



St. Matthew's Catholic Primary School

English Policy

I try to live like Jesus: I love; I forgive; I pray.
'Come Follow Me' - Be the best that I can be.

Introduction

We believe that each child is given gifts and talents by God and is called to be the best they can be. This policy is to ensure that, as teachers, we provide good quality teaching which helps every child progress and reach their full potential

Rationale

At St Matthew's Catholic Primary School, we understand that English is both a subject in its own right and a medium for teaching the wider curriculum. 'Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects' (pg.10, National Curriculum). With this in mind, we strive to advance pupils' language development and communication; ability to listen with understanding and for all pupils to progress in the skills of reading and writing.

Aims and Objectives

Our English Curriculum develops pupils' ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes and across a wide range of experiences and text types. Pupils are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of non-fiction and media texts. Pupils use their knowledge, skills and understanding of the spoken language across a range of situations.

Our objectives in the teaching of English are:

- to provide a well-planned and resourced curriculum
- to ensure that objectives set for pupils are clear, realistic and obtainable;
- to provide purposeful and real experiences to develop English skills;
- to encourage the use of discussion, debate and drama, to explore ideas;
- to enable pupils to speak clearly and audibly, and to take account of their listeners;
- to encourage pupils to listen with concentration, in order to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- to be role-models for pupils on how to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands, taking into account the correct use of Standard English;
- to develop pupils love of reading, encouraging pupils to read for enjoyment
- to help pupils to become confident, independent readers, through an appropriate focus on word-, sentence- and text-level knowledge;
- to develop enthusiastic and reflective readers, who can understand a wide range of texts through the provision of a variety of appealing and rewarding reading;
- to teach pupils to adapt their writing depending upon, context, purpose and audience
- to encourage accurate and meaningful writing, be it narrative or nonfiction;

- to improve the planning, drafting and editing of their written work;
- to enable pupils to apply their knowledge and understanding across the curriculum.

Parental/Community involvement

We believe it is vitally important to work together with parents and carers to support their child's development of literacy. We promote a positive home school partnership in the following ways:

- Asking parents/carers to read regularly at home and record and write comments in the pupils reading record.
- Sharing information – newsletters, parents' leaflets, twitter, Marvellous Me app, Class blogs on school website, reading diaries
- Celebrations – whole school worships, special events such as World Book Day, assemblies, displays, book fairs, poetry weeks, Take One Picture Open gallery, Take One Book etc
- Home Learning - in line with our homework policy and home/school agreement

Overview of Teaching and Learning

Foundation Stage

Foundation Stage children will be taught phonics through a synthetic and systematic approach as laid out in the Floppy Phonics Programme and Letters and Sounds document. Guided reading approaches are followed in line with the rest of the school when children are ready to embark on the school's colour banded reading system. Emergent writing is encouraged through role-play experiences and informal writing opportunities. When children are familiar with the phonics and letter formation they are encouraged to attempt a more focused form of writing using the initial, end and medial sounds in words, learning high frequency words and make phonic attempts at writing across all areas of learning.

The Foundation Stage children will experience Communication, Language and Literacy as part of the six areas of development as laid out in Foundation Stage Curriculum. Through careful planning, teachers will ensure that Foundation Stage pupil needs are provided for, through activities in discrete planned sessions and areas of provision. Speaking and listening skills are highly regarded and the environment should be rich with language with a focus on developing vocabulary through the use of 'WOW' words.

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1 daily discrete phonics lessons (Floppy Phonics Programme with support from Letters and Sounds) continue and are taught in ability groups, while children have daily mixed ability English lessons with an emphasis on quality texts. Children take part in both guided reading comprehension and individual reading sessions and have regular story times to develop a love of reading. Literacy skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes, differentiated class teaching and targeted teaching groups in Literacy and reading comprehension sessions.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2 children have daily English lessons. Spelling and grammar skills are initially taught discretely before being embedded within the lessons. (refer to Grammar and Handwriting Policy). Reading has a discrete weekly session which is supported by additional support staff, so that children have a quality reading comprehension session. Each class listens to a class novel. Literacy skills are developed across the whole curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through targeted teaching;(e.g. individual reading, handwriting, Toe by Toe) and differentiated class teaching.

Spoken Language

The school acknowledges the importance of speaking and listening; that it is the foundation for all future development. We believe that pupils should be taught from an early age to elaborate sentences

as required. Opportunities are given for the development of spoken language in the classroom through: - 'talk for writing', drama, partner work and group work.

The school aims to help pupils to:-

- use a growing vocabulary with increasing fluency to gain competence, confidence and pleasure in the use of language;
- speak in a variety of forms for different audiences, purposes and situations; reflect upon their speech, as used in different circumstances, and to make appropriate choices;
- develop the conventions of conversation, debate, discussion and performance;
- talk in a group situation, listening to the contribution of others, taking turns and responding appropriately;
- develop correct use of grammatical speech;
- Speak Standard English
- acquire good listening skills, attentive listening, recalling and evaluating what they hear;
- develop good thinking skills.

Children who require extra support in speaking and listening benefit from small group sessions led by ELKLAN trained Teaching Assistants and draw on the expertise of a Speech and Language trained practitioner. We recognise the need for all pupils to speak, read and write Standard English fluently and accurately. The school has achieved the Communication Friendly Status.

Handwriting

At St Matthew's, we believe that teaching handwriting is extremely important as it aids writing for all areas of the curriculum. The school aims ultimately for pupils to develop a fast, flowing, attractive, legible, cursive, personal hand and to achieve this is aware of the need for a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting across the whole curriculum and key stages. We use the Pen Pals Handwriting Scheme to support the teaching of handwriting in school; to help children develop fluent, clear and legible joined up writing (refer to the Handwriting Policy).

APPROACHES TO GRAMMAR

The teaching of Grammar is in line with the requirements of The National Curriculum (2014). Our expectations were created as a whole staff and are outlined in 'St Matthew's Grammar Progression Grid'. It details the expectations for the teaching of grammar and the agreed terminology (from the NC glossary) which must be used by each year group. Grammar is included in the English lessons and integrated into the Reading Comprehension weekly sessions. Of course, grammar skills are also embedded within English lessons where appropriate.

APPROACHES TO PHONICS AND SPELLING

The teaching of phonics at EYFS and Key Stage 1 is delivered through daily phonic sessions, this is supplemented by the Curriculum spelling requirements as set out in the English curriculum for each year group.

At Key Stage 2, spelling is taught using the English curriculum. Where children in KS2 have been identified requiring additional phonic work, these children have a least two extra phonic sessions a week to boost their learning

St Matthew's School recognises: -

- that children move through developmental stages in learning to spell and that teaching methods will vary depending upon a child's stage of development;
- the importance of mastering conventional spelling in order to clearly convey meaning in writing;
- the importance of promoting an ethos of curiosity and interest in words;
- the need to encourage children to develop independent strategies as quickly as possible.

The school aims to develop pupils' knowledge of:-

- sound – symbol relationships;
- high frequency words;
- regular patterns in words;
- word structure;
- high interest words associated with topics and specific curricular areas.

The school aims to teach a variety of strategies. These include:-

- listening and pronunciation skills;
- phonological skills, rhyme and structures phonics linked to handwriting;
- multi-sensory – looking – saying – listening – doing;
- spelling rules;
- mnemonics as a memory aid;
- focus on the visual shapes of words – identifying roots; looking for words within words; grouping words according to spelling patterns; making connections between graphically related words;
- identifying and highlighting high frequency words in a variety of texts;
- use spelling lessons to pupils' growing understanding of grammar;
- investigating the origins of words

APPROACHES TO READING

At St Matthew's a range of reading schemes are used to support early readers as well as book banded 'real books' used for guided reading comprehension. Books which are part to the Accelerated Reader Online programme are identified for home/school readers.

From Foundation to Year 6 there is a planned and consistent approach to whole class and guided reading comprehension sessions. In these sessions children are grouped according to their reading ability. The groupings are monitored and reviewed every half term.

Throughout school children have a home reader book and diary. Parents are encouraged to support their children in their reading. Each child has a reading folder/school bag and a home school reading record that teachers and parents can use to share information about a child's reading. Parents are encouraged to read with their child daily. Information is given on how to support their child in reading at reading and phonic workshops (provided by the Parent Involvement Worker) and also in curriculum letters.

We encourage all our children to share a book at home with their grown-ups. We believe that this not only helps to develop inferential skills, but also supports a lifelong love of reading. Throughout the Key Stage, children become more independent in recording what they have read in their reading journals. We recognise the value of adults (both in school and at home) reading aloud to children, in order to improve their grasp of story language, enthuse them with a love of books and inspire them as writers. We use the school newsletter, twitter school account, school blogs, Marvellous Me app and the school reward system to reward reading progress and reading achievements.

Teaching assistants support reading activities to ensure that children have more frequent opportunities to read with adults. In KS1 children read to an adult once a week. In KS2 most children read to an adult once a week. Where children are identified by their teacher to need extra provision; children have extra 1:1 reading sessions.

Many exciting and rewarding activities are arranged in school to promote the pleasure and knowledge that can be gained from books, i.e. 'Book Week', Poetry Week, Take One Book, performances by professional theatre groups, making books.

APPROACHES TO WRITING

We aim to develop the children's ability to produce well structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the reader. Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling.

Our approach to teaching writing covers the 'transcription' and 'composition' requirements of The National Curriculum. To support our teaching of writing, staff refer to Alan Peat, Talk for Writing and Pie Corbett's strategies. Teachers are flexible in their selection of these Literacy experts' strategies to suit the needs of the children and text type being taught. Teachers model writing strategies and the use of phonics and spelling strategies in shared writing sessions.

Guided writing sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals, whilst children have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions during each unit. The children are given frequent opportunities in school to write in different contexts using quality texts as a model and for a variety of purposes and audiences. The text types which are required to be covered by The National Curriculum are outlined in our long term plans for each year group to ensure that there is a breadth of coverage.

We recognise the important role that computing has to play in our school in the development of Literacy skills. There are many opportunities for children to improve their writing inspired by drama techniques and film clips. Children will also be given the opportunity to produce multimodal texts and develop their understanding of visual literacy. Interactive technology is used on a daily basis to enhance the teaching of literacy.

All Curriculum Areas

The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. The pupils' skills in reading, writing and spoken language enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work at school.

English and Inclusion

At St. Matthew's Catholic Primary School, we teach English to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children.

Through our English teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

Assessment against the National Curriculum Outcomes allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected standards. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

All children receive quality first literacy teaching on a daily basis and activities are differentiated accordingly. Where identified some pupils are considered to require targeted support to enable them to work to age appropriate objectives. Intervention strategies are mentioned on individual children's IPM forms and discussed with parents. More able pupils are planned for in line with our policy for teaching more able pupils. The needs of children with English as an additional language will be met through planning and support.

Assessment for Learning

The short-term assessments that teachers make, as part of every lesson, helps them to adjust their daily plans. They match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. Written or verbal feedback is given to help guide pupils' progress. Pupils are also encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work. (refer to the Marking and feedback Policy)

Assessments measure progress against the key objectives and allow a judgement to be made against Age Related Expectations (ARE). These assessments are used to help teachers plan for the next unit of work. Assessments are made at key points throughout the year. This data is then analysed and targets are set and tracked.

Teachers make long-term assessments towards the end of the school year, and they use these to assess progress against school and national targets. With the help of these long-term assessments, they are able to set targets for the next school year, and to summarise the progress of each child before discussing it with the child's parents or carers. The next teacher then uses these long-term assessments as the planning basis for the new school year.

Moderation takes place termly to validate teacher judgements. The moderation also takes place with other schools as part of the Catholic Schools Partnership. The subject leader keeps samples of moderated children's work in a portfolio. This demonstrates what the expected level of achievement is in English in each year of the school. Teachers meet regularly to review individual examples of work against the national exemplification material produced by the QCA and the DFE.

Reporting

Teachers report to parents twice a year at parents' evenings and in the annual report to parents. At the beginning of year 6 parents are invited to a pupil progress meeting with the Head and year 6 teachers to set targets, discuss progress and review support. A home/school agreement is made to support each children.

Staff Development

Supported by the English Leader, teachers are expected to keep up to date with subject knowledge and use current materials that are available in school. Training needs are identified as a result of whole school monitoring and evaluation, performance management and through induction programmes. These will be reflected in the School Improvement Plan which includes the Reading and Writing Action Plans. Additional adults who are involved with intervention programmes will receive appropriate training.

Resources and Accommodation

Every class has easy access to basic resources for Literacy such as dictionaries, thesauri and reading books. The school library contains a range of up-to-date fiction and non-fiction books. Guided reading comprehension books and kept centrally, these books are banded according to 'KS1 Book bands' and in KS2 according to the colour codes in 'KS2 Guided Reading'. The Accelerated Reader scheme also provides pupils with a rich variety of texts to read at home and in school.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of the policy will take place in line with the monitoring timetable, through the scrutiny of work, lesson observations, Good to Great videoing and pupil interviews in particular.

The policy and procedures will be reviewed every year. A named member of the school's governing body is briefed to oversee the teaching of English.

Date Agreed by Governors: February 2017