



St John with St Augustine C of E Primary School English Policy



“With God’s help, together, we aspire, achieve and believe.”

Intent

At St John with St Augustine Primary School, we want our children to become enthusiastic, engaged readers and writers who develop a life-long love of reading and a passion for writing. We aspire to promote and instil a love for reading, writing and high-quality literature into pupils at all ages. We are committed to providing an exciting, ambitious and progressive English curriculum which is sequenced so pupils acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding to become lifelong learners and linguists. We aim to ensure that all our pupils receive a well-rounded learning experience which will equip them with the fundamental tools to achieve in the school and beyond.

Reading is at the heart of our English curriculum and underpins all their learning across the curriculum. Our English Curriculum is planned around high-quality texts, stories and novels. We believe that all children are entitled to a broad and balanced English curriculum and it allows each individual to maximise their learning potential; preparing them for the application of English skills across the whole curriculum and life beyond primary education. We encourage all children, to become speakers, readers and writers, through a wealth of opportunities. Oracy is at the heart of our teaching and learning approaches. We know language development is an area of key importance to our pupils. Our pupils acquire a wide vocabulary, captured through a wide breadth of texts and modelled with high quality talk from adults in school. Through our English curriculum we strive to teach pupils how vital these skills will be for their learning now and for their futures.

Aim

We aim to develop pupils’ abilities within an integrated programme of speaking & listening, reading & writing. Pupils are given opportunities to interrelate the requirements of English within a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of English across the curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught skills.

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

At St John with St Augustine’s Primary School, we strive for children to be a ‘Primary Literate Pupil’ and to leave at Year 6 being able to:

- *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; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas*
- *are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate*

Vision for Reading

At St John with St Augustine Primary School, we believe that reading is at the centre of learning. We strive for children to learn to love books through a range of storytelling sessions. English topics are based on stories by well-known authors and the children are given time to immerse themselves in the story and get to know the characters and story format. Children are encouraged to read a wide variety of genres, they have access to this through a well-resourced and modern reading scheme which they read at home with parents and also in school with staff.

We endeavour to teach children how to comprehend, interpret and apply reading skills to cross-curricular content. As children's reading develops at different rates, teaching is tailored to each child and their ability. Children will read daily in their classroom, either in shared reading, one to one reading or guided reading sessions. Children are encouraged to read a range of books in school and at home and communication between staff and parents is encouraged. We aim to bring reading to life and give it purpose by using music, speaking and listening, drama and performance.

Vision for Writing

It is our vision that every child will learn to write through real and exciting materials and opportunities. We will show and explain everyday occurrences to the children and inspire them to write about them. We will share high quality writing to inspire children to emulate styles. We encourage children to use their oracy skills to plan and create their writing, to read their work for enjoyment, to read it aloud to others and provide audiences for writing. They will reflect on their own and others writing and have an understanding that writing has a real purpose and that word choice and style can bring about change.

We believe that this encouragement will enable them to become confident, capable, enthusiastic writers who will develop a genuine love of writing. They will use writing to express themselves creatively and communicate with others and will write independently for a range of purposes.

Purpose of study

A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society.

Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum document (2014) and in the Communication, Language and Literacy sections of the Development Matters Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021).

Approaches to Speaking and Listening

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception Class) children are given opportunities to:

- speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities;
- use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum;
- become immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2) children learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

At Key Stage Two (Years 3-6) children learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

The four strands of Speaking and Listening: Speaking; Listening; Group Discussion and Interaction, and Drama permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. We believe that high quality talk leads to high quality English.

Opportunities to develop these skills include: the use of talk partners, taking part in class and whole school assemblies, involvement in the school council, key stage performances throughout the school year.

Approaches to Reading

At St John with St Augustine's Primary School, we teach reading in a variety of ways.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception class) and Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) the children are 'learning to read.' In Key Stage 2 (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6) the children are 'reading to learn.'

Phonics

Phonics at St John with St Augustine is taught using Red Rose Letters and Sounds Phonics which is a new systematic, synthetic phonics planning programme. This planning programme has been developed by Lancashire's Primary English and Literacy Consultancy Team. In Phonics the children are taught about letter sounds and shapes, and which letters (or groups of letters) make which sounds. Children are taught to say the sound and recognise the letter (or group of letters) that makes that sound. However, using phonics to help you read is not just about knowing the sounds that the letters make. The children have to learn how to blend those individual sounds together to read words. For example, c-a-t blended together says 'cat' and sh-o-p says 'shop'.

In Reception and Year 1 the children have daily phonics sessions. The sessions are delivered by the teachers and teaching assistants. The children are grouped for phonics according to what they know and can do. This means that they are taught specific next steps in groups.

In Year 2, children who did not pass the phonics screening test, will have additional phonics lessons to close the gaps. Target tracker will be used to identify gaps and lessons from Red Rose Letters and Sounds Phonics to be taught to target the specific gaps – rather than revisiting a whole phase again.

Each half term, the phonics lead meets with the class teachers (Pupil Progress Meetings) to evaluate progress in phonics and the groups are adjusted to reflect the progress that the children are making (using Phonics Tracker). If a child is struggling, specific intervention will be put in place to prevent them from falling behind (additional to the daily phonics lesson). For some children with Special Educational Needs, phonics targets will be included in their Individual Education Plans. This means that they may be taught phonics one-to-one with an adult.

For a very small number of children, learning to read through phonics may not be an appropriate method. For example, if a child is hearing impaired or has a specific learning difficulty, adjusted or alternative provision is made to meet the needs of such children.

Whole Class Shared Reading

Shared reading provides the opportunity to share texts with children that they would not normally access or be able to interpret on their own. The reading skills taught in the shared reading session are usually appropriate to the age of the children rather than their reading ability.

Guided Reading

Guided Reading in EYFS and Year 1:

Guided Reading is taught daily, moving through a carousel of activities. In small groups, children work with different teachers focusing on one activity: pre-teach phonics focus, comprehension and respond task. These activities are carefully planned using the EYFS early learning goals and reading domains for Year 1. Reading books are closely matched to the current phonics teaching and are sequenced to follow the Red Rose Letters and Sounds teaching sequence. Reading for pleasure is encouraged within the classroom and all children have an opportunity to explore pleasure texts through a range of activities i.e. reading river, library visits and classroom libraries.

Guided Reading in Year 2 – Year 6:

Whole class guided reading takes place daily at St John with St Augustine Primary School. Guided reading allows children to access a range of text types, completing responding to reading activities and questions around the texts.

Our questioning focuses on the reading domains; the skills needed for the end of key stage assessments.

Key Stage One:

1a draw on knowledge of vocabulary to understand texts

1b identify / explain key aspects of fiction and non-fiction texts, such as characters, events, titles and information

1c identify and explain the sequence of events in texts

1d make inferences from the text

1e predict what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far

Key Stage Two:

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

In our guided reading lessons, we want:

- Our children to have opportunities to read quality books and not just extracts
- More opportunities for the class teacher to listen to readers
- Children to enjoy guided reading
- To read a range - fiction, non-fiction and poetry
- To bring a love of reading – having planned opportunities for reading for pleasure

A range of books and texts are used for planning Guided Reading sessions:

- Fiction weeks – there are class sets of quality books (book bands)
- Non-fiction/ Poetry weeks – extracts from Reading Explorers (age related)

Individual Reading

This is the opportunity for children to practise the reading skills they have been taught on a one-to-one basis with an adult.

Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 will read to an adult and change their reading books at least once a week. Some children will do this more frequently.

Children in Key Stage 2 will be heard individually where the teacher feels they would benefit from extra support with their reading.

Comments about a child's progress will be made in their Reading Record.

Home Reading

At St John with St Augustine's Primary School, phonics reading books are banded in their phases. From Year 2, book band colours are used for children's individual readers. Children will have full access to age appropriate texts and each child has a home reading book which they choose themselves.

At St John with St Augustine's Primary School, we recommend that children practise reading at home for at least five minutes a day. A signature and/or short comment should be made by the parent/carers in the Reading Record. We ask that children take care of books taken home with them.

Wider Reading

Each classroom has an attractive reading area with a selection of appropriate books for children to read for pleasure. Books are updated at least half termly in the class reading areas, with a good selection of curriculum matched texts.

Story Reading and Telling

Staff read regularly to the children from stories, poems, nursery rhymes, and more. From Year 2 onwards, each class listens to their teacher read regularly from a class novel. This is important for developing children's vocabulary and sentence structure as well as fostering enjoyment in reading.

Common Exception Words (High Frequency Words)

Children are taught to read common exception words on sight, through the use of flashcards and games.

Approaches to Writing

At St John with St Augustine Primary School, we aim to develop the children's ability to produce well-structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the reader. Children are taught to write fluently and recognise different genres through shared, guided and independent activities. They are provided with opportunities to see adults writing and are encouraged to present their work for wider audiences in order to achieve a sense of authorship. Opportunities for drafting, collaboration and planning are given, and skills are practised throughout the curriculum. Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation, handwriting and spelling.

Emergent Writing

Emergent writing is encouraged at the early stages. Children are given a range of opportunities to create and use print in a meaningful way. Some examples of emergent writing skills include scribbling, drawing, copying, writing individual letters, inventing spellings of words.

Shared Writing

During Shared Writing sessions, the teacher provides a role model, often acting as a scribe, demonstrating how to form a letter, spell a word, leave a space, or put in a full stop. As the children progress, more sophisticated strategies of modelling, planning, drafting, proofreading or writing in a genre, are used.

Guided Writing

Guided Writing sessions should provide a bridge between shared and independent work. Children are placed in small groups according to writing ability and the teacher focuses on a specific challenging aspect of writing.

Independent Writing

The children work on individual pieces of writing linked to the genre of the unit they are studying. They have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions at the end of each unit. Throughout each unit, teachers will plan a range of short independent writing opportunities.

English Working Wall

Each classroom has an interactive English working wall to support children's independent writing. It evolves as a unit of work unfolds and is not intended to be a tidy display of finished work. The wall should exemplify the writing process from the 'reading as a writer' stage to the 'nearly finished' stage. The wall represents a workshop approach to writing where the tools of the trade are accessible, and added to, as the process develops. Final presentations can be displayed in public areas of the school or in anthologies, portfolios or folders.

Handwriting

Handwriting is taught using the 'little and often' philosophy. The children are introduced to letters with a 'flick' in Reception with a more formal cursive writing style being introduced in Year 1 depending on the ability of the child. Sometime during KS2, each child earns their 'Pen License', which means that they move from writing with a pencil to a pen. The children are always very proud when they achieve this.

Please see Handwriting Policy.

Spelling

Children across the school use the Spelling Shed which is a teacher-led activity based scheme for spelling. Spelling is taught daily and each lesson has a main objective from the National Curriculum appendix for spelling. The lesson sequence is planned to systematically build upon acquired knowledge. Challenge weeks are lists of words made up from the statutory word lists found in the National Curriculum English Programme of Study - Spelling.

Grammar

Grammar teaching a key skill within a sentence over several days, or as part of a guided session. The model follows the sequence of immerse, imitate, innovate and invent to allow modelling, practising and application. This is taught daily within the English lesson.

Teaching Sequence for English Units

Daily English sessions take place in all classes where children are taught the skills that they need to become thoughtful and imaginative writers. Writing is taught through units of work, which each focus on a specific type of text, e.g. recounts, instructions, fairy tales, etc. The units take the children from reading and analysing examples of a particular text type, to developing their ideas then writing their own. As well as being taught to voice and improve their ideas, the children learn specific grammar, punctuation and spelling skills within each year group.

Children are encouraged to present their ideas in a variety of formats, not simply in their exercise books. These could be leaflets, posters, published books for our library or PowerPoints, etc. We believe that this helps the children to see themselves as writing for a real purpose.

Children receive regular feedback throughout the writing process, both verbal and written, to help them to identify where they have done well and what their next steps in learning are. This enables our children to effectively improve their work and make continual progress towards their learning outcomes.

Children are also expected to write as part of their wider curriculum learning, as this gives the children opportunities to use and apply their learning in English in a different context.

The Teaching Sequence

A suggested unit outline follows the teaching sequence:

- Creating Interest
- Reading:
Reading and responding
Reading and analysing
 - Gathering content
 - Writing
 - Presentation

The amount of time spent in any one phase needs to be tailored to the needs of the class.

Writing Outcomes

Extended Writing Outcomes: Each unit of work should result in at least two (and possibly three) extended, written outcomes. This allows children several opportunities to practise and apply newly acquired skills in context.

Outcomes are identified as follows:

1. Scaffolded outcome

This is completed on a daily basis during the writing phase. It is supported through daily, whole-class, shared and modelled writing. It may be further supported by small-group, guided writing for some pupils. Each section is supported through teaching, with the children working on their own version following the teacher's model.

The effectiveness of this model is enhanced by:

- feedback and marking on a daily basis and pupils being given time to respond;
- use of ideas and vocabulary gathered during earlier phases displayed on the working wall;
- displaying the shared and modelled writing from across the writing phase.

2. Independent extended writing outcome

This is a second opportunity for the children to write in the same genre or text-type, but this time, more independently. Generally, this would take one (or at most two lessons) and should take place soon after the completion of the unit. The children should have time to think, plan and discuss their ideas and they should also have access to prompts created through the unit, e.g. content from the working wall, genre checklists, word banks, dictionaries etc. Crucially however, there should be no adult modelling of writing to support the completion of this second outcome. As well as giving children another opportunity to apply their skills, this outcome is very useful to inform assessment and next steps in teaching and learning. Consequently, feedback and marking for this outcome might be less in-depth and feature on

completion of the piece only. This provides an ideal opportunity for pupils to make improvements to their independent writing via redrafting and self-editing. The piece can still be used for assessment purposes, provided that the process is not over-scaffolded by the teacher and is the result of the child's own improvement.

3. Cross curricular application

This works best for non-fiction units. It usually takes place some time after the completion of the English unit and in another area of the curriculum. This provides opportunity for children to revisit text types and revise skills. Pupils should be given time to refresh their knowledge and understanding of the text type, looking back at their own writing and prompts created. Again, this outcome is particularly useful for assessment purposes and children should be given opportunity to edit and improve their own writing.

Publishing Writing

Children invariably write more effectively when they have a real audience and purpose for their writing. Thought should be given to this at the outset and shared with the children. This might involve:

- writing stories to entertain Year 2, for example: arranging an opportunity for the children to share their stories with them in small groups;
- writing, then redrafting, non-chronological reports to make a class book which is put on display in the school library;
- children reading, rehearsing and performing their own poetry to be recorded and shared on the school website.

Short writing

Of course, all writing must not be left until the writing phase! Writing skills need to be constantly practised and revisited throughout the reading and gathering content phases. Outcomes should be linked to a specific learning objective e.g. LO: To infer character thoughts and feelings – Outcome: diary. Examples of short writing opportunities include: - diary entries - character profile - dialogue exchange - fact file - letter to a problem page - book review
Grammar and Punctuation An age-appropriate grammar and/or punctuation focus should be selected for each unit, based on the genre or text type from the unit.

However, it is important that teachers consider the children's current skills in relation to grammar and adjust this focus if necessary. For example, it is not appropriate to teach main and subordinate clauses to a Year 3 class who are not secure with simple sentence construction. As well as the acquisition of grammar skills, knowledge and terminology, it is important that children are shown how to apply these appropriately in their own writing.

The process involves:

- Short, sharp grammar warm-ups - a highly effective way of introducing and practising the skills initially;
- The teacher modelling the appropriate application during the writing phase;
- Establishing the expectation that the children will apply the skills appropriately in their own writing;
- The children having opportunity to self and peer assess;
- Teacher feedback and marking which reflects the grammar or punctuation focus. It is advisable to address one or two objectives for grammar and/or punctuation within a unit; this allows skills to be taught and secured through a 'little and often' approach.

The impact on our children is clear: progress, sustained learning and transferrable skills. As a result we have a community of enthusiastic readers and writers who enjoy showcasing their developing English knowledge and skills. They are confident to take risks in their reading and writing, and love to discuss and share their ideas. As all aspects of English are an integral part of the curriculum, cross curricular writing standards have also improved and skills taught in the English lesson are transferred into other subjects; this shows consolidation of skills and a deeper understanding of how and when to use specific grammar, punctuation and grammar objectives. We hope that as children move on from us to further their education and learning, that their creativity, passion for English and high aspirations travel with them and continue to grow and develop as they do.

The impact is evidenced in the learning outcomes of the children at the end of KS2, who:

- can read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- have developed the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- have acquired 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; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

Cross-curricular Opportunities

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make 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.

Assessment and Target Setting

Formative assessment will be used daily to inform us of the knowledge and skills acquired by the children. We will use a colour code system to show whether a child has achieved the Learning Objective this day. This will give us an insight into each child's understanding of the areas of English taught. Please see our Teaching and Learning policy for more information on assessment, marking and feedback.

Each term teachers will use their teacher assessment to track whether pupils are working at the expected standard in reading and writing. During Pupil Progress Meetings, the subject leader, SENCO and Head Teacher will discuss with the class teacher any children who are not on track.

Inclusion

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. By targeting intervention programmes and support appropriately, we aim to narrow the gap between an under-achieving child's English attainment and national expectations.

Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

Equal Opportunities

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 Governing Body

Regular reports are made to the governors on the progress of English provision. This policy will be reviewed every three years or in the light of changes to legal requirements. The Nominated English Governor meets termly with the Subject Leader.

The Role of the Subject Leader

The Subject Leader should be responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

Monitoring and evaluating:-

- pupil progress
- provision of English (including Intervention and Support programmes)
- the quality of the Learning Environment;
- the deployment and provision of support staff

Taking the lead in policy development

Auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD

Purchasing and organising resources

Keeping up to date with recent Literacy developments

Parental Involvement

Parents can support children with English by:

- Regularly hearing their children read
- Sharing books with their children
- Promoting enjoyment of reading in the home and wider environment
- Supporting their children with English homework
- Supporting school in English events e.g. Book Fair, World Book Day
- Providing wide and varied opportunities to speak and listen in the home and wider environment

Conclusion

This policy also needs to be in line with other school policies and therefore should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

Teaching and Learning Policy

Feedback and Marking policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

Handwriting Policy

Phonics and Early Reading Policy

