St. John's C. of E.

Blackpool's First Free School 1817

English Policy

'In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.'
Matthew 7:12

Be Kind Be Forgiving Be a Good Friend Be Honest Love One Another

Be part of our St John's family!

Last updated: Sept 2023 Next review due: Sept 2025

Our aims

We aim to build upon the experiences and skills children bring to school, to develop their knowledge and understanding of the spoken and written word and enable them to use language with growing confidence to support their own learning and understanding of the world and other people, thus supporting the school mission statement:

"Everyone matters in God's world."

Our teaching also reflects our ethos which, promotes, recognises, celebrates and welcomes diversity, honesty, respect and tolerance. This is rooted in our theological Christian vision:

'In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.' Matthew 7:12

Reading

Reading is a high priority for our school since success in reading has a direct effect upon progress in all other areas of the curriculum and is crucial to develop a child's confidence, motivation and self-esteem.

We encourage children to:

- Read with confidence, fluency and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct;
- Have an interest in a wide range of books and read for enjoyment and pleasure;
- Understand a range of text types and genres;
- Have a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their responses, thoughts and ideas.

Planning

Our long term plans illustrate the organisation of the year into the units covered, organised to ensure purposeful cross-curricular links with other subjects. We break these units down into medium and short-term plans that can be used to develop a sequence of teaching and learning opportunities offering stimulating learning experiences and providing both continuity and progression throughout the school. Differentiated tasks and challenges are planned for and implemented that enable all children to make progress and be challenged at an appropriate level. Effective deployment of adult support will also ensure maximum learning potential is reached.

The teaching of Reading

Children are given a variety of reading experiences at our school in order to develop the skills they need.

Shared Reading

This is reading with the whole class or a specific group. The teacher models as an expert and draws attention to the specific learning objective as well as different reading strategies. The teacher uses questioning to ensure maximum participation and understanding of the children.

Guided Reading

In some classes children are grouped in no more than six according to their reading ability. Children work towards a specific learning objective. Children read a range of fiction and non-fiction texts (including poetry) that are matched according to their reading levels. Guided reading is led by both teachers and Teaching Assistants.

Independent Reading

As the children progress through school, they are encouraged to read regularly in class. This may incorporate reading silently with a specific focus or reading for information. Teachers plan in opportunities for the children to read independently in their weekly timetable (KS1) and daily (KS2)

Individual Reading at Home and at School

We encourage parents to play a crucial part in their child's reading development and enjoyment of books. All children are provided with reading records and home reading books. The books sent home to be read together are taken from a selection of reading schemes, matched to the children's reading ability, to provide a broad and balanced reading curriculum.

Our reading books are colour banded in Key Stage 2 and banded according to phonic phase in Key Stage 1. Reading assessments (including reading analysis and bench marking) ensure that children progress appropriately through school. Reading books are changed when necessary. The children choose their own reading books. When a reading book is changed the date and book title is recorded in a class reading file.

Parents/Carers and adults in school are encouraged to leave a comment in the child's reading record commenting on how well the child read at home and strategies which they may need to practise. KS2 children are also encouraged to leave their own reviews in their reading record where appropriate.

Whole Class Reading

This is teacher led reading to develop listening skills, a love of stories and reading for pleasure. Children should be listening and responding to questions, predictions and vocabulary choices as appropriate to the level of the children. We use a wide range of texts which are linked to our curriculum topics.

Phonics

We follow the Bug Club Phonics programme for teaching phonics. Phonics is taught discreetly in EYFS and Key Stage 1. Children are grouped according to the phase they are working within. A combination of teachers and trained teaching assistants lead Bug Club Phonics sessions. Sessions may continue in Key Stage 2 if the need is identified. A selection of books is available for teachers to choose for Guided Reading Sessions / Shared Reading Sessions which are linked to the Bug Club phonics phases.

Reading for Pleasure

We aim for all children to enjoy reading. Teachers and support staff model an enjoyment of reading to children through shared sessions and personal reflections and comments. Whole school events such as 'World Book Day' help to encourage children to enjoy reading further. We invite different authors into school to promote reading for enjoyment including local authors. KS2 classes also visit Blackpool Central Library once every half-term. Reception and KS1 classes also attend story telling sessions at the library on a regular basis.

Assessment of Reading

Teacher assessments are made from evidence collected from guided and individual reading using the Lancashire KLIPs, LAPs and the Interim Framework (Yr2 & 6). Children's progress is regularly updated so that future learning can be specifically targeted to their needs.

Teachers may use assessment tools at the beginning of a year such as PM Benchmarking to help correctly identify children's reading levels.

Children in EYFS are assessed using the Early Years Statutory Framework. Children in Year 6 undertake a reading statutory assessment test during the summer term as current government legislation decrees.

Phonics & Spelling

At St John's C of E Primary School, we understand the importance of the systematic teaching of phonics and spelling in order to increase the success and confidence of children as spellers as they advance through the school and the world beyond.

EYFS:

Children use phonetic knowledge to write simple regular words and make phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words.

Key Stage One:

Children write most common regular words and CVC words correctly. They make phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words. Phonetically plausible attempts at spelling reflect a growing knowledge of whole word structure, together with an awareness of visual patterns and recall of letter strings.

Key Stage Two:

Children should spell common monosyllabic and polysyllabic words correctly. They spell polysyllabic words containing common prefixes and suffixes correctly. Attempts are made to spell unfamiliar polysyllabic words using known conventions and phonemic, morphemic and etymological strategies.

The teaching of spelling

EYFS and Key Stage One:

The Bug Club Phonics programme is used as a basis for the teaching of spelling and to help children see the relationship between reading and spelling, and how the teaching of one reinforces the understanding of the other. Children are grouped according to the phase they are working within.

Key Stage Two:

Children are taught using the Spelling Shed programme. Through this scheme, children are given both phonemic and morphological knowledge. Objectives are organised over the three terms of the year. The teaching of spelling strategies, high-frequency and cross-curricular words should be built into each half term's work in addition to phonemic and morphological knowledge.

Assessment of spelling

Group records are kept as part of the Bug Club Phonics programme and these are used to inform future learning for pupils and track progress.

During the Summer Term, Y1 undertake the Phonics Screening Test as current government legislation decrees. Any Y2 children who did not pass in Y1 are to retake the test at this time.

Speaking and Listening

At St John's C of E Primary School, we aim to build upon the experiences and skills children bring to school; to develop their knowledge and understanding of the spoken and written word and enable them to use language with growing confidence to support their own learning and understanding of the world and other people.

We encourage children to:

- Speak with increasing confidence and competence when using language for many purposes across the curriculum;

- Select and use language appropriately for different audiences in a range of situations;

- Progress and develop their speaking and listening skills as they move through school and become confident when interacting with others – questioning, disagreeing with, or qualifying comments.

The teaching of speaking and listening

We believe it is important to allow adequate curriculum time for the teaching of speaking and listening. This teaching takes place not only in English lessons, but also across the curriculum subjects. Children play an active part in presentations, topic talks, group discussions, debates and drama activities. Staff will also model speaking and listening in different situations.

Children will experience and participate in all four aspects of speaking and listening:

- Speaking
- Listening and responding
- Group discussion and interaction
- Drama

These oral skills are directly taught, modelled and sensitively encouraged in whole class and small group settings. We follow the statutory guidance and ideas from the National Curriculum and Talk for Writing materials to support the effective teaching and learning of speaking and listening.

Writing

Language is at the heart of all learning. At St John's C of E Primary School, we aim to build upon the experiences and skills children bring to school. Children should become confident writers who are able to express their thoughts, feelings and ideas in a variety of contexts and for a range of purposes.

We encourage children to:

- Write with confidence, fluency and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to self-assess and edit and improve their own writing;
- Have an interest in words and their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms;
- Understand a range of text types and genres – be able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation;
- Be developing the powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.

Planning

Our long term plans illustrate the organisation of the year into the units covered, organised to ensure purposeful cross-curricular links with other subjects. We break these units down into medium and short-term plans that can be used to develop a sequence of teaching and learning opportunities offering stimulating learning experiences and providing both continuity and progression throughout the school. Differentiated tasks are planned for and implemented that enable all children to make progress and be challenged at an appropriate level. Effective deployment of adult support will also ensure maximum learning potential is reached.

The teaching of writing

Writing should be a creative and a developmental process using the 'phased approach' to writing. All attempts at writing are valued and we know that all children have potential to be successful writers. Immersion in reading, talk and preparation for writing is vital to the writing development process.

Cross-curricular opportunities for writing:

Throughout the school children need opportunities to develop their confidence and practise their writing skills. All writing activities should have a purpose that helps to develop independent, creative writers who are able to make informed decisions about form, audience and purpose.

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make meaningful cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

Information and Communication Technology:

ICT has a relevance and purpose in many aspects of English learning. It should be used to enhance the learning experience and support effective teaching. There is a range of writing software on all computers as well as our school website to support the teaching and acquisition of writing skills and for the presentation of work.

Assessment of writing

Writing assessment is ongoing and teachers use their judgements daily when marking a child's work to ensure that subsequent learning provides a suitable level of challenge and progression.

Each half term, in Y1 – Y6, at least two independent pieces of writing, are assessed using the St John's assessment Framework. Assessment informs teacher's planning and the setting of appropriate targets and future learning for children. Teacher's assessments of children's writing are moderated by the English subject leaders,

School Leadership team, writing moderation in staff meetings and also writing moderation with other Blackpool primary schools.

Children in EYFS are assessed using Early Years Statutory Framework. Writing from children in Years 2 and 6 is moderated to support teacher judgements of attainment using the Interim Framework, as set out by STA/DfE.

Statutory requirements

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the Lancashire Reading /Writing Skills (Klips) document as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English.

Inclusion/Equal opportunities

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve well in English according to their individual abilities. We identify pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving through the use of our tracking system and take steps to improve their attainment. For children working significantly below the level of their class or group, learning objectives related to the aspect on which the whole class is working should be chosen wherever possible. If this is not appropriate, then teachers may want to track back to an earlier objective. Children working at 'greater depth' or have the potential to be working at a higher level will be identified in teacher's planning and suitable learning challenges provided in lessons that add breadth, increase the depth or accelerate the pace of learning. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background. *See Inclusion and Special Educational Needs Policy.*