

ST ANDREW'S METHODIST PRIMARY SCHOOL



English

Reviewed: January 2024

Headteacher:

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Chair/Vice Chair of Governing Board:

Geoff Jones

Date of Next Review: January 2024

This policy has been scrutinized to ensure it meets the requirements of the single equality duties. The school will make every reasonable adjustment to comply with the duties and actively avoid discrimination.

Philosophy

At St Andrew's we recognize that English extends to all aspects of a pupil's life. The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of ideas, views and feelings. It is a core aspect of the curriculum, where high expectation across all strands allows children to **'Strive for excellence, together as one with God'** reflecting our Christian vision. Children become empowered to interpret the world around them and make sense of their experience; in this sense, literacy is a tool for our thinking and our learning.

Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and play-scripts/drama, as well as of non-fiction and a range of multi-media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins; ensuring that they are at the heart of the learning experience. As a result, our children grow in wisdom, knowledge and skills allowing them to develop academically, culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually.

We value reading and writing as key life skills and are dedicated to enabling our pupils to become lifelong readers and writers.

We believe that reading is crucial for academic success and that a fundamental pathway to high achievement in reading begins with a secure knowledge of the English phonetic code. It is therefore our intent to ensure that all children are taught the English phonetic code and are secure in their knowledge and application of this to support them when reading and decoding words. In addition, it is our intent to develop the children's understanding of vocabulary, develop their knowledge of different authors and genres and to enhance and strengthen their comprehension skills. This will give them a good understanding of what they have just read. We want our children to be passionate and enthusiastic readers and strive to make reading fun and engaging, so that our children become independent and enthusiastic readers.

Equally, we strive for our pupils to enjoy the writing process and to be proud of their written skills, possessing a deep appreciation of the written word. We want the skills taught when reading to be transferred to writing. We want pupils to use the text they have read or heard, and the skills learnt and knowledge acquired from this, when using their own authorial voice. Hence, we aspire for every child to leave St Andrew's with the skills of an excellent writer.

The aims of teaching English are:

- To enable children to speak with clarity, confidence and expression and to take account of their audience, purpose and differing situations.
- To encourage children to listen with concentration to others, to respond and build on their ideas and views and to identify features of language used for specific purposes.
- To show children how to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands.
- To teach children effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal, through a variety of drama activities.
- To use phonological awareness to decode and encode words.
- To help children to be able to read with fluency, accuracy, understanding and enjoyment.
- To help them become confident, independent readers, through an appropriate focus on word-sentence and text-level knowledge.
- To develop enthusiastic and reflective readers, through contact with challenging and substantial texts.
- To help the children to develop an understanding that writing is both essential to thinking and learning and that it is enjoyable in its own right.

- To enable children to learn to communicate meaning in narrative and non-narrative texts, spelling and punctuating accurately and for a range of purposes.
- To enable the children to improve their planning, drafting and editing of their work.
- To allow children to appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage, as well as the increasingly diverse world that we live in, through exposing them to a variety of fiction, non-fiction and poetry genres/themes.
- To ensure children have the opportunity to creatively access the objectives outlined in the English curriculum throughout their literacy learning in our school, in order to help them achieve to their full potential. By the end of each key stage, pupils are encouraged to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the new programme of study.

The Curriculum

English is a core subject within the National Curriculum. We use this and the 'Supersonic Phonics' scheme as a basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English.

The Early Years/Foundation Stage (EYFS) children are taught the English skills outlined in the EYFS curriculum 2023 – communication, language and literacy. We aim for Nursery and Reception children to be given opportunities to:

- speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities;
- use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum;
- participate in high-quality back-and-forth interactions and conversations;
- engage in role-play and story-telling activities;
- be read to frequently and actively join in with stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems;
- become immersed in an environment rich in print, language and with possibilities for communication.

At Key Stage One (KS1), children should learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They should begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They should use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds. During Year 1, teachers build on work from the EYFS.

At Key Stage Two (KS2), children should learn to become fluent, articulate speakers and good listeners and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They should read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They should explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

By the end of KS2 we aim for a child, the learner, to be able to:

- Read easily, fluently and with good understanding.
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information- having an interest in books and reading for enjoyment.
- Acquire a wide vocabulary, show an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.
- Appreciate a rich and varied literary heritage.
- Write confidently, clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences, orchestrating a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct.
- Use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas.
- Be competent in the arts of speaking and listening, designing and giving formal presentations to others and participating in debate.

- Have an interest in words, their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms.
- Understand a range of text-types and genres – be able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation and audience.
- Demonstrate a vibrant imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.
- Have a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their responses.
- Be confident and accurate spellers, applying taught phonic strategies.
- Be able to proof read their own writing and confidently demonstrate self-correction and editing skills to further improve their written pieces.
- Have acquired the skills of language that are essential to participating fully as a member of society, including speaking and writing fluently so that they can effectively communicate their ideas and emotions to others, and through their reading and listening skills, others can communicate with them – as outlined in the National Curriculum aims.

Subject Organisation

In Nursery and Reception, the statutory framework for the EYFS 2023 is followed to ensure continuity and progression from the EYFS through to the National Curriculum. Planning and provision is related to attainment, not age.

Literacy, language and communication in the EYFS has a very high profile and is taught through a wide variety of well-planned, stimulating activities, both indoors and outdoors. Literacy is embedded within other areas of learning, including creative reading and writing opportunities in the continuous and enhanced provision. The children learn through focussed and independent activities, as well as through child-initiated and play-based activities in the areas of provision.

Children in the EYFS have daily 20 minute phonics sessions.

From Years 1-6, the English curriculum is planned from the National Curriculum 2013. English work covers the elements of the new programmes of study relevant to their year group:

1. Spoken language
2. Reading (wording reading and comprehension)
3. Writing (transcription and composition)
4. Spelling, vocabulary, punctuation and grammar

In KS1 and 2, English is taught as a discrete subject for **one hour per day**. This may consist of a mixture of the above elements or focus on only one, dependent on the objective of the lesson. These lessons are supplemented by daily guided reading, daily phonics and /or spelling lessons, and individual reading.

Teachers use National Curriculum content and weekly planning sheets to breakdown the teaching and learning of the objectives in more detail. Short-term planning focuses on specific learning objectives, teaching and learning activities, texts used, group differentiation and guided group work, as well as outcomes. Additionally, grammar and punctuation tasks are outlined on short-term plans.

Teachers review weekly planning for assessment purposes and to highlight future development and targets for the whole class, groups and individuals.

1. Approaches to Speaking and Listening

We aspire to give children an opportunity to talk and collaborate, finding their own voice, thoughts and opinions, and so embed and enhance their learning. Teachers plan for speaking and listening activities, not just in English, but in other curriculum subjects.

Approaches to speaking and listening include: talking partners, peer assessment/feedback, play scripts/drama, role-play, hot seating, poetry recitals, talking about a chosen topic, presentations, debates and group discussions.

Within each year group, teachers plan for and aim to develop the statutory speaking and listening requirements. These are highlighted in the curriculum at a level appropriate to the age of their pupils and relevant to the content of their planning.

2. Approaches to Reading

Teacher Questioning:

During sessions involving reading, staff model good reading skills, including: the pronunciation of words (linking spelling rules to reading), the purpose of punctuation in texts, the vocabulary choices chosen and why, paragraph/sentence structures and author's intentions.

Teachers use every opportunity to 'delve' into and explore texts further, steering and guiding the questioning to meet the lesson objectives and needs of the children being taught. We aim for questions to be:

- Probing – Pushing for more clarity or more depth
- Challenging – Require re-evaluation or justification for thinking
- Bridging – Move thinking across to other topics
- Reflecting – Thinking about a learning process behind an idea or point
- Extending – Move pupils towards greater complexity or difficulty
- Personalised – Personal angle or evaluative response

Reading Spines

Each year group has a 'Reading Spine' that highlights the 'key' texts that are read, analysed and explored (see class reading spines) in each year group. These are progressive and offer our children high-quality text selections that consider narrative, poetry and non-fiction. Hence, by the time pupils finish Year 6, they have read and experienced books from a wide range of genres and authors, with an extensive, rich vocabulary, supporting them in gaining a broader knowledge of the world.

These books (and the books within our provision) offer representations of a range of cultures, religions, family structures, disabilities and economic status', offering increasingly challenging themes as the children move through the school.

Some of the books included in our reading spines are utilised purely for reading for pleasure, aiming to instil a love of reading in all our students. While other texts are used as a stimulus to inspire children when creating their own written and oral pieces.

The reading spines as working documents, which meet pupils' changing needs and interests.

Guided reading (Refer to KS2 guided reading policy)

In EYFS and KS1, shared reading is timetabled in daily through a whole-class story-time at the end of each day, for approximately 15-minutes. Shared reading may also take form in the areas of continuous provision or as part of a lesson, as the opportunities arise.

In KS2, shared reading of a class text is timetabled in at the end of each day, as part of whole-class story-time, for approximately 15 minutes. Shared reading of the class text may also happen within English lessons, as appropriate to the focus and outcome.

Guided reading is taught as a whole-class five times per week, for approximately 20-30 minutes. The level of the text used is appropriate to the required reading level, offering a challenging reading experience carefully guided by the teacher.

The six domains of reading (based on National Curriculum Test Framework 2016) are embedded and incorporated as the foundations for our whole-class guided reading focuses. This means

skills are regularly revisited and developed to ensure pupils become well-rounded readers. We expect to see these skills applied in pupil's writing.

We use 'VIPERS' from 'The Literacy Shed' to explicitly teach and practise reading skills. Lessons are planned on a three-week sequence of fiction, non-fiction and poetry, to allow for a rotation of texts and a breadth of coverage.

One to One reading

From Reception to Year 2, children read individually with an adult at least twice a week. Year 3 and Year 4 children read with an adult at least once a week. This encourages regular reading, allows staff to evaluate each child's attainment and progress and monitor how often they read at home. In Years 5 and 6, this reading becomes increasingly independent.

Home Reading

Parents and carers are actively encouraged to be involved in their child's reading development. All children, from Reception to Year 6, follow a progressive banded reading scheme until deemed appropriate, where they read both at home and at school.

Parents/carers are encouraged to read with their child for at least ten minutes per evening, and are asked to comment on their child's reading in reading diaries. Reading at home is encouraged and promoted through incentives, competitions and family learning workshops.

We also encourage Parents/carers to read to their children at all ages.

Independent reading-

Children have regular opportunities to read a variety of texts independently throughout the school day. They are encouraged to use our school libraries to widen their book choices and read for pleasure.

3. Approaches to Writing

We want to ensure that children's reading and writing learning is closely linked and learning is intertwined. We teach the children to 'read as writers', exploring how grammar and sentence construction can be employed to create an effect and similarly and how vocabulary sits alongside to engage the reader.

Emergent writing

Our EYFS practitioners provide an abundance of writing activities in all areas of provision. This, along with phonics teaching, allows excellent emergent writing to develop.

Modelled writing

Teachers orally compose a planned piece of writing, demonstrating the key features and 'thoughts of a good writer'. Teachers demonstrate how to improve and develop a piece of writing by 'up-levelling' and editing it.

Shared/Guided Writing

The teacher composes a piece of writing, using ideas from the children to improve and develop it. Children write alongside the teacher. Key features and the 'thoughts of a good writer' are demonstrated, with a focus on 'up-levelling' and editing as the writing is produced and once finished. If writing is guided, a 'G' will be written next to each child's writing in their book.

Independent Writing

Weekly planning indicates the different writing experiences and tasks for groups and individuals. The teacher plans for high-quality writing experiences depending on the needs and abilities of the learner.

Assessed writing in writing portfolio books is completed independently, without support.

The Writing Process

At St Andrews, we believe that quality writing is a product of following a process of planning, crafting a range of engaging sentences, using success criteria, drafting and editing. As children travel through the school, they are taught that a drafting and editing process needs to take place, as our pupils are taught that even the best authors improve and refine. This editing may be carried out using 'fix it' pens/purple pencils or work may be redrafted and rewritten.

Handwriting

Children are taught to print letters in the EYFS. In KS1, they learn a cursive script. This develops from Y2 upwards as joined, cursive handwriting. From lower KS2 (normally in Y4) pupils use a handwriting pen as their main writing tool. Neat, careful presentation is expected, encouraged and rewarded. Handwriting expectations are in line with each child and may be adapted dependent on specific needs.

(See handwriting policy).

4. Approaches to Spelling

Phonics

At St Andrew's, we adopt a highly-structured approach to the teaching of Phonics. All children in the EYFS and KS1 follow the *Supersonic Phonics Friends* programme. Discrete daily phonic sessions take place in groups matched to the needs of each child, for between 20 to 30 minutes. The structure of each lesson and journey across the week facilitates all aspects of segmenting and blending, and ability-appropriate phonemes and graphemes. Teaching includes 'sound discrimination', and the skills of word recognition, decoding, blending and segmenting and common exception words.

To ensure phonics learning and reading complement each other, fully decodable books are matched to each stage of a child's learning.

Children are taught and encouraged to apply their phonic/spelling knowledge in their writing. The children are given access to sound mats/'Choose to use' cards (*Supersonic Phonic Friends*) and high frequency/key word mats, log books and display boards.

Spelling

In KS2, the children are taught spellings, concentrating on spelling conventions, rules and patterns. Children engage in a range of spelling tasks within their sessions to scaffold them in being able to become competent spellers. Spellings featured on the statutory word lists are introduced and practised as part of spelling revision in line with year group requirements.

To support with this, KS2 use 'Spelling Frame' (<https://spellingframe.co.uk/>). The scheme allows every word to be read aloud (supporting pronunciation), the spelling to be broken into its syllables and to be provided in a sentence, so that children also learn the meanings of the words.

For children in KS2 who are not yet ready to move onto Spelling Strategies, phonics is taught instead, using the *Supersonic Phonics Friends* programme to continue our consistent approach. Catch up phonics books are provided for these children.

(See Phonics Policy)

4.1 Vocabulary

Vocabulary is vital and the children learn that words are not only the building blocks of the sentences we craft, but a tool to express our ideas. At St Andrew's, we understand the importance of teaching and understanding the vocabulary in model texts, and supporting pupils in using them in their own writing, exploring ways in which they can be used and 'manipulated' within sentences. We use a range of stimuli and learning activities to teach vocabulary, for example, 'Word Aware' strategies and the use of the 'Descriptosaurus'.

4.2 Punctuation and Grammar

Staff expertly plan stand-alone grammar and punctuation lessons for children in Years 1 to 6, or where appropriate teach it alongside Reading and Writing. To ensure consistency and interwoven approach of all English elements, an overview of links between grammar and punctuation is outlined on our school 'Reading Spines' (Please note that these are Working Documents).

Assessment and Target Setting

We are committed to an assessment and learning cycle, where assessment is a tool to inform planning, identify gaps in learning, set targets, measure progress, and move forward learning.

In English, assessing progress and learning takes the forms of:

- Questioning at key points in lessons (e.g. mini plenaries)

In EYFS:

- Baseline on entry to Nursery and Reception.
- Nursery children undertake an individual 'WellComm' assessment. This is repeated in the summer term for those who did not meet the expected standard.
- Children are assessed using the EYFS Profile each term.
- Daily observations of pupils during self-initiated learning, evidencing assessments that link with 'Development Matters' statements. These build up a profile of each pupil, ready to make judgments at the end of Reception.
- One piece of writing each half term in Reception, assessed against 'Early Years Writing Development'.

In KS1 and KS2:

- Teacher feedback through live marking, stampers or via verbal discussion. Pupils are taught to respond from an early age, ensuring that editing and improving their work is a core part of their daily learning.
- Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their work themselves, through peer and self-assessment.
- Independent writing in the children's writing portfolios takes place three times in a half term. This is an opportunity for children to display and apply their learning. Teachers assess these pieces against the objectives for their year group. This information is uploaded to our online tracking system, *Sonar*.
- Formal standardised reading (KS1 and KS2) and grammar (KS2) assessments take place on a termly basis eg. Pira and NFER assessments.
- Summative levels are awarded on a termly basis. This is used to measure both attainment and progress according to the levels found within the National Curriculum Assessment guidelines. This is provided by the class teacher on the 'Sonar' online tracking system and is scored using a range of evidence and information, for example English exercise books, written tests, writing portfolios, 'Salford Reading Test' scores and spelling tests. (A final grade for each child is awarded in the summer term)
- Year 1 (and some Y2 pupils) undertake the national phonic screening test each June.
- Year 6 complete statutory assessments, which determine attainment and progress at the end of KS2, before transition to secondary school.

(See Marking Policy)

Inclusion

We use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons to ensure all children are fully immersed and included. We seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child, aspiring for all pupils to reach their full potential and to experience success.

All children experience a range of activities suited to different learning styles; including whole-class teaching, guided activities, small group tasks and independent work. We use appropriate classroom resources, differentiated work and teaching assistants to support children, and to enable work to be matched closely to the needs of individuals and in line with the expectations of the year group.

Staff set high expectations for all children to achieve, including boys, girls, pupils with SEND and EAL. We will also set high expectations for pupils from all social and cultural backgrounds. Where needed, reasonable and suitable adaptations are made to meet the needs of all learners. Resources such as coloured overlays or books for dyslexic readers support individuals in accessing an inclusive curriculum.

(See SEND Policy)

Intervention Programmes

At St Andrew's, there are intervention programmes and groups in place for both children with specific needs and for those children who require some extra support/ 'booster' work to positively promote progress (see SEND and inclusion policy).

Equal Opportunities

All children have equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background. We aim to celebrate the diverse world that we live within through the study of a selection of texts that reflect a variety of traditions and cultures.

Cross Curricular Opportunities

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links in English. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to wider learning and the breadth of the curriculum. Studied texts used may connect to the wider curriculum and writing outcomes may link to the topics being taught in other subjects, where relevant.

Computing

Opportunities to use computing and electronic devices to support teaching and learning in English will be planned and used where it enhances children's learning. For example, when recording, reviewing and analysing dramatic performances, or in multimedia to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning.

Resources

Staff make use of, and teach children to become increasingly independent when making use of, resources which support reading and writing processes. These include:

- Access to texts from our Reading Spines
- A wide range of texts in our school libraries, from a range of genres

- Dictionaries
- Thesauruses
- Phonics 'Choose to use' cards
- Alphabet strips
- Word mats
- Puppets
- Electronic devices, such as laptops and tablets

Role of Subject Leaders

The subject leader/s should be primarily responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

- Monitoring and evaluating English throughout the school
- Monitoring planning and curriculum coverage
- Taking joint responsibility for book scrutinies to monitor and ensure high standards of teaching and learning
- Contributing to the school improvement planning process
- Monitoring pupil progress and tracking systems
- Organising provision of English (including intervention and support programmes)
- Encouraging the importance of a high-quality, language-rich learning environment
- Developing quality-first teaching
- Considering and liaising with other members of staff concerning the deployment and provision of support staff
- Taking the lead in policy development
- Auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD and organising suitable training courses
- Attending relevant training courses to keep abreast of current issues and developments
- Purchasing and organising resources
- Keeping up to date with recent English developments and organising the dissemination of resources through staff training and INSET days
- Celebrate a passion for reading and writing throughout school
- Encourage parental involvement, e.g. family learning workshops, parent workshops.
- Organise wider events linked to English, e.g. book fair, family learning workshops, World Book Day.

Conclusion

This policy should be read in conjunction with the English National Curriculum 2014 and other relevant school policies including:

- Whole-Class KS2 Guided Reading Policy
- Phonics Policy
- Handwriting Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Marking Policy
- SEND and Inclusion Policy

The whole-school reading spines and poetry spine should also be read alongside this policy.