLIER STREET SCHOOL

Our overarching aims and vision

'Learning as we grow. Growing as we learn. Rooted in Jesus.'

Our expectations for achievement are high. We inspire children to develop a love of learning, broadening their creativity and enabling them to discover their full potential. The curriculum will aid this by particularly focusing on:

1. Globalisation and interdependence
2. Identity and diversity
3. Concern for the environment
4. Self-awareness and reflection/Empathy
5. Critical and creative thinking

ENGLISH POLICY

Rationale

Studying English develops a child's ability to speak and listen, and to read and write which are foundations for learning in all areas of the curriculum. The development of a child's language contributes to the understanding of their own world, the world of others and the world of imagination. It allows them to respond creatively and to confidently express their thoughts, feelings and opinions in a wide range of contexts. Language rich environments support pupils in understanding and developing the necessary vocabulary to succeed in all areas of English.

Aims

- to develop pupils' abilities to communicate effectively in spoken language, reading and writing
- to develop pupils' understanding of spoken and written language so that they become enthusiastic, responsive and knowledgeable speakers and readers
- to help pupils understand how language enables them to experience and appreciate their world and the realms of the imagination in all media
- to help pupils understand the part language plays in enabling them to express their ideas, feelings and experiences and come to an understanding of those of others
- to help pupils understand the function and importance of standard English
- to foster a love of literature which will develop through to adult life
- to develop pupils' use of a wide range of media for information and pleasure, whilst developing their critical awareness of the powerful effect of words, images and sound
- to enable more able learners within the class to work towards a greater depth of literacy

Planning

Whilst planning to deliver the requirements of the English National Curriculum, teachers will aim to ensure breadth and balance and a variety of activities and strategies. Planning will take account of mixed age groupings in classes. Where possible cross curricular links will be made, and English will be taught through both discrete daily lessons and relevant topic work. Teachers will ensure that provision is made to support the more able learners to work at a greater depth in English, and will also support their class TAs as needed when working with the more able children, so that all staff are fully aware of high expectations.

Teachers will plan for interesting reading experiences through shared, group and individual reading. There will be regular independent reading sessions for all children in the school. Writing will be taught through blocked units, ensuring that children become immersed in a genre, exploring through talk, reading, drama and other media before leading to writing. Writing opportunities will occur through shared, guided and individual writing in English lessons, through opportunities in other curriculum areas and specifically planned extended writing sessions.

Speaking and Listening

Our objectives are to ensure the development of effective speaking and listening so that pupils can:

- express themselves clearly and audibly in a variety of situations, using language which is appropriate to their needs and the intended audience
- listen and respond appropriately to others, showing understanding and empathy
- show mutual respect linked to British Values when listening to the ideas of others
- use, with increasing confidence, the vocabulary and grammar of Standard English
- engage meaningfully in role play and drama activities
- for the more able pupils, to gain a mastery of spoken English

Opportunities for speaking and listening are planned regularly into lessons across the curriculum. Pupils regularly share ideas in pairs or small groups and are encouraged to listen carefully and respond appropriately to others. As a school, we foster an atmosphere where everyone can express their ideas and know that their contributions will be valued.

School staff model the correct use of spoken English and pupils are taught the importance of adapting their speech to different audiences and situations. Specific opportunities for speaking and listening are built into lessons, including presenting to groups and the class, drama activities and debating issues (including in RSE and RE).

As a whole school, speaking and listening is promoted in a range of ways including through weekly whole school sharing assemblies, pupils leading acts of worship and school church services, a yearly community church service led by the school and a Year 5 Spoken English Competition.

Reading

Our objectives are to ensure the development of reading so that pupils can:

- master reading skills and become independent and enthusiastic readers
- read a range of paper and on-screen texts fluently, accurately and with understanding
- find out information they need in order to research and answer their own questions and questions set by others

- understand the variety of written language and the difference between fiction and non-fiction
- understand and respond creatively to a wide range of books and media texts
- improve their abilities to analyse, evaluate and respond critically to texts they have read
- work at a greater depth of the curriculum, focusing on an enriched provision for more able learners

The Letters and Sounds programme is used to teach daily discrete phonics lessons in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Some Read, Write Inc materials are used to support the delivery of Letters and Sounds in Foundation Stage. These small group sessions enable children to decode confidently and accurately. Reading books, which are carefully matched to their phonetic knowledge, are sent home regularly to share with parents as well as other books which parents can read to the children at home. This strives to reach a balance between books which pupils can read themselves and books which they can gain pleasure from listening to and which will expose them to vocabulary beyond their current reading level. 6 weekly tracking of phonics in Foundation Stage allows for gaps to be identified and addressed. In Years 1 and 2, phonics are tracked 3 times a year which informs planning and groupings. In Years 1 and 2, the Reading Recovery literacy intervention is used to support the lowest achieving children to close the gap between their reading attainment and that of their peers. Pupils in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 have the opportunity to read 1:1 with adults in school (including with volunteers) at least weekly as well as in small group guided reading sessions.

Reading is taught in Key Stage 2 both through guided reading sessions and whole class reading lessons. These are used to teach a wide range of reading skills relating to decoding, fluency and comprehension. In Key Stage 2, pupils begin to take more responsibility for choosing their own books to read, including using peer recommendations and challenge bookshelves to support their choices. Lowest achieving pupils will continue to be supported through phonics sessions and other planned interventions as well as continuing to read regularly 1:1 with an adult.

In the teaching of reading, a range of genres, texts and modes will be selected to ensure that children get a balance drawn from a variety of sources. A wide range of resources will be used: big books, picture books, stories, fairy tales, myths, legends, poetry, nursery rhymes, songs, non-fiction books, newspapers and magazines, posters and advertisements, comics, tapes, films, multimedia texts and internet resources. Extracts and whole books used for teaching are carefully planned to also represent more diverse characters, themes and authors.

As a school, we use class books to read daily to children, modelling the reading process and taking opportunities to discuss with children events, characters and themes. These shared reading experiences also provide plenty of opportunity for regular discussion of books amongst children and classes. These class books are also sometimes used as the basis for English units of work.

Reading is also promoted through classes accessing the school library and whole school initiatives such as World Book Day, book fairs and other events.

Writing

Our objectives are to develop pupils' writing skills so they can:

- express themselves clearly and precisely showing an increasing mastery of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- write for an increasing range of purposes, matching their language appropriately to the needs of the audience
- use writing to enable them to remember, communicate, organise and develop their ideas and information
- use computing to support the writing process, where appropriate
- understand that to communicate effectively language must be chosen with care, precision and imagination
- develop a clear, cursive style of handwriting to embed the fluency of a joined script (this is introduced and shared with parents from Year R)
- fulfil all the legislated requirements of the National Curriculum, and take into account the criteria for working at greater depth, especially for the more able learners

Units of work for writing are planned throughout the school year and cover a range of genres which include fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Writing for purpose is important so English units are often linked to topics in other curriculum subjects and recent world events. The Talk for Writing approach is used as a basis for many of the units of work taught across the school and focuses on children moving from imitation of a model text to innovation and then invention, which culminates in an independently planned, written and edited final piece. Model texts are carefully planned by staff to demonstrate the writing skills and techniques identified as being a focus from initial assessments in each unit.

In Upper Key Stage 2, pupils are regularly given 'free writing' opportunities to allow them to more freely explore their creativity in writing and have the chance to use ideas and influences from texts they have read. This supports more able writers to be able to achieve the greater depth standard.

The teaching of grammar and punctuation is often embedded within reading and writing lessons but is also sometimes taught as a stand-alone lesson where appropriate. Grammar and punctuation learning involves a range of activities such as games and short writing tasks, often used as a warm up to using these skills in other written work in English.

Progression in the teaching of spellings is based on the information from the National Curriculum (2014). Spellings in Key Stage 2 are taught in a variety of ways and tested weekly. Handwriting is taught through phonics sessions in Foundation Stage and small group lessons in Years 1 and 2. In Key Stage 2, handwriting is taught through both whole class lessons and intervention groups. Throughout all writing opportunities, neat and legible handwriting, the use of spelling strategies and the application of grammar and punctuation rules are promoted.

Role of Subject Leader

The subject leader will:

- take the lead in policy development and curriculum development to ensure progression and continuity in English throughout the school
- support colleagues as necessary in their teaching, assessment and record-keeping
- monitor the delivery of the English curriculum and discuss with the H/T any actions as they arise
- keep up-to-date with developments in English and disseminate information to colleagues as appropriate
- ensure that all staff are fully supported in working with more able learners to help them reach a greater depth within English

Monitoring

Monitoring the delivery of the English curriculum and children's attainment will be carried out by:

- overseeing short and long term planning by H/T, subject leader and SLT as appropriate
- regular monitoring of writing books by subject leader, H/T, SLT and GB as appropriate
- analysis of KS1 and KS2 SATs results, EY data, phonics tracking data and 3 x yearly target tracker data
- discussion with individual children about their personal progress

Assessment (See the Curriculum and Assessment Framework Document)

Assessment in English is continuous; it informs planning and diagnose strengths and weaknesses. In speaking and listening this involves observing children using a variety of spoken language for different purposes. Specific assessment opportunities will be planned for. Self-assessment is made possible through the use of technology to record children's performance in speaking and listening tasks.

In reading this involves formal and informal observation and close monitoring of children's developing use of strategies and responses to texts. Published reading tests will be used at KS2. The SENCO will carry out a graded yearly reading test to monitor the reading age and progress of all children in school.

In writing this involves effective marking which is positive, constructive and developmental. Writing across a range of genres will be assessed using resources linked to the 2014 National Curriculum year group expectations criteria. Children will be aware of the next steps in their writing, referring back to clear learning intentions and success criteria in lessons as well as developmental marking from staff, where appropriate. Feedback to children about their progress in English is through verbal comment, discussions and marking of work. Opportunities are given for older children to respond to comments written by the teacher. Summative assessment is through teacher assessment and testing, including pieces of independent written work throughout the school to aid with this as needed.

The SENCO will also feedback to the Subject Leader with regard to the success of English interventions across the school, helping to identify any areas of weakness which may need addressing or further support. The interventions are reviewed 3 times per school year. Each class should be providing an intervention to extend the more able learners.

Recording and reporting

Teachers will make their own records as appropriate, but will also use the Kent assessment materials to help build up knowledge of whether children are working at the Emergent or Expected levels in each curriculum year group, or showing evidence of working at a Greater Depth (Exceeding). Progress is recorded 3 times yearly through Target Tracker. Communication to parents will be through end of year reports and twice yearly consultations. The home/school reading record book provides an opportunity for regular and frequent communication between parents and the child's teacher, and teachers are happy to provide opportunities for informal discussions of a child's progress.

Professional Development

Staff are made aware of courses available to them which are appropriate to their Key Stage. The subject leader will find opportunities through staff development days and meetings to inform teachers of curriculum developments.

Additional Adults

TAs receive appropriate training in the use of English, and are kept up to date with specific areas, such as attending relevant phonics or language training courses. TAs work with groups or individual children in English lessons. They work collaboratively with the class teacher and planning is shared to ensure the support is as effective as possible. Focus groups are changed regularly to ensure that all pupils can benefit from the expertise of both the teacher and TA. Feedback on children's work for whom they have worked with is encouraged orally or by written notes, in line with the marking and feedback policy.

TAs provide extra support in English teaching by:

- supporting specific children during shared and independent reading and writing
- working with groups in guided reading and writing to provide extra support or the opportunity for differentiated activities
- 1:1 help with individual reading, and for children on specific learning programs
- specific support for children with poor speech skills
- focused small group phonics work at KS1 and phonics and spelling at KS2
- enabling the more able learners within the class to work towards a greater depth of understanding

Parental Involvement

Parents are regarded as taking a vital role in the growth of their child's language and literacy skills, and it is expected that they will provide support throughout their child's school life. This is made clear to all parents on their child's admission to school. Most important is regular reading with their child at home (daily wherever possible). A 'Reading at Home' guidance leaflet is shared with all parents when their child starts at school. Other homework activities will include embedding spelling knowledge, playing phonics based games, supporting written work and research activities, to name but a few. National Curriculum standards are shared with the parents, to ensure they are aware of the relevant Emerging, Expected and Greater Depth criteria. Regular parent volunteers also help support reading in school through hearing individual children read, and occasionally joining in with other English based activities. Appropriate training and support is given by the class teacher and SENCO where required.

Equal Opportunities

Children of all ethnic groups, both genders and all abilities have equal access to the English curriculum. Positive images in terms of such groups are promoted throughout the school, both in the use of language and in the provision of resources. Increasingly diverse reading books purchased and shared in classes will support with promoting diversity, inclusion and tolerance across the school.

Differentiation and SEN

The development of children's language necessitates a variety of differentiated texts and approaches. Careful planning will ensure that these resources and approaches are appropriately matched to individual pupils. Teachers will ensure that all children have access to shared reading and writing texts. When working in groups, activities can be provided with

suitably differentiated work, including enriching and challenging tasks to extend the more able learners.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs have targets set by the SENCO and class teacher, appropriate for their specific needs. Support for these targets is provided within English lessons and small group interventions with progress tracked termly. Parents are invited to attend regular review meetings so that their views can be taken into account when reviewing progress and planning the next steps in learning for their child.

Resourcing

Budget allocation for English resources takes account of the annual review of the subject and the areas to develop. Part of the budget each year is used for updating book areas to better reflect new books and authors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies:

1. Health and Safety
2. Equal Opportunities
3. Marking
4. Homework
5. Computing
6. Assessment, Recording and Reporting
7. Language
8. SEN

Review

This policy document will be reviewed as appropriate in response to local or national initiatives, evaluations of monitoring procedures and as detailed in the school development plan.