

St Paul's CE (VC) First School

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English Policy

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Philosophy

We use the National Curriculum and the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework Document, Development Matters, to plan for Speaking and Listening activities and opportunities. Talk is a key underlying factor in the development of literacy skills and language is an integral part of most learning across the curriculum.

Philosophy

At St. Paul's First School we believe that Literacy is a fundamental life skill. Language is inextricably bound up with all the learning in our school. It is important for our children to master basic language skills to:

- *Become independent learners*
- *Enable them to participate fully in everyday life.*
- *Enable them to communicate effectively with other people.*
- *Equip them for the world of work.*

It is vital that the "language development" is planned and organised in such a way to provide an educational programme which is as consistent as possible for each child throughout the school and through which all children have opportunities to develop their language skills, concepts, attitudes and usages to the maximum. It is our philosophy that teachers are positive role models in achieving this.

*The emphasis in our teaching of Literacy is on having respect for and building upon all of the children's home experiences and language. We intend to develop and extend this via a safe, secure and stimulating environment where children are motivated, enabling them to achieve their potential in the areas of Literacy regardless of their gender or ethnic or social background. **We believe that a vocabulary rich curriculum is key to closing gaps in attainment and through English and other curriculum areas we endeavour to provide our children with opportunities to hear, write and use a growing bank of words. "Knowing more words makes you smarter" research supports this affirmation and this is a key message shared with all at St. Paul's First School.***

Basic Skills Statement

Basic skills are the key to learning. At St. Paul's First School we recognise that all subjects in the curriculum can be used to develop and nurture these necessary skills. We aim to incorporate the teaching of Basic Skills throughout the curriculum in order to enable St. Paul's children to acquire the ability to read, write and speak English and use Mathematics at a level necessary to function at work and society in general.

Intent

- *To deliver all areas of the National Curriculum for English including Speaking and Listening/drama, Reading and Writing skills as the central of the language experience.*

- *To ensure that the language scheme reflects the interdependence of the three principle areas of the National Curriculum and that progress in one of these areas will directly influence and affect the progress and achievement in the others.*
- *To plan programmes of work which provide tasks and learning opportunities to develop language skills appropriate to the age and ability of the learners.*
- *To develop and maximise the learners competence in and enjoyment of language in all areas of the curriculum.*
- *To enable each child's work to demonstrate to the fullest extent their individual aptitudes, abilities and interests.*
- *To enable the children to develop skills required to employ language effectively, appropriately, constructively and imaginatively in a broad range of linguistic situations and for a wide variety of purposes and types of audience.*

English is taught as a stand-alone subject daily for at least 1 hour in Years 2, 3 and 4 and 30 minutes in Year 1. In addition to this, the children in Year 1 receive a Phonics lesson for an hour daily. Guided Reading sessions and Reading lessons also take place each week with a rota for each ability differentiated group. Spelling lessons take place daily. Handwriting lessons also take place daily using the MSL Scheme. In addition to these specific literacy based lessons, cross curricular activities are also used further develop literacy skills.

Individual policies for each area of English follow this General English Policy.

Curriculum Planning

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum and integral in all we do at St. Paul's First School.

Curriculum planning in English is carried out in three phases; long-term, medium term and short term. The National Curriculum details what we teach in the long-term while our yearly teaching programme identifies the key objectives in literacy that we teach with purposeful cross-curricular links with other subjects.

Our medium-term and short-term plans are adapted from the curriculum. These plans define what we teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each unit covering a range of genres. The short term plans are detailed daily lessons with the objective clearly defined along with differentiated activities including support where appropriate.

Foundation Stage

We teach English in the foundation Stage as an integral part of the school's work. We relate the English aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals and Foundation Stage Curriculum Guidance, which underpin the curriculum for children aged three to five. We give all children the opportunity:

- *To talk and communicate in a widening range of situations*
- *To respond to adults and to each other*
- *To listen carefully*
- *To practise and extend their vocabulary and communication skills*
- *To explore words and texts.*

Children in Reception take part in a daily phonics lesson using the RWInc. Phonics Programme. In Nursery, children initially learn about sounds before moving onto learning specific letter sounds.

The Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas

The skills that children develop in Literacy are linked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work at school. Cross-curricular writing opportunities are greatly encouraged and examples of this can be found within the termly topic books.

Differentiation

We recognise that within any group of children there will be a variety of needs. To meet the needs of each child we must identify previous learning and present understanding. Work should allow for differentiation to enable children to develop in language whatever their ability.

Differentiated work may include:

- Allowing sufficient repetition to consolidate skills. At St. Paul's this may include extra support from support staff, homework, and/or slower pace of working. Less able children read or complete reading activities every day whenever possible.*
- Ensuring that the pace of the lesson takes into account the different work rates of individual children.*
- Effective use of Teaching Assistant support. At St. Paul's Reception have a teaching Assistant. These are used to work with all groups of children. TA support is given to other year groups where a need has been identified and there is availability.*
- Providing the children with fix it or now try's as part of our daily marking policy allows children time to reflect on their work and act on feedback that has been given.*
- Tasks which are set with high expectations of both boys and girls and consideration is given to recognising and building on what boys and girls do well in English.*
- Using a range of communication methods and adaptations of these for children with Special Educational Needs.*
- Much of our English work encompasses 'open-ended' tasks, thus enabling the More Able child to achieve at his/her own level. More Able children may, however, be given a similar task to the main group, but one which involves higher order thinking skills. More Able children are catered for through guided work or individual work e.g. Guided Writing, phonic groups, reading groups. The focus of work will be to develop mastery when writing by exposing the children to concepts which will upskill their writing and reading further.*

Equal Opportunities/Inclusion

When planning, teachers will set high expectations and provide opportunities for all pupils with special educational needs, pupils with disabilities, pupils for all social and cultural backgrounds and pupils for different ethnic groups. Material is chosen which is free of gender bias and from a variety of cultures. The planning of teaching and learning and delivery should ensure that all pupils participate effectively in lessons. Our results show that there is success in all aspects of English for both boys and girls equally. The Senior Leadership Team monitor equal opportunities and inclusion for all children seeking to ensure

success for every child. Pupils with a defined Record of Support (issued under the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs) are supported in their English work through Individual Education Plans, monitored by the class teacher and Special Needs Co-ordinator.

English as an Additional Language

Learning English as an additional language is essentially about teaching and learning language through the content of the whole curriculum. The more a learner of a second language is exposed to that language, the quicker they will learn it. "A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of the home is different from the language in which he or she is or will be taught." (S.E.N.D Code of Practice 2014)

At St. Paul's First School children who have English as an additional language will be assessed on entry to school and as much information as possible gathered from parents. The assessment of EAL will follow the same principles of effective assessment of all pupils; recognise what pupils can do and reward achievement; be based on different kinds of evidence; be a valid reflection of what has been taught or covered in class; be manageable; be sensitive to the pupil's first or main language; take account of how long the pupil has been learning English and be aware of the influence of behaviour, attitude and cultural expectations. An appropriate differentiated programme of work and realistic but challenging targets will be set as necessary. The Head teacher refers pupils to EMAT.

Assessment for Learning

Assessment practice in English follows that agreed procedure identified within the Assessment Policy.

Short-term assessments are used to inform short-term planning. These are closely matched to the teaching objectives and will often be made from day to day observation and use of peer assessment.

When assessing, we use the Staffordshire Learning grids for both Writing and Reading.

- **Writing:**
From Year 1 onwards each child has an English book where all writing in English is completed. Each half term at least two pieces of independent writing should be completed to inform assessment judgements. These pieces of work should include both narrative and non-narrative.
- **Reading:**
*Children read in ability groups which are closely monitored and comments recorded during or after each Guided session. Where possible, children also read individually weekly or more frequently according to need. Comments are recorded and these also inform assessment judgments. Teachers plan and assess reading by focussing on VIPERS and the Reading Domains identified in the NC.
*All children complete a PIRA Reading Test at the end of each term and the results from this are added to the online tool Mark Entry.**
- **Speaking and Listening:**
The children are given a range of opportunities to develop each area of Speaking and Listening.

At the end of every term the medium term assessment information is used to inform assessment judgements made on O'Track and a class tracker. It is analysed to ensure all groups of children are reaching or on track to achieve their full potential. Pupil Progress meetings take place termly following these assessments so that strategies can be agreed and put in place to ensure at least expected progress is made. Relevant interventions should be provided if this is not the case. Targets are set for the next school year based on these end of year assessments. Individual targets are shared with parents during Parent Evenings and are reported to parents in the annual school report.

Homework

Homework is used to support language development and can benefit pupils by:

- *Practising and consolidating basic skills and knowledge e.g. reading, phonics/spelling, handwriting etc.*
- *Reinforce work in class e.g. gathering information, preparing for a presentation.*
- *Create a partnership between parents/teachers and children in relation to children's learning e.g.*

Apart from daily reading activities and weekly spelling (Year 1 – 4) other homework is set as part of a homework passport which is full of activities designed to develop a wide range of skills including language development.

ICT and the English Curriculum

The English curriculum at St. Paul's is enriched and enhanced by the use of ICT. The children are encouraged to communicate with others about what is being done; developing the skills of speaking and listening which introduces the children to new ideas and vocabulary.

Computer programmes help children to present work in different formats e.g. as a newspaper. A word processor can make a very valid contribution to the development of children's writing and the writing process. It allows the manipulation of text without having to write it out again. Collaborative and co-operative work is enhanced by the use of a word-processor. When children work in ICT they will discuss, plan and co-operate to produce the finished text.

A wide variety of ICT programmes support all aspects of the Literacy curriculum and teach/develop Literacy skills through other subjects. The school subscribes to interactive programmes such as Oxford Owls for spelling programme and RWInc. Phonics.

Resources

There is a wide range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and Years 3 and 4 have thesauruses. The library is well stocked and is used as a resource across school. We have a growing stock of banded reading books which are used both for Guided Reading and as home readers. We also have many books to support reading for pleasure and to supplement the reading band books. In KS2, each class has class sets of the shared texts used for English lessons and class sets of books linked to topic which are used in Guided Reading.

Roles and Responsibilities

Head Teacher and Governing Body

- *Monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment and progress.*
- *Ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching.*
- *Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively.*
- *Ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning.*
- *Monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations.*

English Subject Leader

- *To have an impact on raising standards of attainment and progress for English across the whole school.*
- *Ensure the effective implementation of the Statutory National Curriculum for English.*
- *To monitor the whole school and individual needs to be able to assess individual professional development opportunities and needs.*
- *To maintain the availability of high quality resources*
- *To maintain an overview of current trends and developments within the subject.*
- *To ensure, together with the Head Teacher, a rigorous and effective programme of lesson observation monitoring.*
- *To ensure a regular and effective programme of analysis of children's work sample monitoring is in place.*
- *To ensure a regular and effective programme of analysis of short-term planning is in place.*
- *To ensure there is regular reviewing and monitoring of an English Action Plan.*
- *To effectively manage any funding designated to English.*

Class Teachers

- *Ensure the effective implementation of the Statutory National Curriculum for English.*
- *Make effective use of Assessment for Learning within English.*
- *To ensure work is differentiated to enable all children to reach their full potential.*

Teaching Assistants (EYFS)

- *To support the class teacher in the effective implementation of Communication and Language.*

Parents/Carers

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- *Holding parents' evenings to discuss children's progress*
- *Sending an annual and interim reports to parents in which we explain the progress made by their child and how they can further develop their learning.*
- *Explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework*

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- *Providing parents with a half termly curriculum newsletter and 'Big Picture' identifying what areas of English their child will be studying.*
- *Holding information sessions to explain to parents about any new or significant changes/developments in school which can be extended at home.*

We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would like parents to:

- *Fulfil the requirements set out in the home/school agreement.*

Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation of the English Policy is the responsibility of the English Subject Leader who is responsible to the Head Teacher and the Governors. This is to be achieved in a variety of ways:

- *Regular discussions with staff concerning progress of groups and individuals*
- *Monitoring planning for coverage of objectives*
- *Classroom observations/learning walks and working alongside colleagues*
- *Pupil voice*
- *Book Scrutiny*
- *Analysis of data*
- *Pupil Progress discussions*

This policy will be reviewed every two years or in the light of changes to legal requirements.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING POLICY

High Quality talk leads to high quality literacy.

"children's ability to speak and listen is fundamental to their language development, learning in school and to social development ...School provides new contexts for talk that demand new and greater oral skills. However, simply providing contexts for talk is not sufficient to ensure development of speaking and listening. As with reading and writing, direct teaching of the skills involved is important." (Teaching Speaking and listening at KS1 and KS2 QCA 1999)

Intent

At St. Paul's First School:

- *We teach children to speak clearly and to develop and sustain ideas in talk.*
- *We develop active listening strategies and critical skills of analysis.*
- *We encourage children to take different roles in groups, make a range of contributions and work collaboratively.*
- *We use drama across the curriculum for improvisation and working in role, scripting and performance and responding to performances.*
- *Children work with a variety of talk partners throughout the year, which are changed regularly according to the task set.*
- *Children are involved in the process of peer marking and giving verbal evaluations of their own work and the work of others.*
- *Our 'Talk for Writing' sessions and their emphasise on developing the use of vocabulary to help children to become more articulate and to think about their choice of appropriate use of language.*

Foundation Stage:

In the Foundation Stage, we incorporate the Development Matters, ages and stages, and early learning goals into our planning and teaching, which ensures that our pupils:

- *Use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences*
- *Develop active listening and response*
- *Interact with others in both indoor and outdoor play*
- *Use language to 'get things done'*

At Key Stage 1:

We build on pupils' prior learning in Speaking and Listening. We:

- *Encourage pupils to speak according to the context, with consideration for their audience*

- *Develop pupils' ability to use language imaginatively*
- *To express their ideas and feelings when working in drama activities*
- *Teach pupils to work effectively and collaboratively in groups and with their talk partners*
- *To join in discussions, making relevant contributions*
- *To listen carefully and actively*

At key Stage 2:

We build on pupil's attainment and speaking and listening experiences at key Stage 1. We:

- *Develop pupils' ability to speak in a range of contexts with increasing sense of audience and purpose*
- *Encourage more sophisticated interaction in groups and with talk partners*
- *Develop pupils' ability to respond appropriately to others*

The use of talk partners is used effectively to enhance the development of language and speaking and listening skills. Talk partners are changed regularly often according to the task.

In our teaching pupils should have the opportunity to:

- *Ask Questions*
- *Explain*
- *Inform*
- *Persuade*
- *Argue*
- *Dispute*
- *Disagree*
- *Negotiate*
- *Clarify*
- *Analyse*
- *Share*
- *Hypothesise*
- *Evaluate*
- *Predict*
- *Comment*
- *Think aloud*
- *Explore ideas*
- *Interview*
- *Report*
- *Describe*
- *Narrate*
- *Present*
- *Express and justify an opinion*
- *Express feelings*
- *Discuss*

- *Develop and idea*
- *Collaborate*
- *Make decisions*
- *Compare*
- *Reason*
- *Reflect*
- *Criticise*
- *Suggest an answer*
- *Demonstrate*
- *Summarise*
- *Encourage thee views of others*
- *Recite*
- *Read aloud*
- *Role play*

Teachers at St. Paul's First School take great care not to dominate the dialogue that takes place in the classroom. We aim to offer prompts or scaffolding, but try not to take over or rephrase. We give children time to think about, discuss with talk partners and explain their ideas. Confidence and participation are our main criteria for success. We give focused feedback to try and move the child on.

We strive to promote:

- *A shared acceptance of different points of view*
- *A commitment to mutual attention*
- *Mutual support*
- *A lack of closure – speculative/hypothetical talk*
- *Pose more problem-posing and less solution giving*
- *Learning as enquiry*
- *A social, interactive process*

Speaking and Listening in all areas of the curriculum

We teach speaking and listening explicitly across the whole curriculum, not just during English sessions. Teacher's plans identify opportunities for Speaking and Listening. Different ways we can develop speaking and listening skills are:

- *As a stand-alone activities*
- *As planned activities to complement literacy/other curricular activities*
- *As by-product (unplanned opportunities that present themselves)*

Assessment for Learning

Assessment and record keeping is in accordance with the whole school policy [see assessment policy]. Assessment opportunities and the evidence to be used by teachers in judging the level at which a child is

working are built into planning. Through our assessment for learning approach to the whole curriculum we continuously assess children by listening and observing. Teachers keep their own written evidence where appropriate e.g on evaluation of lessons. We summarise achievement every half term using the Staffordshire Learning Grids and the school system of recording judgements . Standards are judged against year group National Curriculum expectations. This data is inputted on to O'Track half termly and informs a class tracker.

READING POLICY

Philosophy

At St. Paul's First School we have a clear, consistent whole school approach to reading. Competence in reading is the key to independent learning and is given the highest priority at our school, enabling the children to become enthusiastic, independent and reflective readers. Success in reading has a direct effect upon progress in all other areas of the curriculum and is crucial in developing children's self-confidence and motivation.

1) Intent

The school aims to:

- *Provide the children with the skills and strategies necessary to develop into competent and fluent readers.*
- *Encourage the enjoyment of books and reading so that the children develop a life-long love of books.*
- *Develop a critical appreciation of what they read.*
- *Develop study skills so that the children can find appropriate fiction and non-fiction books from the library.*
- *Develop research skills, using library and class texts, in conjunction with the ICT system.*
- *Develop a critical appreciation of the work of authors, poets and illustrators in order to emulate these skills in their own writing.*
- *Encourage care and ownership of books.*

Our ultimate aim is for the children to become confident and independent readers with high levels of enjoyment, understanding and comprehension. To promote enjoyment of reading and the understanding that reading is a life-long skill.

Reading is closely linked with writing – the two activities reinforce each other. Children become successful readers by using a range of strategies to get to the meaning of the text. At St. Paul's First School we believe that literate children should:

- *Read with confidence, fluency, understanding.*
- *Be taught the full range of reading strategies including;*
 - *Phonic knowledge (visual information)*
 - *Grammatical knowledge (structural information)*
 - *Word recognition and graphic knowledge (visual information)*
 - *Contextual knowledge (meaning)*
- *During shared, guided and independent reading to monitor their reading and correct their own mistakes.*
- *Have an interest in words and their meanings, developing a varied and rich vocabulary.*
- *Read a range of genres in fiction and poetry*
- *Understand, use and be able to read a range of non-fiction texts.*
- *Use conventions of library organisation and ICT systems to access texts and to locate information.*

- *Through reading and writing, develop their own powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.*
- *Discuss books with reference to author, illustrator, genre, theme and characters, to express personal responses with increasing fluency.*
- *See the reading process being modelled by their teacher and take part regularly in activities with the whole class, as a member of a smaller group or individually.*
- *Understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately.*
- *Have a suitable technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their reading.*
- *Be interested in books, read with enjoyment and evaluate to justify their preferences.*

Implementation

We aim to provide high levels of motivation and active participation for our children at all ages. All of the teachers are able to provide a deep analysis of each child's reading and the prompts/strategies needed to support the child's next steps. The teaching of reading and the strategies used by the teachers in each year groups varies as the children progress through the school.

Foundation Stage

- *All children will bring a book bag into school each day*
- *The teacher will provide every child with a phonetically decodable RWINc book previously shared in RWInc. Phonics lessons and the matching RWInc. Book Bag book and a reading diary.*
- *Daily RWInc. phonic lessons take place.*
- *Guided Reading – From October half term in Reception, the teacher will lead a reading session which will involve sharing and discussing a text on a weekly basis. As the children develop a better phonological understanding, the texts read will be at a higher book band or harder texts in the same band than those taken home. The teacher records progress made in a whole class Reading Folder.*
- *The Teacher will assess who needs to read on a daily, three times a week or weekly basis and produce a Reading Frequency timetable which is displayed in the reading corner. An individual comment will be recorded on Individual Reading sheets when these children read. The teacher/TA records strategies the children are using and progress made. Next steps are also recorded.*
- *Shared reading – using books and interactive whiteboard programmes*
- *The teacher will analyse evidence from reading sessions to see what the child is attending to and neglecting to assess appropriate strategies/prompts to ensure next steps in learning.*
- *Parents are requested to always encourage the children to read daily and to write positive comments in the reading diary.*
- *Library – Fiction and non-fiction books are available for the children to choose.*
- *Daily story time which uses the technique of 'Hooked on Book'.*

Key Stage 1 and 2

- *All children are grouped according to ability within their own classes. These groups are flexible and because reading is continually being assessed then children will be moved within them according to their needs.*
- *All children will bring a book bag into school each day.*
- *The teacher will provide every child with a reading book and reading diary.*
- *Guided Reading sessions will take place on a bi-weekly cycle with the teacher ensuring that every child is heard read and that skills previously identified form the focus. The teacher records progress, reading behaviour – strategies used on the guided reading record sheets which are kept in Guided Reading folders. Objectives and VIPERS skills are included to ensure focus in each session and progression. The texts used for guided reading will be pitched at the level above those books which are taken home.*
- *The Teacher will assess who needs to read on a daily, three times a week or weekly basis and produce a Reading Frequency timetable. An individual comment will be recorded on Individual Reading sheets when these children read. The teacher/TA records strategies the children are using and progress made. Next steps are also recorded.*
- *Reading volunteers will provide further reading opportunities for those children identified as needing further practice.*
- *From Year 2 onwards, a whole class reading lesson takes place on a bi-weekly basis four times a week. The same text with some differentiation is used as well as differentiated questions where appropriate. These lessons follow the reading focus identified by the teacher and in line with VIPERS. Each of these should be planned for over the course of each half term.*
- *Reading aloud – the children will have opportunity to share their written work by reading it aloud to the rest of the class and read sections of shared text.*
- *Daily story time takes place in all year groups. The children also hear stories read aloud by the teacher.*
- *Silent reading – The children have access to a range of books with in the classroom book boxes or shelves and regular opportunities are given to access these.*
- *Higher Order Reading Skills – these are explicitly taught during the Reading lesson.*
- *Parents are encouraged to listen to their children read each day and this is rewarded over each half term when they receive a Reading Challenge certificate and prize during the Celebrate and Praise assembly every Friday.*
- *Children in all year groups choose their own library book weekly where possible to share/read at home.*

Phonics Policy

Rationale:

We aim to provide children with an integrated programme of learning letters and sounds through speaking and listening, reading and writing.

The teaching of Phonics is based upon curriculum guidance in Ruth Miskins Read Write Inc. Phonics Scheme.

- *A daily phonics session using the RWInc. Scheme takes place daily in Nursery (From Term 2), Reception and Year 1.*

Our pupils learn to read and write effectively and quickly using the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme. They progress onto Read Write Inc. Literacy and Language and Read Write Inc. Spelling once they can read with accuracy and speed.

Read Write Inc. Phonics

The programme is for pupils in Year N, R to Year 1 who are learning to read and write

In Read Write Inc. Phonics pupils:

- *Decode letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic knowledge and skills*
- *Read common exception words on sight*
- *Understand what they read*
- *Read aloud with fluency and expression*
- *Write confidently, with a strong focus on vocabulary and grammar*
- *Spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words*
- *Acquire good handwriting.*

In addition, we teach pupils to work effectively with a partner to explain and consolidate what they are learning. This provides the teacher with opportunities to assess learning and to pick up on difficulties, such as pupils' poor articulation, or problems with blending or alphabetic code knowledge. We group pupils homogeneously, according to their progress in reading rather than their writing. This is because it is known that pupils' progress in writing will lag behind progress in reading, especially for those whose motor skills are less well developed. In Year R we emphasise the alphabetic code. The pupils rapidly learn sounds and the letter or groups of letters they need to represent them. Simple mnemonics help them to grasp this quickly. This is especially useful for pupils at risk of making slower progress. This learning is consolidated daily. Pupils have frequent practice in reading high frequency words with irregular spellings – common exception words. We make sure that pupils read books that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and the common exception words. This is so that, early on, they experience success and gain confidence that they are readers. Re-reading and discussing these books with the teacher supports their increasingly fluent decoding.

Alongside this, the teachers read a wide range of stories, poetry and non-fiction to pupils; they are soon able to read these texts for themselves. Embedding the alphabetic code early on means that pupils quickly learn to write simple words and sentences. We encourage them to compose each sentence aloud until they are confident to write independently. We make sure they write every day. Pupils write at the level of their spelling knowledge. The quality of the vocabulary they use in their writing reflects the language they have heard in the books the teacher has read to them; they have also discussed what the words mean. Our aim is for pupils to complete the phonics programme as quickly as possible. The sooner they complete it, the sooner they will be able to choose books to read at their own interest and comprehension level.

Assessing and tracking progress

We assess all pupils following Read Write Inc. Phonics using the Entry Assessment. We use this data to assign them to Read Write Inc. Phonics. This gives us a very good indication of how well they are making progress relative to their starting points. We do this for all pupils, whenever they join us, so we can track all of them effectively, including those eligible for the pupil premium.

For those on the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme, we record their starting date and entry point on the tracker to monitor the rate at which they are making progress. We can also easily identify those who joined the programme later.

In addition, we use a standardised reading test PIRA so that we can ensure that the gains our pupils are making are age-appropriate. 100% of our pupils complete the phonics programme by the end of Year 1. We aim for all children to be accurate and speedy readers by the time they enter Key Stage 2.

We have high expectations of our pupils' progress. In the June 2019 phonic screening check, 95% of our pupils reached the threshold, and in June 2018, 89%. We attribute this to the programme and to the expectations it builds in.

We support pupils who have identified special educational needs for however long it takes until they can read. For example, we identify those who are at risk of falling behind their peers immediately – whatever their age. Highly trained staff tutor them, using the Read Write Inc. One-to-one tutoring programme.

By the end of Key Stage 1, our pupils are able to read aloud age-appropriate texts accurately and with sufficient speed for comprehension. This means that we can focus on developing their comprehension, preparing them well for transition to Key Stage 2. Their good decoding skills mean that they have a sound strategy for decoding unfamiliar words when they come across them at whatever stage or in any subject, even into secondary school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

The programmes' 'cycle of instruction' means that, after direct instruction and guided practice, the pupils teach another pupil. In this way they all rehearse and consolidate what they have been learning. This helps the pupils to make their understanding clear to themselves and helps the teacher deal with any misconceptions. 'Partner teaching' is a key assessment tool. We also use this approach very effectively in other subjects.

In Read Write Inc. Phonics, because the pupils are grouped across EYFS and Y1 in terms of their reading ability, they are reading at an appropriate decoding level every day. The homogeneous groups in the Phonic lessons help us to focus the teaching and ensure pupils learn to read quickly.

Staff teaching Read Write Inc. Phonics record the results from the Assessments 1 and 2, which take place every eight weeks. This data allow us to intervene in different ways. For instance, we quickly move pupils to another group if they are progressing faster than their peers. Those who continue to struggle have one-to-one tutoring so that they keep up.

All the pupils are engaged, with a positive impact on their behaviour. They learn to participate fully: we agree with them the rules for working in a group or discussing with a partner. We discourage 'hands up' for answering questions because we believe that all pupils should answer every question. The teacher selects pupils to answer.

The Read Write Inc. programmes have detailed lesson plans. These give the teachers practical day-to-day guidance, but we work hard to build on these plans so that the lessons are matched carefully to the needs of their particular group. Every activity is prepared thoroughly and has a clear purpose. The teacher explains this at the beginning so that the pupils understand, during the activity, what they are learning and why.

Feedback and marking

We emphasise constructive feedback. For example, we praise pupils for how hard they work together to ensure that their learning is successful. We have clear systems for marking pupils' work. Pupils know their teacher's expectations for each activity. We mark short activities with the pupils in the lesson. Extended pieces are marked afterwards. We discuss the outcomes with the group and individuals so that the marking is genuinely used to take forward pupils' learning.

Assessment for Learning

The children are assessed and records are kept in line with the school's assessment policy.

- *Pupils' reading behaviour and assessment of the reading VIPERS is observed by the class teacher in the guided reading session and noted on reading record sheet.*
- *Assessments and evaluations are made after all lessons and subsequent planning should reflect this.*
- *Pupil's progress is assessed using Staffordshire Assessment Grids and this information is fed into the O' Track online assessment system every half term. The results of these assessments are monitored in order to inform targets for subsequent year groups.*
- *Statutory assessment of reading occurs through baseline assessment and the reading SATs at the end of Key Stage 1. Year 1 children also complete the Phonics Screen. All of this data is subsequently reported to the DFE.*
- *PIRA reading assessments are completed termly. The results are entered onto Mark Online and analysed accordingly.*

The data from these assessments is used to:

- *Action any special needs or intervention/scaffolding provision*
- *Group the children*
- *Identify the most able to ensure provision on extension/enrichment work*

Through assessment and dialogue, the children are set individual reading targets to achieve. These targets are differentiated according to age and ability, for example:

St. Paul's First School English Policy

- *To know the names and sounds of all the letters*
- *To be able to sustain 10 minutes of individual reading*
- *To be able to break words into syllables*
- *To be able to read aloud fluently and expressively*
- *To read a wide genre of books*
- *To use inference and deduction etc.*

These will be recorded in Reading diaries so that parents are aware and can help.

Parental Involvement

The teaching of reading is greatly helped if there is strong communication and support between home and school. Information sessions will also be held in school when any initiatives are launched or revisited. Advice on reading strategies which are used in school are shared during Phonics Information Sessions which are held during the Autumn term. When a child enters St. Paul's First School parents are asked to read and sign a Home/school agreement which requests their continued support with reading. This agreement is then subsequently sent out during September each year to remind parents of the expectations.

Library

The Library is the centre piece in the main school entrance. This, we feel, highlights the prominence and importance of books and reading across school. There is a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books which are used to inform and enrich as well as develop reading for pleasure. It is accessed weekly by children across school.

Resources

St. Paul's provides a print rich environment. All classrooms have an interesting, well stocked reading area which includes fiction and non-fiction books, and which reflect diversity in culture. Guided and group reading books are levelled according to the Book Banding system and we have selected these from a range of 'providers' so that we are not reading scheme led. All books in the library are either in alphabetical order according to author or set out in titled non-fiction sections.

WRITING POLICY

Philosophy

Writing is a major part of the curriculum and along with reading, listening and talking, makes a significant contribution to the development of children as thinkers and learners.

Writing involves a set of complex skills that will not develop without structured teaching and practice. Throughout the school the children use a variety of texts to gain more knowledge about improving their own writing. Children read to write and write to read.

We have a high expectation of the use of the core skills of vocabulary, conjunctions, openers and punctuation. We value writing and work hard to achieve high standards from all children, within a positive writing ethos.

Literacy skills empower individuals to unlock their potential as independent lifelong learners. They have a significant impact on self-esteem, motivation and aspirations for the future. Being literate equips young people to be proactive in their own learning and to articulate their thoughts. In this way they grow in an understanding of themselves as individuals and as members of society.

“Children and young people will demonstrate their progress in writing through the degree of independence they show, the organization and quality of their ideas, their skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar, the match of their writing to audience and the effectiveness of their use of language.”
Curriculum for Excellence

Intent

- *To develop pupil's understanding of the value of writing as a means of communicating*
- *To enjoy writing in response to a range of different stimuli,*
- *To equip children with the necessary skills to write independently and effectively for different purposes and readers.*

We aim to teach the children to:

- *Enjoy writing and see the value of it.*
- *Communicate meaning in narrative and non-fiction forms.*
- *Spell words correctly and punctuate their writing accurately*
- *Use the main rules and conventions of written English*
- *Plan, draft, edit and process writing to improve it.*
- *Develop fluent and legible handwriting*

Implementation

The National Curriculum and the Early Years Foundation Stage form the basis of our teaching of English. These ensure balance and coverage of the objectives. The Programmes of Study for writing are constructed of transcription and composition.

Writing is taught during English Lessons and uses quality texts. It is also integrated into other subject areas.

Shared Writing

During this part of English lessons, pupils are taught as a whole class. A wide variety of quality texts linked to the current topic are used to develop ideas and structures for writing. The children are taught through teacher demonstration and modelling of how to compose texts and how ideas are sequenced, clarified and structured. Shared writing is also used to teach grammar and spelling skills, layout and presentation. Texts used in shared reading are often used as a frame for writing or as a stimulus to extend, alter or comment on it.

Modelled Writing

Teachers model the writing process during most writing lessons but always during the build up to a sustained piece of writing. This is important to ensure that children see the teacher as the writer and how the writing process develops. WAGOLs written by the teacher or other sources are used to identify features of genres and elements which make up a good piece.

Guided Writing

This enables the teacher to focus on teaching the children to write independently. These sessions are used to meet the specific objectives set out in the National Curriculum. Examples of areas focused upon are:

- *Planning a piece of writing*
- *Applying phonological skills*
- *Composing a text*
- *Expanding or contracting a text*
- *Editing work for clarity and presentation*
- *Writing instructions*
- *Note taking*
- *Reviews and evaluations*
- *Writing stories and poems*
- *Constructing complex sentences*
- *Developing spelling strategies*

Other opportunities for Writing

During English lessons, those children not working in a guided group will be working on a variety of independent, partner or group writing activities. In addition, extended writing should place outside English lessons during topic.

Links with the rest of the curriculum are fundamental and other subjects are treated as vehicles for English work. The skills learnt in English are applied in work in other subjects.

Assessment For Learning

The children are assessed and records are kept in line with the school's assessment policy.

A success criteria is included in pieces of sustained written work so that the children can self and peer assess. This is then reviewed by the teacher who will use it as a reference for feedback with the child and for further targeting in the next piece of writing. This also feeds into teacher assessment and future lesson plans. Each half term two pieces of writing are assessed using Staffordshire Writing Grids. These pieces of writing will be completely independent of any intervention from the teacher in order to ensure that they are a true indication of what the child can do. Assessment data is put onto O'Track at the end of each half term.

Assessment data is used to inform future planning and to apply intervention strategies that may need putting into place.

Vocabulary

Intent

To improve children's reading and writing attainment through the development of vocabulary acquisition and understanding.

We want to provide all of our children with a rich and varied vocabulary which will help them to better understand what they read, add interest and detail to their writing and enable them to express themselves fully verbally. A rich and varied vocabulary knowledge will help to ensure success as the children continue their learning journeys because research shows that 'knowing more words makes you smarter'!

Our aim is to promote and explicitly teach children (across the school) high quality Tier 2 words. This would then support and accelerate children's vocabulary acquisition and understanding which in turn would benefit their overall reading and writing progress and equip them with a wide and varied vocabulary with which to express themselves.

Implementation

All children are explicitly taught one new (Tier 2) word a day. These will form part of the daily writing lessons with the children writing their own sentences using these words. These words should link to a shared text in EYFS and Year 1 but in Years 2, 3 and 4 Vocabulary Ninja daily words will be used. Where possible, new words put into context of current reading text. Working walls should display weekly words.

When new topics are introduced then tier 3 vocabulary is shared too.

The Children all have Vocabulary Journals which they use to create a bank of interesting vocabulary to use in both English and Topic lessons.

Spelling

Intent

We aim to make sure that all of our children become competent in spelling.

Implementation

Spelling is developed through:

- The marking of work – children are encouraged to practise words which have been highlighted by the teacher as ones which they need to learn.*
- Regular learning of spelling lists, allocated according to ability groups. Depending on the age and ability of the child, these spelling lists should include a spelling patterns, high frequency words and topic based words. These words are tested each week.*
- Daily spelling input to teach pupils to use a range of spelling strategies in order to become independent and accurate spellers.*
- Encouragement of word banks, personal word logs and dictionaries.*

Handwriting

Intent

A flexible, fluent and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with confidence and creativity. As such, we actively teach handwriting as part of the English curriculum through daily lessons and application every day.

Handwriting is a developmental process with its own distinctive stages of progression from readiness for handwriting, through to letter joins, practising speed and fluency and higher presentation skills.

We aim for children to have developed a fluent, joined handwriting style by the end of Year 2.

To develop a clear, legible style of writing, children are taught to;

- Hold a pencil comfortably; promoting a legible style that encourages writing from left to right, from top to bottom of the page and starting and finishing letters correctly.*
- Develop a consistent size and shape of letters and regularity of spacing between letters and words*
- Join letters correctly*
- Develop greater control and fluency as they become increasingly confident.*

Since handwriting is an essential movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed handwriting style by all adults is very important.

Implementation

EYFS

Children will begin the Foundation Stage with a wide variety of writing skills ranging from simply making marks to writing discernible letters. Children will move from gross to fine motor skills using a variety of tactile methods. They will be given opportunities to make marks in their own way and to gradually refine these into recognisable patterns and eventually individual letters. Children will be encouraged to use correct directionality.

*In Nursery all children will be taught to hold a pencil correctly and to form letters **without** using an entry stroke.*

The MSL scheme for handwriting scheme will be introduced in Reception and will help prepare children for handwriting, consolidate their motor control and introduce letter shapes. It is expected that most children will be forming each letter in both the capital and lowercase form.

Year 1

It is expected that by the end of this year, the majority of writing will be unaided, using capitals appropriately and presenting their written work legibly. Children will practise forming letters and are introduced to entry and exit strokes in preparation for cursive writing. Children practise their handwriting using initially handwriting sheets and then move one to specific handwriting-ruled books to develop consistency in size.

The approved style of handwriting & joins will be that exemplified in the MSL Handwriting Rescue Scheme.

Year 2

By Year 2 children will be using a joined handwriting style and be able to write on lined paper with a reasonable degree of accuracy in their day to day work. They will continue to practise their handwriting using specific handwriting-ruled books to continue to develop consistency in size

The approved style of handwriting & joins will be that exemplified in the MSL Handwriting Rescue Scheme, Book 1.

Year 3 and 4

It will be expected that all children will be able to join letters and use cursive script across the curriculum in pencil. Children not achieving this will be specifically targeted during handwriting lessons and will have handwriting as a Fix It in other subjects too. Those children demonstrating consistently neat handwriting will be given a Pen Licence and fountain pen. These can be taken back if handwriting falls below expectations.

Children will continue to practise their handwriting using specific handwriting-ruled books to continue to develop consistency in size.

The approved style of handwriting & joins will be that exemplified in the MSL Handwriting Rescue Scheme, Book 2.

Organisation

Daily teaching session in EYFS and Year 1. One weekly 15 minute taught session in Year 2, 3 and 4.

Pen Licence

When the class teacher feels that a child has achieved the necessary level of handwriting to be able to write in pen they will provide that child with a blue fountain pen to use in their handwriting book.

Once the child has proved capable of writing in pen they will then be allowed to use this to write with in subjects across the curriculum. At this point the child will be presented with a certificate as recognition of this achievement.