



"Choose the Right Path"

St James' C of E Infant and Nursery School

English Policy

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Signed:	
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Aims

At St James' C of E Infant and Nursery School, we aim to provide a creative, vocabulary rich curriculum that inspires and challenges our children, in preparation for life in a culturally diverse and everchanging world. High expectations, inclusive approaches and excellent teaching will form the basis of all our work. Our children will have the opportunity to read widely, explore, ask questions and become knowledgeable, independent learners. Our Curriculum will prepare our children for life-long learning. Inspire

The aims of English are:

- To enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which takes account of their listeners;
- 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 activities;
- To develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge;
- 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;
- To increase children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.
- To promote a lifelong love of reading.

Teaching and Learning Style

Read Write Inc.

Our pupils learn to read effectively and quickly using the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme, which is started in our Nursery during their final summer term.

In Read, Write Inc Phonics pupils:

- Decode letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic knowledge and skills
- Read common exception words on sight
- Understand what they read
- Read aloud with fluency and expression
- Spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words

In addition, we teach pupils to work effectively with a partner to explain and consolidate what they are learning. This provides the teacher with opportunities to assess learning and to pick up on difficulties, such as pupils' poor articulation, or problems with blending or alphabetic code knowledge.

In Nursery and Reception, we use early listening and phonics awareness activities to develop the children's listening skills, which later supports their phonic awareness. The pupils rapidly learn sounds and the letter or group of letters they need to represent them through the use of the RWI

programme. Simple mnemonics help them to grasp this quickly. This is especially useful for pupils at risk of making slower progress. This learning is consolidated daily. Pupils have frequent practise in reading high frequency words with irregular spellings – common exception words.

Embedding the alphabetic code early on means that pupils quickly learn to write simple words and sentences. We encourage them to compose each sentence aloud until they are confident to write independently. We make sure they write every day. Pupils write at the level of their spelling knowledge. The quality of the vocabulary they use in their writing reflects the language they have heard in the books the teacher has read to them; they have also discussed what the words mean.

We group pupils homogenously, according to their progress in reading rather than their writing. This is because it is known that pupils' progress in writing will lag behind progress in reading, especially for those whose motor skills are less developed.

We make sure that pupils read books that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and the common exception words. This is so that, early on, they experience success and gain confidence that they are readers. Re-reading and discussing these books with the teacher support their increasingly fluent decoding.

Our aim is for pupils to complete the phonics programme as quickly as possible. The sooner they complete it, the sooner they will be able to choose any book to read at their own interest and comprehension level.

Once children complete the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme they are taught in their year group using Read, Write, Inc Spelling and comprehension programmes.

Alongside this, we use the Literacy Curriculum to teach reading and writing which 'places a Literature-led Approach at the Core of English'.

We believe the exposure of children's literature within the primary school setting is vital as a rich context for learning; not only within English as a subject but to support building a reading culture throughout the school.

Through the use of The Literacy Curriculum reading sequences, we use high quality books that offer opportunities for empathy and can aid philosophical enquiry, where children see their cultures, families and relationships reflected, as a means of developing the spoken language requirements through debate, drama and discussion using the issues raised through, and within, the text.

By placing books at the core, we ensure that we use a text as the context for the requirements of the national curriculum. The national curriculum states that:

"This guidance is not intended to constrain or restrict teachers' creativity, simply to provide the structure on which they can construct exciting lessons.'

This would suggest that a context for learning is vital – and this is where our chosen approach ensures that objectives for reading and writing, including those for grammar can have purpose. We will always aim for our writing opportunities to be meaningful and to feel authentic. Whether these are short or long and that the audience is clear. Books offer this opportunity: our aim is that that our children have real reasons to write, whether to explain, persuade, inform or instruct and that where possible, this can be embedded within text or linked to a curriculum area. Writing in role using a range of genres is key to our approach and we would always model the tone and level of formality.

This sits comfortably alongside the following statement from the English national curriculum:

'The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.'

The scheme has mapped the coverage of the entire English Programme of Study for KS1 for Writing and Reading Comprehension, as well as meeting the needs of the statutory 2021 Early Years Framework. In many cases objectives are covered more than once and children have opportunities to apply these several times over the course of a year, as well as to consolidate prior knowledge from previous years. This approach supports children to think deeply and develop skills with depth. Where needed, planning sequences should be adapted, personalised and differentiated by the school to ensure all access arrangements can be made to support children with the requirements.

Early Years Foundation Stage (read alongside EYFS policy)

All children in the EYFS follow a broad-based curriculum and have a wide range of opportunities to communicate and develop early reading and writing skills. We believe that before children can become effective readers and writers they must have a solid understanding of language and be exposed to a vast range of vocabulary. We aim to do this through adult led activities, enhanced and continuous provision. Resources are used imaginatively and creatively to stimulate curiosity and excitement about the world around them.

We use Read, Write, Inc alongside the rest of the school and we start to use the Literacy Curriculum in reception, so that children are exposed to a range of fun and high-quality texts from an early age. Our Wider Reading Blanket, ensures that children from Nursery have access to a wide range of texts which promote a love of reading from the youngest of ages.

In Key Stage 1

English will be taught daily through dedicated English lessons using The Literacy Tree Curriculum, alongside separate RWInc phonic and handwriting lessons. These lessons will also have a focus on: drama and speaking and listening; spellings; grammar, punctuation and spelling (SPaG); along with cross curricular opportunities to embed the learning from English lessons. The amount of time devoted to each of these areas varies dependent upon the age of the child and also their ability. We strive to make English learning an enjoyable and motivating experience by using a range of stimuli, including drama, film and text, relating these as closely as possible to real-life experiences that children can relate to.

Again, our Wider Reading Blanket, ensures that children from Nursery have access to a wide range of texts which promote a love of reading from the youngest of ages.

Approaches to Speaking and Listening

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 aim for children to be able to speak clearly, fluently and coherently, to be able to listen attentively with understanding, pleasure and empathy, and contribute to group discussion effectively.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Giving our children confidence in themselves as speakers and listeners, by showing them that we value their conversation and opinions and encouraging a respect for the views of others.
- Being aware that we provide a model for speakers and listeners in our day-to-day interactions with them and other adults in the school.
- Helping them to articulate their ideas and provide purposes and audiences for talk within a range of formal and informal situations and in individual, partner, group and class contexts.
- By providing opportunities to perform to a larger audience, in assemblies and productions, where children's efforts and skills are acknowledged by staff, parents, carers, visitors and peers.
- By providing a range of experiences where children can work collaboratively and give them opportunities to reflect on talk and explore real and imagined situations through role play, hot-seating, drama and discussions.
- By developing the child's ability to listen with attention and understanding in all areas of the curriculum and where necessary, asking and responding to questions appropriately

Approaches to Reading

Children are taught a wide range of reading strategies, including context, picture cues, and sound/letter correspondence. The school has a variety of pre-readers and reading scheme books linked to our RWI scheme and used by early readers.

To develop our pupils as readers we

- Build on the children's knowledge and experience of print that they bring to school and involve parents for the beginning, through parent's information meetings, guides and ways to help at home such as through our fortnightly Book Warmers.
- Provide a stimulating environment, where books and other reading materials are presented in an attractive and inviting way, so that children can see we value books and reading, and will enjoy reading for pleasure and information, and develop an awareness of the importance of reading in the everyday life for example through our Book Nooks and Library.
- Ensure that the children are given extensive experience and access to a quality selection of a range of genre, and plan for them to have time to browse and read for pleasure as well as using books as a tool for learning.
- Provide opportunities for children to read aloud, on their own, with their peers and with their teachers and also regular opportunities to enjoy stories being read aloud to the class.
- Give opportunities to respond by talking appreciatively and critically about what they have read, discussing authors, themes, characters, settings and plots.
- Encourage children to write their own stories or poems, making books or contributing to class books so that they have opportunity to become authors.

Phonics - see early section about Read, Write Inc.

Guided Reading

Once children are on paper ditty books in Read, Write, Inc they will access daily shared reading writing their group.

Shared Reading

Regular shared reading takes place where pupils are encouraged to listen, discuss, re-enact and develop their own ideas in co-operation with others. This happens several times each day, whether it is through our English lessons or story times throughout the day.

Individual Reading

Children from Reception upwards, read books that are matched to their phonic level and ability. These books are sent home once a week, alongside the book that they are working on in RWI. Each child has a home to school book, where dates, titles of books read are recorded by the child. Parents

are encouraged to add comments. The reading diary acts as a contact between all who hear the child read, and is an important link with home. We have Superstar Reader certificates for those who read 5 times per week; whether it be a reading scheme book or sharing a story at home.

Reading for pleasure

This is always a priority for us at St James as we strive to ensure that our children have a lifelong love of reading. Each classroom has a book/reading area which is regularly refreshed and updated. The children have a voting system in KS1 to select books for story sessions, as well as storybooks that are planned for by our teachers using year group 'Wider Reading Blankets'.

They are able to borrow books from the areas to take home and we also have Reading Sheds on both EYFS and KS1 yards for children to choose picture books to take home

The library van visits termly and we also visit the library each term. The children take part in reading activities throughout the year, such as World Book Day, Creative Week based around books and have access to visiting authors. We also have Buddy the Book Bear who goes home with pupils in a crate with a book, snuggle blanket, hot chocolate etc. to enjoy reading at home.

Parental Involvement

Reading with a supportive adult is the centre of our reading philosophy and reading can be best learned with the support of both school and parents. Therefore, we actively encourage parents to participate and share in the child's reading. All children are encouraged to read daily. Parents and teachers can communicate in the child's home to school book for reading on a regular basis. We also encourage joining the local library and participation in any extra reading ideas sent home. Each year group teacher sends out a 'Book Warmer' linked to each book we are using in class. This details linked books, key vocabulary we learn and additional learning they can access at home.

Approaches to Writing

To develop our children as writers we

- We use Literacy Tree Curriculum from Reception through to year 2. The children develop writing skills in this way using 2 linked books per half term.
- Early writers also use RWI to help support them in the early skills of constructing a word or sentence. A 'hold a sentence' approach is used for this.
- Treat children as writers, from the earliest stage, who have something they will want to communicate, by building on their writing skills they have acquired and their knowledge of print form the environment.
 - Provide experiences where the child can acquire confidence and a positive attitude to writing.
 - Develop and sustain writing skills by providing opportunities for children to write a range of purposes and audiences.
 - Use guided writing sessions to model writing skills, teaching children how to compose, amend and revise their writing.
 - Teach children to become critical readers of their own writing by using self-evaluation and checking their work independently for sense, accuracy and meaning.
 - Teach grammar and punctuation in the context of children's own writing, as well as exercises and word games and by modelling examples.
 - Encourage children's ability to organise and present imaginative factual writing and poetry in different ways.
 - Teach strategies for spelling to enable children to become confident and competent spellers.

Handwriting

Handwriting begins in the Early Years with mark-making and patterns. All pupils are given access to a wide range of writing tools and mediums to practice the early fine motor skills. Pupils are given opportunities to trace and follow writing patterns until they are confident of writing independently.

Pupils are encouraged to develop fluent lines of correctly orientated letters from an early age and emergent writing is encouraged. We believe that discrete handwriting sessions where children's formation and pencil grip can be readily overseen should take place on at least a weekly basis and more frequently in the Early Years. Once in reception we introduce the children to the Nelson Handwriting scheme which they then use up until Year 2.

Correct posture and positioning of paper or books are also emphasised during these sessions. Letter formation and handwriting is taught and modelled using the Nelson handwriting scheme. Individual letters are taught with flicks that lead onto a cursive script. Some children will begin to join their letters from Year One and encouraged to join their writing regularly in Year Two. Children are encouraged to think carefully about the presentation of their work and to develop clear, legible and fluent hand-writing.

Spelling

Spelling is an integral part of the writing process; children who spell with ease are able to concentrate on the content of their writing. Spelling strategies are taught explicitly and important links between spelling and handwriting are made. Children start spelling words from an early age in RWI and have spelling slinked to the sound and phase that they are on. We investigate and learn how to use common spelling patterns and frequently used prefixes and suffixes.

In Year 2, children follow the RWInc spelling programme focussing on different spelling rules and mnemonics for remembering the common exception words.

The use of classroom resources including displays, competitions, word banks, wordbooks and dictionaries to support spelling is actively encouraged.

Teaching English to children with special educational needs.

At our school we teach English to all children, whatever their ability. English forms part of the school's curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. 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 and the Early Years outcomes allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels. When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style and differentiation so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the children's needs. Intervention through School Action and School Action Plus will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to English. We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning English.

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.

Cross-curricular Literacy Opportunities

Teachers in both key stages seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through literacy lessons to other areas of the curriculum, especially when planning topic work. The school also hosts creative writing weeks throughout the year, where children are able to fully engage with their writing skills in a fun and practical way.

Assessing and tracking progress

We assess all pupils following Read Write Inc. Phonics using the Sound and Word Entry Assessment. We use this data to assign them either to Read Write Inc. Phonics or Read Write Inc. Spelling and Comprehension. This gives us a very good indication of how well they are making progress relative to their starting points. We do this for pupils, whenever they join us, so we can track all of them effectively, including those eligible for Pupil Premium. For those on the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme, we record their starting date and entry point on the tracker to monitor the rate at which they are making progress. We can also easily identify those who joined the programme later.

Pupils who are making slower progress usually complete the RWI programme by the end of year 2. We support pupils who have identified special educational needs for however long it takes until they can read. For example, we identify those who are at risk of falling behind their peers immediately – whatever their age. Our approach is to ‘keep up, not catch up’. With this in mind RWI is assessed regularly and the children in the lower 20% of each year group are targeted for Fast Track Phonics interventions. Highly trained staff tutor them for 15 minutes a day, using the Read Write Inc. Fast Track tutoring programme. If a child arrives in Year 2 reading below their chronological age or with English as an additional language they are taught Read Write Inc. Phonics until they too catch up to their peers.

By the end of Key Stage 1, our pupils will be able to read aloud age appropriate texts accurately and with sufficient speed for comprehension. This means that we can focus on developing their comprehension, preparing them well for transition to Key Stage 2. Their good decoding skills mean that they have a sound strategy for decoding unfamiliar words when they come across them at whatever stage or in any subject, even into secondary school.

Writing is assessed in line with the Marking and Assessment Policy and the expectations for that particular year group. Formal assessments are completed every half term and progress and attainment is monitored using the EYFS Profile/ ScholarPack Program. At the end of each term data is analysed by both class teacher and SLT. Progress meetings are then held by the Head, alongside the class teacher and targeted children/groups are identified and provisions are timetabled accordingly.

Targets are then shared with the children informally on a regular basis and with parents at parents evening and on the end of school year report.

Role of the Subject Leader

The subject leader is responsible for:

- Ensuring that there is clear subject intent which is understood by all staff in the school
- Monitoring standards of attainment and the teaching of literacy in school
- Monitoring and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- Auditing the school resources annually
- Keeping up to date with recent Literacy developments
- Keeping GB informed of new developments
- Working with the SLT to collate and analyse SAT's data, and to set whole school targets
- Providing interventions for pupils who are not making expected progress
- Ensuring clear progression of skills across both key stages
- Ensuring that the teaching of the subject is constant across the school and staff are adhering to the policy

Monitoring and review.

Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English subject leader , Jenny King, and in Phonics/RWI Simone Chambers. However, both leaders work closely together on the subject. This involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, coaching in RWI, being informed about current developments in the subject, working alongside our local English Hub who we are partnered with and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The subject leaders for English and RWI and the head teacher write an annual Action plan for English. The subject leader gives the head teacher an annual monitoring report in which she evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and indicates areas for further improvements. This information informs the school improvement planning and action planning processes. The subject leader has specially allocated regular management time in order to enable her to review samples of the children's work and undertake lesson observations of English teaching across the school. The named governor responsible for literacy, Abi Spencer, makes regular visits to school and meets with the subject leader to review progress.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies e.g.

Teaching and Learning Policy
Marking and Assessment Policy
SEND Policy
Equal Opportunities Policy
Handwriting Policy
RWI Policy

Signed: *J King*
English Subject Leader

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