

English Policy

St Patrick's Catholic Voluntary Academy



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| Approved by: | Headteacher | Date: December 2023 |
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Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Aims | 3 |
| 2. Legislation and guidance | 3 |
| 3. Our vision for English and literacy in our school | 3 |
| 4. Our guiding principles for the teaching of English and literacy..... | 4 |
| 5. Roles and responsibilities | 4 |
| 6. Curriculum | 5 |
| 7. Marking and feedback | 6 |
| 8. Monitoring, assessment and moderation..... | 6 |
| 9. Learning environment | 7 |
| 10. Resources..... | 7 |
| 11. Review | 9 |
| 12. Links with other policies..... | 9 |

1. Aims

This policy aims to set out:

- Our approach to teaching, monitoring and assessing English and literacy knowledge and skills
- How we will make sure our provision for the teaching of English and literacy is of consistently high quality

Audience:

This document is intended for:

- All teaching staff and staff with classroom responsibilities.
- School governors.
- Parents
- LA Advisor/ Inspectors
- Inspection Teams.

Copies are provided for staff and governors, as well as published on the School Website.

Paper copies of all documents are available upon request from the School Office or from the Curriculum Lead.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements and expectations set out in:

- The [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice 2014](#)
- The [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The [National Curriculum programmes of study for English](#)

3. Our vision for English and literacy in our school

Our school aims to develop pupils' skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening. By the time that pupils move on from our school, our aim is for them to:

- Communicate effectively and confidently in front of any type of audience
- Be fluent speakers, readers and writers.
- Have a positive attitude towards books and reading, reading widely for pleasure and information.
- Enjoy writing in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences.
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting language and style accordingly.
- Be curious and creative when it comes to reading and writing, for example by being interested in learning the meaning of new words.
- Have a wide vocabulary and understanding of grammar.
- Feel confident speaking in class and be able to clearly explain their understanding and ideas.
- Listen carefully and sensitively to adults and their peers.

4. Our guiding principles for the teaching of English

We teach English and literacy best when:

- There's a joyful culture around reading in the school.
- All staff feel they have the knowledge, skills, understanding and professional support they need to teach English effectively.
- There's sufficiently detailed and frequent ongoing assessment of pupil progress.
- We expose pupils to a range of curiosity inspiring hooks including high-quality texts, first hand experience, visitors, videos, drama and other activities that develop the children's speaking and listening skills.
- Our working wall in our classroom displays and mirrors key learning and vocabulary.
- We involve families in supporting their child's oracy, reading and writing.
- The English curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced.
- We identify where pupils have learning gaps or aren't making the expected progress, and make sure interventions target these.
- Teaching resources are available, up to date, varied and diverse, and match pupil and curriculum needs.
- We engage pupils in high-quality back-and-forth interactions.
- We model new language and accurate grammar to pupils.
- We identify and support pupils with speech, language and communication needs, addressing these with support and recommendations made by our Independent Speech and Language Therapist.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Building a team of expert teachers who know and understand the processes that underpin learning to read and write.
- Providing teachers with the appropriate training and resources so that they can competently deliver the English curriculum.
- Creating a stimulating school environment where pupils are exposed to different types of reading material, such as through displays, books and other classroom resources

5.2 The English lead, with the Curriculum Lead and Early Reading Lead

Our Key Stage Leaders share responsibility for the English subject leader role, together they are responsible for providing leadership and management for English to secure:

- High-quality teaching and subject knowledge of staff.
- A coherently planned and sequenced English curriculum.
- Consistent assessment and accurate teacher judgements within English.
- Effective use of resources.

The English lead, along with the Curriculum lead, are responsible for the planning of effective English lessons.

5.3 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Providing opportunities for pupils to apply their English skills in a variety of ways.
- Completing the relevant marking and assessment according to school policy.
- Making sure that support staff have:
 - Access to planning materials and resources.
 - The knowledge and skills they need to support and challenge pupils.

6. Curriculum

Our English Curriculum is set out in a range of documents, including:

The Early Reading and Phonics Policy (based on our chosen Phonics Scheme – Little Wandle).

The Long-term Yearly Overviews from Foundation Stage 1 to Year 6.

The Handwriting Policy.

The Spelling Policy.

The Reading, Writing and Spoken Language Intent, Implementation and Impact Statements.

Progression of Reading Skills document.

Progression of Writing Skills document.

Progression of Spoken Language Sequence document.

The intended writing coverage document

The Marking and Feedback Policy

We understand the importance of developing the children's spoken language skills across the school as the key foundation for successful readers and writer, particularly within the Early Years Curriculum. Early Readers and Writers are taught the foundations of reading and writing through our phonics scheme and we prioritise this through our rigorous and consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. Through regular assessments and monitoring, we ensure that children make the expected progress and put in place early interventions for children who require more support.

Alongside the teaching of the decoding and transcriptional elements of reading and writing, we also promote a rich oral language curriculum, so that the children can develop their comprehension and compositional skills.

By Key Stage 2, most children are becoming fluent readers and writers, so reading, writing and spoken language skills are taught through a whole class approach.

Copies of the above documents are provided and accessible for staff and governors, as well as published on the School Website.

Paper copies of all documents are available upon request from the School Office or from the Curriculum lead.

6.1 Timetabling

We follow a whole school weekly timetable.

- Children in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 receive daily 30 minutes Phonic sessions and 3 x weekly Reading Practice sessions in small groups 1:6 using fully decodable books.
- As children progress from being early readers to fluent readers, reading is taught through whole class sessions in Year 2.
- In Year 3 upwards, all children are taught age related skills through whole class reading sessions. Some early readers will continue to receive additional phonic interventions.
- Spoken language is not taught separately: it is the bed rock of the rest of the curriculum, including reading, writing and the foundation subjects.
- As children progress from being early writers to fluent writers, writing skills are taught through discreet handwriting, spelling and GPS lessons, as well as whole class writing sessions that explore a range of genres.

6.2 Adaptive teaching

We provide suitable adapted teaching to make sure that every pupil makes maximum progress in English, by:

- Recognising where some pupils need specific help with their English skills, e.g. if they are dyslexic.
- Providing resources such as phonics mats and writing frames to scaffold pupils' learning.
- Identifying pupils who would benefit from more support in an area of their English learning, and running small intervention groups for targeted support each week to aid their progress and attainment. We will monitor these closely to move pupils in and out of these groups as needed.

7. Marking and feedback

Feedback clearly explains to pupils what they're doing well, and what they need to do next to continue to improve their work.

Please see the Marking and Feedback Policy.

8. Monitoring, assessment and moderation

8.1 Monitoring

We monitor teaching and learning of English in our school to make sure that all of our pupils make the best possible progress from their starting points.

The Curriculum lead, English lead and Key Stage leads monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning through:

- Conducting learning walks.
- Reviewing marking and feedback.
- Termly pupil progress meetings.
- Gathering input through pupil voice.
- Planning reflections.
- Book looks.

8.2 Assessment

We track pupils' progress using a combination of formative and summative assessments. This includes formative assessments throughout every lesson, in-school summative assessments in reading (in the form of termly PIRA tests), Birmingham Toolkit assessments and Point in Time Assessments, as well as formal summative assessments at the end of Year 1 in phonics and each Key Stage. We assess progress in writing by moderating the children's published pieces of 'White Gold' writing.

Our pupils will sit the following formal assessments:

- The phonics screening check at the end of year 1.
- National Curriculum tests in the summer terms at the end of KS1 and 2.

We provide regular verbal and written feedback so that children understand what their next steps are. Pupils receive a written report annually outlining their progress and next steps. Parents are also invited twice yearly to parents' consultation meetings.

8.3 Moderation

We standardise writing samples to:

- Demonstrate how pupils' work meets the National Curriculum attainment targets for KS1 and KS2, to help with assessment.
- Make sure staff have a consistent approach to marking pupils' work.

We refer to the Standards and Testing Agency (STA)'s exemplification materials for [KS1](#) and [KS2](#) to support this process.

We moderate teacher assessments of reading and writing on a termly basis.

9. Learning environment

Pupils learn English and literacy in spaces that:

- Are well-organised.
- Contain appropriate and good-quality resources for pupils to refer to (in a space where they can find or see them easily).
- Are quiet.
- Have minimal distractions, for example not containing a distracting amount of decoration.
- Display letter cards and posters showing grapheme-phoneme correspondences that match our school's phonics teaching programme.

10. Resources

10.1 Books

We select and use books that:

- Engage pupils emotionally.
- Cover a wide range of subjects.
- Elicit a strong response, such as curiosity, anger, excitement, laughter or empathy.
- Have a strong narrative that will sustain multiple readings.
- Extend pupils' vocabulary.
- Have illustrations that are engaging and reflect children from all backgrounds and cultures.

- Help pupils connect with who they are.
- Help pupils to understand the lives of people whose experiences and perspectives may be different from their own.
- Include stories set in both the UK and around the world.
- Include both modern and traditional stories.
- Include fiction, poetry and non-fiction.

It's unlikely that just 1 book will meet all of these criteria, but our full selection as a whole will.

Once we've chosen our books, we:

- Identify a core set of stories for each year group.
- Refresh the list regularly (at least once a year), as new books are published and as our school welcomes new teachers.
- Encourage teachers to familiarise themselves with the stories their pupils will know from previous years.
- Get teachers to choose their own books to read aloud alongside the core set of stories.
- Share the list with parents, and explain its purpose, so they can buy or borrow the books

10.2 Book corners

When visiting their book corner, pupils will be able to:

- Browse the books.
- Revisit the ones the teacher has read to them.
- Borrow books to read or re-tell at home.
- Spend time reading books of their choice, either individually or with their peers, as part of our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy. Reading for Pleasure is learner-led, informal and social, with texts that tempt.

When arranging the book corner, teachers:

- Avoid displaying too many books at once.
- Choose a space in the classroom that is well lit and of an adequate size.
- Display books pupils have listened to recently, at their eye level on outward-facing shelves.
- At the start of the year especially, include around 20 of the children's favourites from the previous year (either on lower shelves or in boxes).
- Make the books look attractive and easy to find – removing any that are dull and dog-eared, unless these are particularly well-loved.
- Refresh the display to highlight topics, titles or authors that might engage pupils.
- Keep any books that have been previously read in extra boxes for pupils to read and retell again, at school and at home.

10.3 Rhymes and poems

We choose rhymes and poems that develop pupils' language skills. The English lead identifies a core set of poems for each year group, including:

- Rhyming poems.
- Poems where alliteration is a strong feature.
- Word games.
- Traditional songs and rhymes.
- Nonsense rhymes.
- Poems that:
 - Are particularly rhythmical.
 - Can withstand a lot of repetition.
 - Elicit a strong emotional response.
 - Extend pupils' vocabulary in different areas of learning.

10.4 Dictionaries and thesauruses

To support with writing and spelling, we make sure that pupils have access to dictionaries and thesauruses by:

- Having multiple copies of dictionaries and thesauruses available in each KS2 classroom.
- Allowing pupils in UKS2 to use iPads during lessons to look up word meanings and synonyms, where possible.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed every year by the headteacher.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

12. Links with other policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- Curriculum policy
- SEN/SEND policy and information report
- Marking and feedback policy
- Assessment policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Behaviour policy
- Schools with early years provision only: Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy