

# St. LAURENCE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



# English Policy

*Through God's grace a community growing in knowledge  
and understanding*

Achieving competence in English language is a vital part of the education of our children. The study of English develops children's language skills and their ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, views and feelings. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers and writers. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking, reading and writing across a range of different situations and across the curriculum.

### **Aims**

- To provide a language rich environment that promotes a culture of communication, reading and writing;
- To develop a love of books that will not only support children's learning across the curriculum, but also enrich their lives;
- To value and use books as a basis for learning, pleasure, talk and play;
- To teach children the craft of writing, including handwriting, in order to develop in them the confidence and skills to write well for a range of purposes and audiences;
- To systematically teach spelling, handwriting, grammar and punctuation – to support accuracy within creativity;
- To encourage children to listen with concentration, in order to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- To foster in children the confidence, desire and ability to express their views and opinions both orally and in writing;
- To raise the standards of communication, reading and writing so that every child makes good progress;
- To value and celebrate diversity in culture and language.

### **Teaching and Learning**

English is taught on a daily basis from Reception to Y6 and this is supported and enhanced through other curriculum areas. We follow a creative curriculum and wherever possible English activities are linked to current topic work.

Teaching and learning usually takes place within a whole class setting with differentiated tasks and support as appropriate, but will also include independent and partner work. In all classes children have a wide range of abilities, and we seek to 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. Good practice in reading and writing is shared and modelled in whole class teaching and small guided group work. Teachers use a variety of interactive teaching methods to deliver the curriculum and achieve set learning objectives.

In the Foundation Stage, English forms the basis of Communication, Language and Literacy; one of the seven areas of learning. Emphasis is on teaching English

through stories and non-fiction texts with strong topic links, child initiated learning through play, demonstration and use of language.

## **English curriculum planning**

We complete curriculum planning in English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The National Curriculum 2014, programme of study for English details what we teach in the long-term and identifies the key objectives in literacy that we teach to each year and mixed year group class.

Our medium-term plans, also based on the National Curriculum 2014 programme of study for English, outline the main teaching objectives for each term in each year group phase. These plans define what we teach, and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term.

Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for English lessons. This lists the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each day, and gives details of how lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of what each group of children will be learning, the success criteria for activities, resources to be used and deployment of additional adults.

## **Speaking and Listening**

We aim to develop children's ability to speak with confidence, clarity and fluency in a variety of situations, for a range of audiences and purposes. We also aim to further their capacity to listen with attention and understanding. Teachers model correct use of Standard English and accurate speech to improve grammar in children's writing.

## **Reading**

### **Shared Reading**

Shared reading takes place within the English lesson; the teacher models the reading process to the whole class as an expert reader. Sessions are characterised by explicit teaching of specific reading strategies, oral response from children and high levels of collaboration. The children join in, where appropriate, with the reading of the text. The texts selected are quality texts that reflect the learning objectives.

### **Guided Reading**

Each child participates in a teacher/TA led guided reading session at least once a week. Children are grouped by ability. During a guided reading session, the children read and respond to a text, with the teacher supporting. Each session has an assessment focus against which children's knowledge and understanding are assessed. Guided reading provides an opportunity for children to demonstrate what they have learned about reading and to develop further and extend their reading fluency, use of expression and comprehension skills. The carousel of guided reading sessions also includes other purposeful independent reading activities for children not in the teacher focus group.

## **Individual Reading**

At St Laurence Catholic Primary School we have a structured early learning programme which begins in Foundation Stage and continues until children become competent, independent readers. We teach early reading skills with a wide selection of reading books banded in line with the PM Benchmark 'colour steps' which children progress through to support the development of their individual reading skills.

Phonics is taught systematically from the Foundation Stage through adopting and adapting a wide range of resources and the Letters and Sounds 'phased' programme. Children have regular short whole class sessions until the end of Year 2, learning sounds, actions and letters, games and activities to support sounding out, segmenting and blending for reading and writing.

A home/school reading diary is used to record books read. Children are encouraged to read daily at home to an adult. The adult then signs the reading diary and adds a comment. In KS2 children are expected to continue home reading. Reading is not restricted to the English lesson. Many opportunities are provided for children to practise and extend their reading in other subjects. Reading for pleasure and enjoyment is given a high priority and sufficient time is set aside for this.

## **Writing**

At St Laurence Catholic Primary School we strive to create an environment that promotes writing, ensuring that there are purposeful outcomes for each piece of work. Writing, for a wide range of purposes and audiences, takes place within English lessons as well as in other lessons and times of the school day. Wherever possible opportunities for writing are linked to the current class topic to promote engagement and allow children to practice and apply their developing skills of writing within a relevant context. We aim to inspire writing by providing stimulating first hand experiences for children to draw upon in their work and celebrating their achievements through school display.

We build stamina for writing by providing opportunities to write for extended periods. We include a half termly, Big Write session which covers different genres and allows children to re-visit writing objectives.

## **English and inclusion**

At our school we teach English to all children, whatever their ability, home language or individual needs. All children receive quality first literacy teaching on a daily basis and activities are differentiated according to individual need. Through our English teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language and take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

## **Assessment**

Assessments are made in line with the school Assessment Policy.

Teachers assess children's work in English in three phases. The formative assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson help them to adjust their daily plans. They match these assessments closely to the teaching objectives. Written or verbal feedback is given to help guide children's progress and so that pupils know what they need to do to achieve the next steps.

Teachers use Target Tracker to as a tool to track children's progress in reading and writing every half term. Teachers use Target Tracker to measure progress against the year group expectations and to help them plan for the next unit of work. Teachers make long-term assessments towards the end of the school year, and they use these to assess progress against school and national targets. These long-term assessments are based on end-of-year tests and teacher assessments. Children undertake the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and the optional national tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. Teachers also make annual assessments of children's progress based on the Target tracker evidence collected throughout the year.