

English Policy for The Federation of All Saints and St. Margaret's Catholic Voluntary Academy.

Rationale

This policy reflects the schools' values, philosophy and mission statement in relation to the teaching and learning of the English Language. It sets out a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can operate, and it gives guidance on planning, teaching, and assessment. The policy should be read in conjunction with the National Curriculum Guidelines. These set out in detail the rationale for teaching each area of the English language curriculum and specify the skills that will be developed for all pupils.

It has been produced for all teaching staff, non-teaching staff, school governors and LEA advisors.

Aims:

- To develop pupils' abilities to communicate effectively in speech and language.
- To develop pupils' understanding of spoken and written language so that they become enthusiastic, responsive, and knowledgeable speakers, readers, and writers.
- To develop pupils' listening skills essential to communicating effectively in a range of situations.
- To help pupils understand how language enables them to experience and appreciate their world and the realms of the imagination through all media.
- To help pupils understand the part language plays in enabling them to express their ideas, feelings, and experiences, and those of others.
- To help pupils understand the function and importance of Standard English.

Objectives

These objectives are derived from the aims and should inform planning, teaching, and assessment:

To develop effective speaking and listening pupils should be taught to:

- Use, with increasing confidence, the vocabulary and grammar of Standard English.
- Formulate, clarify, and express their ideas.
- Express themselves in a variety of situations using language which is appropriate to their needs and the intended audience.
- Listen, understand, and respond appropriately to others.

To develop as effective readers, pupils should be taught to:

- Extend and develop as readers throughout their time in school.
- Read for purpose and pleasure so that they become enthusiastic readers and enjoy reading a variety of texts: fiction; non-fiction; poetry; magazines; newspapers; recipes; word searches etc.
- Master their initial reading skills so that they become independent readers with the knowledge and experience of a wide range of reading strategies.
- Read a range of texts accurately, fluently and with understanding.
- Find out the information they need to research and answer the questions of others.
- Understand and respond to a wide range of books and media texts on paper and on screen.
- Understand the variety of written language, and the differences between fiction and non-fiction.
- Improve their abilities to read, analyse, and evaluate a wide range of texts, including literature from other cultures and traditions.
- Develop higher order reading skills, enabling the use of inference and deduction.

To develop as effective writers, pupils should be taught to:

- Express themselves clearly and precisely for enjoyment.
- Use knowledge acquired from their range of reading texts to model their writing in the style of different authors and in different genres.
- Demonstrate their understanding of how writing enables them to remember, communicate, organise, and develop their ideas and information.
- Write for an increasing range of purposes, matching their language to the needs of the appropriate audience.
- Understand the appropriate use and purpose of an increasing range of written forms on paper and on screen.
- Develop ideas and communicate meaning to a reader, using a wide-ranging broad vocabulary and effective style.
- Write neatly with accurate spelling and expression.

Progression – Principles of Teaching, Learning and Progression

Teaching and Learning at All Saints and St. Margaret's is based on the Primary Framework for Literacy. Pupil provision is related to attainment, not age. It is important to remember that the National Curriculum in English is much broader than the Primary Literacy Framework so it necessary to practise and apply aspects of English through cross-curricular links with other National Curriculum subjects.

Teaching and Learning at All Saints and St Margaret's is very cross-curricular. English is embedded in all subjects across the curriculum. Children are grouped in reading, writing, phonics and spelling according to ability; work is differentiated and set at a level above their current level of achievement to ensure constant progression is made.

Teaching Methods and Organisation

Approaches to Speaking and Listening

The four strands of Speaking and Listening: Speaking; Listening and Responding, Group Discussion and Interaction, and Drama permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

Children at All Saints and St Margaret's play an active part in presentations, topic talks, debates, and drama activities.

Approaches to Reading

At All Saints and St. Margaret's, we believe in developing a reading culture throughout the school by creating welcoming book areas in classrooms and in the library. Children are encouraged to read a wide range of books. Children in all years experience reading through:

- Shared reading during Literacy and Theme work
- Independent reading
- Paired reading
- Phonics: Twinkl Phonics. (EYFS and KS1 daily session)
- Spelling: No Nonsense Spelling (KS2 daily session)
- Home reading
- World book day
- Guided Reading (daily session)
- SNIP Spelling programme

The way in which Guided Reading is taught was reviewed in 2012 and we feel it has had an impact on achievement. Children are grouped according to attainment and given a guided reading book, a level above their current level of achievement. Many brand-new guided reading books were purchased and were appropriately colour/book banded by the English Coordinator in March of 2012. This system is still viewed to be successful. Similarly, children have been encouraged to 'Read for Pleasure' and parents are asked to log the reading of a range of genre at home: comics, magazines, word searches etc. Brand new books were purchased Summer and Autumn 2018 for Free Readers, for the library and to support the teaching of PSHE. A reward scheme was introduced in September 2019 where a child is given a badge-bronze, silver, and gold after every '50 reads.' Children are given a book voucher after 200 reads. Every summer, each child is provided with information on the Summer Reading Challenge that takes place at the local library.

Approaches to Writing

Children at All Saints and St. Margaret's have opportunities to write through:

- Phonics and spelling
- Emergent writing/ mark making
- Shared writing

- Supported writing
- Modelled writing
- Guided writing/ Independent writing
- Extended writing
- Handwriting

Teachers are aware of the distinct types of genres children need to be familiar with within the current framework. Teachers are aware of the current assessment criteria after the abolition of the writing SATS paper in 2012. Children are encouraged to develop their writing skills across the different genres and across all other subjects. There are regular opportunities to develop and celebrate writing by taking part in ‘Young Writers’ Fiction and Poetry competitions.

Breadth and Balance

Teachers should have a clear idea of the knowledge and skills to be taught in the four areas of speaking, listening, reading, and writing, which incorporate composition, handwriting, spelling, punctuation, and grammar. All members of staff have been advised of a change in initiative, regarding the GAPS test, which was introduced in 2012.

It should be noted that these four language modes are inextricably interrelated and that a balance must be struck between them across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

A range of genres and texts are selected to ensure that children get a balance drawn from a variety of sources enabling cross-curricular links.

Variety

The English session will ensure that children will be engaged in a variety of activities appropriate to their specific needs. Child initiated activities, storytelling, talking about their own experiences and ideas, drama and improvisation provide a sound base at Foundation Stage and are developed throughout Key Stage 1 and 2.

Teaching and learning styles incorporate direct instruction; group collaboration; paired work; mixed ability work; practical activity; performance; individual research and investigation with other appropriate strategies all encourage effective learning through language.

Such is the importance of language (tiered language acquisition) to effective learning that this variety will be encouraged across all subjects and aspects of the curriculum. A wide range of resources (big books; picture books; stories; sound and film clips; fairy tales; myths; legends; poetry; nursery rhymes; songs; non-fiction; magazines; comics; multicultural resources;) are used to help children discover and explore the rich variety of linguistic experience.

Relevance

Language is relevant to all aspects of learning. This relevance is enhanced by enabling children to explore and express their own experience (e.g. family, pets, favourite toys), explore appropriate texts (e.g. fairy tales, nursery rhymes, television programmes), and express their thoughts, feelings and responses to an increasing range of styles and forms.

Cross-curricular skills and themes

Language pervades all aspects of our lives and culture. It is the driving force behind learning and across all aspects of the curriculum. The Framework recognises the centrality of language by prefacing each subject's orders with the following statement:

“Use of Language: Pupils should be taught to express themselves clearly in both speech and writing and to develop their reading skills. They should be taught to use grammatically correct sentences to communicate effectively in written English.”

As a federation, we recognise and identify the aspects of language and language use which occur and encourage effective learning, across all studies, topics or subjects. Language makes a valuable contribution to cross-curricular elements in the development of key concepts, skills values and attitudes.

Differentiation and Special Needs

The development of children's language necessitates a variety of differentiated texts and approaches across the four language modes (speaking, listening, reading and writing). Careful planning will ensure that these resources and approaches are appropriately matched to individual pupils, including the more able and those children with learning needs, across year groups.

Intervention:

Intervention is tailor made to suit the needs of the child. The need is identified by the class teacher and a schedule is agreed between themselves and the Teaching Assistant.

- Nelson handwriting (lined or squared exercise books for pupils who find handwriting difficult)
- No Nonsense Spelling
- Support for Spelling
- Sentence work (sentence structure, fronted adverbials, grammar, figurative language etc.)
- Rapid Reading
- Rapid Phonics
- Fresh Start

Intervention is delivered by Teaching Assistants, with individual pupils or to small groups of pupils.

Equal Opportunities

Children of all ethnic and cultural groups, races, genders, sexual orientation and abilities, have equal access to the English Curriculum. Positive images in terms of all groups are promoted throughout the school, both in the use of language and in the provision of resources.

Resources

Funding for English will be included within the school budget plan for each budget year

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Opportunities for teacher assessment will be identified in planning documents, together with opportunities for any pupil self-assessment or peer assessment.

Assessment in English is continuous, to inform planning and diagnose strengths and weaknesses. In speaking and listening this involves observing children using a variety of spoken language for different purposes. In reading, this involves formal and informal observation and close monitoring of children's developing use of strategies and responses to texts. Summative assessment is gained through a mixture of teacher assessment, mid-term and end of year reading paper (SATS style) and reading age testing. In writing, it involves effective marking, which is positive, instructional and developmental. Feedback to children about their progress in English is through verbal comment, discussion and the marking of work. (See marking and assessment policy for further details)

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 English lessons to other areas of the curriculum. They will have the same expectations of pupils during English and across other subjects.

ICT

ICT should be used to aid and support teaching and learning wherever possible. This may be in the classroom or ICT suite. Children should be actively engaged in developing their English skills through their own use of ICT.

Health and Safety

Guidelines in the Health and Safety Policy will apply about the use of ICT, all school-based activities and out of school activities relating to English.

The Role of the Subject Leader

The subject leader will be responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

- Taking the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work
- Auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- Purchasing and organising resources
- Keeping up to date with developments in English and disseminate information to colleagues as appropriate
- Monitoring the delivery of the English Curriculum and advising the Headteacher on any action needed
- Monitoring and evaluating pupil progress and the quality of the Learning Environment

Parental Involvement

Parents can support their children in English through encouraging shared reading at home; ensuring homework is completed; talking to their children; taking them to the library; an active role in school on World Book Day or Book Week.

Review

This policy will be reviewed as appropriate in response to local or national initiatives, evaluation of monitoring procedures and as detailed in the school improvement plan. Regular reports are made to the governors on the progress of English provision. This policy was reviewed by the English Subject Leader September 2025. This policy will be reviewed every three years or in the light of changes to legal requirements.