

POLICY FOR ENGLISH/LITERACY

INTRODUCTION

Communication is central to learning across all areas of the curriculum. An English curriculum in addition to the attainment targets of speaking and listening, reading and writing should be integrated in all subjects as well as communication in its widest sense.

DEFINITION

The ability to communicate (receptive or expressive, oral, graphic, gestural or signed) is the foundation on which all aspects of the pupil's learning are built and the medium whereby other curriculum areas are experienced. Communication encompasses alternative and augmentative communication, including the use of technological aids, signing, symbol systems (Makaton), eye pointing, augmentative devices, facial expression, objects of reference, gesture, body movements and vocalisations.

AIMS

1. To raise standards in English and communication by giving pupils the means to access the curriculum, including the National Curriculum, the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and the Post 16 Curriculum.
2. To provide opportunities to develop functional communication skills (for example - making decisions and choices).
3. To develop pupils' abilities to communicate effectively in speech and writing.
4. To develop communication through a range of relationships within the school and its wider community including social media.
5. To give pupils an awareness and understanding of their environment and a means of extending control over their life.

POLICY INTO PRACTICE

OBJECTIVES

1. In speaking and listening pupils should:
 - Be given opportunities each day to develop and consolidate a more formalised means of communication, e.g. signs, symbols, and words.
 - Be encouraged to listen, understand and respond to others appropriately.
 - Be encouraged to transfer skills and communicate with others in a one to one situation, in a small group and as a member of whole class sessions.
 - Formulate, clarify and express their ideas.

2. In reading pupils should:

- Improve their abilities and strategies to understand some written text (both fiction/nonfiction/environmental text).
- Master some initial reading skills, e.g. phonics, word building, high frequency words so that they can become as independent and enthusiastic readers as possible.
- Understand and respond to a wide range of books, media and texts.
- Find out information they need from books, media etc. in order to answer questions.

3. In writing pupils should:

- Express themselves through drawing, mark making and writing for enjoyment.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how writing marks can help them communicate their ideas and information.
- Write/make marks for an increasing range of purposes, i.e. re-tell, instruction, label, story etc.
- Use ICT writing tools i.e. Clicker to support communication through the written word.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Communication should be functional for the pupil at all times. The development of communication skills should be an integral part of all areas of the curriculum. For a child with sensory impairment or profound and multiple learning difficulties, 'objects of significance/reference' will be used and specialised communication aids may be provided following assessment. Each pupil, where appropriate, should have an individual programme which has been developed with the Speech and Language Therapist (S.A.L.T.). All staff should have knowledge of communication methods to be used and have received training from the S.A.L.T. on strategies to promote good communication skills. All communication/reading in groups should include key word signing. The Framework for Language and Interaction in the Curriculum (F.L.I.C.) developed at St. Nicholas School is used along with other appropriate programmes as advised by the Communication Assisted Technology (CAT) team throughout the EYFS and Primary Department to develop communication skills in a small group setting; this is directed by the Speech and Language Therapist. In the Secondary Department and at St. Nicholas @ Canterbury College, class groups follow Functional skills programmes and life and Living skills programmes which incorporate communication in Social Skills programmes, directed by the Speech and Language Therapist where necessary.

AUGMENTATIVE COMMUNICATION

SYMBOLS

The agreed bank of Makaton/PECs symbols is centrally stored in the therapy room. Each class holds a manual called "Tools for Communication" which offers support in the use of and making of symbols. All computers offer access to this bank of symbols. The Therapy staff offer training to support teams in creating a bank of symbols, or offer a service in creating symbols as requested by teachers. All staff will wear a symbol key ring if appropriate and in addition to this, there are symbol access points around the school, providing basic symbols for communication with any pupil. Children with English as an additional language will have both their home language and additional language displayed on the symbol. The Picture Exchange Communication system (PECS) is also used for individuals where appropriate.

SIGNS

Staff will be trained by the regional Makaton trainer. This will be on a rota basis with priority given to new members of staff. Twilight sessions are also offered to staff, parents and teachers from other schools. Additional signs are taken from British Sign Language.

COMMUNICATION PASSPORT

For pupils with more profound needs, a communication passport will be completed in consultation with the pupils, parents and staff contributions. This will give an immediate idea on key areas on the pupils needs. This is reviewed for some pupils through the Shared Goals Programme.

LOW AND HIGH TECHNOLOGY COMMUNICATION AIDS

Pupils assessed as requiring low or high technology communication aids will need to have access to them at all times. Multi-Agency assessments for these aids are carried out as required. Teachers needing technical support for these should contact the therapy assistant. The therapy assistant will audit annually the location of all high technology equipment.

LITERACY

Literacy is taught throughout St. Nicholas School every day. In the Secondary Department all classes have daily literacy lessons and students have literacy/English as part of the carousel. All teachers have a long term literacy planning document summarising the stages of the English Curriculum that are appropriate for St. Nicholas School. From which they make their medium term plans individualised to each student's ability.

CURRICULUM PLANNING

Planning for literacy follows 'The KASS English Document' taken from both the National Curriculum documents for primary and secondary. The EYFS Curriculum is followed in the pre-school and reception Class and pupils will continue to work on these where appropriate into KS1.

READING

Reading should be an integral part of all lessons as well as students having daily reading session individually or in shared reading groups.

The teaching of reading should focus on

- Word reading skills, including the look and say method and the teaching of phonics.
- Reading for sense and meaning
- Fluency
- Comprehension including inference and deduction.
- Students should be exposed to wide range of fiction and non-fiction.

The Better Reading programme and Reading Recovery intervention are used where appropriate.

PHONICS

The discreet teaching of phonics is taught throughout the school following the Letters and Sounds document.

Throughout the school various reading schemes are used within a book banded system, following the Reading Recovery Levels. Pupils will be given daily opportunities to develop oral, visual, motor and memory skills. Pupils will have the opportunity to develop the pre-requisite skills for both reading and writing such as visual skills, fixation, focusing, scanning, symbols, words, developing fine motor skills and sequencing. Pupils will have access to different texts and labels inside the school environment to prepare them for the wider community.

Pupils will be encouraged to look at and share a favourite book.

Children will be encouraged to take a book home to share with parents. This might be a chosen book or one from their reading scheme. Parents will also be informed how they can help with reading skills.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Curriculum planning and reading within the Primary Department and EYFS encourages all pupils to communicate using the most appropriate methods. Work on early communication skills includes:

- Use of senses and awareness of self
- Looking
- Listening
- Attention
- Turn taking
- Development of play skills
- Making choices
- Using all functions of language
- The social uses of language
- The imaginative use of language (through cross-curricular topic work, free play, drama)
- Engagement

WRITING

At St. Nicholas we expose pupils to both cursive and print writing, and progress on whichever the pupils preferred mode. The cursive writing model is recommended to be used in conjunction with the writing programme. 'Writedance' is a multi-sensory programme that consolidates all pre-writing marks and builds confidence and flow in the mark maker.

Pupils are also encouraged to use ICT as a writing tool, and the use of the new writing programme Clicker. Staff are trained in the use of Clicker as either a beginner or an advanced user.

ST. NICHOLAS @ CANTERBURY COLLEGE

Literacy is one of the key skills of adult life. Students of St. Nicholas @ Canterbury College follow literacy programmes differentiated to meet their individual needs. The students, depending on ability either follow the Functional Skills course or the OCR Life and living Skills course in communication.

ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING

In the Foundation Stage the EYFS profile is used, as well as the Early Years Kent Tracker tool and the Pupil Asset assessment tool.

Key stages 1, 2, 3 and 4 also use the Pupil Asset tool.

Assessment of the EHCP section F targets for each pupil in speaking and listening, reading and writing is ongoing and recorded termly using Pupil Asset.

The teacher on a termly basis evaluates the schemes of work for each area.

LIBRARY

The school has two libraries areas one for secondary aged children and one for the primary aged children. Each library offers a wide range of genre and texts to offer breadth and balance from a variety of sources. All reading schemes are sited appropriately and graded within Reading Recovery Levels. All classrooms have a dedicated book area so all students have access to books every day.

ICT/COMPUTING

Pupils will be given opportunities, where appropriate, to use ICT resources to extend their understanding within all areas of Literacy.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be monitored on a bi-yearly basis by the Curriculum Co-ordinator to keep up to date with any adjustments to statutory legislation or curriculum and any changes will go via the Governing Body when necessary

EQUALITY, SAFEGUARDING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

St Nicholas School, in all policies and procedures, will promote equality of opportunity for students and staff from all social, cultural and economic backgrounds and ensure freedom from discrimination on the basis of membership of any group, including gender, sexual orientation, family circumstances, ethnic or national origin, disability (physical or mental), religious or political beliefs.

St Nicholas School aims to:

- Provide equal opportunity for all
- To foster good relations, and create effective partnership with all sections of the community
- To take no action which discriminates unlawfully in service delivery, commissioning and employment
- To provide an environment free from fear and discrimination, where diversity, respect and dignity are valued.

All aspects of Safeguarding will be embedded into the life of the school and be adhered to and be the responsibility of all staff.

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

Teaching and Learning, All curriculum policies, Safeguarding, Positive Behaviour Support, Community Cohesion, Monitoring and Evaluation

JANE PUNTON

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