



## **St Teresa's Catholic Academy**

### **English Policy**

#### **Mission**

In line with our Mission Statement, at St Teresa's we make every effort to ensure all pupils are safe, happy and successful. This policy supports and reinforces the aims of our school, valuing all children equally and the individual gifts they and all other members of our community bring to school life at St Teresa's. We aim to love, respect, value and support everyone in our community. We aim to work and behave as well as we can and are proud of our own and others' successes.

#### **Rationale**

The National Curriculum (2014) clearly states that teaching the English language is an essential, if not the most essential role of a primary school.

We aim to develop in the children we teach an enthusiasm for English in all its forms and the confidence to express themselves both orally and through the written word. By developing a comprehensive range of reading skills we aim to foster in the children a love and appreciation of a variety of literature. These skills will enable them to access all aspects of the curriculum.

The policy should be read in conjunction with the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (2021) and the National Curriculum (2014). These set out the rationale for teaching each area of the English Curriculum and specify the skills that will be developed for pupils in each year group.

#### **Spoken Language**

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently in Standard English.

They should:

- Justify ideas with reasons
- Ask questions to check understanding
- Develop vocabulary and build knowledge
- Negotiate
- Evaluate and build on the ideas of others
- Select the appropriate register for effective communication
- Give well-structured descriptions and explanations
- Speculate, hypothesise and explore ideas
- Organise their ideas prior to writing

#### **Our aims and connected provision:**

We encourage our pupils to speak clearly and confidently and articulate their views and opinions. We teach that children need to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose. Listening and responding to literature, giving and receiving instructions. They develop the skills of participating effectively in group discussions.

Ways in which we support this include:

- Activities which are planned to encourage full and active participation by all children, irrespective of ability
- School plays/nativities/productions
- School worships
- Events within the community
- School Council
- Class debates
- Talk partners
- Book talk sessions
- Drama / role play
- PSHE and circle time
- Big Question discussion in RE
- Children with specific speech and language and auditory problems will be identified and specialist help sought, where appropriate

## **Reading**

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Reading is singled out as of extreme importance since through it 'pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually'. Reading allows pupils to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know.

The English Curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions:

- Word reading/ decoding
- Comprehension

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, writing, grammar and vocabulary. We also understand that reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning and we encourage and praise children at every stage.

## **Our aims and connected provision:**

### **Foundation Stage:**

The teacher introduces concepts of print and teaches synthetic phonic skills using the 'Bug Club Phonics' scheme in differentiated groups on a daily basis. The children take home 2 books a week; both of which are linked to their Phonics learning. Children are rewarded when they achieve 100 reads. Every child is heard reading individually at least once a week (more for children who are reading at a level below age expected level). Stories are shared twice a day to model the concept of reading and to develop a love of books and reading. We model the correct procedures for reading such as reading from left to right and turning onto the next page.

### **In Key Stage One:**

Using 'Bug Club Phonics' the children continue to have daily phonics lessons; children are divided into differentiated groups dependent on their current Phonics phase.

Guided reading sessions in Year 2 are organised weekly. These sessions are used to teach word reading, comprehension and vocabulary skills as both a whole class and in smaller groups with adult support. Children take home 2 books each week, which relate to their phonetical awareness and are fully decodable to share with parents. Children are rewarded when they achieve 100 reads. The children are taught skills to decode real and nonsense words ready for the end of Year One Government Phonics Test.

### **In Key Stage Two:**

The progress made in Key Stage One is built upon. In Guided Reading/Comprehension the focus is on developing higher order reading skills such as inference and deduction, skimming and scanning and the ability to read texts critically. Where necessary, specific phonic support is used to develop children's reading skills through the use of interventions. Children continue to participate in Guided Reading/Comprehension sessions 3x weekly. Pupils are encouraged to read widely, through our use of differing class texts, library visits and high quality attractive books in classrooms. Every child in KS2 has a home reading record in which their home reading is recorded 3x weekly as a minimum. Children are rewarded when they achieve 100 reads.

Classrooms have dedicated areas where a love of reading is encouraged and fostered.

### **Library:**

Children have the opportunity to select library books from the school library to read in school or at home. Children are encouraged to choose books, which they are interested in and this helps to promote reading for pleasure. The school library is run by pupil librarians.

### **Writing**

The National Curriculum states that pupils should:

- Develop the stamina and skills to write at length
- Use accurate spelling and punctuation
- Be grammatically correct
- Write in a range of ways and purposes including narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations
- Write to support their understanding and consolidation of what they have heard or read

The 2014 Curriculum divides writing skills into:

- Transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- Composition (articulating ideas in speech and writing)
- Grammar, vocabulary and punctuation

We recognise that these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of these sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning.

### **Our aims and connected provision:**

We teach children to develop and communicate their ideas clearly in the following ways:

- When new grammar and punctuation concepts are introduced, they are taught discretely; we then ensure this learning is embedded in our English teaching
- We correct grammatical error orally/ written work (where appropriate)
- We have a systematic approach, we revisit key learning and build upon it in all areas from phonics, through to grammar and spelling
- We use high quality texts, modelling and shared/ collaborative writing to demonstrate good practice
- We provide writing models for children to use as an initial basis for their own independent writing
- We use drama, role play and hot-seating to help pupils to help develop their ideas
- We provide writing frames and word banks to support the least confident
- We provide time for planning, purple pen/blue pencil editing and revising
- We ask children to complete a Friday Focus each week which outlines which specific area of their writing they wish to focus on the following week
- We use checklists for pupils to self-assess or peer assess, when appropriate so they can evaluate effectively

In the Foundation Stage, we model and teach the children how to write using non-cursive script. This places a strong focus on the accurate formation of letters, which will later support their ability to write using joined cursive

handwriting. Another priority is to develop the children's fine and gross motor skills ensuring that they have the required strength and mobility to write accurately and for a reasonable length of time.

In order to achieve this, we support the children in the following ways:

- Access to resources which support the development of Gross motor skills.
- Daily Fine motor skill activities
- A daily writing activity within their phonics session.
- Twice a week handwriting sessions.

In KS1 and beyond, we teach and encourage joined cursive handwriting to support spelling and speed in the following ways:

- Regular cursive handwriting sessions in KS1
- In KS2 handwriting is taught as part of our morning starters
- In KS2 handwriting lessons extra support is given for children who are struggling to develop a joined style
- We provide support for pupils with learning and motor difficulties

We encourage our pupils to have a wide and growing vocabulary in a number of ways, these include:

- Spelling lists/ key words to take home and learn – Spelling Shed
- Display of key words linked to topics and subjects
- Using the correct vocabulary orally
- In-depth word based lessons looking at patterns
- Magpie vocabulary walls in all classrooms
- Using challenging texts in lessons which help broaden vocabulary
- Using dictionaries, thesaurus and similar programmes
- Targeted one to one/ small group support, where appropriate

## **Planning and Assessment**

### **Planning**

- Long term overviews are completed for each academic year
- Planning for each year group is created using the National Curriculum objectives
- Planning shows differentiation by ability
- English is planned separately to other subjects however, as part of our creative Learning Focus links are considered and maximised to engage pupils
- Short term – weekly planning is flexible allowing for assessment for learning after each session/ group of sessions
- Planning is annotated in red to outline misconceptions/successes to inform future planning

### **Assessment**

- Staff assess pupils learning during and as part of every English session, they adapt their practice accordingly
- Phonics are assessed at least termly and Year 1 are assessed using the Year 1 Phonics Screening Test.
- During Guided Reading pupils are assessed at each session against the reading focus
- Formal assessments of reading comprehension ability are carried out, tracked and monitored at least termly
- Writing levels are assessed using STA grids and age-related benchmarks
- Staff attend moderating sessions within county including the local cluster/MAT
- End of Key Stage Assessments are analysed by the English Leaders and Head teacher and feed into the school SEF, development plan and performance management

## **Professional development**

- The English Leader or delegated member of staff will attend training from the LEA. Training and information will be cascaded to members of staff

- Staff may be asked to attend relevant courses during the school year to support their development
- Moderation takes place in house, within the cluster/MAT and with support from the LEA

### **Specific groups**

- Analysis of English achievement is carried out termly, pupils who are not making expected progress are discussed and plans made
- Pupils entitled to Pupil Premium are given additional English support and this is monitored for effectiveness termly
- Pupils with EAL are given additional support in all aspects of English when required
- Pupils who are gifted and talented receive appropriate differentiation of the curriculum
- Pupils with SEN will, where necessary, have English based targets on their SEN Support Plan and additional provision is agreed with the class teacher and SEN team. These are reviewed termly

### **Associated Policies**

- SEND
- Equality Scheme
- Teaching and learning
- Assessment