

# **St John Baptist (Southend) CE Primary School**



# **ENGLISH POLICY**

**Reviewed: Dec 2016**

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**By: Curriculum and Pupil Welfare Committee**

## Teaching and Learning

The main focus for the teaching and learning of English at St John's is through a daily literacy session encompassing the content of the National Literacy Strategy and National Curriculum. This will cover the objectives from both documents but there is flexibility of when the objectives are covered within the academic year. The class teacher will use a medium-term plan to decide when they will teach the different objectives, linking different writing genres with suitable cross-curricular topics from the Irresistible Curriculum.

The following activities are planned for during taught literacy sessions:

- Word and sentence level activities
- Planning for writing
- Extended writing
- Speaking and listening activities including drama and role play
- Publishing, presenting and performing learning products/projects

The following activities are planned for and taught in addition to literacy sessions:

- Guided reading
- Handwriting
- Phonics/spelling sessions

## Reading

Each class should have a class reading corner containing a range of suitable reading books for the age range. This should also include topic books that reflect the Irresistible Curriculum's current focus.

In the Foundation Stage, KS1 and early KS2, the Oxford Reading Tree is used in conjunction with picture books to promote independence and confidence. The Oxford Reading Tree is used to establish a basic sight vocabulary and as an assessment and diagnostic tool for teachers.

All children in the Foundation Stage, KS1 and KS2 will have a Home Reading Record to promote home reading and to record child/parental views. The school expects parents to read with their children on a regular basis and record their comments in the record.

In KS2, independent readers are encouraged to choose their own reading material and record these in their Reading Record. The school expects parents to read with their children on a regular basis and record their comments in the record. The school also encourages its pupils to read every evening and record their comments in the record.

Guiding reading takes place every day across both Key stages. The class teacher plans and delivers a range of activities within the guided reading session designed to improve reading skills and promote a love of reading. Ongoing assessment records are also kept by the class teacher that will inform on each child's current NC Level.

## Writing

Have a go writing is encouraged from Reception class and this progresses into Year 1, where the teaching of writing develops as children become able to construct simple sentences. Children are always encouraged to challenge themselves in writing, regardless of their age.

At St John's, in developing children's writing ability we focus on:

- Composition and effect
- The organisation of writing
- Sentence structure
- Spelling
- Handwriting and presentation

A unit of work will include all of these elements and these are then broken down and focused on in different teaching sessions.

In Years 1 to 6, extended writing has high importance and takes place within every planned unit of work. When possible, children will be writing towards producing a published outcome that can be celebrated around the school. Examples of these are class books, on Fronter and writing that is put on display.

Children are to use a pencil for writing apart from in Year 6, where they will use a black pen. Rubbers are not to be used. Children are to use one neat line to cross through a word that contains a spelling mistake.

In KS2, children should be encouraged to write on every other line when drafting to leave space for revisiting and editing. In Years 4-6, children are encouraged to peer mark each other's writing, using the Marking Code.

## Handwriting

A cursive style of handwriting is introduced from the Foundation Stage. Children are taught cursive handwriting on a weekly basis until the class teacher feels that their cursive style is fully developed. This is usually the case by upper KS2. This style joins fully from the beginning of the word to the end and has two basic rules:

1. every letter begins on the line
2. every letter has a lead in and lead out stroke

The teaching and practice of handwriting will be short (10-15 minutes) and regular (at least twice a week). It should be linked to appropriate spelling and grammar patterns. Key taught elements are:

- correct posture and pencil grip
- correct letter formation and joins
- improving speed, stamina and fluency (do not hold pencil tightly)
- the teacher will model correct letter formation and cursive script but a range of print will be used and displayed in classrooms.

## **Spelling**

The teaching and learning of spelling should be investigative and contain VAK elements. In KS1, Letters and Sounds is used for the teaching of the phonemes necessary for word building. The Reception and KS1 high frequency words are also taught and displayed in the classroom. Phonic/spelling activities go home in Reception Class and Year 1.

In KS2 the NLS publication 'Support for Spelling' is used to support the teaching of the word level objectives.

## **Curriculum Content and Planning**

The NLS framework covers the statutory requirements for reading and writing from the National Curriculum for English and contributes substantially to the development of speaking and listening.

The majority of our literacy learning is planned through the topics that make up our Irresistible Curriculum. On a termly basis, teachers immerse the children in these topics and use a range of resources to design meaningful cross-curricular units of learning. The key objectives from the NLS and NC underpin the units of learning and the relevant curriculum topics provide the stimulus for these units. When possible, links are also made with ICT, art and other areas of the curriculum with the aim being to create a holistic learning experience.

When planning for English, a class teachers planning file should contain:

- a medium/long term grid showing literacy genres covered during the year
- A 3-circle plan that illustrates the learning that will take place within each unit
- A weekly plan that shows how the literacy learning has been broken down during each week into daily sessions. Chosen objectives from the NLS and NC should be shown on these weekly plans as well as

information about how each session has been differentiated and linked to other subjects.

- A guided reading plan that should be kept in a separate planning folder

Other English teaching, such as spelling and handwriting should also be shown on the teacher's weekly plans.

### **Assessment**

Assessment will take place in line with the requirements of the Assessment Policy. Key assessment areas that directly feed into the teaching and learning of English are:

- Assessment/Learning ladders, used to provide teachers and pupils with ongoing attainment and progress information and the 'next steps' required to move through the National Curriculum levels. These include the assessment of handwriting and spelling
- Focused marking and feedback (including the use of red and blue stamps) for extended writing, providing children with clear information about how they have met targets and how they can improve their work
- Guided reading assessment information (including CLLD\*), that is used to provide teachers and children with ongoing attainment and progress information and the 'next steps' required to move through the National Curriculum levels
- Peer and self- marking by the pupils in Years 4-6
- Termly writing and reading tests using QCA papers to be used alongside teacher assessment in English

### **Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)**

Children who experience difficulty in particular aspects of literacy will receive additional support from the class teacher, designated teaching assistants and/or the SEND Co-ordinator. This is achieved by our staff developing personalised learning plans specifically designed to meet the individual needs of each child.