

St. James CE Primary School



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English Policy

Flourish
Respect Courage
Friendship Develop
StrongGrowth
Community StJames' Strive
God Trust Kindness
Freedom Unique Perseverance
DeepRoots Positivity
WholeChild
Responsibility

Statement of Vision and Values

In consultation with pupils, parents, governors, community members and staff our vision and values were generated based on our inspiration from the Parable of the Sower and how this links to our children and their journey with us.

Our School Vision:

Within our community we strive to develop deep **roots**, strong **growth** and freedom to **flourish** as a unique and whole child of God.

Matthew 13 - The Parable of the Sower – ‘... but the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it.produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.’



Values

We decided at St James CE Primary School that **Kindness and Respect** are values which we feel underpin our vision and are incorporated in all we do and say – so therefore these two values will be taught alongside all the other six values we have chosen.

| ½ termly focus | Value |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| Autumn 1 | Responsibility |
| Autumn 2 | Friendship |
| Spring 1 | Perseverance |
| Spring 2 | Trust |
| Summer 1 | Courage |
| Summer 2 | Positivity |

St James' CE Primary School is committed to the safeguarding of our pupils and staff.

English Policy

Intent

At St. James CE Primary School, it is our aim for all children to learn to speak, read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding, enabling them to become independent, confident and creative learners. Through our teaching of English, we aim to nurture within children a love for books - reading for their own genuine enjoyment. Therefore, it is our philosophy that children should engage in a curriculum that inspires their reading, writing and spoken language.

We believe the teaching of English is a crucial key to improving learning and raising standards. It supports children to access subjects across the curriculum, to read for information and pleasure, to communicate confidently and effectively.

Our aim is for all children to have equal access to English, which is one of the core subjects of the 2014 National Curriculum. The school values all pupils' efforts to read, write and talk. This is demonstrated by pupil's work displayed in classrooms, a positive agreed approach to assessment, and the role of self assessment in pupil's progress.

We intend that each child:

- To create confident writers who develop stamina for writing throughout school and are able to write at length.
- For all of our children to be independent writers, building on a range of skills as they work through each journey of writing.
- That all of our children are exposed to high quality texts that model excellent writing practises across a broad range of genres.
- Ensure that all pupils know how to plan, practise, evaluate their work as well as carry out an effective edit and improvement process using feedback from the teacher.
- That our children are challenged and encouraged to take risks and view mistakes as a positive part of the learning process.
- To provide a balanced and broad curriculum, which allows the children to write within the different genres alongside handwriting, spelling, grammar and widening vocabulary.
- To be inclusive of all children, including SEND by providing the appropriate scaffolding, support and writing tools so that children who need adaptations in their writing processes can experience success.
- That our children have high expectations of themselves where they take pride in all aspects of learning and in everything they produce.

Implementation

Reading:

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Reading is at the core of our curriculum. Children will read at school as well as listen to adults and other children read to help them develop listening skills as well as fluency when reading aloud. Each classroom has a library where children can select books to read as well as use the Collins Big Cat books which are linked to the phonics programme, we use in EYFS and key stage and lower key stage 2. Each class have a novel that is shared each day and develops listening skills. The teaching of comprehension is essential in children and learning how to understand the text and the author choices is a key area of development. These are taught through comprehension lessons and through our guided reading sessions. Reading for pleasure and enjoyment is at the heart of what we do and we read across the curriculum and through all our lessons so that our children can access the wide range of genres to enable them to be successful readers that will impact their learning.

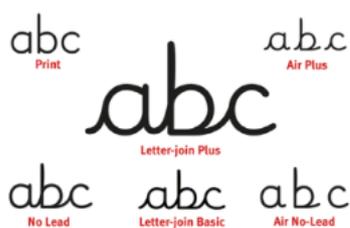
Phonics:

At St James we use the 'Little Wandle' phonics programme that is linked to our reading books which are from Collins Big Cat. The programme fosters Children's speaking and listening skills and equips them the phonic knowledge and skills to enable them to become a fluent reader. Foundation stage and Key stage 1 classes have daily Phonics lessons that reinforces a letter sound and phase. There are 5 phases and these are taught as a whole class and in smaller groups or on a 1:1 basis. The books that the children are reading matches the phonics attainment and teaching. High quality lessons, practical and interactive lessons are used and in Year1 the children complete a phonics screening check in the summer term. This shows whether they have met the expected standard of phonics knowledge for their age. Children who do not the standards are supported in Year2 to help them reach the expected standard. All staff are trained to deliver the phonics programme to ensure consistency and support for the children.

Handwriting

Cursive handwriting teaches pupils to join letters in words as a series of continuous flowing movements or patterns and children are taught cursive handwriting from Reception onwards using 'Letterjoin' our online platform that is used in school and through home learning. In reception and Year 1 children are taught correct letter formation through print. In year 2 we use begin the teaching of continuous cursive writing. Children will develop writing words without taking the pencil off the page. Continuous style provides a directional left, right movement. This flowing, rhythmical movement aids speed and fluency particularly when practised from Foundation level with the final product being neat and fast. This cursive style also lessens the chance of reversing letters by eliminating the need to lift the pencil between letters. The spaces between words become distinct and distinction between upper and lower case is clearer. Pupils with specific learning disabilities find continuous cursive useful because the pencil stays on the page throughout every word, thus simplifying the movement.

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Spelling

At St James' we believe that spelling has a direct effect upon progress in all other areas of the curriculum and is crucial to developing a child's confidence, motivation and self-esteem. We provide children with a range of spelling strategies throughout school which cater for different learning styles. Early spelling is taught through phonic work in Early Years, Foundation and Key Stage 1 using our phonics programme of 'Little Waddle' and Collins Big Cat. As children move from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2, the emphasis shifts from the teaching of phonics to more focussed teaching of spelling strategies, conventions and rules to build upon the children's established phonic knowledge. However, phonic support and intervention is still provided in Key Stage 2 to those children who need it.

Writing Process

Each unit of writing will consist of learning done through a learning journey throughout the unit/ theme in lessons delivered and planned for by our teachers using the national curriculum objectives. This is in order to ensure that the build-up of knowledge and skills is progressive and clear. Although the pedagogical process is detailed for each lesson, teachers have the professional scope to make adjustments where they think they are needed. For example, if more than one lesson is needed to embed a skill then this can be done or if an extra lesson is needed for drama/speaking and listening then teachers have the freedom to do so. Each stage of the learning process is evident in our books, learning environment, planning and pupil voice discussions. Learning journeys are usually based on high quality texts but we also use videos, real life events, images or lyrics from a song (anything that might get the children excited about writing).

In reception the daily routine will include planned and child-initiated activities that include:

- a wealth of opportunities to develop and experience speaking and listening;
- experiences that develop gross and fine motor skills through play, finger gym to develop handwriting skills
- sharing and enjoying a range of rhymes, songs, stories and books;
- immersion in a print rich environment with opportunities for oral language and written communication e.g. differentiated phonic activities;
- talk for writing where children are exposed to quality core texts and repeat the stories to rehearse the story language used
- focus activities that teach children early communication language and literacy skills.
- Guided Reading three times a week, each child is taking part at their level

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- Core book activities with a shared reading and writing focus each week
- Little Wandle Letters and sounds sessions are daily and include Child initiated and adult led writing

At the end of the Foundation Stage, children will meet with their new teacher in their new classroom before they move to Year 1.

The teaching of English in KS1 will include:

- genre overviews to identify the learning objectives, success criteria and outcomes of each unit of work and weekly plans tailored to the needs of our children
- speaking and listening activities, e.g. role play, pair talk, drama and hot seating in order to prepare pupils for the writing process;
- explicit teaching of phonics and spelling using the Little Wandle Letter and Sounds (see Phonics Policy)
- quality texts to develop grammatical awareness and punctuation skills
- using a range of genres will develop comprehension and composition skills and the understanding of print;
- letter formation and handwriting taught and modelled using the Letter-join handwriting scheme (see handwriting policy)
- immersion in a print rich environment that promotes a reading culture develops children's oral and written communication.

Key Stage 2 (KS2 - Years 3 to 6)

In KS2 children learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They explore the use of language and learn how the structure of language works.

At the beginning of Year 3, the Year 2 teacher assessments (informed through the KS1 tests) will enable the planned work to follow a smooth transition.

The teaching of English in KS2 will include:

- genre overviews to identify the learning objectives, success criteria and outcomes of each unit of work and weekly plans tailored to the needs of our children
- explicit teaching of spelling strategies and rules and Little Wandle Letters and Sounds where required
- use of quality texts to develop grammatical awareness and punctuation skills;
- reading a range of genres to develop comprehension skills and scaffold writing;
- a range of text types, including cross-curricular writing, modelled to promote sustained composition;
- handwriting and presentational skills taught and modelled using the letter-join programme
- immersion in a print rich environment that promotes a reading culture and develops speaking and listening.

Subject organisation

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The Early Learning Goals are followed in Reception to ensure continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage through to year 6.

Across the school, children are taught in year groups. They have the opportunity to work independently or co-operate in ability or mixed ability groups when appropriate. English is taught as a discrete subject, but cross-curricular links are developed and encouraged, particularly with our Curriculum Maestro Topics. With the school's curriculum, there is provision for a range of teaching and learning inputs, including cross curricular links, international links, drama, talking partners, trips, theatre/storytelling workshops, speakers, media etc.

Computing and ICT

Information and Communication Technology is used to enhance the learning experience and support effective teaching by the use of electronic media eg the use of digi-cameras, lap-tops, fiction, non-fiction, drama texts, magazines, encyclopaedias, newspapers, reference books, dictionaries/thesaurus, internet, e-mail etc. All classes have screen and access to Ipad's and laptops for in class use (at least one laptop between two pupils and one each in year 6). There are a range of writing and teaching programs on all computers to support the teaching and acquisition of literacy skills and for presentation of work.

In addition to the online resources available, each classroom has age-appropriate resources, which include reading books, textbooks, support books with spelling, grammar and punctuation resources for teachers and computing resources alongside the Letter-join handwriting scheme. Reading areas in classrooms are used, where children can use the books as home-reading books. There is also a range of reading scheme books that are accessible for children in Reception up to Year 6 for reading sessions or to for them to take home, where they would continue to improve their reading.

Approaches to Speaking and Listening

In line with the New 2014 English Curriculum, we believe that speaking and listening is fundamental to children's development and that confidence in this area is essential to be successful in all areas of English development.

These oral skills are directly taught, modelled and sensitively encouraged in whole class and small group settings. Opportunities across the school's Curriculum Maestro curriculum are planned for and developed. Children play an active part in presentations, topic talks, group discussions, debates and drama activities. Children also participate in school productions and class assemblies during the year. Digital recordings, photos and sometimes podcasts are used as a means of capturing achievement, progress and keeping records in speaking and listening.

Approaches to Reading

We aim to enable the children to read a range of texts with increasing fluency and with understanding, to have confidence in themselves, to find pleasure and enjoyment in reading, as

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well as reading for information, interest, entertainment and purpose. Children need to be aware that reading is necessary for themselves, for learning across the curriculum and life.

The books in classrooms provide a range of reading - including a mixture of 'real' books, both fiction and non-fiction. Children in EYFS and KS1 will work through a programme of sequenced books from the reading scheme that have been colour coded according to reading levels (Book Banding). Children are encouraged to select reading books independently. Once children are able to read the 'Diamond' book band independently they will become a 'Free Reader' enabling them to select their own 'real' books within their classroom or even from other year groups.

Children read regularly to themselves and as frequently as possible to teachers, other adults and other children. Weekly guided reading or whole class reading sessions take place in KS1 and KS2 outside of English lessons. Children are encouraged to take books home. Parents are encouraged to share in the development of reading skills by listening to their children read and to leave a comment in their children's Home-School reading record. In upper KS2 children are encouraged to be signing their own reading record by writing a short sentence about what they have read.

The teaching of phonics begins in Reception using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds programme.

Reading is taught through:

Whole Class Reading - develops listening skills, a love of story and reading for pleasure. This is teacher led reading with children listening and responding to questions, predictions and vocabulary choices as appropriate to the level of the children. In all year groups this happens on a daily basis and texts are often linked to their Learning Challenge enquiries.

Shared Reading - immerses children in the pattern of story and features of text types. This happens in English sessions when introducing text and prior to writing. The teacher models as an expert reader and draws out the key elements of the content.

Guided Reading - targets children's reading skills. Guided reading takes place in small groups with teacher's and sometimes the Learning Assistant's input using a levelled text.

Whole Class Reading Workshops - enables all pupils to work with the same text, supporting each other in their learning and developing skills, in both KS1 and KS2.

Independent Reading - books are sent home with a Reading Record Book for communication with parents. Parents are encouraged to share in the development of reading skills by listening to their children read, discussing the story and to leave a comment in their children's Reading Record Book. Children are encouraged to choose books independently from the reading area to read or look at with their parents/carers. In KS1 particularly, children will work through a programme of sequenced books which will include books from the book banded reading schemes or phonically decodable books in EYFS and KS1. However, this may vary so as to encourage reading different styles of books. In Year 2 and KS2 children may choose their own chapter book to take home and these are changed regularly. Some children in KS2 are also given scheme books to further support their reading skills until they are able to read the 'Diamond' book band independently.

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The Reading Environment

The print rich environment encourages children to interact with displays, to follow instructions and signs, promoting functional language. Within the classroom the reading area is attractive and inviting. Themed displays are encouraged along with opportunities to write book reviews and show homemade books. Books are also displayed and promoted around the classroom and the whole learning environment of the school. Book and audio tapes along with story props and puppets enhance the reading environment and process.

Phonics

Little Wandle Letters and Sounds, is used as a synthetic phonics reading programme taught daily as a discrete phonics lesson from Reception through KSI (see Phonics Policy).

Assessment and target setting in Reading

Every half term the children will be assessed using an on-line Target Tracker programme which relates to the 2014 curriculum objectives. Guided reading and whole class reading workshop sessions also provide formative assessments throughout the year.

Approaches to writing

We want children to develop writing skills for a range of purposes and audiences, using spelling, punctuation and syntax appropriately and with confidence. The school aims to provide creative approaches to writing and purposes for their writing, which is encouraged across the creative curriculum both on screen and in writing. Immersion in reading, talk and preparation for writing is essential to the writing development process.

Writing is taught through:

Shared Writing / Joint Construction - is modelled by the teacher as the 'expert writer' with contributions from the children.

This is teacher-led writing with children watching and contributing ideas. Shared writing is not exclusive to English sessions and can be taught across the school's Learning Challenge curriculum. The emphasis may be on the generation of ideas, grammatical awareness, and spelling and phonics, compositional, transcriptional, and presentational skills alongside other key strategies needed in writing. Not all of these can be modelled in one session, but the teacher as the expert writer leads the cumulative writing process.

Guided Writing - targets children at their point of writing.

Guided writing takes place in small groups with a teaching focus using targets set by identified objectives and writing already modelled. Feedback on progress is provided for each writing

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session and each guided group writes with a teacher. The main part of the session is spent by the child writing with the adult intervening as appropriate.

In Reception children receive more individualised support from the teacher/support staff at the point of writing.

Opportunities for developmental writing

In Reception children experience writing in a range of settings and opportunities for developmental writing available through all areas of learning and throughout the learning environment. Children's own attempts at early writing are celebrated and promoted, alongside the direct teaching of the key skills that will enable the children to progress through the stages of writing development. In Reception and KS1, children's writing that needs interpretation can be scribed by a teacher or adult working with the group. Ideally this is during the learning session.

Independent Writing

Throughout the school children have many opportunities to develop their confidence and practise their writing skills. Independent writing is supported through the use of dictionaries, word banks, writing frames or plans and alphabet cards.

Writing Environment

The school environment celebrates quality writing through displays of work in both handwritten and typed form as well as signs and labels. Opportunities for writing are planned for and accessible throughout the learning environment and school day. Functional and creative writing are demonstrated and promoted by staff and visitors.

Handwriting

Handwriting and letter formation is taught throughout the school. The correct way of forming letters with joining flicks is modelled by the teacher using the Letter-join handwriting scheme. Good presentation is emphasised at all times and through all forms of writing. Support is given to those with poor pencil grip through triangular pencils and/or pencil grips. Left-handed writers are sat on the left hand side of the table. Pens are introduced in the form of a 'Pen Licence' once a child's handwriting and presentational skills are correct and consistent

We aim for children to:

- form letters correctly, leading to a fluent, legible and individual style
- write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed
- use different forms of handwriting for different purposes

All staff are expected to model the level of handwriting expected across the school. (see handwriting policy)

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Assessment and target setting in writing

Work will be assessed in line with the Assessment / Feedback and Marking Policy.

- Pre & post assessments - are used at the beginning of each unit (genre) of work where teachers and children can evaluate their progress in writing
- The Target Tracker Assessments are used every half term to assess the children's knowledge and skills relating to grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Children's daily English work is regularly marked with a range of feedback (linked to the learning intention) providing closing the gap comments, extensions and achievement relating to the lesson success criteria. Children are also encouraged to participate in the assessment of their work using self-assessment or peer assessment. This encourages children to understand what their next steps are for learning and to understand their targets to help them move on in their writing. Writing in books is marked using the St James' Marking Feedback policy and extended pieces of writing are marked against checklist for that genre, to ensure progress and that children are applying taught skills.

Book and English week

Book week usually takes place in the Spring Term when we organise events to promote reading and writing. Children write book reviews, stories, poetry and other artistic activities. A range of reading and book related activities take place during this week.

Inclusion

We aim to ensure learning is accessible for all children, so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual learning needs. Steps are taken to support under-achieving pupils or groups of pupils, to help improve their attainment. A number of English intervention programmes are used to support targeted learners. More and most able children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided in class or other planned activities with challenges.

Differentiation: The children are mostly organised into mixed ability groups (with exception to reading groups and guided writing groups) but activities are planned to meet the (individual) learning needs of the children. The teachers' and support staffs' knowledge of individual children through a range of assessment procedures including feedback, observations and marking, allows for planned differentiation by input, activity and outcome.

Equal opportunities

All children are entitled to high quality English teaching - we aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity, additional needs, physical needs, home background or where English is an additional language. If a child is performing below the national expectations, it is the responsibility of the teacher to inform the Assessment Headteacher and English Curriculum Leader during Pupil Progress Review Meetings, conducted every term, and set appropriate English targets on the child's Individual Education Plan.

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Role of the curriculum leader

The Curriculum Leader supports the improvement of the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

Monitoring and evaluating English:-

- pupil progress including data analysis
- provision of English (including intervention and support programmes)
- the quality of the learning environment;
- the deployment and provision of support staff
- monitoring standards, progression and attainment in English
- taking the lead in policy development
- auditing and supporting colleagues in their professional development
- purchasing and organising resources
- keeping up to date with recent developments

Parents/carers involvement

Parents/carers are encouraged to support their child's development. Reading with children is crucial; the children's Reading Record Book are used for parents/carers to leave a comment about their child's reading at home. Libraries are a valuable resource for parents/carers to use with their children.

Home learning in English includes daily reading and weekly spellings. Regular projects which may include topic links, research, presentations, reports, journals etc will also form part of the English home learning.

Impact

The impact on our children is clear: progress, sustained learning and transferrable skills. With the implementation of the writing journey being well established and taught thoroughly in both key stages, children are becoming more confident writers and by the time they are in upper Key Stage 2, most genres of writing are familiar to them and the teaching can focus on creativity, writer's craft, sustained writing and manipulation of grammar and punctuation skills. Teachers complete termly assessment, which allows them to have a clear understanding of what the children in their class need in order to become a successful writer and reader and that then influences what and how it is taught to the children in order for them to be successful.

As all aspects of English are an integral part of the curriculum, cross curricular writing standards have also improved and skills taught in the English lesson are transferred into other subjects; this shows consolidation of skills and a deeper understanding of how and when to use specific grammar, punctuation and grammar objectives.

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We hope that as children move on from St James' to further their education and learning, that their creativity, passion for English and high aspirations travel with them and continue to grow and develop as they do, so that they are a lifetime reader and writer.

Conclusion

This policy also needs to be applied in line with other school policies and therefore should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

Teaching and Learning Policy

Assessment Policy

Inclusion Policy

Computing & ICT Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Phonics Policy

English Curriculum Leader: Mrs. Claire Oliveri and Mrs. Marina Loizou

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Review Date: November 2024