



ST ANDREW'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

ENGLISH AND LITERACY POLICY

This Policy reflects St. Andrew's Church of England Primary School's vision: At St Andrew's CE Primary School, we aim to bring children to a place where they can realise their full potential. Our Christian values are the foundation of all we do and each one is a facet of the central value, love, which 'always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.' (1 Corinthians 13:7)

Our English and Literacy Policy fulfils all aspects of our mission, especially:

- Building on the respectful relationships existing between staff, pupils and all stakeholders in our school.
- Nurturing resilience and the aspiration to develop a sense of curiosity and interest in the wider world.
- Setting high expectations to enable pupils to become independent, creative and resilient learners in a restless school

As a 'Rights Respecting School', we follow the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which states:

Article 13- Children must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information

Article 29 – Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full

Introduction:

All of the skills of language are essential to enable our pupils to participate fully as members of our society. We therefore strive to give our pupils the ability to speak, read and write fluently and confidently in order for them to realise their full potential.

High quality teaching in literacy will produce pupils who can speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others. Through being confident readers and attentive listeners, others can communicate their ideas to the pupils.

Through our literacy teaching at St Andrew's C of E Primary School, we ensure we fulfil the aims of the National Curriculum for English that all pupils:

- Read easily, fluently and with good understanding.
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information.
- Acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.
- Appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage.
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.

- Use discussion in order to learn.
- Are able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas and are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Speaking and Listening

Through talk our pupils' ideas become concrete. Talk allows us to see whether or not our ideas make sense and we can refine them in the light of how others respond to us. Talk prior to writing raises pupil confidence and the quality of their writing. Talk is an entitlement for every pupil.

Our pupils are expected to listen to the teacher and also to listen to one another. At St Andrew's, the children respect each other and know that through listening to others' ideas, their own knowledge and understanding can be expanded.

Through talk, we can support children to develop their inference skills. To become better at inference, children need plenty of practice talking about what might be going on in a text or picture, even though the writer or illustrator has not made it explicit.

At St Andrew's, children are taught how to speak confidently, clearly and audibly in a wide range of contexts. They are taught to understand how to adapt their use of language, varying use and register in relation to purpose and audience.

The children have opportunities to participate in pair/group discussions, debates, and individual, group and class presentations. They are given opportunities to reflect on their own and each other's use of language.

Drama

Drama supports the development of speaking and listening. Pupils learn how to take on a role and respond to others in role. Children are given opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances. Role-play helps pupils to identify with and explore characters. By reading plays aloud, children extend their understanding of what they read and have opportunities to try out language they would not normally use. By playing roles and developing scenes in various settings, this will impact on raising the quality of their writing.

At St Andrew's, pupils participate in spoken performances, dramatic interpretation and improvisations. They write original scripted scenes to develop written skills. We encourage the children to evaluate the effectiveness of a performance. Through the plays the children are able to be a part of in their time at St Andrew's, the children experience a sense of achievement, enjoyment and it develops their self-esteem. Drama is also used to deepen pupils' understanding of other areas of the curriculum.

Reading

At St Andrew's, we strive to develop in our children a life-long love of reading. Through reading, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Reading also enables pupils to acquire knowledge and build on what they already know.

Reading, re-reading and rehearsing poems and plays for presentation and performance gives pupils opportunities to discuss language, extending their vocabulary and interest in the meaning and origin of words. Having to read aloud with expression helps develop their comprehension of texts.

At St Andrew's, we recognise the importance of children hearing high quality texts read aloud. It is a great way to expose children to language they would not hear in everyday life. We ensure we put aside time each day to read to the children.

We also make time in the day for children to read to themselves and we ensure our book corners are stocked with a wide variety of texts which make them think and develop their language and ideas. We

have a small non-fiction library in school and are able to take classes to the county library which is next door to St Andrew's.

We have our own 'reading spine' of quality texts which the children are introduced to in each year group. The books could be used for guided reading, whole class books read by the teacher or books children read to themselves. The 'spine' ensures the books in each year are age appropriate and become more challenging as children progress through the school. Having selected books in place also ensures we are developing the children's 'cultural capital' by ensuring they are exposed to well-loved stories which open them up to a wide range of experiences of our world. We have a number of books in a 'Literacy in Colour' collection. These books support inclusive reading in school and create belonging, reflecting the diversity of the society we live in.

St Andrew's uses 'Rocket Phonics' – a DfE validated SSP (Systematic Synthetic Phonics) programme which is aligned to the Letters and Sounds (DfE 2007) phonics document. We focus on two sounds weekly as well as tricky words. In Year 2 the focus shifts from teaching new content to recapping and building on SPaG elements.

Rocket phonics provides medium term plans, weekly plans and daily plans which teachers follow. Teachers carefully match phonics reading books to the phonics teaching. The scheme covers all of phonics from phase 2-6 in a clear progression of skills.

See separate Phonics Policy for more information.

In Key Stage 2, children are given continued support with their phonics knowledge where necessary. Children continue to read and take books home at an appropriate level. Once children are confident readers, they are able to choose their own books from class libraries, Chinnor library and from home.

Children read individually to an adult regularly. We have volunteers who visit our school to give their time to support with this.

Reading lessons are delivered in classes either through whole class shared and guided sessions or in small groups. In many classes both whole class and small group sessions take place. Reading lessons are used to develop phonics skills and also to develop: vocabulary; inference skills; ability to make predictions, explain, retrieve and summarise. We call these our 'Reading VIPERS'.

Reading ambassadors from each class promote reading for pleasure in St Andrew's by keeping library areas tidy, sharing ideas for reading events and inviting children to join them for reading clubs.

Writing

Written work is important because it is one of the ways pupils communicate their ideas and understanding. But in order for high quality writing to emerge, emphasis needs to be placed on speaking, listening and reading. Writing does not come naturally. Pupils can master the skills of mark-making, holding a pencil or pen correctly and writing at a reasonable speed, but this does not mean they will be good writers. Children need to have heard plenty of conversation, stories and high-quality texts in order to inform their writing.

We teach spelling, grammar and punctuation (SPaG) across the school, sometimes as discrete lessons but we link the learning of these skills to our literacy units and topic lessons as much as

possible. The children need to know that SPAG is important because it helps their writing make sense.

A range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry units are taught in each year group. Each unit begins with a 'cold' piece of writing completed in literacy books after a small amount of input about the text type.

'Cold' pieces are used to generate the success criteria for the unit – the learning journey. Distance marking sheets are used to record notes to feedback to the whole class and the learning journey is displayed on literacy working walls in the classrooms.

The 'Storytelling' approach to teaching writing is one approach used throughout our school. Texts are learned by heart to extend children's vocabulary and ability to use language in a variety of situations. 'Stepping-out' stories is a method used to help commit texts to memory and helps teach children about paragraphs. 'Story-mapping' also supports children to remember texts. Learning a story is the 'imitation' phase. Children then 'innovate' by changing key parts of the text but maintaining the learned structure. Once the children are confident with a story or text type, they reach the 'invention' stage where they are able to write original texts which fulfil the success criteria for the text type. Fiction units are taught in this way and non-fiction units are taught in a very similar way using Pie Corbett's 'Talk For Writing' technique.

A 'hot' piece of writing is completed in literacy books when the objectives in the learning journey have been taught. After teacher feedback, the children re-read their work, look at the success criteria and comment on their own (and their peers') success. The children reflect on their own marking and feedback from the teacher to edit and improve their work. Through supporting the children to assess and improve their own work, our pupils develop their 'growth mindsets'. Our pupils are happy to share mistakes and support each other to make their work the best it can be.

IT and Literacy

IT is used to enhance learning through using the internet for research in literacy and across other areas of the curriculum. An important literacy skill of applying the ability to appraise and evaluate texts and check for bias, validity is particularly important when using the internet.

St Andrew's is a 'Microsoft Showcase School' and we are working towards having a device for every child in the school to enhance learning across the curriculum.

Our pupils use word processing skills as part of their writing opportunities, including making decisions about the form, layout and presentation of their work. The children learn to understand how words and images are combined to convey meaning.

A range of computer programs and Apps enable the children to combine words, sound and images in a range of creative ways. This can bring to life their ideas and give their writing more purpose.

EYFS

In EYFS, literacy is taught in alignment with the 'Early Learning Goals'. The children learn through themes which follow the children's interest. A book is used as a basis for planning across the curriculum. The children experience lots of stories and lots of talk.

The 'Rocket Phonics' structured phonics scheme is introduced. The learning environment includes many signs, labels and an inviting reading area. The adults model writing throughout the continuous provision and enhanced provision approach.

Book talk and vocabulary progression is carefully planned. Language specific vocabulary is introduced and links to topics. Adults model language and encourage the use of full sentences. 'Helicopter Stories' is an approach used where stories are shared by adults and then children learn them by heart. Dictation sessions take place weekly to support writing development.

Teaching Assistants run interventions using NELI (Nuffield English Language Intervention), an intensive programme which promotes language, listening skills and comprehension.

Writing is moderated against the Early Learning Goals.

Assessment and Target Setting

Assessment of pupil work and progress is on-going by the class teacher and informs future planning. Teachers mark work in literacy in line with the school marking policy. Teachers use National Curriculum 2014 year group objectives to track pupil progress. Teachers complete tracking sheets at four assessment points during the academic year and children are assessed as 'Emerging, Expected or Exceeding' against the year group objectives. This information informs the planning for groups and individual pupils, and to set targets.

Children are encouraged to self and peer-assess their work during lessons and at the end of each unit of work in order to improve their evaluation and editing skills and help develop their 'growth mindsets'.

Formal assessments are used to assess reading comprehension once a year in KS1 and three times in KS2. These assessments enable the teacher to identify reading skills to focus on and identify children who would benefit from interventions. 'Wow Writing Weeks' are planned three times a year where the children are given inspiration for different genres of writing which are then assessed against year group objectives.

In the core subjects, statutory assessments are made at the end of Foundation Stage and end of Key Stage 1 and 2. Parent/teacher discussions are held in the Autumn and Spring terms and parents receive a mid-year progress report and an annual report at the end of the year.

There are four assessment points each academic year. Teachers use these to monitor pupil progress and update each child's attainment on the Oxfordshire Pupil Tracker (OPT). Following these assessment points, pupil progress meetings are held to discuss any pupils of concern.

Inclusion

The school aims to provide a broad and balanced education for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. Assessment information is used to identify pupils or groups of pupils who are under-achieving and steps are taken to improve their attainment, e.g., through the provision of specific guided group work, 1:1 support or intervention programmes.

Equal Opportunities

In line with the Equal Opportunities Policy, all children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

The role of the Subject Leader:

The Subject Leader is responsible for raising the standards of teaching and learning in Literacy through:

- monitoring and evaluating Literacy:-
 - pupil progress
 - provision of Literacy (including Intervention and Support programmes)
 - the quality of the Learning Environment;
 - the deployment and provision of support staff
- Leading in policy development
- Keeping up to date with recent Literacy developments
- Auditing CPD needs and supporting colleagues in their CPD

- Auditing, purchasing and organising resources

The Governing Body

Initiatives are discussed with the teaching and learning committee and regular meetings take place on the progress of English provision with the Literacy Leader and Literacy Governor.

Involvement of Parents/Carers

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn in literacy. In order to promote this, we:

- provide home/school reading diaries across the school
- offer guidance to parents, in the form of information letters/leaflets, presentations in school and areas on the school website about how they can support their children with homework
- hold parents' evenings twice a year to discuss children's progress
- send an annual report (and a mid-year report) to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can develop their learning

Review

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

Signed:  _____ **Chair of Governors**

Date: **November 2022**

Reviewed: **November 2025**