

# St Peter & St Paul Primary School English Policy

This policy must be read in conjunction with the Reading and Phonics policies

## Aims

At St Peter & St Paul Primary School, we strive for excellence in English achievement throughout the school. We hope to develop children's abilities within a cross curricular programme of Reading, Writing and Speaking & Listening. Across all classes, pupils are given opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding and use of spoken and written English, within a balanced and exciting curriculum. There are lots of opportunities for children to consolidate and reinforce taught English skills and to apply them in a range of contexts.

## Children at St Peter & St Paul Primary school will:

- learn how to read and write with fluency, understanding and confidence, developing a range of independent strategies to take responsibility for their own learning
- be encouraged to develop a love of reading and to read for enjoyment
- develop their ever-growing vocabulary, through an interest in words and their meanings
- experience a range of text/media types and genres, across a range of contexts, to develop their understanding
- learn to write in a variety of styles and be able to apply characteristic features of texts to their own writing
- develop a technical vocabulary with understanding of grammatical terminology
- learn how to apply grammatical terminology in their own writing
- have the opportunity to write for pleasure; to explore and develop their own ideas

Most importantly, children will have the opportunity to develop their creativity and imagination.

## Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are set out in the National Curriculum in England (2014) and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage (2012). The aim for English in the National Curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by allowing children to develop a strong command of the spoken

and written word, and to develop their love of literature. From EYFS to Year 6, the national curriculum for English (2014) aims to ensure that all children:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

## EYFS

In EYFS (Reception) children are 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 opportunities to communicate

## Key Stage 1 (Year 1 & Year 2)

In Key Stage 1, children learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They learn to read and write independently, at length. They use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

## Key Stage 2 (Years 3 - 6)

In Key Stage 2, children learn to change the way they speak and/or write to fit different situations, purposes and audiences. They encounter a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. They explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works. Children in Key Stage 2 develop their knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology.

## Subject Organisation

## EYFS

In EYFS, children have daily phonics lessons to develop skills such as blending and segmenting in preparation for early reading and writing. A wide range of exciting Learning Zones provide children with opportunities to develop their communication, language and literacy skills on a daily basis with a focus on child initiated activities. As well as a Writing Area, which provides children with a range of materials with which to experiment and practice mark marking/letter formation (and eventually to practice taught skills), other Learning Zones are enhanced to provide children with the opportunity to read and write in a range of contexts. A range of resources in the outdoor area, including a mud kitchen menu and writing belts, provide valuable opportunities to engage children in writing for pleasure. In the outdoor area children have constant access to Reading and Writing sheds, which are filled with engaging, exciting resources that children can use independently. They also have access to a vast range of texts, including fiction and nonfiction. Children enjoy daily 'story time' so they become familiar with stories and authors and begin to develop a love of reading. Adult led activities in EYFS are usually linked to stories, poems or nursery rhymes or to cross-curricular Topics. From when they start school, children learn that writing can have a range of purposes and they begin to explore the features of different types of writing.

### Key Stage 1 (Year 1 & Year 2)

In Key Stage 1, phonics lessons are continued and are taught in groups according to individual ability, with an increased focus on spelling and spelling rules. In English lessons, children explore a variety of themes such as Stories in Familiar Settings, Instructions, Fantasy Stories or Funny Poems. They study fiction and non-fiction and begin to compare characteristic features of writing. Children learn how to apply these features in their own writing and begin to write at length. In Key Stage 1, children will write for a range of purposes, including (but not limited to):

- stories
- diaries
- newspaper reports
- instructions - recipes, 'how to' guides
- explanation texts
- poems
- letters & postcards
- labels, lists and captions
- recounts
- non-chronological reports

Children in Year 2 have discrete English, Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar lessons daily. These lessons are usually focused on a word or sentence type each week, for example, Verbs or Commands, with activities throughout the week linking to this. In VGPS lessons, children focus on Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar objectives from the National Curriculum and learn how to use these taught rules in their own writing.

Writing skills are developed across the curriculum and children are given lots of opportunities for cross-curricular writing. This may be linked to Topic (for example, Kings & Queens, the Great Fire of London, Great Explorers) or other curriculum areas such as R.E or Science.

Children have 1:1 reading sessions as well as guided reading. Children are encouraged to develop a love for reading through daily story time.

### Key Stage 2 (Years 3 - 6)

In Key Stage 2, children have English lessons in which they focus on a range of text types throughout the year. These may be linked to Topic themes or to a book or poem. During Key Stage 2, children can expect to tackle a range of writing tasks, including (but not limited to):

- stories (including a variety of genres such as myths & legends, adventure, mystery & suspense)
- letters
- play scripts
- biographies
- recounts
- instructions
- glossaries
- explanations
- debates
- haikus
- poems

Children will also learn to write in a range of styles, including;

- writing persuasively
- writing in a journalistic style
- writing formally/informally
- writing arguments

English, Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar is taught discreetly in daily sessions.

Additional English sessions include guided and individual reading and handwriting.

In Key Stage 2, children continue to have a range of opportunities for cross-curricular writing. English skills are developed across the curriculum so children can apply what they know in a variety of contexts.

### Approaches to Reading

We use Letters & Sounds to deliver daily discreet phonics lessons in EYFS & KS1, enabling children to decode efficiently. Where necessary, this is continued into KS2.

Teachers and teaching assistants model reading strategies daily and children have the opportunity to develop these and discuss texts in detail.

In EYFS & KS1, children have the opportunity to read 1:1 with an adult at least once per week for approximately 10 minutes. This is more frequent for children who read less often at home, or who may need additional support to reach national expectations for their age. As children move through school (or become more able readers), opportunities for sustained independent reading are provided. A range of reading schemes are used across the Key Stages. In EYFS & KS1, children follow Oxford Reading Tree colour banded books beginning with early readers in which children rely on their Phonic decoding skills to read words. In EYFS and KS1, children take home a reading book daily to be shared with parents. Each child keeps a 'Reading Record' in which parents and teachers share information about a child's reading. Parents are encouraged to read with children as often as possible, preferably daily, and information is provided by teachers at the start of each school year to ensure parents know how best to support their child in reading. In KS2, children have more responsibility for selecting books to take home and read. The expectation is that children are able to read independently by this Key Stage. Children in KS2, who do not meet national expectations for their age, may continue to read with a teacher or adult frequently, or intervention is put in place to support their reading. Although children in KS2 are likely to read without a parent/carer, we still encourage all readers to share books at home with their family and complete a 'Reading Record' as we want children to develop a lifelong love of reading.

As a school, we recognise the value of reading aloud to children to model appropriate use of story language and reading with expression. We want to enthuse them with a love of books and inspire them as writers. Children have the opportunity to participate in lots of exciting and rewarding activities linked to reading, including:

- visits to the local library for storytelling and book sharing
- visits to Seven Stories (local literary exhibition for children)
- World Book Day celebrations - dressing up, activities linked to favourite stories
- Roald Dahl Day celebrations - as above

### Approaches to Writing

Our aim at St Peter & St Paul Primary School is to develop children's ability to produce well-structured writing with appropriate detail, in which the meaning is clear and the interest of the reader is engaged. Our approach to writing aims to instill the importance of transcription and composition, as required by the National Curriculum (2014).

Throughout the school, teachers are flexible in their selection of teaching models for English. In EYFS & KS1, Pie Corbett's Talk for Writing allows children to develop their story language and learn how to structure stories so that the meaning is clear. Story maps provide children with invaluable opportunities to express their own ideas and develop their own characters and plots. Children in all Key Stages are given daily opportunities to write in a range of contexts, for a variety of purposes, and have regular opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions. Our long term planning for English covers the range of text types set out in the National Curriculum

(2014), ensuring a breadth of coverage.

We recognise the importance of Computing/Technology in developing English skills. Children are given lots of opportunities to improve their writing through drama or short film clips. Interactive technology is used daily in a range of ways to enhance the teaching of English; in EYFS or KS1 children may play English games on the interactive whiteboard or iPads, in KS2 they may use the internet to conduct research to support their writing. Technology may be used to support the 'end product' of a writing task; for example, in Year 2, children wrote newspaper reports about the sinking of Titanic, rewrote them as a script and filmed them as a 'news clip' using iPads.

As a school, we use the Letterjoin Handwriting scheme to help children develop fluent, clear and legible handwriting. In KS1, children will begin to join their writing.

### Approaches to Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar

In response to the new National Curriculum for England in 2014, as a school we developed our own schemes for the teaching of Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar. VGPS is taught in year 2 in discreet, twenty minute sessions. These sessions focus on aspects of VGPS detailed in the National Curriculum, including;

- word classes, what they are and when/how to use them
- sentence types & structure
- spelling rules
- adding suffixes/prefixes
- using a range of punctuation appropriately
- subordination and coordination

Daily phonics is fundamental in developing children's spelling. Children are taught to segment to spell. From EYFS, children learn words, which are not phonetically regular (common exception words). From Year 2, there is more focus on choosing the 'right' sound for spelling, and children learn alternative representations of graphemes and spelling rules. We use Twinkl Spelling to support the teaching of spelling from Year 2 - Year 6. At this stage, children begin to keep a Spelling Journal that they can consult when writing independently. We believe that helping children know how to use and apply spelling patterns is the key to helping them become successful spellers. In KS2, there is a focus on key aspects of VGPS as detailed in the National Curriculum and on further developing skills taught in KS1. English lessons focus on a range of VGPS topics including;

- antonyms and synonyms
- using a range of tenses
- punctuation (semi colons, colons, brackets, hyphens)
- paragraphs
- adverbials/Adverbial phrases

- suffixes/prefixes
- word classes
- sentence types

When marking, we do not correct all spelling errors, instead focusing on high frequency words, topic words and those studied in Phonics. VGPS is assessed every half term.

### Approaches to Speaking & Listening

Speaking and listening are fundamental to good communication for us all, and are independent of ability in reading and writing. We recognise the importance of being aware of skills children have already acquired in order to build on this foundation. From entry in EYFS, children are given opportunities to develop and learn new skills in formal and informal settings, both in and outside of the classroom.

Children are encouraged to speak clearly and listen carefully, and both speaking and listening are stimulated in a range of ways, including;

- listening to and responding to stories, rhymes, poems, songs and games from various cultures
- responding to visual and aural stimuli, such as pictures, paintings, radio or film clips
- discussing and expressing opinions
- giving and receiving instructions or information
- using talk partners in EYFS/KS1 in **all** curriculum areas
- describing/recounting events
- storytelling and reading aloud
- reciting lines, songs or poems learned by heart in school plays or presentations
- imaginative play (not just in EYFS) for example, roleplay, use of puppets or drama
- circle time
- Collective Worship
- debates (KS2)

We also realise that a rich variety of speaking and listening opportunities arise from literature and so we have a vast array of books in each classroom including fiction and non-fiction. Any child thought to require the support of a Speech & Language therapist is referred in accordance with our SEND policy.

### Cross-Curricular Opportunities

Teachers plan carefully for children to practice and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum. Because of this, children from EYFS to Year 6 are provided with outstanding

opportunities for cross-curricular writing. Each class has a new Topic each half term, focusing on History or Geography.

These topics allow children to write for a range of purposes, in a variety of contexts. In the past, children have written letters to the Queen, written reports, written diary entries imagining they are Roman soldiers, produced play scripts about the Passover Story and written biographies about significant individuals in History. We believe that providing these cross-curricular opportunities helps children to develop a love of writing, as well as instilling in them that all writing has a purpose.

### Assessment and Target Setting

Children are assessed half termly by their class teachers in Reading, Writing and VGPS. Formative and summative assessments are carried out regularly to ensure that the teaching of Reading, Writing and VGPS is focused on children's needs. Every child has a writing portfolio. This is used to collate a selection of children's independent writing throughout the year. The writing is assessed using the interim framework for years 2 and 6. For years 1,3,4 and 5 it is assessed using the school's writing assessment framework.

In Y1, children take a statutory Phonics Test to test their decoding skills. In Years 2 and 6, children will take statutory assessments in Reading and Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar. In all other years, children take annual formal assessments in the summer term in Reading, Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar. For more information please see the **Assessment Policy**.

### Inclusion in English

The needs of all children are considered carefully when planning and teaching English at St Peter & St Paul Primary School. We want children to reach their full potential. Where necessary, teachers identify which children are not making progress and take steps to improve their progress and attainment in English, usually in liaison with the SENCO. More able and talented children are identified and suitable learning challenges are provided.

### Equal Opportunities

At St Peter & St Paul Primary School we have high expectations for **every child**, whatever their background, ability or circumstances. We know that children learn best when they are healthy, safe and engaged. In order to engage all children, cultural diversity is celebrated. Our English curriculum includes a wide range of texts and other resources, which represent a variety of cultures and backgrounds. We value what each individual child brings to our school.

### Role of the Subject Leader

Our subject leader for English is Mr Cunningham. The subject leader is responsible for maintaining and improving the standards of teaching and learning in English by:

- monitoring and evaluating English; pupil progress, planning, marking & feedback, curriculum coverage, teaching, role of teaching assistants, English provision
- taking the lead in policy development
- auditing and supporting colleagues in CPD
- purchasing and organising resources
- keeping up to date with developments in English

### Parental Involvement

We hope to involve parents as much as possible in school life, and thus in the development of children's skills, knowledge and understanding in English. Parents are kept up to date on day-to-day activities in school via Twitter, Facebook, church services, Collective Worship, parent cafés and the school newsletter. In EYFS, parents are invited to view pictures, work and observations via Tapestry and to make comments on them to further their child's learning.

Parents receive midyear and end of year progress reports giving them information about their child/ren's progress, attainment and effort in Reading and Writing. There are two parents consultations meetings per academic year in which these reports are discussed with the class teacher. The results of statutory assessments are reported to parents in accordance with government legislation.