



St James Infant & Pre-School

English Policy inc. Library

Statutory / **Non-statutory**

Annual review / 2 yearly review

Date policy adopted	Sept '15			
Review date	Sept 2019	Sept '20		
Reviewer's name	BF and LS	BF and LS		
Date minuted by committee meeting	3.12.19			
Next review due by	Sept 2020			

This policy is intended to ensure that whilst children are at St. James we help them develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively with the world at large, through spoken and written language. We also intend to help children to enjoy and be inspired by literature and its rich variety.

English should enhance learning through:

- A rich and stimulating language environment, where speaking and listening, reading and writing are integrated.
- An inclusive environment where children are encouraged to construct and convey meaning, both in speech and writing, of factual, imaginary and personal experiences.
- Opportunities for children to become confident, competent and expressive users of the language with a developing knowledge of how it works.
- Opportunities for children to be reflective users of language, able to analyse and evaluate its main features
- An enthusiasm for, and love of reading for life
- Opportunities to develop a fluent and legible handwriting script
- Opportunities to write independently and at length using own initiative
- Opportunities for children to communicate ideas through a wide variety of mediums, including technology
- Opportunities for role-play and drama
- Providing opportunities for vocabulary to be enriched and developed so that each child can flourish and reach their potential

Spoken language and listening:

We believe it is important to provide planned opportunities for a range of speaking and listening tasks, to encourage children to develop as fluent, confident and competent speakers, who are able to listen with interest and understanding. It also encourages children to work co-operatively, and listen to the views of others. Here at St James, we also believe in the value of a language rich environment, which encourages the use of quality vocabulary and aims to be inclusive for all.

This is enhanced through:

- Planned opportunities to use speech for different purposes and across the whole curriculum
- Opportunities to learn how to adopt appropriate vocabulary, tone, pace and style for a variety of audiences and situations
- Be able to use talk to develop and express ideas.
- Use of Mrs Wordsmiths 'Word a day' book in each classroom.
- Implementation and utilization of Jane Considine's FANTASTICS, which are embedded across the school. This includes the use of Grandma FANTASTIC.

Phonics:

Children are taught phonetic awareness from Pre-school, in dedicated, daily phonics time. Throughout the school we follow the 'Story-time Phonics' scheme, taking a whole-class approach to phonics teaching, differentiated accordingly. In this scheme, children are taught the phonemes (unit of sound) and graphemes (written letters) through stories, accompanied by an action. The structure follows Letters and Sounds.

This is enhanced through:

- A phonic approach being taken within the teaching of reading and writing

- Repetition and review sessions planned in to support the LA
- Planning fun and engaging sessions

Mock phonics assessments take place during Year 1 to ensure progress is being made and children are on track. These are used to inform intervention support and future lessons/provision. Any Year 2 children who may need to retake the screen also complete the mock assessments.

Reading:

Children are encouraged to become confident, enthusiastic, critical and independent readers. They are given the opportunities to experience print that has been produced in a variety of forms and for a variety of purposes. They will have opportunities to read for information, interest and enjoyment.

This is enhanced through:

- Opportunities to investigate and understand the features of books and how they work, appreciate the work of individual authors, illustrators and publishers.
- Encouraging an interest in words and their meanings, reflecting on their reading, and offer a personal response to a wide range of texts
- Having opportunities to read for and with other children and adults, in a variety of situations
- Providing reading rewards for reading at home
- Having a '20 minutes reading pledge' where teachers and parents agree to read to their child for 10 minutes a day each, providing the opportunity for the adult to model reading styles and further encourage a love of books. This reading partnership is promoted and celebrated.
- Use of Dojo videos and Book and Biscuit sessions to model reading with children for families and enabling parents to become more involved and have an active part in their child's reading journey.
- Termly reading newsletters sent home to pass on information and ideas to the school community.
- Use of reading buddies to give each child a focus to support them as they read.
- Having access to 'Oxford Reading Buddy' (an e-book account) to encourage further reading at home
- Book Talk sessions (In Year 1 and Year 2) – see below.

Book Talk:

'Book Talk' is a systematic way to teach reading strategies across the whole school. It is delivered throughout the year in KS1 and some elements are used later on in EYFS. Our practise continues to be underpinned by certain guiding principles:

- Pupils are organised into reading attainment groups and share a set of the 'same' books whether that be fiction, non-fiction or poetry.
- Pupils will receive a 20-30 minute 'Book Talk' session twice a week
- The session is layered with open-ended whole class questions to tackle the three layers of the reading rainbow.
- A hallmark of the session is on developing reading for meaning and oral comprehension techniques.
- Book Talk is structured with reasons to read. The reasons to read are taken from 'The Reading Rainbow'. One reason is taken from the top layer of the rainbow under FANTASTICS. The second reason is taken from the STYLISTICS layer. The third reason is taken from the ANALYTICS layer.
- These are introduced to the pupils in chunks and it is through these generic lenses they think and discuss their reading material.
- The sessions work best if they operate like conversations about books and 'hands up' is not used so there is a natural flow of talk about what they are reading.
- During these sessions the pleasure principle of reading is fostered and highly engaging picture books should be used in favour of phonic based books to heighten engagement and excitement.

- 'Book Talk' is sharply focused on reading for meaning, listening to friends read and talking about books.
- During these sessions pupils read using different structures such as around the group, in pairs or to themselves. The teacher will direct them in these different organisational ways.
- Teachers use Book Talk assessment records to track the progress of each child.

Assessment of reading is ongoing, attainment is recorded in reading folders and on our tracking grid for data analysis at least termly during pupil progress meetings. The subject lead track the data of children who are reading below the expected level as well as tracking progress in phonics through the mock assessments. PiXL gap analysis is also used as an assessment tool. Teachers and TAs assess children on their reading strategies, as well as comprehension, which then informs key group and individual targets for the following sessions.

Writing:

We believe it is important for children to develop as independent, enthusiastic and expressive writers, who are able to write in a meaningful way. They should be able to use a range of forms, for a variety of purposes and audiences. They should be confident in their choice of style for a specific purpose. Children are encouraged to regard themselves as writers and value their own work and that of others.

This is enhanced through:

- Having a variety of opportunities to use writing as a means to communicate ideas and information to a reader
- Using talk and drama to help generate ideas creatively and to inspire children
- Having opportunities to collaborate with others during the writing process
- Explore and use technology as a tool for writing
- Having the opportunity to write at length across the curriculum and to promote engagement
- Classrooms are set up to help provide opportunities for children to write at length if they choose to. This is through opportunities in role play areas and also flexible seating options.

We aim to provide hooks for children, based on a first hand 'WOW' experiences. Specific elements of grammar, punctuation and spelling are taught overtly and discreetly through this approach. English planning is linked to the themes and added into the medium term creative curriculum webs. Short-term plans give more detail of the activities, LOs, success steps. All planning is monitored regularly by the English Leader.

In addition, the library is set up by teaching staff at the beginning of each term, as an exciting space linked to the whole school questions (e.g. Autumn: What if Paddington got lost in Daventry?) The library will be set up for children to visit and explore whilst selecting their books to take home.

Assessment of writing is ongoing, attainment is recorded on our tracking grid for data analysis at least termly during pupil progress meetings. Subject leads track the data of children who are reading below the expected level. In Reception and KS1, children complete a 'First of the Month' piece of writing to show the progress they are making.

Children are given planned opportunities to use a range of dramatic forms for example role-play, hot seating, tableaux, mime and freeze frame techniques, to express feelings and ideas both verbally and non-verbally in English sessions, which children can then develop further in the setting, through independent learning opportunities. Children are also encouraged to appreciate drama, both as participants and observers, through themed planning, theatre visits/visitors, and Christmas Concerts.

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar:

Children are taught to have the understanding of how to apply grammar rules and punctuation in their writing. We believe that punctuation and grammar should be taught within English lessons, to enable it to be put into context.

This is enhanced through:

- Teaching punctuation and grammar within English teaching
- Using support materials from a grammar scheme to enhance their understanding
- Expanding their knowledge into other areas of the curriculum

Children are encouraged to develop as confident and independent spellers, who use an adventurous vocabulary in their writing. We encourage the children to use a range of spelling strategies, alongside their phonic knowledge, so they can attempt unknown words.

This is enhanced through:

- Providing fun and engaging opportunities to develop an increasingly wide range of words from memory, especially high frequency words.
- Having a variety of resources and strategies to help them with spelling, for example word banks, dictionaries, spelling rules and mnemonics.

Spellings are taught from the summer term in Reception through to Year 2. Children have the opportunities to explore spelling patterns in a practical and physical way. We have devised a programme using a mixture of the National Curriculum statutory and non-statutory guidance as well as the Letters and Sounds phases.

Handwriting:

This is taught in separate daily sessions throughout the week, but forms an important part of the children's English work. This begins in Pre-school and Reception, where the focus begins with building core strength and pencil grip/control. We have adopted the 'Kinetic Letters' handwriting programme. It is important for children to be able to write clearly and develop a fluent and legible handwriting style. We reward children with a pen licence when all their letters are formed correctly, and then encourage them to join their letters together, following the handwriting scheme. We also reward children who are trying very hard with their handwriting with a weekly handwriting award which is given out in our celebration assembly.

We aim for the children:

- To form letters correctly and use upper and lower case letters appropriately
- To use the correct and comfortable pencil grip
- To sit properly and comfortably in their writing positions – lying, kneeling and sitting.

Special Educational Needs:

Children who require extra support with their English skills are given this either in the classroom alongside the other children, or groups/individuals are withdrawn for a particular focus. The level of support given is outlined in the year group provision map or children's Individual Education Plan. These children are reviewed regularly during Pupil Progress Meetings.

English as an additional language:

Children who speak a language other than English at home are highly valued and sometimes used as a resource in the classroom, as appropriate. We also recognise the need to provide extra support for these children, where necessary, to maximise their access to English skills and the curriculum. We aim to provide learning activities which involve practical activity and discussion, with concrete items, pictures etc. to show concepts without relying on oral language.

More Able and Equal opportunities:

Any child demonstrating a particular skill or talent in any aspect of English should be encouraged and given opportunities to make accelerated progress. The English Subject Leader will give advice on suitably challenging activities and differentiation.

All children have access to the English Curriculum regardless of gender, faith, culture, ethnicity, home language, sexuality or background. (Refer to the school's Equal Opportunities policy for further details).

Resources:

Resources are carefully selected to engage and inspire children. English reading resources are stored in the Library (reading scheme books) and at the back of Bluebells (large books and reading scheme teacher's books). Grammar support resources are also stored in the cupboard at the back of Bluebells. Book Talk resources are kept in the cupboard in the library. Audits take place at least once annually to ensure the resources meet the needs of the English curriculum.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The English subject leader monitors the English Curriculum on a regular basis through lesson observations, work scrutiny, data analysis, year group and cross year group moderation sessions, and reviewing planning documents. Staff/pupil/parent voice is also sought. The Subject Leader tracks the provision of the Early Years Foundation Stage and National Curriculum through the planning to ensure coverage of all of the objectives. The subject area is evaluated formally on an annual basis and an action plan with priorities for the following year is drawn up from this. The subject leader is responsible for the annual review of this policy and writing an action plan, where necessary, for the subject and is also available for support and advice on resources, teaching, learning and intervention.

Reviewed and Updated September 2020

L.Sheridan and B.Finch

English Leaders