

Darwen St James'
C of E Primary Academy



ENGLISH POLICY

2024/25
(reviewed October 2024)

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 through adopting the scaffolded approach of the Lancashire English scheme of work. The children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts, which help to teach grammatical features and high tier vocabulary in context. Working walls are used in classrooms to encourage independence from the children, to show examples of work and the writing tool kit as it is built.

Each unit of work from Lancashire English follows the same structure of phases. The phases include:

- **Creating interest** - this is the opening lesson in the sequence, and should include artefacts or images to help build curiosity and provide the class with motivation to learn more about their new text. .
- **Phase 1 - Reading response and reading analysis** - during this phase the class will read the text daily and become immersed in the narrative. The children will develop a strong understanding of thoughts, feelings and motivations of the characters by writing diary entries, character descriptions and using role on the wall techniques.
- **Phase 2 - Gathering content** - during this phase students will focus on gathering examples of the grammatical features, sentence types and vocabulary from the text that they will be able to use in their independent writing. Students will build a writing toolkit, which can be added to on the working wall, from this they will be able to understand the success criteria for their expected outcome.
- **Phase 3 - Planning and writing** - during this phase children will first focus on being able to 'chunk' the story, and focus on the key events, this will help them to create a focussed plan for their own writing. Lancashire English uses a range of planning strategies which should suit a variety of learners. Children will analyse a good example of their intended outcome, and work as a class to model good examples before finally completing their independent writing. Proof-reading and editing skills need to be explicitly taught and encouraged during this final writing phase.
- **Phase 4 - Presentation**

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. 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 access to a stimulating book area and we ensure children have numerous opportunities to read within the school week.

Home Reading

All children at DSJ are expected to read at home with a suitable adult or sibling for 10 minutes five times a week. Children take two books a week home:

1. Children select a level appropriate book which is 100% decodable.

2. In addition to this children select their own book to enjoy at home from an age appropriate section of the school library.

Parents are expected to sign the Reading Record daily.

Reading Records are checked daily. If children have not read at home they read to an LSA during the day and the LSA signs the Reading Record.

Children who have been identified as in the bottom 20% of the class for reading read their books to an LSA daily.

Children who's Reading Record shows that they have read 3 or 4 times in a week receive 1 token, 5 times a week 2 token. The tokens can be spent at the school 'shop'.

Teaching Reading

At Darwen St James we teach reading using reading content domains, with a focus initially on defining unfamiliar vocabulary, and embedding teaching of retrieval and inference skills - along with the other content domain areas, providing full coverage over time.

Content domain reference	
2a	give / explain the meaning of words in context
2b	retrieve and record information / identify key details from fiction and non-fiction
2c	summarise main ideas from more than one paragraph
2d	make inferences from the text / explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text
2e	predict what might happen from details stated and implied
2f	identify / explain how information / narrative content is related and contributes to meaning as a whole
2g	identify / explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases
2h	make comparisons within the text

Source: *English reading test framework 2016 National curriculum tests Key stage 2 For test developers STA/15/7341/e ISBN: 978-1-78315-826-3*

Guided Reading

Guided reading is taught daily in class, using 20 minute sessions. High level quality texts are carefully selected to enrich the children's vocabulary and love of learning, these texts will include a combination of narrative and non-narrative text types.

The weekly sequence of lessons is as follows:

Monday	Content domain: Define. Pre-teach up to 5 unfamiliar words. Whole class reading to enjoy the text, develop fluency, echo reading.		
Tuesday	Whole class reading. Teacher to develop/ model content domain skill for the week (inference, retrieval, prediction etc)		
Wednesday	Whole class reading. Focus on the content domain skill of the week. 3 questions 'I do, we do, you do'. Chn to complete 'you do' question on whiteboards.		
Thursday	Group guided reading.		
	<u>Independent group.</u> Answer content domain skill of the week Q x 3 in books, based on what has been read so far.	<u>LA group</u> (T support) Read a section of new text . T monitor and support fluency and comprehension.	<u>SEN group</u> (TA support) Read a section of new text . TA monitor and support decoding, fluency and comprehension.
Friday	Group guided reading.		
	<u>Independent group.</u> Answer content domain skill of the week Q x 3 in books, based on what has been read so far.	<u>LA group</u> (TA support) Re-read section from yesterday. Answer Q x3 based on the content domain skill of the week.	<u>SEN group</u> (T support) Re-read section from yesterday. Answer Q x3 based on the content domain skill of the week.

Spelling

DSJ follow Spelling Shed for our spelling lessons. Weekly spellings are taught and sent home.

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 other joins. All staff use the 'Letter Join' handwriting resources, beginning each session with a warm up activity.

Handwriting is taught twice a week in KS2 and three times a week in KS1 (year 1 have no timetabled lessons). However, at DSJ, we believe that the high expectation of neat, appropriately sized, legible writing is the best teaching tools.

Handwriting pens are given to children who are competent with their letter formation, based on the teacher's discretion throughout Year 5 and 6. Children earn their Pen Licence and then use a handwriting pen.

Grammar

Grammar is taught using the I Model approach. Grammatical features are taken from the Lancashire English scheme, and are always taught in context with the class text. Class teachers can adapt and ensure full coverage of the national curriculum objectives.

Foundation Stage

During the foundation stage children follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 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 'access for all' pedagogy, we give the children opportunities to obtain resources for their level of attainment on our classroom helpdesks. 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 SONAR 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. We also use termly NFER progress tests which help Teacher Assessment.