

**Darwen St James'**  
C of E Primary Academy



**ENGLISH POLICY**

**2021/22**

## **Mission Statement**

Nurturing ambition through a living faith

## **Vision**

Our academy delivers a purposeful curriculum through its living Christian faith. We nurture ambition in all our learners in order for them to become positive citizens of tomorrow.

## **Bible**

Let us not love with words or speech alone but with actions and truth. John 3:18

## **Aims and Objectives**

The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, so using language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. It enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

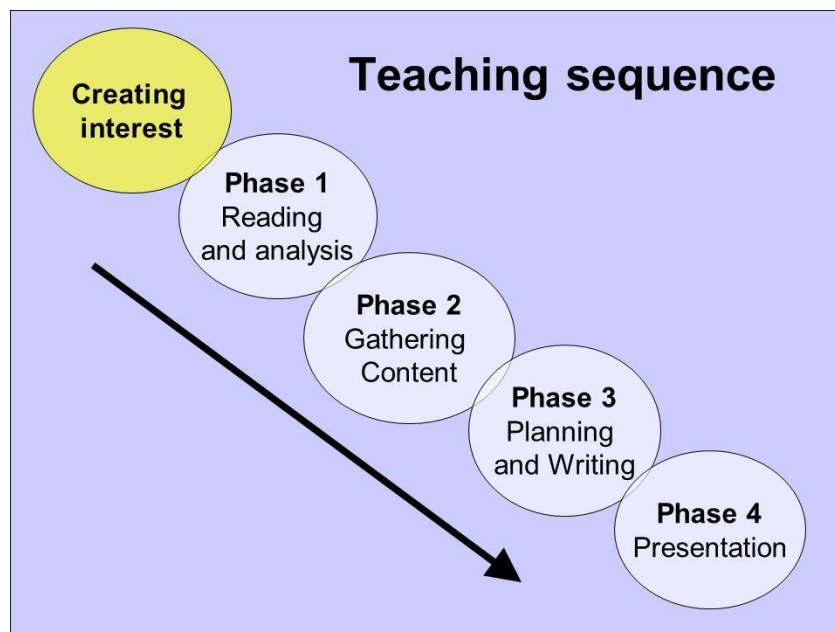
The aims of English are:

- To enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners in a range of situations.
- To encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard.
- To enable children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands.
- To develop children's abilities to reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used.
- To enable children to evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama, speaking and listening activities.
- To develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge and understanding.
- To encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers through contact with challenging and lengthy texts.
- To help children enjoy writing and recognise its value.
- To enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction recognising features of both.
- To increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work using prepared planning sheets, with a view towards children developing the ability to create their own planning formats.

## Teaching and learning

We believe that children learn best when they are happy, interested and motivated through challenging tasks that are appropriate to the level of ability. We have mixed ability classes at Darwen St James and provide learning opportunities that meet children's individual needs. We achieve this in different ways and through a range of strategies; differentiated activities (writing frames, spelling banks etc), teacher or teaching assistant support, collaborative work (paired or group work). The children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and use a range of resources such as dictionaries and thesauruses to support their work. Displays also promote learning through interactive activities that extend and reinforce learning and each class has a Help Desk to support children's independent learning.

The English plans follow the Lancashire Unit Summaries, with a strong emphasis on building children's vocabulary and understanding first.



The writing process is broken down into a number of steps that needs to be taught and practised regularly, in each year group.

1. Creating Interest
2. Reading and Analysis
3. Gathering Content
4. Planning and Writing/editing
5. Presentation / Publishing

### Links with Other Areas of the Curriculum

The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. When appropriate, other curriculum areas are linked to an English focus, and the aim is for English teaching to cover a large part of the learning time. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work in school.

## Reading

At Darwen St James, we recognise the need to promote reading, not only for the acquisition of skills and knowledge but reading for enjoyment as well. We have fostered a reading literate environment within school, with all classes having a stimulating book area too and we ensure children have numerous opportunities to read within the school week. In addition to the reading which takes place within shared, guided and independent reading in the literacy lessons, we are also dedicated to the use of silent reading, 1:1 reading, home reading and reading extended stories to the children outside the English lesson. Staff endeavour to promote reading through our shared story time. Reading is crucial to all areas of the curriculum and many opportunities are made for reading skills to be applied to the wider curriculum.

Within guided reading, a variety of approaches are employed by each teacher and support staff to read the text, give information, check comprehension, explore ideas within a text and examine pupil responses.

Our Guided reading sessions are delivered over a five day rotation:

- Pre reading activity (I)
- Independent reading (I)
- Guided Reading (T or TA)
- Comprehension activity (I)
- Marking comprehension (T or TA)

## Phonics

We teach letters and sounds through specific phonics sessions that run daily throughout Reception and Key Stage 1. This continues into Key Stage 2, where appropriate. Sessions are led by both teachers and teaching assistants.

Phonics sessions follow the following structure:

- Revisit and review
- Teach
- Practise
- Apply

Assessment of phonics is done through the Phonics Tracker App.

## Handwriting

Children are taught printing letter formation from Reception class. In Year 1 children are taught to join letters when learning digraphs and trigraphs in phonics sessions. In Year 2, children continue with this style, adding in. All staff follow the 'Letter Join' handwriting sessions, beginning each session with a warm up activity.

Handwriting is taught three times a week from Year 1 to Year 6. The lessons take the following structure:

Lesson 1: selected sheet from Letter Join.

Lesson 2: practise of letter or join in Handwriting books on lines.

Lesson 3: dictation of graphemes, digraphs, words, captions or sentences using the letters from lesson 1 and lesson 2.

Handwriting pens are given to children who are competent with their letter joins, based on the teacher's discretion throughout Year 1- 4. Children earn their Pen Licence and then use a handwriting pen.

### Foundation Stage

During the foundation stage children follow the Development Matters Objectives and Early Learning Goals that underpin the curriculum planning for children aged between three and five. Children experience independent and teacher led activities. Children are given the opportunity to talk and communicate in a wide range of situations, to respond to adults and each other, to listen carefully, and to practise extending their range of vocabulary. They have the opportunity to explore, enjoy and learn about and use words and text in a range of situations.

### Teaching English to Children with Special Educational Needs

At Darwen St James' C of E Primary School we teach English to all children, whatever their ability. Through our English teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels. We identify which children or group of children are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. Intervention and booster activities are provided for those children who need additional support and are identified during Pupil Progress meetings with the Senior Leadership team. The programmes are delivered by either the teacher or teaching assistant and reviewed on a regular basis.

### Assessment and Recording

The use of Target Tracker each half term enables children's attainment to be tracked against the statements. Tracking of these targets ensures accurate targets are set, allowing children to move on to the next stage of their education.