



## OUR BLESSED SAINTS ENGLISH POLICY UPDATED SEPTEMBER 2017



### **Rationale for the policy**

English is a core subject of the curriculum and is central to the wider curriculum and fundamental to every child's learning both at school and in the world beyond. Children need to develop their use of language in order to learn and to play a full and active role as individuals in society. It is central as a medium of thought, learning and expression across the curriculum and also as a subject in its own right.

### **Purpose of the policy**

To offer guidance to staff, parents and governors on the role of English in delivering the Every Child Matters agenda from the Foundation Stage to Key Stage Two.  
To ensure English is given a high priority in the school and that it is taught daily in every class using the guidance from the New Primary National Curriculum.

### **Philosophy**

We believe that English is:

- What children 'do' with language whenever they speak, listen, read or write.
- About grasping the code, learning to recognise and use the structures and patterns of spoken and written English with increasing confidence and competence.
- About each child's increasing awareness of what language is and how it works.
- Most importantly about each child's growing ability to construct and convey meaning in speech and writing and to read with fluency and understanding.

### **English across the curriculum**

As a school we recognise that English skills should be regularly applied in every subject area and that, where appropriate, English teaching should be linked to work in other areas of the curriculum. The teaching of English, through access to quality texts is an important part of SMSC development. This is taken into account through medium and short term planning where links with other subjects are made evident.

### **Aims**

In line with the framework for English, Spoken Language, Reading, Writing and Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation are equally represented within the effective teaching of English across the school.

### **Guidance for Spoken Language**

*Our aim is to help children:*

- To value the language they bring with them; the language of their families, community and culture.
- To be able to express themselves in an effective and appropriate manner to a wide range of audiences and for a wide range of purposes
- To confidently and accurately use standard English (grammatically correct)
- To be able to use spoken language to support and extend their learning across the curriculum.
- To be able to listen to others attentively with an increasingly capacity to understand more complex information an ideas.

- To be able to offer and exchange ideas in both formal and informal discussion.
- To be able to express clearly their own ideas to others in a manner which allows for an exchange of opinions and viewpoints.

### **Guidance on Reading**

*Our aim is that all children should:*

- Be able to read fluently with understanding, expression and confidence.
- Be able to read in ways which supports and extends learning across the curriculum.
- See reading as enjoyable, rewarding and worthwhile.
- Be aware of the wide range of reading materials that have been inherited from their own and other cultures.
- Be able to access a wide range of materials for different purposes.
- Become critical readers by:
  - being increasingly able to see how texts create effects and meanings.
  - being able to place their own ideas, experiences and values.
  - using text to support their opinions.

Pupils become successful readers by learning to use a range of strategies to understand the meaning of the text. Successful readers use as many of these strategies as possible (phonic, grammatical, word recognition, graphic and contextual knowledge) within reading.

In line with the English framework, a wide range of texts including those on paper and screen are used to develop the breadth of reading materials experienced by the children.

Reading skills are developed through all areas of the curriculum with explicit references being made to shared and guided sessions to enable pupils to connect the learning. Reading is planned as shared, guided and independent reading and is organised in the following way:

- Every class has a daily guided session of around 30 minutes.
- Additional independent opportunities are also provided for pupils throughout the school day. (Minimum 15 minutes)
- Every child will take a book home to read with an adult. Where appropriate the teacher will select the book according to the pupil's stage of reading. These books may be taken from the school's reading scheme. Independent readers may select their own reading materials.

It is the school's expectation that the reading diary should be completed 3x a week by a parent/carer. Those who meet this expectation, when the reading diary is completed by the class teacher each week, will be rewarded with house points.

The class teacher will complete the diary during weekly guided reading sessions (these will have an AF focus) and independent reading sessions.

#### *Guided reading*

Daily guided reading activities take place for all children in all ability groups with a curriculum focus for the whole class and teacher led work which will be dependent on

need. Reading material is chosen to ensure all children are suitably challenged and make progress using the assessment focuses for reading. Guided sessions focus on word recognition and reading comprehension with both elements explicitly taught and modelling using guidance and resources from the English curriculum to support.

A daily phonics session takes place in the Early Years, Year One and Year 2 following the Letters and Sounds/Read, Write, Ink scheme. Although it is anticipated that all children will have completed the phases by the time they leave Year Two, some children will still require additional phonic teaching.

Reading is assessed termly using appropriate formal assessment and teacher assessments based on evidence from the guided reading session to indicate attainment and inform next steps. Every child is encouraged to follow their own reading book, taking it home each day to share with an adult. Where appropriate, the teacher/TA will select a book according to the child's stage of reading. Older/more able readers are encouraged to choose for themselves.

The use of ongoing assessment of reading will inform future planning and next steps. Benchmarking is used to ensure that children progress through all areas of the reading curriculum before moving on to the next book band.

#### *Shared Reading*

Shared reading is a class activity where children learn from and about different texts that can then inform their own writing. During these sessions teacher or other adults will model key features of the texts and use the sessions to demonstrate the application of a range of reading strategies to develop word skills and comprehension.

#### *Independent Reading*

Independent reading takes place as appropriate, giving pupils time to apply and practise the skills they have learnt during the shared and guided reading sessions. Children keep a record of books they have read independently. We aim to encourage all children to read for pleasure and enjoyment.

### **Guidance on Writing**

*Our aim is that all children should;*

- Develop a confident and reflective approach to writing.
- Create texts based on their existing knowledge and understanding of spoken language and the writing system
- Write with growing confidence and precision in a widening variety of forms for different purposes.
- Discuss and evaluate their writing range.
- Apply their understanding of purpose, form and structure of different types of writing in their own work.
- Use writing to consolidate and develop thinking.
- Develop an independent approach to spelling and to word acquisition.
- Use punctuation appropriately.
- Develop a legible and fluent style of handwriting.

Elements of writing are included in the teaching of English as well as cross curricular skills.

All children are given opportunities to experiment with their independent writing. Each year group will have opportunities to develop their skills in a range of contexts, thus ensuring that they receive a balance of opportunity to write in different genres including narrative, non-narrative and poetry.

### *Spelling*

Spelling will be taught in accordance with the English curriculum with an emphasis on the teaching of phonics e.g. strategies, conventions, rules and vocabulary extension work will be taught in Year 2 and KS2 using the curriculum spelling lists. Weekly spelling tests will be given which will include 2 'mystery words' that follow that week's spelling rule. Termly spelling tests in KS2 will be undertaken using the curriculum yr 3/4 and yr 5/6 word lists. In both key stages children will undertake termly spelling tests to assess their spelling age. Throughout the school the children will use word banks, dictionaries, thesauruses and etymological dictionaries. Children are encouraged to attempt spelling by themselves and to self-check their own writing in order to help them develop self-reliance and continuity of thought. They may also proof-read writing with a partner to identify mistakes.

We recognise and make links between handwriting patterns and spelling patterns and these will often be taught together.

### *Handwriting and Presentation*

Pupils should be taught presentational skills which include legible hand writing using appropriate skills. The English curriculum states that pupils need to understand from an early age that much of their writing will be read by other people and therefore needs to be accurate, legible and set out in an appropriate way. They need to see the writing process being 'modelled' by the teacher. Handwriting activities should be regularly carried out with the class as a whole or with smaller guided groups as needed. A cursive script will be taught from yr 2 onwards with Foundation Stage and yr 1 teaching the pre-cursive script. Children will use the modelled style in all writing within all books. In addition, all children will use keyboard skills and ICT tools confidently to compose and present work.

## **Guidance on Grammar and Punctuation**

*Our aim is that all children should;*

- using modal verbs or adverbs to indicate degrees of possibility
- using relative clauses beginning with who, which, where, when, whose, that or with an implied (i.e. omitted) relative pronoun
- learning the grammar in column 1 of year 1 in Appendix 2
- indicate grammatical and other features by:
  - using commas to clarify meaning or avoid ambiguity in writing
  - using hyphens to avoid ambiguity
  - using brackets, dashes or commas to indicate parenthesis
  - using semi-colons, colons or dashes to mark boundaries between main clauses
  - using a colon to introduce a list
  - punctuating bullet points consistently
- use and understand the grammatical terminology in Appendix 1 accurately
- recognising vocabulary and structures that are appropriate for formal speech and writing, including subjunctive forms
- using passive verbs to affect the presentation of
- using expanded noun phrases to convey complicated information concisely

## Pedagogy

A clear, shared understanding of:

- What makes good teaching (high expectations, good staff subject knowledge, differentiation, effective intervention to address underachievement)
- Effective teaching strategies and appropriate use of ICT.
- Underpinned by the Early Year Foundation Stage, Primary Curriculum.

## Teaching and Learning

At Our Blessed Saints we believe that Literate primary pupils should;

- Read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding.
- Be able to orchestrate a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, and 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.
- 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 literacy 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.

## Teaching

The teaching of English will take the form of a daily English lesson that will be in line with the age, stage of development and ability of the children being taught.

The objectives in the framework will give English teaching focus and direction which should aim for good levels of motivation and active engagement for all pupils. To achieve this, teachers use a variety of teaching strategies through whole class, shared and guided sessions that also address a range of learning styles (VAK). These include:

- **Direction** – to ensure pupils know what they should be doing, to be aware of the success criteria and to develop key strategies in reading and writing.
- **Modelling** – discussing the features of written texts through shared reading books and extracts.
- **Scaffolding** – providing writing frames for shared composition.
- **Explanation** – to clarify and discuss.
- **Questioning** – including higher order questioning to probe pupil's understanding and to extend their ideas,
- **Speaking and Listening** – discussing, arguing, listening and responding.
- **Demonstration** – e.g. to teach letter formation, join letters, read punctuation, use a dictionary.
- **Listening to and responding** – e.g. to stimulate and extend pupils' contributions, to discuss/evaluate their presentations.

## Equal opportunities, inclusion and SEN

As a school we are committed to the premise that every child, irrespective of race, gender or ability is entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum and that the curriculum we teach should reflect the diversity of the society in which we live.

Activities are suitably differentiated and challenging to allow all pupils (including less able, more able and gifted children, EAL) of all ages and abilities full access to the English curriculum.

### **Assessment**

Our Blessed Saints believe that assessment is ongoing and is conducted informally on a day to day basis. This information is then used to identify the next learning steps and children's groupings as appropriate.

Children's writing is formally assessed each term to ensure that in the course of each year a piece of fiction and non-fiction is assessed for each child. Independent writing is used to assess children progress in writing across a variety of genres. Teachers are asked to:

- Assess samples of writing from each child within the class identifying which statements reflect attainment and which indicate gaps.
- Look back at earlier year group statements, in which case they should be identified as such as they will be priorities for teaching.
- Use the statements to identify gaps in children's learning. When gaps have been identified these will then form the basis of:
  - whole class or group teaching objectives
  - a focus for marking and responding to pupils' writing
  - Intervention groups

The target statements can also be used to support teachers' formative assessment as they check progress from week to week.

A phonics assessment is administered in Key Stage 1 and Reception at the beginning of each half-term. This is used to help organise reading groups and track progression over a year.

Termly NFER tests will be undertaken in KS2 to formally assess the children's reading ability and age.

### **Target Setting**

Children have year group statements in the front of their books to enable them to know what they need to do to progress to the 'At National' standard for their year group.

Where children are working above age related expectations they will have the 'Greater Depth' targets in front of their books. For those children who are not working at the age related expectations they will have 'Working Towards' targets in their books.

## **Marking**

Our Blessed Saints recognise that marking is an important part in ensuring pupils progress through the curriculum. Marking should be positive, constructive and informative to the child. It should relate to the lesson objective and success criteria and make the next learning steps clear. A range of marking is used weekly, including Closing the Gap, peer marking, extension and next steps.

## **Moderation procedures**

Writing is moderated as a whole school each term, and we aim to moderate with our federated school and with the local authority as often as possible.

## **Monitoring**

English sessions are monitored regularly by:

- the attached advisor
- the head teacher
- the English coordinator

English book and the use of English across the curriculum are monitored by the Senior Leadership Team termly.

## **Early Years**

Children get full access to all requirements for their year group through work in whole class and guided activities.

Foundation guidance provides a steer for ensuring that the youngest children engage in appropriate activities. They include well planned purposeful activities which provide a rich context for learning. We consider that enjoyment and experimentation are key features of a successful learning and plan a balance of adult-led, adult-directed and child-led activities. We plan for a designated time for language and English with opportunities for whole class, guided, group and individual work.

Our Blessed Saints value greatly the contribution that speaking and listening makes to English and indeed the wider curriculum. Speaking and listening activities, therefore, form a large part of our early years' English teaching with many activities being planned for separately and in addition to the English session.

The notion of the English lesson develops over the term/year extending the interactive whole class session gradually for the youngest children.

Other areas of the curriculum provide opportunities for children to apply and further develop their language and English skills. Children developing independence is given a high priority and adult intervention will support this and will also focus on the language and English elements of the activities.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### ***Role of the subject leader:***

To ensure:

- That the policy is implemented consistently across the school.
- To support colleagues in the development of detailed planning that takes account of the units of work and objectives outlined in the primary framework.
- To identify areas for further staff development and to ensure that staff have access to opportunities to address these.
- To support colleagues with record keeping and assessment in English.

- To monitor progress and evaluate assessment to advise the senior leadership team on action needed to address specific issues.
- To monitor the delivery of the primary curriculum within school.
- To monitor medium and short term planning.
- To keep up to date with developments in the subject area and disseminate information to colleagues as appropriate.
- To take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of English resources.

***Role of the teacher:***

To ensure:

- That the teaching of English secures the best learning for all children and provides opportunity and challenge.
- That an emphasis is placed on carefully planned, purposeful and well directed teaching and learning and learning takes into account any assessments.
- Marking is completed in line with the school marking policy to move learning forward.
- That the learning environment is stimulating supports learning and celebrates children's achievement through the use of working walls.

***Role of the Governing Body***

- To ensure that they are kept fully informed by the head teacher and senior leadership team regarding the current state and future development of English. Governors undertake monitoring activities alongside the SLT which are related to the priorities on the school development action plan. (Learning walks, talking to children, looking at children's work).

***Role of Parents***

- Parents are important partners in the process of developing children's language skills. Therefore, parents are encouraged to play a full part in their children's education by:
- Supporting their child in home reading.
- Supporting their child with homework tasks.
- Offering a useful audience for children in their development of speaking and listening, reading and writing.

**Planning Guidance**

When planning these essential elements for effective short term planning should be considered:

- Age appropriate objectives (including spoken language)
- Teaching related to prior learning.
- Differentiation.
- High order questioning.
- Teaching strategies
- Success Criteria
- Assessment opportunities
- Resources
- Deployment of additional adults
- Use of cross curricular links.



## **Differentiation**

Differentiation can be achieved through:

- Modification of resources
- Questioning
- Extension and open ended tasks
- Level of support: scaffolding and prompts, TA/ other adult/ peer support.
- Target setting
- Expectation
- By outcome

## **Deployment of other adults**

Access to English planning should be openly shared with additional adults working in the classroom. The system to ensure this takes place is that it is the teachers responsibility to ensure all TAs working in their classroom have copies of weekly planning at the beginning of each week.

Regular opportunities are created to share pupil progress through meetings. All adults in school are informed and updated on new initiatives in English and supported in their professional development.

## **Intervention Programmes**

When necessary, suitable children are carefully selected through teacher assessment to take part in intervention programmes (eg Booster, pre-teaching, precision teaching to address a specific need). These sessions will take place outside the English session. Assessment should be carried out before and after the intervention to measure effectiveness, impact and inform next steps.