

English Subject Policy

St. Francis' Catholic Primary School



Approved by FGB on: N/A

Committee Responsible: Learning

Next review due by: November 2023

English

Intent

At St. Francis' School, the teaching of English promotes the development and mastery of the essential life skills of reading and writing. It is a subject which recognises our God given talents to communicate creatively and expressively. We acknowledge God as creator through continuous development of our own creative abilities and recognise that a love of language can help us to express a sense of awe and wonder. The ability to speak and listen well is vital if we are to articulate our thoughts, feelings and ideas. Furthermore, by promoting the school values of respect and honesty through English work, we are able to value the thoughts and feelings of others, treating them with respect and integrity. English also contributes to our community by providing opportunities to communicate with and promote our parish links.

Aims

- develop a life-long love and enjoyment of reading and be able to share this with others
- develop comprehension skills and an ability to look beyond the written word that can be applied across the curriculum
- support all children to become confident, expressive and effective independent writers who realise that writing is a life-long skill
- enable children to acquire a range of strategies for correct conventional spelling so that they can spell age-appropriate words and apply this knowledge during independent writing and reading
- develop clear, concise and legible handwriting
- to provide a stimulating environment where key vocabulary, sentence structure and achievements are displayed in every classroom, alongside resources such as dictionaries, word mats etc.
- develop and extend an awareness of other cultures, traditions and languages

Implementation

Speaking and Listening

- speaking and listening will be taught in accordance with National Curriculum guidelines and supported by strategies applicable across the curriculum e.g. 'Talk for Writing'
- teachers promote and model high-quality speaking and listening as well as providing a variety of opportunities to use talk for learning e.g. reading out loud, group work and debates
- we recognise the importance of verbalising thoughts as a means of learning. Children will have opportunities to discuss and formulate ideas before committing them to paper
- opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills will be utilised through talk partners, small group work and whole class situations
- drama provides powerful means of self-expression and will be applied across the curriculum. Techniques will range from hot-seating through to performance for an audience
- a wide range of resources are adopted to encourage speaking and learning opportunities, including puppets, stories for retelling and ICT for presentations

Reading

- reading will be taught in accordance with National Curriculum guidelines

- the core reading schemes of Pearson Bug Club and Oxford Reading Tree will be used to support the teaching of reading (supported by additional supplementary schemes, such as Collins and Rigby Star)
- children will be actively encouraged to select additional reading material from the school/class library in addition to the reading scheme. Fluent readers should select material that is appropriate and challenging
- children working towards becoming fluent readers will have reading records (completed by teachers and parents) to ensure continuity and progression, and support planning, assessment and target setting
- the support and participation of parents in children's reading is highly valued and encouraged
- school is a stimulating reading environment where children are encouraged to read for pleasure and research, have ready access to books, reading materials, notices, instructions, inviting reading areas in classrooms and a well-stocked library
- library skills will be developed from Reception in order that children are able to select, borrow and return books independently
- reading skills will be practised and consolidated using a variety of methods, including silent reading, paired reading, one-to-one reading with an adult, guided reading in groups and reading aloud to an audience
- through their reading, children will experience a variety of authors (including their peers), genres and cultures. They will develop an understanding and awareness of character and setting, expressing and discussing preferences as they do so
- the monitoring and evaluation of reading is an ongoing and regular process carried out by teachers and children. Formal summative assessment of phonics/reading (EYFS/Year 1) and reading comprehension (Year 2 – Year 6) takes place three times each year to track progress

Writing

- writing will be taught in accordance with National Curriculum guidelines
- guidelines from North Somerset provide a more detailed programme for each year group
- phonics is taught from the EYFS and throughout the school in order to support the acquisition of writing skills
- children will learn to write through focussing on a range of genre, immersing themselves in that genre and analysing it for features and structure
- sentence structure, grammar and punctuation will be covered alongside genre work and then applied to subsequent written work
- children will write towards a set of success criteria that they have helped design. Self/Peer assessment against these criteria will inform next steps for proof-reading and editing
- additional strategies (e.g. Talk for Writing) will be used to support the teaching and learning of writing
- writing in different genres will be practised and consolidated with a cross-curricular approach
- summative assessment of writing takes place three times per year. A judgment is made based on assessment and moderation of a number of pieces of independent writing, supported by 'Build a Picture' analysis sheets. Moderation will take place both within school and with colleagues from other schools (e.g. Newman group schools and local schools)

Spelling

- spelling will be taught in accordance with National Curriculum guidelines and supported by the Nelson scheme of work
- an understanding of letters and sounds will be developed using a multi-sensory approach and supported by the North Somerset adaptation of the Letters and Sounds scheme. Additional support is provided by the Jolly Phonics and Read Write Inc schemes
- daily phonics will be taught in EYFS and Key Stage 1, informing ongoing teacher assessment. Where appropriate, this continues in Key Stage 2
- Key Stage 2 children will have a weekly spelling focus based on spelling patterns and including a weekly test
- high frequency words will be an ongoing focus with a 'no tolerance' approach towards mistakes in spelling words that we know how to spell
- the 'Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check' approach will be encouraged at school and home
- spelling should play a significant role in proof-reading with children being encouraged to identify their own 'tricky' words
- strategies/resources available in class include mnemonics, dictionaries, word mats, word banks, thesauruses, computer programmes and spell-check facilities
- some spelling errors will be corrected or highlighted for correction as appropriate to the individual's needs
- a home/school partnership for the learning and revision of spelling is encouraged

Handwriting

- handwriting will be taught in accordance with National Curriculum guidelines and supported by the Nelson Handwriting scheme
- children will develop handwriting ability by practising pre-writing patterns/activities, moving on to individual letter formation, followed by letter patterns/word families and finally developing a fluent, joined handwriting style
- weekly handwriting sessions will be led by the class teacher and modelled to ensure consideration of pencil grip, writing posture, paper position and selection of writing tool
- handwriting skills should be applied across the whole curriculum
- all children will write in pencil
- handwriting activities will also reflect phonic skills/high frequency words/spelling patterns that are being focussed on at that time
- as joining and fluency develop, older children will also focus on speed and be able to use ink pens for writing on display

Impact

The English coordinator, reporting to the Head Teacher, is responsible for monitoring teaching practice to ensure that the school English policy is being implemented. This includes overseeing the development and review of schemes for learning in English, mapping out and monitoring curriculum planning, lesson observations, oversight of assessment materials/procedures, and moderation of work and teacher feedback.

Conclusion

The combination of skills in speaking and listening, reading, writing, spelling and handwriting - together with a strong home/school partnership in all areas – will lead to confident individuals who are effective communicators. By being explicit about how these areas overlap and providing suitable opportunities, children will learn to apply their knowledge and grow in independence.