



St Philip's Catholic Primary

**English Policy**

**2016 – 2017**

## English Policy

At St Philip's Catholic Primary school we can help children to acquire this proficiency by giving a sharp focus to the relevant aspects of the programmes of study for English. The outcome should be to articulate pupils who are confident enough to use all areas of English confidently across the wider curriculum.

### Our pupils should:

- have the opportunity to hear and use a high quality and variety of language ;
- be enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama
- be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world they live in, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum;
- develop competence in transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing)
- be taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing

English is a core subject of the National Curriculum. Teaching supports teachers in ensuring the programme study for English is made accessible to all pupils. We implement the National Curriculum throughout the school and in Nursery and Reception we relate our teaching of English to the Early Learning Goals (ELGs).

Taking the **curriculum and assessment** in the school as a whole, better English standards occur when:

- staff share a common understanding of English and how best to promote it;
- there is a daily, dedicated English lesson in every class, with lesson time extended through out-of-class activities and regular homework;
- the teaching programme is based on identified learning objectives, and is planned thoroughly, to ensure high expectations, consistent approaches and good progression throughout the school;
- the foundations of phonics, reading, spelling, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and glossary are established thoroughly;
- assessments are used to identify pupils' strengths and difficulties, to set group and individual targets for them to achieve and to plan the next stage of work;
- assessments include informal observations and oral questioning, regular mental tests, and planned activities designed to judge progress each half term; and
- recording systems give teachers the information that they need to plan and report successfully, but are not too time-consuming to maintain.

### Mastering English in St Philips:

At St Philip's Catholic Primary, English lessons will include some aspect of speaking, reading or writing to help develop skills, knowledge and understanding in other subject areas.

From Year 1, children who show mastery of writing will have a clear authorial voice with evident purpose and audience. Their writing will show control and restraint both of word choices and structures. They will often draw on models from reading, and manipulate them for their own purposes. They will also have the stamina to write for extended periods.

Teachers plan longer sequences of work in English to allow children to know a book inside and out, to look at how writers use language and words to impact on the reader and use them as models for their own writing.

Topics from other curriculum areas are linked to wonderful, high-quality books which can be thoroughly explored. Teachers place less emphasis on covering so many text types in each year group; identifying fewer text types to be taught, but teaching them in greater depth, so that children are secure in the types taught and can write them in any context with confidence. Instructions, for example, can be taught and secured in Y2. There will be many purposeful opportunities to write instructions across the curriculum all through KS2.

Mastery of Writing is about effective not formulaic writing. Children are beginning to understand that they need to make choices about the sentences and words in their writing. Simply applying a "list" of grammatical features will not make great writing e.g - finding adjectives to describe a tiger went from first thoughts of orange, scary, stripy to majestic, fiery, ravenous. In the past, we have been too quick to accept first responses and too slow to say when a word choice is not effective. Mastery means children must be able to understand how to improve their work Using proofreading to check for accuracy – spelling, punctuation and correct grammar. Time to explore words, develop phrases, play with sentences and paragraphs means that children always consider impact on the reader when they write. When they recall the skill or feature and use it appropriately without prompting in their writing. At that point, children are doing this consistently, they have secured the learning.

Teachers will look for opportunities for children to write for real purposes e.g sports journalism –reporting on school competitions; writing to local businesses to request information or to support fund raising. Throughout the year children have the chance to show mastery in oracy skills in Christmas productions, class acts of worship and special assemblies.

To master English and achieve beyond the expectations for their age, children must be able to independently apply their Reading, Writing and Speaking skills in a range of contexts across all curriculum subjects.

#### **Reading:**

To enable all children to become self-regulated readers by the end of Year Six reading lessons are designed around the content domains of KS1 and KS2. Children are taught a variety of techniques in each area of the end of key stage expectation with each reading domain taught through high quality reading texts. Guided reading lessons support the children's understanding of reading domains expectations and how to apply them to understand good quality texts.

#### **Writing:**

To support children in addressing any misconceptions in writing, teachers set them an unaided writing task at the beginning of unit – this is called the 'Cold Write'. Teachers use the work produced to create a series of lessons which build on children's prior knowledge and addresses any misconceptions. At the end of each unit, teachers then ask children to complete another unaided piece of work similar to that the beginning of the unit – this is called the 'Hot Write'

#### **Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar:**

Primarily, Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar is embedded through our writing model whereby children are taught the National Curriculum requirements 'in action'. Teachers will plan their unit between the 'Cold and Hot' writes to ensure genre specific Spellings, Punctuation and Grammar are taught where appropriate. Alongside this, teachers teach explicit lessons to ensure children's knowledge of National Curriculum requirements is fully understood and becomes second nature.

### **Phonics at St Philip's Catholic Primary**

The government strongly recommend the use of synthetic phonics when teaching early literacy skills to children. Synthetic phonics is simply the ability to convert a letter or letter group into sounds that are then blended together into a word.



Reading opens the door to learning. A child who reads a lot will become a good reader. A good reader will be able to read more challenging material. A child who can read more challenging material is a child who will learn. The more a child learns, the more he or she will want to find out.

Here at St Philips Catholic Primary School, we are using the Read Write Inc (RWI) programme to get children off to a flying start with their literacy. RWI is a method of learning based upon letter sounds and phonics, and we use it to aid children in their reading and writing. RWI is taught for 1 hour daily in Key Stage 1 and for 30 minutes in Reception class.

Using RWI, the children learn to read effortlessly so they can put all their energy into comprehending what they read. It also allows them to spell effortlessly so they can put all their energy into composing what they write.

The children are assessed regularly and grouped according to their ability. They will work with a RWI trained teacher or teaching assistant. In addition to the RWI, children will also be working on writing skills in their classes with their own teacher.

### **Reading**

When using RWI to read the children will:

Learn 44 sounds and the corresponding letter/letter groups using simple prompts.

Learn to read words using sound blending (Fred talk).

Read lively stories featuring words they have learnt to sound out.

Show that they comprehend the stories by answering 'Find It' and 'Prove It'.

### **Writing**

When using RWI to write the children will:

Learn to write the letter/letter groups which represent the 44 sounds.

Learn to write words by saying the sounds and graphemes (Fred fingers).

Learn to write simple then more complex sentences.

Compose stories based on story strips.

Compose a range of texts using discussion prompts.

### **Talking:**

When using RWI the children will also work in pairs:

To answer questions.

To practise every activity.

To take turns talking and listening to each other.

To give positive praise to each other.

### **Blending**

Children learn to read words by sounding-blending (Fred talk) eg. c-a-t = cat, sh-o-p = shop. Children learn to read words by blending the letter-sounds that are in the Speed Sounds set (shown further down the page).

Children are supported to say the pure sounds ('m' not 'muh', 's' not 'suh' etc.) as quickly as they can, and then blend the sounds together to say the whole word.

## Reading Books Sent Home

Children in Reception who are learning the first 44 letter sounds and are not blending fluently will bring home sound sheets, picture books and a library book for you to read with them.

Once children can blend fluently and know the first 44 sounds they will bring home Ditty sheets or a red Ditty book, an Oxford Reading Tree or Storyworld book and a library book.

Children on Green level to Orange level will bring home a RWI book, an Oxford Reading Tree or Treetop book and a library book; these will be changed every 3/4 days.

Children on Yellow level to Grey level will also bring home a RWI book, an Oxford Reading Tree or Treetop book and a library book. As these books are lengthier, these will be changed once a week.

Read Write Inc Books: (This is the child's main reading book) Children are encouraged to read though the speed sounds page first, then the green and red words page and then check the child understands the meaning of words on the vocabulary check page, before they start reading the book. Children will have read this book at least three times before they bring it home. They should be able to read this book with fluency and expression by the time books go home they should have a good comprehension of what the book is about.

Oxford Tree/Treetops Books: These books are to extend the children's reading. Children should be able to read most of this book however they might need a little support, especially with the first read.

## Home Reading

Every child in school has at least one reading book to take home each night. We actively encourage parents to read with their child and to make comments in their reading record. In Foundation Stage and KS1, teachers and learning support staff play a key role in changing books and hearing pupils read individually from their reading books.

As the children enter KS2, they are increasingly expected to take responsibility for changing their own books when required. Teachers and LSP's check at least weekly that each child is reading their book by checking records and through discussion with pupils.

## Handwriting

We teach children handwriting with the aim of them developing a fluent, joined and clearly legible style as quickly as possible. The Nelson scheme is used throughout the school to support these objectives. Teachers use the Nelson script when writing on displays, on the board and in pupils' books. Handwriting is taught systematically throughout the school both within and outside of the English curriculum. Handwriting sessions are planned for and timetabled by teachers.

## Spelling

R.W.I is a scheme integrated for children's phonological awareness to aid in reading, but also in spelling. This is put into practise by teaching and support staff from foundation stage to key stage 2 (for those children who need the support). Teachers implement the R.W.I spelling scheme in key stage 2 as a follow on to their R.W.I work. This scheme is used for 10-15mins every day. For the other classes, teachers are beginning to use the 'topical resources' spelling scheme. Teachers spend half an hour a week testing the children and teaching new spelling patterns, using the same 'dot, dash' technique as used in the R.W.I scheme. Teachers make connections to their spellings in other subjects to integrate this across the curriculum.

## Assessment

Assessment, recording and reporting are important elements of teaching but they have to be manageable if the information they yield is to be useful. It is for this reason that at St. Philip's we have adopted the recommendations set out in the National Curriculum. As with planning, it is best to think of assessment at three connected levels: short-term, medium-term and long-term. Your assessments can then inform your teaching plans at each level, in a continuous cycle of planning, teaching and assessment.

## I.C.T.

The use of I.C.T. enables children to apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. Children use I.C.T. as both a source of information and as a means of presenting their finished work. Spell checkers, e-dictionaries and thesauri, e-mail and electronic books are all used to support learning and teaching in English. The use of interactive whiteboards enables pupils to modify and improve texts, use animations to learn spelling rules and to be interactively involved in the learning process. The interactive and motivational nature of I.C.T. is also used to support children who are gifted and talented, more able, those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.

## Equal Opportunities and Children with SEN

At St. Philip's, we aim to ensure that all children fulfil their potential in English. By valuing diversity, utilizing a variety of teaching and learning styles, and using resources effectively, the school ensures that the English curriculum it offers removes any barriers to full participation and meets a wide range of needs.

We are committed to providing every individual pupil with access to the full curriculum. Teachers plan carefully to meet the needs of pupils in their classes. It is sometimes appropriate for pupils with SEN to be taught from the objectives of a lower age group or Key Stage. Teachers ensure that pupils are equipped with basic skills before moving on to more complex objectives and to this end it is always necessary to match planning to individual needs. Where pupils are taught from the objectives of an earlier age group, care is taken to do so in an age and maturity sensitive way. Depending upon the level of need, teachers plan for the use of learning support staff in order for children to be able to access the curriculum, they plan and arrange access to ICT resources to enable inclusion in the learning and they plan careful and structured use of the guided teaching session. All planning takes account of Individual Education Plans (I.E.P.s) and other action plans. *See also 'Intervention Strategies'.*

## English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Pupils with EAL are taught with the whole class, individually and as part of groups. We make a clear differentiation between our provision for children with EAL and that for children with SEN. It is sometimes appropriate for both groups to be planned for together but more often the two are planned for as discrete groups. Teachers and learning support staff plan carefully to equip EAL pupils firstly with a 'survival' vocabulary and then extend this support by providing opportunities throughout the curriculum for pupils to see and hear good quality use of the English language medium. We use the services of the LEA where available and appropriate as well as utilising bilingual school personnel where available. We provide a developing range of bilingual books and seek to expand this range to meet the needs of individual pupils. As with all individuals, pupils with EAL are taught as part of the whole class, are supported by learning support staff, are taught individually and as part of specialist groups. The guided group session provides a special opportunity for individualised teaching. Where pupils are taught from the objectives of earlier year groups, care is taken to do this in an age and maturity sensitive way.

## **Intervention Strategies**

We use 'Freshstart' to aid some pupils' development in upper key stage 2. Across the school there are one-to-one sessions taking place for those children needing extra support English. We seek to adapt and modify the programmes to suit the needs of pupils'. For example, it may be appropriate for younger pupils to work from intervention strategies for older pupils or older children to work from strategies designed for younger pupils. There are personnel implications involved in the delivery of such strategies and we will seek to make best use of our available human resources. We seek to make creative use of staff timetabling to enable the use of intervention strategies where required.

## **Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**

The English co-ordinator and Senior Management Team (SMT) are responsible for ensuring every staff member receives good quality CPD for Literacy. Staff are given opportunities to attend courses provided by the Local Authority, the Birmingham Catholic Primary Partnership and other external agencies. Staff identify their own needs through informal discussions and at their annual performance management meeting. Training days are held in school to meet needs identified through the School Improvement Plan (SIP). The English co-ordinator and Headteacher are responsible for cascading developments in the subject to all staff.

**Policy to be reviewed Spring term 2018**