ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

ENGLISH POLICY

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GENERAL STATEMENT

At Saint Joseph's we aim to develop a love for the English language in its written and spoken forms. We encourage the children to develop skills to communicate effectively in speech and writing and to listen with understanding, to be responsive, enthusiastic and knowledgeable readers. We recognise English as the core subject in the National Curriculum and as a pre-requisite for educational and social progress, empowering children to communicate creatively and imaginatively. We aim to provide an environment for language development, which is stimulating, and is characterised by high expectations of success, so that the fullest potential of each individual may be realised.

Introduction

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of English at St Joseph's School.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At St Joseph's we aim to encourage children to:

- read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding;
- be able to orchestrate a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual), to monitor their reading and correct their own mistakes;
- understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately;
- have fluent and legible handwriting;
- have an interest in words and their meanings and a growing vocabulary;
- have a good command of grammar and punctuation;
- know, understand and be able to write in a range of genres in fiction and poetry, and understand and be familiar with some of the ways in which narratives are structured through basic literary ideas of setting, character and plot;
- understand, use and be able to write a range of non-fiction texts;
- plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing;
- have a suitable technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their reading and writing;
- be interested in books, read with enjoyment and evaluate and justify their preferences;
- through reading and writing, develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the New National Curriculum English Document (2014) and in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (2014).

In the Foundation Stage (Reception) children should be given 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. They should begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They should 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. They should read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They should explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

APPROACHES TO TEACHING AND LEARNING

The major focus for the teaching and learning of English at St Joseph's will be through a daily English lesson. The lesson will begin with a whole class teacher led session, focusing on a text. There is an overall learning objective for each lesson and differentiated groups have a learning objective matched to the overall objective. Must, should, could statements need to be incorporated to allow children to strive for improvement and not put a 'ceiling' on their achievement. The middle section of the lesson consolidates the teaching from the whole class session, incorporating group work, independent task and guided writing.

Guided reading is taught daily throughout the school at the beginning of the day with a real focus on nurturing a love of reading. Children are taught to read in ability groups. During guided reading the teacher will work with a focus group, teaching them the skills needed to decode and comprehend. All teachers use a reading continuum to set clear learning intentions for the group they are working with. A record must be kept each session to show what the group has been working on and to show a record of their progress.

Teaching should be:

- discursive - characterised by high quality oral work;
- interactive - pupils' contributions are encouraged, expected, and extended;
- well-paced - driven by the need to make progress and succeed;
- confident - teachers have a clear understanding of the objectives;
- ambitious - there is optimism about and high expectations of success.

The objectives in the Framework give English teaching focus and direction, which should aim for high levels of motivation and active engagement for pupils. To achieve this, teachers will need to use a wide range of teaching strategies including:

- direction;
- demonstration;
- modelling ;
- scaffolding;
- explanation to clarify and discuss;
- questioning: to probe pupils' understanding, to allow them to reflect on and refine their work and to extend their ideas;
- initiating and guiding exploration;
- investigating ideas;
- discussing and arguing;
- listening to and responding.

Talk for Writing

Talk for Writing is taught during literacy in Reception to Year 3. Talk for Writing helps to raise standards within writing. It allows the children the chance to learn a model text before they begin to write their own. It helps with speaking and listening skills within the retelling of a text and supports accelerated progress in reading and writing.

Handwriting

Handwriting is taught across the school on a daily basis. In Reception Class children are taught the basic font. Children are provided with lots of opportunities to develop fine motor skills.
From Year 1 -6 children are taught to write using the handwriting policy and in cross curricular writing books, handwriting lines are used; starting in Reception until the children no longer need them. Children are encouraged to join from Year 2 onwards.
All staff model good handwriting to the children by using this font for marking and modelling.

Guided Reading

Guided reading is taught on a fortnightly basis; one week carousel, one week whole class. The carousel week is to promote the love for reading; allowing time for book reviews, fiction and non-fiction texts, ICT reading opportunities and reading with class teacher and TA enhancing reading skills throughout. Whole class text reading is

teaching the skills to comprehend shorter texts and deepen their understanding through extensive questioning. Teachers will lead with questioning and TA's on vocabulary.

Phonics Teaching

Phonics is taught on a daily basis in Reception and Key Stage 1. The school has adopted the Read, Write Inc. programme and uses a wide range of resources to support children's learning. Children have phonic reading books to support their early reading. In Key Stage 2 phonics is taught where needed.

Spellings

Year 2-6 follow the Read, Write Inc. programme introducing spellings patterns from the National Curriculum (2014) giving a discrete opportunity for the children to learn the patterns and then apply them into their writing.

Classroom Organisation is a key area to success in the teaching and learning of English. We should ensure that the needs of the full range of pupils are met, including those with SEN, English as a Second Language and the Gifted and talented pupils.

Planning Clear and careful planning is important to the success of the teaching and learning of English.
Medium term plans are taken directly from the New Curriculum objectives and highlighted as they are completed. Weekly short-term plans are recorded on the weekly English planning sheets.

Equal Opportunities issues are a cause for national concern in the area of literacy. Girls tend to achieve higher in reading and writing than boys, and given the central importance of English to the development of other areas of the curriculum, this is of concern. At St Joseph's we are committed to ensuring, as far as possible, that there is equality of opportunity in all areas of the curriculum, including English. Gender issues will be closely monitored in relation to English.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

The assessment and recording of English is part of the overall assessment of the complete child and should be seen alongside all the other areas of development. Assessment in English should reflect the general principles and procedures laid down in the school's Assessment Policy. The following points should in particular be borne in mind:

- a variety of methods are used to gather material for record keeping purposes including digital recording and photographs. Records are kept updated on a regular basis to illustrate specific developments or lack of progress of individual children;
- a written report on each child's achievements in speaking and listening, reading and writing will be sent to parents as part of an overall report on the child's progress to date in the July of each academic year. It is important that this report is as informative as possible. Parents will have the opportunity to discuss their children's progress in all subject areas including literacy three times yearly. The child's opinion of his/her own progress will also be sought.
- Children will undertake statutory assessment in reading and writing (including spelling) at Years 2 and 6.
- Year 1 children will undertake the Phonics Screening Check in summer term
- In other year groups from Year 1 onwards, formal assessments will be made, three times a year (see Assessment Policy for dates of these assessments.)
- Targets are set for all children from Reception to Year 6 in reading and writing. These are reviewed at the end of each term.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The monitoring and evaluation of the English policy is the responsibility of the English Co-ordinator who is responsible to the Principal and the School Standards Committee for the development of English throughout the school. This is to be achieved in a variety of ways:

- regular discussions with staff concerning progress of groups and individuals;
- involvement in long and medium term planning across the school in English;
- regular classroom observation and working alongside colleagues to help identify strengths and weaknesses and to provide support to individual staff as appropriate;
- regular monitoring of resources;
- reviewing of assessment outcomes and data to evaluate the quality of learning in English throughout the school;
- checking that across the key stages there is coverage of the full English curriculum in line with national curriculum requirements, the early learning goals and National Curriculum objectives;

- checking that appropriate opportunities to raise multicultural and gender issues are created and taken;
- ensuring that the time spent on the teaching of English is in line with national recommendations.

This policy will be reviewed every year or in the light of changes to legal requirements.

Classes have their own stock of resources appropriate to age and ability. Other English resources are held centrally.

Homework

All children are given a reading book, which is changed weekly.

Reception: Phonics sheets are sent home daily.
Tricky words sent home weekly.

KS1: Phonics sheets are sent home daily.
Spellings sent home and tested weekly.

Year 3: Spellings sent home and tested weekly.

KS2 (Year 4-6): Spellings sent home and tested weekly.
A piece of English homework weekly.