

## ENGLISH POLICY

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*St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School provides a stimulating and exciting learning environment in which children thrive because they feel happy, safe and secure. We aim to raise standards of English across the curriculum by offering a rich and varied approach to English teaching and learning. We believe that literacy and communication are life skills that allow children to communicate effectively and creatively through spoken and written language. We aim for children to enjoy and appreciate a rich variety of literature and draw on their experience of this across the curriculum.*

*There is a calm, focussed atmosphere at St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School in which children are challenged and have the confidence to reach their potential. Children are at the centre of everything that is achieved. Our children are expected to: be well-behaved, polite and courteous, show respect for others and value diversity. We aim to create an inclusive and motivating environment in which they are excited to learn. They will be expected to always do their best and set themselves high standards. Our children are encouraged to have enquiring and inquisitive minds. They are taught to know that it is important to persevere in the face of challenge and helped to understand that making mistakes is part of the learning process.*

### Overview

This policy describes our aims and our practice in the teaching of English at St Francesca Cabrini Primary School. It is defined by current national guidance on best practice, staff discussion and professional judgement. This policy consists of key paragraphs that explain how English is taught that give further guidance about:

- Aims and Objectives
- Expectations and requirements
- Characteristics of effective teaching and learning
- Reading
- Writing (including Handwriting and Spelling)
- Speaking and listening
- Foundation Stage
- Inclusion
- Parental Involvement
- Assessment, Recording and Reporting
- Staff Development
- Resources and accommodation
- Monitoring and Evaluation

### *Aims and Objectives*

We intend to help children develop skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate creatively with the world at large, through spoken and written language. We also intend to help children to enjoy and appreciate literature and its rich variety. We will provide a consistent whole school approach to raising standards in English across the curriculum.

We aim to:-

- ◆ Provide a rich and stimulating language environment that promotes a culture of reading and writing for pleasure.
- ◆ Provide opportunities for pupils to become confident, competent and expressive users of the English language, with a developed knowledge of a wide range of vocabulary, where it comes from and how it works;
- ◆ Develop the powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness in all areas of English;
- ◆ Foster an enthusiasm for, and love of, reading for life through promoting access to high quality literature across the curriculum;
- ◆ Explicitly teach reading skills throughout the school that continually develop children's understanding and enjoyment of texts;
- ◆ Teach children the craft of writing in order to develop the confidence and skills to write well for a range of audiences and purposes;
- ◆ Provide meaningful opportunities for role-play and drama.
- ◆ Provide opportunities for children to peer and self-assess their efforts enabling ownership over their work and personal targets;
- ◆ Teach children to use spelling, grammar and punctuation accurately;
- ◆ Encourage the production of effective, well presented written work using fluent and legible handwriting and use of ICT;

### *Expectations and requirements*

By the time children leave St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School, we expect them to communicate through speaking and listening, reading and writing, with confidence, fluency and understanding and in a range of situations. We will make every effort to foster an enjoyment of literature.

### In the Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Children should;

- Use language for communication and thinking.
- Link letters and sounds.
- Become immersed in an environment rich in print and develop an interest in stories and books for information.
- Begin early reading processes.
- Begin to communicate through emergent writing.

By the end of Reception, children should be working within the Early Learning Goals for Communication and Language, Reading and Writing.

### At Key Stage One

Children should;

- Speak confidently and listen to what others have to say.
- Begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm.
- Use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.
- Begin to develop their own style of writing that is clear and well organised.

By the end of Key Stage One the majority of children will be working in line with age related expectations as defined in the STAR documentation (see Assessment).

### At Key Stage Two

Children should;

- Be able to write in a range of genres in fiction and poetry and understand and be familiar with some ways in which narratives are structured through basic English ideas of setting, character and plot.
- Understand and be able to write in a range of non-fiction genres and structure text in a style suited to its purpose.
- Use grammar and punctuation accurately.
- Have an interest in words and a growing vocabulary.
- Write creatively and enjoy writing.
- Plan, draft, revise, appraise and edit their work.
- Understand and use phonic systems and spelling conventions.

By the end of Year 4, the majority of pupils should be working within the range of age related expectations. Most pupils are expected to be working securely at the age related level.

By the end of Key Stage Two the majority of pupils should be working within the range of age related expectations. Most pupils should be securely working at the age related level.

By the time the children leave St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School, they should have made significant progress, reaching their potential, with most pupils meeting their predicted targets and average points progress.

### **Teaching and Learning**

Knowledge, understanding and skills are taught daily within English lessons. Lesson planning modelled on the work of the 2014 National Curriculum and is used as a basis for short term planning and adapted according to the text type and the needs of the children. The length of a unit may vary depending on the range of objectives and text type. Clear objectives are set for each session and are shared with pupils. Teachers plan units that work towards an independent, extended written outcome that is linked to reading, drama and other shorter writing tasks. As far as possible, writing is linked to the class topic and therefore the wider curriculum. There is a balance between fiction, non-fiction and poetry and an emphasis towards text based learning. Teachers plan for different working groups e.g. whole class/small group/ paired/individual. Teachers differentiate according to the needs of the pupils and use intervention programmes for targeted support.

Teachers employ a range of interactive teaching strategies. These include:

- Instruction/direction
- Modelling/demonstrating/scribing
- Explaining
- Questioning
- Discussing
- Consolidating
- Evaluating
- Summarising

English across the curriculum is encouraged and cross-curricular links are made where appropriate. ICT is used where it enhances, extends and complements English teaching and learning. Additional adults are used to support the teaching of English and work with focus groups or groups of children identified in the English planning. They work under the guidance of the teacher. Teachers in KS1 lead smaller, ability led guided reading groups daily, based on reading issues that are particular to that group of children. Teachers in KS2 lead whole class guided reading sessions daily.

### **Reading**

At St Francesca Cabrini Primary School, our priority is to foster a love of reading for life by promoting access to high quality literature across the curriculum. Every class has high quality book displays and a well-stocked and organised book corner that encourage children's enthusiasm in reading. Children are encouraged to read for pleasure and share their reading experiences with their peers.

Every class has a collection of banded books, selected by the children and monitored by Teachers and Teaching Assistants. Teachers and teaching assistants regularly read on an individual basis throughout the school: how often is based on assessment of progress. Children are encouraged to have a banded reading book and a reading for pleasure book.

From Y1 to Y6, children have weekly reading homework (30 minutes per night) and a Reading Journal activity to support the development of active readers.

Reading skills are explicitly taught throughout the school to continually develop children's understanding and enjoyment of texts. Reading sessions are planned for during guided reading where pupils will experience a rich and diverse reading experience that includes both fiction and non-fiction books and texts. All teachers from Y2-Y6 have access to a wide range of guided reading material including the Reading Explorers Scheme (Y2) and whole class texts from the Literary Leaves (KS2).

Reading skills are developed using STAR performance indicators and groups of children are targeted in order to progress in their learning. Children will know their individual/guided reading targets and these will be displayed clearly. Teachers keep regular records of guided reading session with reference to the performance indicators detailed in the STAR document.

### Phonics

From EYFS to Year 2 the 'Letters & Sounds Programme' is used to develop phonic learning. Children are expected to reach Phase four by the end of Reception. Phase five is taught throughout Year 1 in conjunction with the National Curriculum spelling programme and phase six is taught throughout year 2. Phonic intervention is provided in each class for those children identified by the class teacher as not making expected progress. This culminates in a 'Phonic Test' at the end of Key Stage 1 in line with the DfE test guidance.

As children progress into Key Stage Two, discrete phonic intervention is provided for those children who have not made expected progress identified by the Year Two class teachers submitting 'Phonic retest' data. A personalised intervention programme is followed by support teachers based the Phonics Books series and support materials.

### Writing

At St Francesca Cabrini Primary School we strive to provide opportunities for children to develop their 'writing voice' through experience, discussion (especially in the Foundation Stage), planning, drafting and reviewing their work. To ensure that our children are confident writers, we encourage children to write creatively whilst teaching key writing skills explicitly and systematically. Extended writing is encouraged and developed across the curriculum to build children's writing stamina. Children are encouraged to critique their own and other's work through planned peer and self-assessment time. Teachers also allow time for children to respond to marking and feedback and for publishing work to be displayed.

Writing is assessed using the STAR performance indicators, and targets for children's writing are taken directly from these records in KS1 and KS2 to promote progression.

### Handwriting

Children are taught handwriting through the 'Nelson Handwriting' programme from Reception, where they learn how to form letters with the correct orientation, leaders and exit points all executed correctly. Our expectation is that by the end of Key Stage One children will have a developing and eligible handwriting style and begin to join their writing once they are securely forming letters with the correct orientation. This will be developed further through Key Stage Two where children will be expected to confidently join letters and write in a clearly defined style. Children who require extra support with handwriting are identified and given extra support where needed.

### Spelling

In the EYFS children are expected to learn to spell common words and most used high frequency words using these within their writing (linked to Letters and Sounds). As children move into KS1, they take spelling lists home and learn blocks of words set out by the National Curriculum and High Frequency word lists. This is monitored regularly and lists are changed as frequently as required by individual learners.

In KS2, children follow the spelling objectives as set out by the National Curriculum through the Spelling Seeds scheme and a spelling list is provided from these objectives. The Spelling Seeds follow a programme of investigative class teaching and homework activities linked to the class English whole class text for writing. Children are tested on these spellings regularly and their progress is monitored by the class teacher.

### Speaking and Listening

At St Francesca Cabrini Primary School, we understand the importance of spoken language in pupil's development across the whole curriculum- socially, cognitively and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing, and so the quality of vocabulary that children hear and speak is vital for developing their vocabulary, grammar and reading and writing skills. Children are encouraged to orally develop their ideas before they write or answer questions.

The EYFS promote 'guided talk' sessions that will develop children's abilities to listen, take turns and ask questions. This is experienced as part of the strand Communication and Language but underpins all other learning areas. Across key stages one and two opportunities for 'talk' guided/paired/peer or small group and class discussion is planned for by teachers. Children are encouraged to question and discuss tasks, work and literature across the English curriculum to build their speaking and listening skills.

The school employs a Speech and Language Therapist to work with targeted children with speech and language needs, and teachers have received training from the SALT to help bring these strategies into the classroom. Teachers use Blooms Taxonomy questioning strategies in English to encourage children to ask and answer questions that will progress their understanding of language and literature. Teachers have been trained in developing vocabulary and vocabulary acquisition.

The school dedicates six days of SALT to Early Years. Children entering Reception are screened and the Speech and Language Therapist works with teachers to devise strategies to use across Foundation stage as well as training staff to deliver targeted group sessions in: understanding, sentence structure, vocabulary and attention and listening.

### **Foundation Stage**

The Reception children will experience Communication, Language and English as part of the seven areas of learning as laid out in the EYFS Curriculum. Through careful planning teachers will ensure that Foundation Stage pupil needs are provided for through activities linked development matters and the Early Learning Goals. 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/High Frequency' words. Foundation Stage children will be taught phonics through a synthetic and systematic approach as laid out in the 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 schools 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 making phonetic attempts when writing.

### **Inclusion**

All children receive quality first English 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 include the use of Individual Learning plans, LSA support and small group work which offers pupils extra opportunities to meet the required age related expectations. More able pupils are planned for in line with our policy for teaching more able pupils and teachers differentiate with this group in mind outside of the age related ranges. The needs of children with English as an additional language will be met through additional planning and class based or individual support as identified by class teachers and the SEN coordinator. This is supported by our Equal Opportunities Policy and our SEN Code of Practise.

### **Parental Involvement**

We value parent involvement in children's development of English and promote a home school partnership in the following ways:

- Sharing information - 'new to St Francesca Cabrini School' EYFS parent meeting, termly information sheets to parents', regular newsletters and parents' leaflets, parents' evenings, reading diaries and journals;
- Celebrations - curriculum assemblies and Masses, displays, book weeks, annual curriculum 'pop-in' where children, staff and parents share work;

- Homework - in line with our homework policy and home/school agreement;
- Speech and Language drop in coffee mornings;
- Beginning to Read and Write parent sessions for Reception parents.
- Workshops for Y6 parents in Reading and Writing.

### **Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Assessments are made in line with the school assessment policy. The school uses STAR performance indicators for writing and reading which inform teacher planning, assessments and setting pupil targets. Teachers report to parents three times a year at parents' evenings and in the annual report to parents. An annual 'pop-in' session is planned so children, parents and staff can share work and any English achievements in the summer term.

Children are assessed on entering the school (EYFS Baseline) and are formally assessed at the end of each key stage. Teacher assessments are carried out each half term in reading and writing across the school using the STAR tracking sheets. These are moderated through staff meetings and through pupil progress review meetings with senior leaders and SENCO (where applicable) alongside class teachers.

Reading, Writing and Speaking & Listening results are analysed in line with STAR performance indicators. The senior leadership team and middle managers then use this as a basis for planning any interventions or support individuals or groups of pupils may need. Analysis of assessment data is used to set numerical targets and a whole school English curricular target(s).

Teachers use assessment for learning to ensure planning is based on prior attainment and so that pupils know what they need to do to achieve the next steps. Group or individual targets are set accordingly in reference to the STAR performance indicators. Marking is in line with the school marking and feedback policy.

Teachers keep individual records for reading and writing. These include reading records, analysed and levelled writing samples and any other information that enables the teacher to deliver an effective, relevant curriculum which builds on prior attainment to aid progression for every child.

### **Staff Development**

Supported by the English Leaders, 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.

### **Resources and Accommodation**

Every class has easy access to basic resources for English such as dictionaries, thesauri, comprehension, spelling and handwriting books (Nelson), reading books and a class library. The school library contains a range of up-to-date fiction and non-fiction books. Guided reading books are kept centrally, and these books are banded according to 'KS1 Book bands' and in KS2 according to the colour codes in 'ORT Guided Reading Guidelines' (based on Book bands).

Enrichment events may be organised including celebrating World Book Day, Storytellers, authors and poets, visiting drama specialists and theatre groups. Children are encouraged to enter story writing competitions and attend other relevant enrichment opportunities.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

English is monitored by the Leadership Team and the English coordinator(s). Having identified priorities, the English Leaders construct an action plan that forms part of the School Development Plan. This forms the basis for any monitoring activities and will clearly identify when, who and what is to be monitored and how this will take place e.g. learning walks, classroom observation, planning scrutiny, work sampling etc.

**Updated By: English Team Leaders**

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