



## St Edmund's and St Thomas' Catholic Primary School

### English Curriculum Statement

Subject Leader – Alison Pritchard

#### Intent

At St Edmund's and St Thomas' Catholic Primary School we believe that English is at the heart of education. English pervades all aspects of school life and the skills of speaking listening, reading and writing are evident in all areas of the curriculum. Through speaking, listening, reading and writing, children develop their powers of communication, inventiveness and critical awareness.

Language and literature are an essential part of everyday life and being literate is crucial for future success, both educationally and in the wider world as active citizens. For children to achieve well in English lessons and to develop a comprehensive set of literacy skills it is vital they experience a relevant and engaging English curriculum.

Our curriculum follows the guidelines detailed in the National Curriculum. We aim to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word and to develop a love of literature.

#### Speaking and Listening

**"The spoken word belongs half to him who speaks, and half to him who listens."** (French proverb)

We believe **all pupils** should have the opportunity to develop effective speaking and listening skills. These are the building blocks of successful learning. Articulate, thoughtful people can connect with, inspire and empower others. Opportunities will be provided to enable our children to develop a wide vocabulary and create a love of words and language. Pupils will be taught to use language to clarify their thoughts develop their thinking and express their ideas to others, in a range of different situations. They will be able to listen to others, evaluate and question what has been said and offer contributions that build on what has been discussed. Through group discussion activities they will develop the language and social skills needed for successful co-operation and collaboration. Through drama activities and role-play our children will explore and develop an understanding of a broad range of social, cultural and historical issues; as well as developing an understanding of themes and ideas contained in literature.

#### Reading:

**"A child who reads will be an adult who thinks."** (Unknown)

We believe **all pupils** should have the opportunity to be fluent, confident readers able to successfully comprehend and understand a wide range of texts. We want pupils to develop a love of reading, a good knowledge of a range of authors and be able to understand more about the world through the knowledge they gain from texts. By the end of their time at primary school, all children should be able to read fluently and with confidence, in any subject and therefore be ready for their forthcoming secondary education. We understand the important role parents and carers play in supporting their children's reading at home. As a result, we promote a strong home-school partnership which encourages parents and carers to value reading, through regularly listening to their children read or ensuring their children develop a reading habit.

### **Writing:**

**'You can make anything by writing.'** (C S Lewis)

We believe quality literature, inspiring cross-curricular links and first-hand experiences are the best means for inspiring children to want to write. Reading along with speaking and listening activities are vital components in ensuring the writing process is taught in an engaging and effective way.

We believe **all pupils** should be able to confidently communicate their knowledge, ideas and opinions through their writing. We want pupils to acquire a wide vocabulary, a solid understanding of grammar and be able to spell new words by effectively applying the spelling patterns and rules they learn throughout their time in primary school. We want them to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences. We believe that all pupils should be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their writing, in part by developing a good, joined, handwriting style by the time they move to secondary school. We believe that all good writers refine and edit their writing over time, so we want children to develop independence in being able to identify their own areas for improvement in all pieces of writing, editing their work effectively during and after the writing process. We understand the importance of parents and carers in supporting their children to develop both grammar, spelling and composition skills and so we want to encourage a home-school partnership which enables parents and carers to understand how to enhance the skills being taught in school.

### **Implementation**

<b>Daily English lesson, including 1 extended writing lesson. Grammar lessons embedded in literacy activities</b>  All year groups	<b>4 x RWI phonics and reading lessons. Taught in ability-based groups</b>  Rec- Y2 Nursery speed sounds set 1 in Summer term Nurse learn rhymes etc Autumn and Spring term	<b>4 x RWI Spelling lessons and RWI Comprehension lessons. Taught in ability-based groups</b>  Y2&Y3	<b>4 x RWI Spelling lessons and Reciprocal Reading lessons. Taught in ability-based groups</b>  Y3-Y6
<b>Daily handwriting lesson</b>  Rec- Y3	<b>Daily silent reading sessions – Accelerated Reading Reading for Pleasure</b>  Y3-Y6	<b>Daily story time</b>  All year groups	<b>Weekly guided reading/ 1:1 reading with target pupils/groups</b>  Rec- Y6

### **Reading and Phonics**

In **EYFS and Key Stage 1** children are taught to read through a programme of synthetic phonics (Read, Write, Inc). Pupils are grouped according to ability and receive four lessons per week which focus on the development of good phonological knowledge, the learning of key words and the opportunity to practise and apply their decoding skills in linked fiction and non-fiction books. An important component of each lesson is the time dedicated to discussing the books to ensure the children develop a good understanding of what is read. Books containing the same focus 'sounds' are sent home so the children can practise the skills with their families. This serves the dual purpose

of reinforcing learning at home as well as informing parents/carers about what the children are learning in school

Children who are not making progress or miss out on key learning will receive additional phonics/reading sessions led by RWI trained teaching assistants. All pupils are assessed every eight weeks and re-grouped according to their learning requirements. During the Summer Term, Year 1 pupils undertake a Phonics Screening Test which assesses their ability to apply what they have learnt. Pupils who do reach the expected standard in the Phonics Screening Test will continue to have RWI lessons to support the acquisition of these key skills.

Once the children have completed the phonics programme, they move onto the RWI spelling programme and continue to be taught reading through the RWI Comprehension programme. Once completed, the children are taught to read more deeply following a Reciprocal Reading format. A variety of texts are used, including poetry, cross curricular non-fiction books and Project X books.

### **Reading Support**

We develop the children's love of books through modelling reading, sharing texts and encouraging children to explore a range of books as part of their daily routine. Class teachers lead weekly guided reading lessons or 1:1 sessions for the most vulnerable pupils, using RWI or Project X books to ensure the children have ample opportunity to practise their skills. Vulnerable pupils are given further opportunities to develop their skills through additional targeted small group or 1:1 reading intervention. Interventions are also included in our extra-curricular provision whereby we provide a Phonics Breakfast club for S 1 pupils and a Reading Breakfast club for upper KS 2 pupils. Progress of all pupils is regularly reviewed and discussed with the English subject leader.

### **Home/School Partnership**

We believe if a child is encouraged to read at home, share books with parents, carers and siblings, they are more likely to be successful learners at school. We encourage parents and children to read daily, at home, either with a book from school or a book from home. We use a whole-school reading scheme (RWI Book Bag Books) that ensures progression in both word reading skills and comprehension. The scheme is structured to ensure that children have access to a wide range of texts and allows for pupils to develop their skills within a level before moving to the next level. Each child is given a reading log which details the books they have read and contains comments about their reading skills. School staff are expected and parents encouraged to write in this book. KS 2 pupils are either given a reading scheme book or a

### **Reading - Y2-Y3**

Once the children have completed the RWI phonics scheme they progress onto the RWI Comprehension programme. They continue to become more accurate, fluent readers whilst beginning to develop a deeper understanding of the texts. Vocabulary development is a significant aspect of the programme. Children are taught to consider the 'big questions' at the heart of each text and are encouraged to reflect on their understanding. Pupils continue to be taught in ability-based groups.

Children at this stage are introduced to the Accelerated Reading programme, that contains a diagnostic resource which produces detailed reports about the children's reading ability and areas for development. Pupils are given a 'ZPD range' which is matched to a broad range of texts. Children at this point are able to choose their own reading book which they expected to take home and bring to school to read during, silent reading sessions.

### **Reading – Y3-Y6**

Once the children are confident, fluent readers they are taught, in ability-based class or guided reading groups. A wide range of quality texts are used to help the children become 'deep' readers.

The texts used include: Project X reading scheme fiction and non-fiction books, short stories, newspaper/magazine articles, poetry and texts linked to other curriculum areas. The Reciprocal Reading structure and its techniques are employed to develop the children's comprehension skills. Texts are studied in detail and discussion actively encouraged. Children make predictions; clarify the meaning of the vocabulary used by the author; question the text and then summarise the main points of the discussion. Throughout this process, children are expected to use dictionaries/thesauruses and reference materials to enhance their understanding. Pupils record their personal responses in a reading journal.

Children who are still developing their decoding skills either continue with the RWI programme or receive additional support through the Early Reading Intervention (organised by the SENCo)

### **Accelerated Reading (AR)**

Pupils in Y3-Y6 are placed on the AR programme. This enables children to choose from a wider range of books matched to their reading ability. The programme enables staff to monitor the children's progress in reading; particularly regarding comprehension. Children are assessed at the beginning of each school year and then termly, using an online STAR reading test. Following each test, children are given a 'ZPD book range' which directs them to the appropriate reading material. Twenty minutes of silent reading is timetabled daily. Pupils in Y3 and Y4 are expected to read for 20 minutes daily and Y5 and Y6 pupils for 25 minutes. When a child has finished their reading book, they complete a 'quiz' which assesses their comprehension of the text. Pupils are expected to achieve an 85+% pass rate, which indicates they have comprehended the text. Senior leaders and teachers use the diagnostic reports generated by AR to monitor and inform reporting of the children's reading progress.

### **Reading for Pleasure**

Reading for pleasure is promoted through the study of quality literature in English lessons; regular opportunities for silent reading; a daily story time and the provision of well-stocked reading areas in each classroom and in the phase group libraries. Reading good quality books to the children is a priority in all year groups. Themed book weeks are used to explore the work of significant authors or to enhance the learning in other curriculum areas. Reading Buddies, involving older pupils reading with/to younger pupils, is used to promote and model good reading attitudes and behaviours. Extra-curricular clubs are provided to promote reading. This includes the *Reading is Fun Club* aimed at our younger pupils, whereby children and families are invited to work together to share picture books and undertake creative activities in response to the themes contained within them. Our KS2 pupils are given the opportunity to discuss, learn and perform poems through the provision of a poetry club.

### **Assessment**

A wide range of information is used diagnostically to make judgements about progress and attainment and recorded on the whole school data base – 'I-Track'. Children are formally monitored by the subject leader and SLT, using information detailed on I-Track to ensure that they are making at least expected progress if not more than expected progress. Children who are not on track are identified for intervention/target teaching.

Assessment in Reading includes:

- Baseline and ongoing reading conferences (assessing fluency as well as comprehension)
- 8 weekly RWI phonics assessments
- Termly NFER reading comprehension tests
- Baseline and then termly STAR assessments (AR) (reading ages, estimated oral fluency rates, ZPD reading bands)
- AR quizzes – home reading
- Y2 fluency tests – words read per minute

- Graded reading scheme
- Y1 Phonics Screening Test (also for Y2 pupils who did not reach standard in Y1)
- KS 1 SATs and KS 2 SATs

### **Writing**

English is taught as a discrete subject with lessons planned within a secure teaching sequence using a quality text as a starting point to develop the children's speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. Within this teaching sequence children receive linked grammar and punctuation lessons. In many cases links will be made by the teacher to cross-curricular topics being studied during the term to give purpose to their final written outcomes.

Children are actively encouraged to read and write independently for a variety of audiences and purposes.

At the start of the school year children complete an independent piece of writing which is assessed against a list of 'non-negotiable' writing statements. This information is used to inform planning and teaching in the first 4 weeks of term.

The '**Talk for Writing**' model is used to teach writing in Early Years and KS1. Children learn texts by heart and through a process of imitation, innovation and finally invention produce pieces of writing based on an original script. The process enables children to internalise the language structures and vocabulary needed to write through 'talking the text', as well as close reading. The approach moves from dependence towards independence, with the teacher using shared and guided teaching to develop the children's ability to write coherently and creatively.

A similar teaching sequence of imitation, innovation and invention is continued through KS2, enabling pupils to adopt the language and text structures contained in the texts used as models for writing. A greater emphasis is also placed on the planning, drafting and editing processes of writing. Themes and texts from across the curriculum are used to promote and develop cross-curricular writing skills. Genres studied and taught in English lessons result in specific skills being transferred and applied in other subject areas.

'**Dilemma led learning**' (Debra Kidd and Hywel Roberts) is a fully inclusive pedagogical approach to learning, which ensures all pupils, including pupil premium children, can access the curriculum and experience success. We use it in English lessons to motivate and inspire children to write. Lessons begin with either a prompt, proposition or problem and through a visualisation activity, drama technique or skilful questioning discuss and explore the given theme and relationships contained within it. This approach enables the children to consider issues much more deeply whilst developing a rich and varied vocabulary. It also enables the children to approach writing activities with a good understanding of the subject matter enabling them to focus on using the appropriate sentence and language structures; applying accurate punctuation and spelling and selecting and using a rich vocabulary.

### **Display**

Classroom displays are used to reflect the reading into writing process and support learning. Working Walls demonstrate the progression of skills taught during the term as well as displaying appropriate vocabulary. Editing toolkits, spelling and grammar rules, word and topic mats are also available in each class to support independent working.

Children's writing is celebrated within school and writing examples are displayed around school.

### **Enrichment**

We are a literature rich school and seek to provide our pupils with a range of opportunities to use and apply their English skills. These include preparing and leading 'Family Learning' sessions based on cross-curricular topics; celebrating school-wide book weeks or topic themed weeks; participating in local and national writing competitions and finally using and applying our oracy and literacy

schools to inform and persuade others about the local, national and global conservation issues that concern us. (We are part of the Chester Zoo conservation project provide by Ignite.)

### **Spelling**

Children are organised into ability-based groups and taught the spelling rules (detailed in the National Curriculum) using the Read, Write, Inc Spelling programme.

### **Grammar**

Both grammar and punctuation are taught daily, through discrete lessons via an online subscription resource - 'Classroom Secrets'. Learning is then linked to and reinforced through reading and writing activities.

### **Handwriting**

In Reception the children are taught to form letters correctly, with a clear focus on ensuring they have adopted an appropriate grip and that letters are correctly orientated. In KS 1 the children are taught to join letters using horizontal and vertical strokes. In KS 2 opportunities to practise handwriting continue and when the class teacher feels a child can join letters fluently and legibly, they are encouraged to write using a pen. The school uses the 'Letter-join' scheme.

### **Assessment**

Assessment of learning is completed half-termly. Children complete independent writing pieces within a unit of work, which are assessed against our writing criteria. Teachers will have at least six pieces of work through the academic year. Outcomes from the assessments are used to inform teacher's planning, so the needs of pupils can be addressed. Moderation of teacher assessment is also completed half- termly in order to ensure that judgements are accurate. Children are formally monitored by the subject leader and SLT, using information detailed on I-Track to ensure that they are making at least expected progress if not more than expected progress. Children who are not on track are identified for intervention/target teaching.

At the end of KS1 and KS2 teachers use the Teacher Assessment Framework to report Teacher assessment.

Assessment in Writing includes:

- Baseline assessment using non-negotiables of writing assessment sheets
- Ongoing pupil writing conferences
- Half-termly writing assessments supported through moderation of writing meetings with key stage colleagues, using 'in house' assessment sheets
- Attendance at Local Authority moderation of writing courses, moderating with colleagues from local schools
- Termly NFER Grammar and Spelling tests
- Termly spelling assessments of National Curriculum common exception words
- KS1 and KS2 GPS Tests

### **Impact**

**Pupils will be equipped with the speaking, listening, reading and writing skills that will enable them to progress to and access the curriculum in the next key stage.**

The % of pupils meeting age related expectations within each year group will be at least in line with national averages.

The % of pupils working at greater depth within each year group will be at least in line with national averages.

There will be no significant gaps in the progress of different groups of pupils (e.g. disadvantaged vs non-disadvantaged).

Targeted interventions will positively impact on pupils' progress, narrowing the gap.

Pupils of all abilities will be able to succeed in all English lessons because work will be appropriately scaffolded.

Children will be independent learners, able to access the next stage of their education.

Children will speak with clarity, expression and confidence to communicate their thoughts whilst also listening to those of others.

**All children will leave our school being able to read.**

Children will be able to read deeply, research effectively, ask appropriate questions, draw on prior knowledge, interpret new information and make links.

Pupils will discuss their books and work with excitement and interest.

Pupils will develop good lifelong reading habits, e.g. reading for pleasure and reading for information.

Children will read audibly, accurately and coherently.

Children will be able to explain and discuss what they have read having developed their inference and deduction skills.

Vulnerable pupils, including pupil premium pupils, will be able to demonstrate success /achievement in writing through inclusive approaches such as dilemma-led writing

Children will be secure with the conventions of writing.

Children will incorporate a wide range of vocabulary in their speech and in their writing.

Pupils will know how to adapt their writing based on the context, purpose and audience of the writing activity.

Writing books will evidence a clear teaching sequence: reading and responding; gathering ideas; planning and drafting; editing and improving.

Pupils will leave primary school being able to effectively apply spelling rules and patterns they have been taught.

Pupils will develop a fluent, legible handwriting style.

Writing across the curriculum will be of the same standard as that found in English books.

Parents and carers will have a good understanding of how they can support reading, spelling, grammar and composition at home.