

St Christopher's Church of England Primary School ENGLISH AND LITERACY POLICY

1. MISSION STATEMENT

Literacy unites the important skills of reading, writing and speaking and listening. Language is a tool for manipulating thoughts and learning. Since English is integral to the whole curriculum, it follows that whenever anything is being taught or learned it needs to be scaffolded by language and this, in turn, will lead to language development in the child.

2. AIMS

We aim to develop pupils' abilities within an integrated programme of Speaking & Listening, Reading & Writing. Pupils will be given opportunities to interrelate the requirements of English within a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of English across the curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught literacy skills.

At St Christopher's Church of England Primary school we strive for children to be a 'Primary Literate Pupil'. By the age of 11 we aim for a child to be able to:

- read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding, orchestrating a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct.
- have an interest in books and read for enjoyment
- have an interest in words, their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms.
- understand a range of text types and genres – be able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation.
- be developing the powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.
- have a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their responses.

3. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in New National Curriculum Framework document (September 2013). This aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

In the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) children should be provided with opportunities to:

- speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities;
- use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum;

- become immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2) children should learn to:

- 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.

At Key Stage Two (Years 3-6) children should learn to:

- change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences;
- read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them;
- explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

4. SUBJECT ORGANISATION

The English Curriculum is delivered using the National Curriculum framework from Years 1 to 6. In the Foundation Stage the Early Learning Goals are followed to ensure continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage through to the National Curriculum. Pupil provision is related to attainment, not age.

Foundation Stage: (Nursery and Reception)

Children acquire literacy through a range of experiences and in the nursery these are an integral and natural part of the curriculum. The challenges we are presented with are:

- to ensure that we plan and provide for a wide range of literacy experiences
- to capitalise and exploit spontaneous, child-led opportunities for literacy development in a natural, enjoyable and meaningful way.

Literacy development is promoted inherently as part of daily routines, such as role play activities and when adults are scaffolding and modelling during child initiated play. This play is inherently directed into writing and a writing area is used where children are encouraged to practise phonics skills being taught. A reading area promotes a love of reading a Big Book of the week is shared with the children via the IWB. Baskets of mark making materials and equipment are always available and children are encouraged to use these in their play to record pictorially or in writing.

Key Stage One: (Years 1 and 2)

There is a Literacy session dedicated to the concentrated teaching of literacy five days a week. Each term the objectives taught will focus on a range of reading and writing skills taken from the National Curriculum and relevant Programmes of Study. However, objectives are pulled from different strands to adhere to the creative curriculum approach. All pupils also have a daily 15 minute phonics session, with objectives taken from the DfES publication, Letters and Sounds. Classes are split according to ability across Years 1 to 3 and pupils are tested on spellings taught once a week. Guided reading/ 1:1 reading take place in all classes for 25 minutes before break time. Activities should include teacher led activities alongside meaningful independent pupil tasks. Where appropriate, literacy should be linked to work in other areas of the curriculum but it is important that literacy objectives remain the key focus of the lesson. Links with the rest of the curriculum

subjects are treated as vehicles for literacy work.

Key Stage Two: (Years 3, 4, 5, 6)

As in KS1, there is a daily literacy session dedicated to the concentrated teaching of literacy skills as set out in the National Curriculum and relevant Programmes of Study. Each term the objectives taught will focus on a range of reading, writing, speaking and listening and embedded grammar teaching. All pupils also have a daily 15 minute phonics/spelling session, with objectives taken from the DfES publication, Letters and Sounds or other appropriate spelling programmes. Pupils are tested on spellings every fortnight. Guided reading takes place in all classes for 30 minutes at the beginning of each afternoon. Activities should include teacher led activities alongside independent pupil tasks. Where appropriate literacy should be linked to work in other areas of the curriculum but it is important that literacy objectives remain the key focus of the skills session. Links with the rest of the curriculum subjects are treated as vehicles for literacy work.

5. APPROACHES TO SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Speaking and Listening aims:

- To have all pupils develop into confident communicators
- To prepare pupils to communicate with a variety of audiences

Four Strands of Speaking and Listening: Speaking; Listening; Group Discussion and Interaction, 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. Speaking and Listening objectives will be taken from APP assessment guidelines.

Talk for Writing Aims:

Talk for writing allows developing writers at St Christopher's Primary School to explore the creative and thinking processes in writing through talk. The talk allows the children to begin to think and talk like a writer.

The Talk for Writing approach includes:

- Learning and repeating oral stories
- Extending the oral stories into writing
- Creating new stories orally and in writing.

The Talk for Writing approach should include imitation (repeating the stories), innovation (changing and developing the stories and finally invention (creating a new story). Talk for writing will expose all pupils to oral storytelling. The benefits of the talk for writing approach are that the pupils will build a bank of good vocabulary and narrative patterning. It will also help build confidence so that children can build their own creative stories. The talk for writing approach gives opportunities for teachers to build in role play/ drama (story whoosh's, hot seating, conscience alley) and to build in different word games (tell me about, building a picture). Each year there will be a storytelling week which may involve all pupils across key stages learning the same story. At the end of the week there will be a celebration of the pupils work from that story and each class will be encouraged to

create a class book to demonstrate the learning they have completed during that week.

6. APPROACHES TO READING

Reading Aims:

- To build on the children's language experiences and early reading skills that they have already acquired.
- For pupils to emerge from inexperienced readers to independent readers who read a variety of texts for different purposes.
- To look for higher standards because we have high expectations of our children.
- For children to develop as readers and to be able to enjoy reading for pleasure, alone or as a shared experience with an adult or their peers. We want children to be able to read independently and be able to follow personal interests, use their research skills to extend their knowledge and understanding.
- To provide books in a variety of languages in order for pupils to develop a healthy knowledge of languages other than English and allow pupils of that culture to celebrate their heritage.
- To recognise that reading plays an important part of education and life.

Guided Reading:

At St Christopher's Church of England Primary School the goal of guided reading is to enable learners to become independent, able readers, who understand and appreciate texts on their own. Guided reading takes place in a small group with a teacher and focuses on developing pupil's ability to become independent readers, thinkers and learners. The teacher acts as the expert who guides the children through the text, providing signposts to the most important and most helpful features of the textual landscape. Pupils are grouped by reading level into groups of up to six children. Teachers will choose texts that will link to the learning objective and appropriate texts will be selected that allow opportunities for work towards specific targets. Texts should match the reading level of the group in terms of fluency-they should be able to read between 90-94% accurately and with understanding. Teachers will change group books on a regular basis and include a mix of fiction and non-fiction texts. Most importantly, texts must provide opportunities to apply the targets and strategies that form the group's current focus.

A guided reading session will follow the sequence of:

- introduction/ recap,
- a strategy check (see APPENDIX 1)
- independent reading/ interaction,
- return and response,
- text activity or reading ahead.

The teacher shares the key objective for the session with the pupils, assesses pupil's progress within the session, gives feedback and next steps in the plenary and records outcomes on the guided reading record sheet. During the guided reading session pupils will be reading at the same time. The class teacher will have

focus children in mind or dip in and out listening to each child read. This will give class teachers an opportunity to assess and monitor each pupil's reading skills and ability, whilst still allowing the other pupils to continue reading.

Shared Reading:

Regular shared reading opportunities are planned for from Foundation Stage upwards. The goal of shared reading is to help pupils extend their understanding of themselves as effective text followers and interpreters. During shared reading, teachers and pupils participate in collaborative discussions. Every class should have a class novel, preferably linked to topic work or a significant author, and opportunities for engaging in whole class shared reading are provided for as often as possible. The school also has links with the local library and classes are timetabled to visit once a term. During these sessions, teachers generally choose a story to share with the class or teach the pupils how to use the library for research purposes. Every child has the opportunity to borrow a book which will remain in a central area in the classroom.

Assessment:

Target tracker objectives are used as an assessment vehicle within guided reading and 1:1 reading sessions. During guided reading sessions teachers should also use questioning, listening, observing and discussing to assess children. Children are provided with bookmark style target cards in KS1 and KS2 and learning objectives, where appropriate, will be linked to these during guided reading sessions. Effective feedback is provided to the children in the group and children are clear about the next steps needed to improve their reading.

Resources:

A book banding system is used throughout KS1 and KS2. Guided reading books are organised into colour banded sets. These are kept in a central location and it is the responsibility of all adults working in the school to return the resources in their original state.

7. APPROACHES TO WRITING

Writing Aims:

- To develop pupils in becoming efficient and effective writers who are able to write appropriately for a variety of audiences
- To develop pupils in acquiring the knowledge and skills to communicate effectively within a range of contexts
- To ensure all pupils can use the conventions of written language and grammar
- To ensure that all pupils experience a range of purposes and forms of writing
- To ensure all pupils have opportunities to plan, edit, draft and present their work
- To develop pupils to become aware of and appreciate the writer's craft
- To develop pupils love of writing

Curriculum coverage:

All pupils should be writing daily in some form across the curriculum using the skills and knowledge acquired in literacy lessons. Class teachers will follow the

curriculum map to ensure that children are exposed to all genres and writing forms.

Planning:

Unit plans are used to show what each daily literacy lesson will entail and how a unit will progress. These will follow the Talk for Writing process of imitation, deepening, reading as a reader/ writer, innovation and invention. A planning format of starter, main teaching, differentiated activities and plenary is used. Key questions are also planned for when required to provide pupils with opportunities to extend and consolidate their thinking and learning. Teachers should refer to the National Curriculum 2013 and relevant Programmes of Study as a guideline before considering objectives, key skills and coverage of a specific narrative or nonfiction unit of work. Planning should be annotated daily using AFL from the lesson and the marking. Teachers should be making notes after a lesson has been completed on what went well, difficulties and specific pupil(s) that will need extra support in subsequent lessons.

Emergent writing:

From Foundation Stage upwards, pupils are provided with a wide variety of opportunities and experiences to develop, practise and refine mark making skills. Emergent writing stages progress from random mark making to patterned letters and invented spellings and eventually conventional writing (see Appendix 2). At each stage it is important that children have an opportunity to practise and put meaning to their marks.

Modelled and Shared writing:

Regular opportunities for shared writing are planned for throughout KS1 and KS2. Shared writing is a whole class activity where the teacher models the writing of the text. In shared writing, the pupils will contribute to the text by suggesting words or sentences to be used. The teacher demonstrates how to write and explains decisions. S/he will model thinking, rehearsing sentences, writing and re-reading constantly generating words and ideas. Across the key stages, teachers will focus on the purpose, audience, level of formality, structure and organisation of the text. A particular aspect of word or sentence level work provides an additional focus depending on the objectives and targets being covered.

Guided Writing:

Teachers use AfL outcomes to plan for Guided writing sessions as a means of aiding children in achieving their targets and making accelerated progress. Guided writing is a mini lesson within a literacy lesson itself and guided writing groups should be fluid and change all the time. Groups may include children from all different ability groups and may also be target based. Guided writing sessions may have a separate learning objective to that of the main teaching.

Extended Writing/ Independent writing:

Extended writing tasks are planned for at the end of units of work. This will provide children with an opportunity to apply the key skills and techniques they have learnt over the past two to six weeks to cross curricular subjects.

Differentiation:

To ensure all of our pupils are making the most progress they can within a lesson, activities must be clearly differentiated using AfL strategies. A variety of methods are used, such as resources, adult support and the level of thinking skills required. Differentiation must not be based on outcome alone but based on the thinking skills the activity requires. Differentiated questioning and high expectations during the main teaching should be used to stretch the more able pupils and develop other pupils.

Assessment:

Before beginning of every writing unit, children will complete a Cold Task to allow teachers to derive individual writing targets and build in teaching focuses into the classes' model text. Pupils will then complete an independent writing assessment in the form of a Hot Task at the end of the unit from which teachers will be able to monitor progress towards targets. The Hot Task will be a completely independent task, reflecting a genre that the pupils have already been taught, and will be an opportunity to see if the pupils are able to apply their newly learnt skills. Teachers will 'level' pupils using these independent writing assessments, their progress towards targets and general knowledge of the pupils.

Phonics/ Spellings:

Phonics and spelling lessons are planned for using the DfES publication Letters and Sounds or other programmes. In Foundation Stage, phonics lessons take place daily after lunch with related follow up activities accessible to the pupils. Phonics is set for across Years 1 to 3 according to ability and sessions are timetabled for 15 minutes daily. In KS2, spellings work is carried out for 15 minutes each day and children remain in class groups. Targeted children, however, receive personalised intervention support such as Direct Phonics teaching or precision teaching programmes such as Toe by Toe. Teachers are responsible for their pupils learning spellings appropriate for their year group. Each year group should include a list of spellings as a weekly/ fortnightly homework task. Pupils should learn spellings using the look, read, cover, write and check method. Each week/ fortnight it will be required that they complete a spelling test to test home learning. Class teachers could also include words searches, spelling games, hangman and spelling bees during guided reading sessions as independent work to help pupils learn their spellings.

HANDWRITING AND PRESENTATION (see Handwriting policy)

Aims:

- To produce clear, concise, legible handwriting
- To provide equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve success in handwriting
- To present work to a variety of audiences neatly
- To develop accuracy and fluency
- To help children recognise that handwriting is a form of communication and as such should be considered important in order for it to be effective
- To display neatly presented work around the school and in classrooms as a model of excellence for others to aspire to
- To encourage pupils to take pride in their work.

8. CROSS-CURRICULAR LITERACY OPPORTUNITIES

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through literacy lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

9. THE USE OF ICT

Opportunities to use ICT to support teaching and learning in Literacy will be planned for and used as appropriate.

10. ASSESSMENT AND TARGET SETTING

Ongoing assessment of reading, speaking and listening, writing and spelling inform teachers of progress and should be used for future planning. Throughout KS1 and KS2 target leaflets are used to assess pupil progress in reading and writing. Planned writing assessment tasks will also take place at the end of every writing narrative and non-fiction writing unit. Work will be analysed to assess progress and inform individual pupil targets. Moderation in the form of writing agreement trialing will take place regularly throughout the year. Statutory or optional SATs will take place in May or July each year for all pupils from year 2 to year 6. Pupil performance will be analysed and areas for development identified.

11. INCLUSION

At St Christopher's Church of England Primary School 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 and take steps to improve their attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

12. INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES

A range of individual and group intervention programmes, co-ordinated by the SENCO and delivered by appropriate Teaching Assistants, are available for targeted pupils who are failing to make expected progress, or who show a specific weakness in the area of literacy.

13. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

At St Christopher's Church of England Primary School 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.

14. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Our aim is to develop a partnership between home and school to enable our children to receive the best opportunity to learn to read and enjoy literature in a supportive environment. Reporting to Parents includes informal individual consultation as the need arises, three Parent/Teacher consultations per year and an end of year written report for all pupils. However our 'Open Door Policy' allows for informal individual consultations with parents as the need arises.

15. HOMEWORK

Homework is set each week for all pupils. All pupils are expected to read at home on a regular basis. From Year 1 upwards differentiated spellings are also set each week or fortnight and are learnt using the look, read, cover, write and check

APPENDIX 1

THE STRATEGY CHECK

The purpose of a 'strategy check' is to give the children an opportunity to practise and remember the different strategies they need to apply in order to read and understand texts.

EARLY READERS:

1-to-1 pointing:

Children practise pointing using a sentence from the story. Children show and use a pointing finger.

Predicting:

Cover a word – predict what it could be and check. Model predicting a word – checking all searchlights.

Checking initial/final sounds:

Cover the first/last letter – predict, then check. Point to the first letter – get your mouth ready to make the sound. Find the letter on an alphabet card.

Applying phonics to read words:

List some more challenging words in the text – decode these together using phonics – predict/discuss the meanings.

Checking meaning:

Explain that reading should always make sense. Practise re-reading to check meaning. Read a sentence – check that it makes sense. Give the children two options – which one makes sense? Discuss what is happening on the page.

Re-reading to check:

Explain to the children the importance of going back and checking their reading. Model and practise re-reading.

DEVELOPING READERS:

Ask children to name the strategies they can use when they are unable to read a word. Ask the children to share the different things they can do when they don't understand a word, sentence or section of text.

Inferring meaning of unknown words:

List some more challenging words from the guided book on the board. Ask the children to read the words and predict what they mean. Read them the whole sentence so they can check their predictions.

Text layout:

Analyse a page of text (e.g. non-fiction) – how is it organised? Why? How do we read it?

Decoding unknown words:

Record any difficult words from the text on cards or on the board. Ask children to decode these words and explain how what they did (i.e. syllables; phonics; knowing parts of words etc.) or predict the meaning of the words.

Checking meaning:

Read a sentence from the text which is more challenging; discuss what it means and how they know.

ACTIVE READING STRATEGIES:

Visualising:

Read a section of text – ask children to think about what pictures they see in their head.

Predicting:

Read the opening paragraph – summarise what they know so far and predict what might happen next – read the next paragraph to check.

Reading complex sentences:

Record the main clause from a complex sentence on the board – read it and discuss what it means – explain that authors often add more information to the sentence (subordinate clause) – add the subordinate clause and discuss what it means – add it to the main clause and discuss how the two clauses relate to each other – locate the comma and explain that the clauses are usually split by a comma.

Identifying the main points:

Read the opening paragraph of the text and ask children to identify the main points- list these on the board and discuss why other information is not key to the story.

Scanning:

Turn to a page of the text and model how you scan the text for information – use a highlighter.

Skimming:

Model reading a paragraph quickly, looking for specific information (for example, information about main characters; clues about the setting etc.).

Appendix 2

The Stages of Emergent Writing

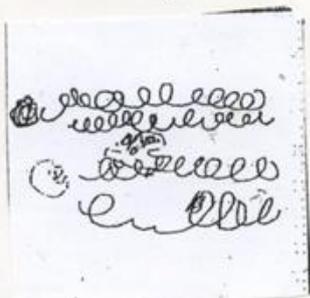
Drawing :
children draw/scribble pictures



Random scribbling :
children scribble and can say
what their marks mean.



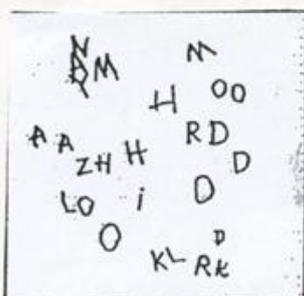
Controlled scribbling:
Children scribble in rows across
the page left to right and top to
bottom and give meaning to lines of
their writing.



Letter like forms :
Children use unconventional
letter forms and familiar
symbols such as circles but
Still give meaning to their
writing.



Random letters :
Children begin to use random letter
shapes to convey meaning.



Patterned letters :
Children begin to use strings
of unrelated letters,
sometimes the letters from
their name appear.



Invented spellings:

Children begin to use some correct isolated sounds in their writing.



Conventional Writing:

Children are able to write with correct or near correct spellings.



At each stage it is important that children have an opportunity to practice and that they can put meaning to their marks.