

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Inspiring everyone to **REACH** through Faith, Hope, Love

At St Joseph's, we strive for academic excellence through encouraging resilience, empathy, aspiration and challenge. We have high expectations for ALL so that we can be 'The best we can be.' With Faith, Hope and Love at the heart of our school family, our children feel safe, secure and supported.



English Policy

Our ethos is one that nurtures education through recognition and celebration of all children's experiences and achievements, whatever the context. Each child is unique and made in the likeness of God. Every child should succeed at their own level and be praised for this success

Approved by: Full Governing Board

Approved on: Autumn 2019

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Aims

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we recognise the crucial importance of studying the English language. Improved performance at reading, writing and spoken language will enable our pupils to express their thoughts and ideas more fluently, accurately and, ultimately, to their greater satisfaction. This will also help them to deal more successfully with other curriculum subjects, while enriching their lives beyond school. The teaching and learning of language skills are, therefore, given a high priority in our school.

Our aim for English 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.

Pupils at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School will leave Year 6:

- reading easily, fluently and with good understanding
- with a love of reading and a desire to read for enjoyment
- having acquired a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciating our rich and varied literary heritage
- writing clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- using discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas

We encourage all children to become independent learners and to be confident in all strands of learning. The children will be given opportunities to speak in a variety of contexts and learn to listen to and value the views of others.

Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum in England: English Programmes of Study – Key Stages 1 and 2 (2014) and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017).

Curriculum Delivery

From reception to Year 6, children are taught English within their classes. Through differentiation and the support of teachers and teaching assistants, all children will receive high quality teaching and appropriate support in order for every child to reach their full potential. Children may receive additional support, if necessary, outside of the English lessons. Evaluative marking is used and next steps identified. Assessment informs planning and reference is made to the National Curriculum in medium term plans. We provide a rich and varied experience for pupils to draw on in their writing and reading skills across the curriculum.

Foundation Stage

In Reception children have daily discrete phonics lessons. Children have opportunities to develop their communication, language and literacy skills on a daily basis in both adult led and child initiated activities.

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1 daily discrete phonics lessons continue and are taught in ability groups, while children have daily mixed ability Literacy lessons. Children take part in daily guided reading sessions where they will work with the class teacher, carry out a follow up task, complete a Look, Cover Write Check(LCWC) activity and starter styles to reinforce their phonics learning. Handwriting is taught daily. There will also be daily DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) times to develop a wider vocabulary and a love of reading. Literacy skills are practised and developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through, matched learning and targeted teaching groups in Literacy and guided reading sessions and specific intervention programmes.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2 children have daily Literacy, guided reading and spelling lessons. Grammar, punctuation and spelling skills are initially taught discretely before being embedded within literacy lessons. Additional Literacy sessions include grammar, handwriting (refer to Handwriting Policy) and daily DEAR time. Literacy skills are reinforced and developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support as for KS1.

Approaches to the spoken language

We recognise the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum - spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The four strands of spoken language: speaking, listening, group discussion and drama permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. We aim for children to be able to speak clearly, fluently and coherently, to be able to listen attentively with understanding, pleasure and empathy and contribute to group discussions effectively.

We achieve this by:

- giving our children confidence in themselves as speakers and listeners by showing them that we value their conversations and opinions. We also encourage a respect for the views of others.
- being aware that as adults, we provide a model of speakers and listeners in our day-to-day interactions with them and with other adults in our school.

- helping them to articulate their ideas and provide purposes and audiences for talk within a range of formal and informal situations and in individual, partner, group and class contexts.
- by providing opportunities to perform to a larger audience, in assemblies, productions, prayers in classes, reading in Mass, school council, house captain elections, and many more, where children's efforts and skills are acknowledged by staff, parents, carers, visitors and peers.
- by providing a range of experiences where children can work collaboratively and participate in opportunities to reflect on talk and explore real and imagined situations through role play, hot-seating, drama, talk partners and discussions.
- by developing the children's ability to listen with attention and understanding in all areas of the curriculum and where necessary, asking and responding to questions appropriately.

Approaches to Phonics

The teaching of phonic skills is embedded within English teaching in each class. We use LCP and the NC programmes of study to deliver daily discrete phonics lessons in Foundation Stage and KS1; enabling children to blend and segment effectively. This is continued into KS2 where necessary. All lessons follow the same structure; revisit and review, teach, practise and apply and assess. They comprise of learning different graphemes, focussing on oral and aural phonological skills and sight vocabulary. During these sessions children are also explicitly shown how to apply their developing skills to their writing. This structure enables children to segment for spelling efficiently. These graphemes then become an expectation in all written work across the curriculum. These lessons are reviewed daily and altered to match the individual group of children's needs. In Year 2, the phonics/spelling sessions are planned bases on the NC programme of study. The lessons also incorporate grammar expectations during the apply part of the lesson. All children are grouped in accordance to their individual needs and are in phase appropriate groups.

Approaches to Reading

Pupils have opportunities to undertake guided, shared and independent reading throughout the school. A diverse range of guided reading books and a staged reading scheme are available. We do not use any one published scheme to teach reading, instead we believe that it is important to provide pupils with a selection of reading books and experiences from different genres and subject matter, therefore we operate using 'book bands' system which includes a broad range of genres. Children are placed on a book band appropriate to their level and ability based on accurate assessment completed by the classteacher. These books should be read with fluency and easy to build confidence. In school the children are challenged by their teacher during guided reading to increase fluency and comprehension whilst reading at a higher level. Staff model reading strategies during guided reading sessions throughout the school to enable children to improve their fluency, intonation, decoding skills and

comprehension. All children are assessed and progression monitored every 6 weeks. Home reading is encouraged and is an integral part of the child's development. The more they practise the more confident and competent they become. In order to have strong communication between teachers and parents/carers, each child has a reading record where both the staff and parents can write comments about how the child is progressing with his/her reading. The book is stamped to show that their child has done guided reading. Reading rewards are given to encourage children to read with their parents at home. Challenges are offered within school and pupils are encouraged to undertake the annual county library reading challenge. We take part in World Book Day and hold a book fair to further promote reading.

Approaches to writing

To develop our children as writers we:

- treat children as writers, from the earliest stage, who have ideas that they will want to communicate, building on writing skills they have acquired and their knowledge of print from their environment.
- provide experiences where the children can acquire confidence and a positive attitude to writing.
- develop and sustain writing skills by providing opportunities for children to write for a range of purposes and audiences.
- use guided writing sessions to model writing skills, teaching children how to compose, amend and revise their writing.
- teach children to become critical readers of their own writing by using self-evaluation and checking their work independently for sense, accuracy and meaning.
- teach grammar and punctuation in the context of children's own writing, as well as through discrete lessons.
- teach children to develop their ability to organise and present imaginative and/or factual writing and poetry in different ways.
- teach strategies for spelling to enable children to become confident and competent spellers.

The school follows the 'Read, Write, Inc: Spelling' programme which enables the children to recap on the previous year's spelling patterns and then introduces new patterns and sight words. This programme is in line with the National Curriculum for spelling. Identified children work on NESSY and some children receive extra spelling and phonics support from TAs

Approaches to Handwriting

Handwriting begins in the E.Y.F.S with mark-making and patterns. All pupils are given access to a wide range of writing tools and mediums to practise the early fine motor skills. The needs of left handed children, or those with physical difficulties are also

taken into consideration and where necessary accommodated with resources or specific intervention.

Pupils are encouraged to develop fluent lines of correctly orientated letters from an early age and emergent writing is encouraged. We believe that discrete handwriting sessions where children's formation and pencil grip can be readily overseen should take place at least once a day and frequently in the foundation stage. Correct posture and positioning of paper or books are also emphasised during these sessions. Letter formation and handwriting is taught and modelled using Collins Primary Focus resources.

The national expectation for children working at greater depth in Year 2 is that they join their handwriting. The national expectation at the end of year 6 is that all children will join their handwriting. Collins Primary to teach individual letter joins with the leader feeder cursive style. This begins in year 2, once correct letter formation is secure, with discrete lessons following a clear scheme of progression. As the children move up through the school they are encouraged to think carefully about the presentation of their work and to develop clear, legible and fluent hand-writing.

Approaches to Grammar and Spelling

To be able to spell correctly is an essential life skill. When spelling becomes automatic, pupils are able to concentrate on the content of their writing and the making of meaning. Whilst we note that spelling is not the most important aspect of writing, confidence in spelling can have a profound effect on the writer's self-image.

The teaching of Grammar and Spelling is in line with the requirements of The National Curriculum (2014). Staff are expected to use the NC glossary which details the expectations for the teaching of grammar and the agreed terminology which must be used by each year group. Grammar is timetabled to be taught discreetly in KS2 every week. Grammar is incorporated into the daily phonic sessions in Year 2 and is introduced in the summer term of Year 1. This is in addition to the VCOP lessons during a writing journey.

Children across the school are given spellings to learn at home weekly. The list is generated from the week's phonics/spelling lessons and come from the words that the group are finding more challenging. They are tested the following week. In addition to this, LCWCs are done during a guided reading session. Helping the children to understand how to use and apply known spelling patterns (and to develop strategies to tackle tricky words) is the key to helping them to become successful spellers. Spelling skills are used daily and are also embedded in Literacy lessons so that strategies and rules can be taught in the context of writing. When actually writing children should be concentrating on higher order thinking skills and should simply 'have a go' at spelling that they are unsure of. When marking children's work, we do not correct all spelling errors, instead we focus on high frequency words, topic words and those studied in phonics/spelling lessons.

Cross-Curricular links

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links wherever possible. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons across the curriculum. Opportunities for extended writing is expected throughout a theme and God Matters work.

Assessment and target setting

Work is assessed in line with the Assessment Policy.

- Teachers use developmental feedback in order to identify where children have included elements of the success criteria (which are highlighted in green), think bubbles (written in pink) are used to give children the opportunity to revisit their work in order to make improvements and set next steps targets (written in pink) are used during the writing phase of the literacy journey.
- Summative assessment is used four times a year in order to assess the children's writing against the school's insight tracker
- Year 1 take part in phonics screening during June
- Year 2 children undertake KS1 SATs in May
- Year 6 pupils undertake SATs in May.

Inclusion

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving at pupil progress meetings. We take steps to improve their attainment through discussion with the class teacher and SENDCo. We write targeted interventions and seek additional support from parents. Children that have a 'My Plan', 'My Plan Plus' or 'EHCP' may be withdrawn during the afternoons in order to receive interventions that focus on the child's more specific individual needs. Children working at greater depth are identified and suitable learning challenges provided. Challenges for these pupils are provided within English lessons or in addition through a range of wider opportunities e.g. More Able Writers Workshops.

Equal Opportunities

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background. Our aim is that all children should 'REACH' to be the 'best they can be' so our curriculum includes a wide range of texts and resources which caters to the needs of all our children.

Role of Subject Leader

The Subject Leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through the monitoring and evaluating of the subject:

- monitoring of pupil progress
- conference with pupils regarding all areas of English
- analysing data
- monitoring the provision of English in line with the subject monitoring policy
- taking the lead in policy development
- auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- purchasing and organising resources
- keeping up to date with recent English developments
- analysis of SATs results to identify areas for development
- checking that assessment for English is carried out in line with the school's assessment policy

Parental Involvement

Parents can play a vital role in the development of English skills. We aim to foster a strong home-school partnership regarding reading, using reading diaries as a tool for communication between school and home. Parents are encouraged to hear their children read and to discuss their books with them. They provide support for phonics, handwriting, spellings and various genres of writing that may be set for homework.

There are two opportunities throughout the year when parents can discuss their children's progress with their class teacher at parents evening. During the autumn parents evening, class teachers give parents Age Related Expectations for speaking and listening, reading and writing for that year.

Termly curriculum letters provide information about the English curriculum and how parents can support their children. They also emphasise the importance of reading. Parents are encouraged to read both with and to their children at home in order to promote a love of reading.

Parents are welcomed into school to support reading in the classroom especially first thing during guided reading. Strategies for supporting children are shared at the reception phonics evening during term 1. Year 1 parents are informed of their child's phonic assessment score in line with government legislation. SATs results are published in accordance with Government legislation.

Conclusion

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

- Phonics policy
- Reading Policy

- Writing Policy
- Guided reading Policy
- Handwriting Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment and Record Keeping
- Marking and feedback policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Computing Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

This policy will be reviewed by staff and presented to governors for approval every three years.