



## St. Godric's RC Primary English Policy



*We love, value and respect each other.*

'Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities'.

*Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.*

*Write to be understood, speak to be heard, read to grow... Lawrence Clark Powell*

**Rationale** At St. Godric's RC Primary School, we recognise that every child has the right to an education (*Article 28 UNICEF Rights of the Child*) and within that education, we understand the crucial importance of studying the English language. The English language is the basic language of communication within our society and is the foundation for almost all the learning which takes place in our school. We believe that a mastery of language can empower the learner and allow children to express their thoughts and ideas more fluently, accurately and, ultimately, to their greater satisfaction. Through reading in particular, children have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually (*Article 29*). Improved performance at reading, writing and spoken language is essential for independent learning and allows children to deal more successfully with other curriculum subjects, while enriching their lives beyond school.

**Aims** Our central aim for English is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

Our aims in teaching English are that all children will: -

- Develop the necessary skills to use the English language confidently, appropriately and accurately to the best of their ability
- Be able to speak clearly, fluently and cogently
- Be able to use discussion in order to learn by elaborating and explaining their understanding and ideas to others
- Be able to listen to the spoken word attentively with understanding and empathy
- Be able to read a wide range of materials easily, fluently and with good understanding for enjoyment and for information, in order to engage with the wider world
- Be able to write clearly, accurately and coherently for a range of audiences and purposes using spelling, punctuation and grammar accurately and confidently.

**The Curriculum** English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. The Department for Education, National Curriculum Framework Document (2013), sets out programmes of study for English covering:

1. Spoken language
2. Reading
3. Writing

These are taught through the New National Curriculum and are reinforced in all aspects of learning and school life.

**Spoken language** is developed by:

- providing a wide range of opportunities for children to talk and listen in formal and informal settings
- frequent storytelling sessions, when the teacher or other adult reads aloud with the class to encourage sustained careful listening
- the use of drama and role play to explore thoughts and feelings through imagined situations
- group and talk partner work, when pupils are encouraged to speak, listen and respond to each other
- more formal occasions when pupils are encouraged to speak in a more formal way to their assembled classmates or to the wider school community
- class discussions and debate on topical or contentious issues, both parochial and world wide to encourage pupils to put a point of view coherently, and to listen and respond to the views of others

**Reading** is developed through:

- programmes of systematic synthetic phonics and development of word recognition strategies
- a Home-School structured reading programme to support all pupils until they are capable of independent reading
- a focused Guided Reading programme
- provision of a wide range of reading materials, and opportunities for children to select from this for information and for entertainment
- targeted support through a range of intervention programmes for children who have not yet met expectations appropriate for their age and year group
- periods of quiet reading
- library visits
- comparison of books and other written texts with other media
- use of the Wordsmith framework which enables children to see the structure of and learn from a variety of texts.

**Writing** is developed through:

- investment in a premium whole school literacy framework (Wordsmith) providing high quality planning and resources - where lessons are focused around engaging texts to enthuse and inspire children's writing
- providing a wide range of contexts for writing including off site visits and writing for a purpose
- paying increasing attention to punctuation, grammar and spelling as children become more fluent and confident
- encouraging a process of drafting and redrafting including the use of ICT tools
- weekly dedicated Big Writing lessons with an emphasis on developing vocabulary, connectives, openers and punctuation where children are provided with personalised steps to success and quality feedback
- providing opportunities for collaborative writing
- Key Stage 2 homework tasks to provide opportunities to practise writing skills learned in school and to provide opportunities for parents to support children's progress in writing
- individual pupil targets
- special events such as Everybody Writes Day and working with authors
- engaging SPaG games and resources
- booster sessions for Year 6 pupils to develop their writing skills further
- celebration of children's achievements

**Cross-curricular aims**

- writing will be developed through all curriculum subjects
- high expectations of writing in English will be consistent across subjects
- writing in other subjects will adhere to high standard of presentation as set out in the Presentation and Handwriting Policy
- high quality marking and feedback will be given in all cross-curricular pieces of writing, as set out in the school Marking and Feedback Policy

**Spelling** is developed through

- phonic activities
- the marking of work
- regular teaching of spelling strategies including spelling patterns and spelling by analogy
- encouragement of dictionary use

**Handwriting** is developed through

- development of fine motor skills
- consistent use of language (patter) throughout the school to describe handwriting patterns
- regular teaching and practice sessions progressing to a joined and cursive style at the start of Key Stage 2.
- introduction of pens in Key Stage 2

**The teaching of English** is organised into “formal” learning of reading, writing and spoken language during daily literacy lessons. In addition, informal learning takes place throughout the school day and through all curriculum areas.

Excellence in English is celebrated through praise, recognition, display and reward. Both hand written and word processed work is displayed. There are regular read or spoken presentations to the class or to the whole school at assembly time. The children participate in performances of improvised and scripted dramatic productions.

**Pupils with special needs in English** including pupils with difficulties in learning to read are identified and supported through targeted programmes which are regularly monitored by the class teacher, SENCo and Literacy co-ordinator, and where necessary are referred to outside agencies. Pupils with particular ability and flair for English, who move quickly through the National Curriculum Framework, are extended through conferencing and the use of a wide variety of reading materials. Pupils with English as an Additional Language who need extra support, receive it through differentiated work, intervention strategies such as Word Wasp, Toe by Toe, Speed Up, Lexia and Fresh start and through outside agencies as appropriate. Home languages are valued and celebrated as every child has the right to learn and use the language of their family (*Article 30*). Literacy in the home language is encouraged.

**Progression and Continuity** Planning in English is a process in which all teachers are involved, wherein the foundation for curricular planning is developed through a process of collaboration between staff with reference to the National Curriculum Framework and a range of teaching and learning resources. For children under five, Literacy is planned according to the Early Learning Goals specified in the Foundation Stage of the Curriculum. The consistency of the approach and standards in the English curriculum is discussed and reviewed by the staff in programmed staff meetings and forms part of the ongoing ‘agreement trialling’ programme. (See Assessment and Recording Policy)

Teaching and learning are monitored by the Head Teacher and Literacy co-ordinator through scrutiny of planning and pupils’ work and through classroom observations.

**Resources** The school is concerned in maintaining a literate environment for pupils, including books, pictures, social signs and captions, displays of children’s work, instructions, menus, magazines, maps, timetables, newspapers, dictionaries etc. The school keeps a large store of Oxford Reading Tree books, (including ‘All Stars’ for able Reception and Key Stage 1 children) interspersed with other colour coded ‘reading books’. The Wolf Hill range is available for children who still need structured support in Key Stage 2. Class reading books are kept in the classrooms and there is a regularly replenished selection of fiction and non-fiction books in the library. The school believes that parents are a resource and reading books are sent home so that children and parents may share the process of learning (see Homework Policy). Parents are invited to attend sessions at school where they are informed of the system we use to teach children to read.

Information and Communications Technology is a major resource which is used in English for word processing, desk top publishing, independent research etc. The

school is aware of the need to promote literacy through ICT. Interactive whiteboards, iPads and netbooks are a major teaching and learning resource allowing regular access to and use of electronic texts. A bank of appropriate software is being established.

A range of commercially produced schemes of work and other resources are used in school. The principle schemes in use are:

Wordsmith

Read Write Inc

Progression in Phonics

Sue Lloyd's Jolly Phonics Handbook

Year 2 and Year 3 Spelling resource

Oxford Reading Tree

Lighthouse Guided Reading materials (Ginn)

Cambridge Passports to Literacy

Focus on Literacy (Collins)

Literacy Worlds (Heinemann)

Cambridge Penpals for Handwriting

Developing Early Writing

Grammar for Writing

Models for Writing (Ginn)

Scholastic materials

Numerous online resources such as The Literacy Shed, PhonicsPlay and others are also used.

**Assessment** Feedback to pupils about their own progress in English is achieved through discussion and through the marking of work.

Effective marking in English:

- helps children learn, so comments should be challenging and have an impact on children's writing
- is often done while a task is being carried out through discussion between child and teacher
- is used sensitively and with discretion in the context of written work so that a child can assimilate a limited number of corrections at one time. This will vary according to age and ability.

(Refer to school Marking Policy for further information on marking in English.)

Formative assessment is used to guide the progress of individual pupils in English. It involves identifying each child's progress in each aspect of the subject, determining what each child has learned and what therefore should be the next stage in his/her learning. Suitable tasks for assessment include:

- hearing children read in a one-to one context
- diagnostic reading tests
- question and answer sessions during guided reading sessions

- small group discussions perhaps in the context of a practical task
  - independent comprehension tasks
  - specific assignments for individual pupils
- (See Assessment and Recording Policy)

Formal summative assessment is carried out at the end of each National Curriculum Key Stage (i.e. in Years 2 and 6) through the use of SATs and teacher assessment. In addition, Year 6 children take the new spelling, punctuation and grammar test and children in Year 1 are required to take the phonics screening check. Optional SATs are also carried out in Y1, Y3, Y4 and Y5. (See Assessment and Recording Policy).

**Recording and Reporting** Records of progress in English include:-

- an individual record of phonic blends known
- a reading skills record dated when concepts and skills are achieved, updated on a half termly basis
- a record of books read
- assessment results recorded using step trackers and iTrack

Reporting to parents is done on a termly basis through interviews and annually through a written report. Reporting in English will focus on each child's progress in Spoken language, Reading and Writing.

**Conclusion** Language is essential for communication. It is vital that every pupil experiences a rich and varied English curriculum, which forms a vital strand in the child's education and develops each child's personality, talents and abilities to the full (*Article 29*). The school aims to promote the importance of literacy and enjoyment of English for the enrichment of every pupil.