

# English Policy

## Christ the King RC Primary School



## **Mission Statement**

Our school exists to serve the parish of Holy Trinity, working together for the development of our children with the love of God as our central focus.

Together as God's children, we wonder, believe, shine and achieve.

We are unique individuals and our talents and gifts are nurtured in a caring family environment. God loves us and through His love, we help each other to make a difference in the world we live in.

## **Intent**

This mission statement links beautifully to our approach to literacy teaching. Together we wonder about reading, we believe we can write just like those writers. Then we shine in our reading and writing abilities and achieve high standards through a cross curricular approach. At Christ the King we aim to develop in the children the confidence to express themselves effectively both orally and through the written word. We also aim to foster an appreciation of a variety of literature by developing a range of reading skills. These skills will enable them to access all aspects of the curriculum.

## **Purpose**

(taken from 'The National Curriculum' 2014)

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others, and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.

## **Aims**

(taken from 'The National Curriculum' 2014)

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

The National Curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- 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

## Subject Content

The English Programme of Study is based on four areas:

- Spoken language
- Reading
- Writing
- Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation

The Primary Curriculum is divided into 3 Key stages: Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4) and Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6).

By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

Detailed guidance of what should be taught at each Key stage is given under the following headings:

- Spoken language
- Reading - Word Reading
- Reading - Comprehension
- Writing – Transcription (Spelling and Handwriting)
- Writing - Composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing)
- Writing –Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation

## Mantle of the Expert

At Christ the King, we have adopted a more cross curricular approach to teaching literacy using the methodology of ‘Mantle of the Expert’. With the use of teacher in role as ‘a client’ and the children in role as ‘the experts’ we are able to set our children ‘commissions’ which enable them to become someone in an imaginary world, which then is taken back to the real world. Through the challenges that the commissions set, the children are becoming expert writers across the curriculum. Through historical, geographical or even religious contexts, the children are able to make links between their work, utilise skills in all areas and therefore writing is more meaningful to them.

## Speaking and Listening

The National Curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in children’s development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Speaking and Listening underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing.

We encourage the children to speak clearly and confidently in a range of situations. They need to articulate their views and opinions whilst considering and respecting the views of others and matching style and response to audience and purpose. They develop the skills of participating effectively in small group work and in front of a larger audience.

### *In the Early Years and KS1*

The children will: -

- Participate in book talk sessions where they will be encouraged to answer questions using Barrett's Taxonomy
- Prepare their ideas before they write
- Be involved in question and answer sessions in response to 'Show and Tell' and visiting Speakers
- Circle time to communicate ideas and listen to others
- Participate in whole school assemblies
- Use drama, and role-play to explore ideas and texts including the use of 'Mantle of the Expert'
- Recite poetry both classic and modern
- Perform in plays.

### *In KS2*

The children will: -

- Use circle time to discuss thoughts and feelings
- Debate topical issues and understand the conventions for discussions and debate
- Use drama to adopt, create and sustain a variety of roles, responding to others in role, including the use of 'Mantle of the Expert'
- Improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences
- Respond to drama and theatre productions
- Prepare their ideas before they write. They must be assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others
- Explain their understanding of books and other reading
- Share their own work with others in front of the class

## **Phonics and Spelling**

In the Reception class and KS1 the children are streamed according to ability. We follow the 'Letters and Sounds' document that advocates a systematic and structured approach to phonics teaching and the pace of learning is appropriately challenging.

In KS1 the children take home spellings on a weekly basis. The spellings are linked to the word level work, phonetic spelling patterns and common exception words for KS1 which are covered in class.

Throughout KS2, children follow the 'No Nonsense Spelling' scheme which is supplemented by words from their current topic and year group common exception words. They also take home spellings on a weekly basis.

## **Reading**

It is essential that Phonics is emphasised in the early teaching of Reading. The children need to understand that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words thus enabling the vocalisation of the printed word. Good comprehension skills draw from linguistic knowledge and high quality discussion. We provide a range of stimulating texts to study and discuss.

In the Early Years the children embark on a shared story project. Each week the child selects a book to share at home with parents. The book is kept for a week to provide opportunities to develop the necessary pre-reading skills. This continues in the Reception class as well as a daily synthetic phonics lesson using 'Letters and Sounds'. When the teacher feels the child is ready a book from the reading scheme is sent home. We have a variety of reading schemes which have been book banded, which include Jelly and Bean, Songbirds from The Oxford Reading Tree Alphakids, Project X books and Treetops from the Oxford Reading Tree.

In Key Stage One and Two the children access high quality texts to engage and challenge every child in their reading ability and comprehension. Through whole class reading approaches, every ability is immersed in challenging texts and thorough discussion. Reading sessions are structured and meaningful. There are often links made to their writing, their topics and 'Mantle of the Expert' work. Due to the nature of the texts that we are using, children are becoming more aware of deeper vocabulary, from a younger age which aids them both verbally and within their writing.

The Key Stage One and Two children are also expected to read regularly and independently both at school and at home. The book bands reach 'Brown Level' then the children are expected to read texts of their own choice either from the school and class libraries or from their own home collections.

## Writing

In the Early Years the teacher demonstrates the use of language for reading and writing by telling and sharing stories in a clear and lively way that motivates and engages the children. Also it is important that the children learn, repeat and tell oral stories to build their confidence and knowledge of how a story works.

They also learn about the different purposes of writing by seeing teachers model writing during Shared Writing and then practising these skills themselves during a guided session. They use a variety of stimuli for writing such as trips, visitors and 'Mantle of the Expert' to write in a wide range of genres including both narrative and non-narrative forms.

As the children start to understand the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) they are gradually introduced to more sophisticated spelling patterns and word structures. In KS1 and KS2 the knowledge and understanding of writing is consolidated and built upon. Before the actual art of composition is embarked upon, opportunities are available for the children to familiarise themselves with the text type. Each text type has its own organisational characteristics and language features, which the teacher can demonstrate during shared and guided reading and use in shared and guided writing. Effective composition involves forming, articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context. To be able to spell quickly and accurately, the children need to know the relationship between sounds and letters, word structure and spelling structure. These are taught implicitly and explicitly from Year 1 through to Year 6 using the appendices in the Primary Curriculum.

The children have opportunities to develop their stamina and skills to write at length in extended independent writing sessions for a range of purposes across the curriculum. This is often developed through the use of 'Mantle of the Expert' where extended writing pieces

are extremely purposeful and have been developed over a number of sessions. They are encouraged to use accurate spelling and punctuation and be grammatically correct. Whole class feedback is often used as a tool to develop extended pieces and allows the individual children to reflect on their work, edit it and re-draft it.

## **Handwriting**

The Cursive handwriting style is used throughout both key stages. In the Early Years the children are taught the individual letter formations in the cursive script. A Handwriting Guide is issued to all parents when their child joins the school.

## **Inclusion/Equality**

All children are provided with equal access to the English Curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background. By on-going formative and summative assessments, the class teacher identifies children who need support with literacy skills at the earliest stage.

In the Early Years the children are assessed by a speech and language therapist and individual plans are drawn up. Throughout the two key stages, children access a range of speech and language programmes where needed to facilitate their needs.

Within the classroom, the teacher targets children with difficulties in reading and writing, and addresses these issues by differentiated activities and extra support where possible. Where a child has a greater need the school's SEN policy is implemented. Classroom assistants, nursery nurses and learning support assistants provide in-class support where appropriate. The class teacher and the SENCO organise work together to formulate Individual Pupil Plans, which are shared with all staff working with the child and the parents. These plans may involve extra support outside of class also, such as precision teaching, extra phonics and PiXL therapies.

The school maintains a register of children with EAL and children's needs are addressed within the class through individual and small group work.

## **Role of the Subject Leader**

At Christ the King, there are a team of people who work together to lead the subject of literacy. There is an overall subject leader, a curriculum leader who supports the role of the subject leader and a phonics champion who leads the teaching of early reading. The Subject Leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in Literacy through:

- Monitoring and evaluating Literacy:
  - Pupil Progress
  - Provision of Literacy
  - The quality of the Learning environment
  - The deployment and provision of support staff
- Taking the lead in policy development
- Auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD Purchasing and organising resources
- Keeping up to date with recent Literacy developments

The Subject Leader monitors the standard of the children's work and the quality of the teaching throughout the school alongside the Senior Leadership Team. Samples of work are reviewed regularly by the Subject Leader and SLT and lesson observations, learning walks and drop ins take place regularly.

## Assessment

Assessment of literacy takes place at various points throughout the school.

In Early Years many of the early learning goals point towards literacy skills. These include, speaking, listening, reading, writing, understanding and being imaginative.

In Year 1 there is a National Screening Check, where the children are expected to decode and blend real words and pseudo words (nonsense words).

At the ends of Key Stage One and Two children sit SATs tests which assess reading, in terms of both decoding and comprehension and spelling and grammar and punctuation.

Comprehension is assessed in a formal way every term using PIRA from Reception Summer term to Year 6.

Spelling is tested weekly in Key Stage Two in line with the word level work taught in class. PiXL assessments are also used throughout the school to assess spelling and grammar, which then help teachers to see gaps in learning and allow any children needing extra support to access this.

Learning Ladders are used regularly to assess both reading and writing throughout the school. These assessments inform planning and helps to set targets for all pupils.

## Displays

At Christ the King we expect a consistent approach to displays for literacy. All classes should have an equal balance of children's work and working walls which support the children with their writing.

Key words for topics and day to day writing should be available to the children either within word banks or on working walls. Evidence of children's work should be displayed appropriately in order to celebrate individual achievements. Every classroom should have evidence of cursive script to support the handwriting sessions. Reading areas should be inviting and accessible to all the children, providing a range of high quality fiction and non-fiction texts. Where possible, evidence of the journey of writing should be shown, whether it is linked to 'Mantle' or an extended piece of writing, including teacher modelling of writing techniques.