

St. Cuthbert's R.C. Primary School



English Policy

September 2015

1 The intentions of the policy

- 1.1 This policy is intended to be read by teachers, staff, parents and governors of the school, and also by LEA advisers, inspectors, support staff and any staff from other schools with whom we have links.

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 Our school's philosophy of language is that the teaching of English has a crucial role to play in equipping learners with the language skills they need to become effective members of their own communities, the world of work, and of society in general.

The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, so using language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. It enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

Rights Respecting

St Cuthbert's RC Primary school strives to be a Rights Respecting School, based upon the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. The rights within this convention cover basic needs, including education, health, being heard and experiencing a safe and secure childhood. We believe that all children should grow up aware of these rights and respecting these rights for themselves and others. Being a rights respecting school underpins this procedure and we believe that this will promote positive behaviour and develop successful, responsible citizens for the future.

As a Rights Respecting School we recognise:

- Article 28 'The right of every child to a good quality education'
- Article 29 'All children have the right to develop their personality, talents and abilities to the full.'

2.2 The aims of English are:

- to enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners;
- to encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- to enable children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- to develop children's abilities to reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used in a range of activities;
- to develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge;
- to encourage children to become enthusiastic, reflective and critical readers through contact with increasingly challenging texts which will develop their comprehension skills;
- to help children enjoy writing and recognise its value;
- to know the features of and produce pieces of writing in a variety of styles; (genres)

- to write with increasing accuracy and meaning according to word choice, use of grammar and punctuation;
- to enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction;
- to develop the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.

3 Teaching and learning style

3.1 At St. Cuthbert's R.C. Primary School in order to enable access to the whole curriculum for every pupil, to cater for the variety of learning styles within each class, and to ensure progression and reinforcement of skills and concepts throughout the year groups, we employ a variety of teaching styles.

- Literacy is a basic skill and is key to creativity, imagination and critical thinking. We want our pupils to find learning exciting, compelling and intrinsically worthwhile. Therefore, we use a variety of interactive teaching and learning techniques so that pupils can respond successfully to their learning.
- We plan activities where pupils:
 - *integrate prior and new knowledge
 - *acquire and use a range of learning skills
 - *solve problems individually and in groups
 - *think carefully about their successes and failures
 - *evaluate conflicting evidence and think critically
 - *accept that learning involves uncertainty and difficulty
- We use questions as a tool for learning. Effective questioning models how learning evolves. Appropriately designed questions leads pupils from unsorted knowledge to understanding, teaching pupils how to use them for effective learning.
- We use a wide variety of materials to enable every pupil to access the planned learning experience and to achieve the planned teaching and learning objectives.
- We give pupils the opportunity to work in a variety of ways – whole class, groups (of differing sizes and composition), as pairs and individuals, according to their needs, the nature of the activity and the learning objectives.
- We build pupils' confidence and self-esteem, and enable them to become effective language users by:
 - *sharing teaching and learning objectives and clarifying expected outcomes in a language that pupils can understand
 - *teaching children to self-monitor
 - *effective use of the plenary enabling children to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and process of learning orally as well as by writing
 - *encouraging children to learn from and support one another, and to realise that they do not all have to be at the same level or arrive at the same point at the same time. There are many routes to the same destination.
 - *positive and constructive oral and/or written feed-back
- We create an environment where **all** children can make progress. We teach **all** children and ensure that **all** children know this.

- We enable pupils to develop written and spoken Standard English through the model we set as teachers, and through sharing and providing good quality reading and writing materials and texts.

3.2 There are children of differing ability in all classes at St. Cuthbert's R.C. Primary School. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies, recognising the different learning styles of the pupils. In some lessons we do it through differentiated group work, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use classroom assistants to support some children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

4 Key experiences

4.1 We guarantee to provide the pupils of our school with the following key experiences:

For all pupils:

- access to a Book-Fair each term
- access to a range of fiction, non-fiction and multi-media based materials from the school's library and classroom stocks
- free access to choose, browse and read from a range of texts housed in the class book area
- access to a wide range of writing materials and implements
- access to a variety of radio, television, and ICT program(me)s including Ipads, to extend their language experiences
- the opportunity to present writing in a variety of formats each year e.g. plays, posters, information leaflets, menus, comic strips etc.
- the opportunity to engage in whole class, guided, paired and individual reading activities
- the opportunity to engage in various forms of drama and role play as a tool for learning and for presentation to a wider audience
- the opportunity to take part in whole class collective worship and assembly performances for parents and carers.

Foundation Stage/Year 5 and 6

- The opportunity to take part in a performance for parents and the wider community.

4.2 Special Educational Needs

- Once identified, pupils with special educational needs in speaking and listening, reading or writing will have their needs assessed and appropriate action taken in line with the "Code of Practice" (see school's Special Needs Policy).

4.3 Pupil Premium

- We believe that all pupils, including those entitled to free school meals should be given the opportunity to reach their full potential through support, experience and the tools necessary to support their learning, their independence and their achievements.

At St. Cuthbert's we direct pupil premium funding towards resource, activities, staffing etc to support the above rationale. Possible examples, appropriate to pupil need, may be:-

- One to one tuition
- Booster classes
- Intervention programmes
- Specific Class based resources
- Enhancement activities and experiences.

5 English curriculum planning

- 5.1 English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the National curriculum 2014 as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English.
- 5.2 The medium-term plans identify the main teaching targets for each term, which will deliver the key objectives. These plans are informed by assessment from the previous term and ensure an appropriate balance, emphasis and distribution of work across each term. The English subject leader alongside the Headteacher are responsible for keeping and reviewing these plans.
- 5.3 Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English, with 1 day focusing on extended writing, taught and supported in a Big Writing session. These list the specific learning objectives for that week and give details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of what each group of children will be learning. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, and the class teacher and subject leader may discuss them on an informal basis.

6 Assessment, target setting and recording in reading and writing

Writing

- 6.1 Teacher's short-term assessment is an ongoing part of every lesson and these assessments lead to individual targets, sometimes written on the children's work and recorded by the teacher to inform and adjust short-term plans. Following termly assessments, targets are adjusted where appropriate and new targets may be set. These targets are recorded on each child's individual target card which all children have access to in all writing sessions including those across the curriculum.
- 6.2 Children are involved in the target setting process through comments orally and in workbooks, through writing and reading conferences and through the target statements in books and class displays of key targets. Half-year reviews and end of year reports record progress of each child for the parents.
- 6.3 At the end of each year teacher assessments are passed on to the next teacher to inform planning. Children undertake the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, plus the optional national tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. Progress made is compared against school and national targets.

- 6.4 Teachers keep ongoing class records to monitor progress and inform planning. Each pupil has a file, which contains end of year assessments and other relevant records including evidence for IEP files.
- 6.5 MAT pupils will be identified as the need arises and provision will be made to deliver appropriate extension and challenging materials.

Reading

- 6.6 Assessment can take place whenever pupils are engaged in reading activities and whatever type of text is being read.
- 6.7 Individual and guided reading sessions provide the main opportunities for monitoring pupils' progress and achievements in reading and for setting targets for future teaching. Monitoring involves both pupil reading and discussion. Note is made of:
- evidence that the pupil has early concepts of print – e.g. orientation of book, that print is read
 - reading strategies that the pupil uses – the pupil should use a range of strategies to decode unknown words e.g. graphic, phonic, contextual
 - level and sophistication of understanding – literal, inference and deduction
 - confidence and independence
 - response to book
 - fluency
 - intonation and expression
 - awareness of audience
 - attitude to reading
- 6.8 A written record is made of every individual reading conference and for pupils with whom the teacher works during guided reading sessions, a note is made on the guided reading planning.
- 6.9 As soon as pupils are able they should keep their own reading logs. All pupils in Y5 and Y6 should keep their own reading logs. These supplement individual reading records and may form the basis of teacher/pupil discussions.

7 Marking

- 7.1 Our school has a policy for marking and responding to pupils' work (see Assessment and Marking policy). The following forms the basis for the school's routines for marking pupils' written English work:
- response is made to content linked to the learning objective, first
 - marking is matched to individual pupil's targets, age and ability
 - the pupils should clearly understand what the teacher is looking for (assessment criteria). This helps them to focus on the kinds of things they need to look for when they check/evaluate their own work
 - pupils and parents are informed that not all errors will necessarily be corrected

- at Key Stage 1, teachers mark selected spelling mistakes linked to spelling targets. At Key Stage 2 errors are signalled rather than corrected
- teachers read, or get pupils to read their work aloud with appropriate expression, to help them to punctuate correctly
- teachers aim to mark some work each week **with** the pupil
- a written comment is frequently used and teachers should remember that the audience for these comments will be wider than the pupil to whom it is directed
- teachers try to develop the pupil's own response to a piece of work
- teachers try to make constructive intervention e.g. by posing a question

8 The Foundation Stage

8.1

9 Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas

- 9.1 Every learning experience is a literacy experience. We think through language. We speak and listen through language. We read through language and we write through language. Every aspect of our lives is governed by language. The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work in school.
- 9.2 Each curriculum area has its own specialised language, e.g. investigations of a scientific or mathematical kind give opportunities for speaking and listening in discussion, for planning, for making suggestions, asking questions and reporting results. There are specific formats of reading and writing e.g. non-chronological reports, explanations and instructions. History gives the opportunity for developing research skills, chronological and story writing. Every subject within the curriculum contains opportunities for speaking and listening, reading and writing.
- 9.3 The teaching objectives in the Medium Term Planning are given detail in the Short Term planning, showing how and what pupils will learn and also how they will take ownership of that learning. It is in the Short Term Planning that differentiation is evident. Whole school planning is monitored by the English Co-ordinator and the Head Teacher to ensure range, continuity, progression, differentiation and entitlement.
- 9.4 **Information and communication technology (ICT):**
The use of ICT enables children to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. Younger children use ICT as a source of information and as a way of enabling them to present their completed work effectively. Older children use the Internet when searching for information about a different part of the world, or when using desktop publishing to design a class newspaper. Children use the planning and proofing tools in a word processor when checking their draft work. We encourage all children to use ICT as a resource for learning, whenever they feel it is appropriate. Resources such as "Nessy," are used to support specific language work.

9.5 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development:

The teaching of English develops skills through which our children can give critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their work. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts brings them into contact with their own literary and spiritual heritage and also the heritage of other cultures. The organisation of lessons allows children to work together and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and results.

10 Teaching English to children with special needs

10.1 At St. Cuthbert's R.C. Primary School we teach English to all children, whatever their ability. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Teachers provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties and our More Able Pupils. Work in English takes into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Teachers provide help with communication and literacy through:

- using texts in a variety of formats that children can read and understand;
- using ICT, (other technological aids) and taped materials;
- carefully matching literacy support programmes
- adapting to individual children's learning styles
- using amanuenses.

11 Monitoring and review

11.1 Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English Co-ordinator alongside the Headteacher. The co-ordinator/Headteacher monitor planning, have an annual programme of lesson observations and monitors curricular targets through monitoring samples of children's work. The work of the co-ordinator involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The co-ordinator works with teachers and head teacher in evaluating the strengths and weaknesses in the subject through an annual audit and works to target areas for further improvement. An Action Plan records initiatives, staff training, use of human and practical resources and purchases made. The co-ordinator has time allocated to review samples of the children's work, support teachers and identify further needs. The named governor responsible for literacy meets with the subject leader in order to review progress.

12 Resources and Intervention programmes

12.1 All classrooms have reading, writing and spelling schemes with text books, big books, enlarged texts, dictionaries, thesauruses, and a range of age-appropriate support materials to deliver word and sentence level work e.g. "washing lines", phonic fans. Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 follow the Read Write Inc phonics program All classrooms have a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts. Children have access to the Internet and a range of IT resources including Ipads. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research.

12.2 Teaching assistants support activities during and outside the literacy hour. They receive specific support from teachers and the co-ordinator in delivering intervention programmes and receive training where possible.

13 Links with parents (see Homework policy and Home/School Links policy)

13.1 Parents are asked to share home reading books with children as regularly as possible and to write appropriate comments in the home reading diary. Teachers monitor these diaries closely. Parents are given a booklet on how they can support their child's development of reading.