



# St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

*Where every child is special*

## English Policy

Policy compiled by:

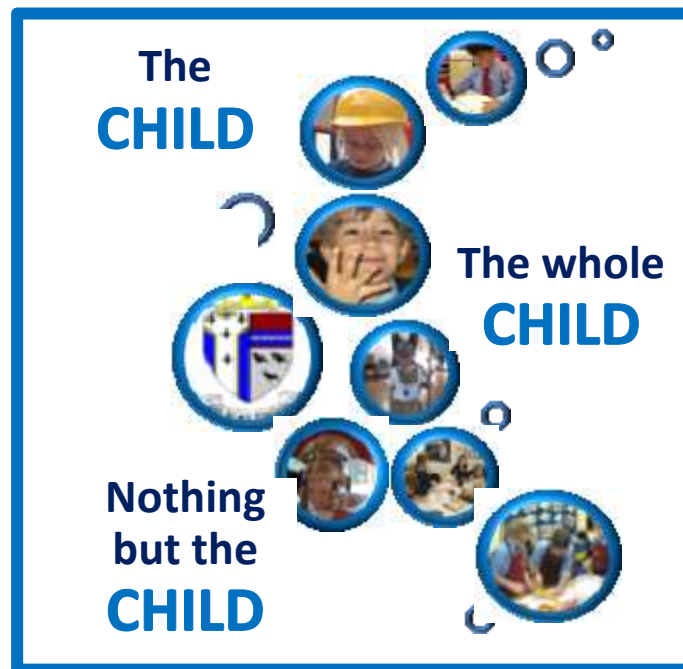
Jacqui Allison and Vikki Royce, Subject Leaders

Date of last review:

Summer 2017

Review Date:

Summer 2019



### **OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

*God's love is at the heart of our Catholic School family. We show this in our respect, kindness and love for others and by treating other people as we wish to be treated ourselves. We will encourage everyone to be the best that we can be.*

### **OUR AIMS**

- To guide our children to grow in the love of God and build relationships that will enable them to make a positive contribution to the school and society.
- To develop an exciting, challenging and creative curriculum that produces confident and successful learners who are the best that they can be.
- To develop high quality learning that enables every child to flourish, to discover their talents and be lifelong learners.
- To establish a teaching and learning environment that encourages everyone to enjoy, to achieve, to be inclusive, to be healthy, and to stay safe.
- To nurture a strong partnership between home and school.
- To have respect and understanding for our school, our community and our world, helping our children to become responsible citizens and good role models.

### **OUR GOLDEN RULE**

We treat others as we would like to be treated



## Aims

Our aims in teaching English are that all children should

- develop the necessary skills to use the English Language confidently, appropriately and accurately to the best of their ability.
- speak clearly, fluently and convincingly.
- listen to the spoken word attentively with understanding, pleasure and empathy.
- orchestrate a full range of reading clues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, and contextual).
- be interested in books, read with enjoyment and be able to evaluate and justify their preferences.
- have a good comprehension of the texts they read
- understand the sound and spelling system and use this to record and spell accurately.
- have fluent and legible handwriting
- can use punctuation correctly for both sentence structure and effect
- know, understand and be able to write in a range of genres in fiction and poetry, and understand and be familiar with some of the ways in which narratives are structured through basic English ideas of setting, character and plot.
- understand, use and be able to write a range of non-fiction texts.
- understand and be able to use correct grammatical concepts in both speech and writing
- through reading and writing, develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.
- ensure children have access to a wide range of opportunities that enable them to develop their skills in English. This should include the use of ICT.
- be able to transfer the skills learnt in English to other areas of the curriculum.

## The English lesson

### Organisation and planning

- At St Thomas' English is taught as a discrete subject and the skills are consolidated during cross curricular activities.
- The St Thomas 10 is followed in every lesson.
- We use a consistent planning format throughout the school.
- Guided reading and English Basic skills take place as focused independent lessons.

### Monitoring and evaluation

Targets are set to improve standards, which are then monitored and evaluated through

- classroom observation
- sampling children's work
- scrutinising planning
- analysis of assessment data

### Assessment and reporting

***This should be read in conjunction with the Assessment and Marking and Feedback Policies***

Summative and Formative Assessment is used to identify each child's strengths and weaknesses and to adapt our teaching accordingly. This is achieved through continuous teaching assessment.

Self assessment against success criteria		
Foundation Stage Profile	-	Reception
Parallel Spelling/Salford Reading	-	Year 2 onwards
SATs	-	Years 2 and 6
Weekly spelling/dictation tests		KS1 and KS2
Individual targets	-	Whole school



Reporting to parents is on a termly basis, through interviews at parents' evenings and annually through a written report.

Parents are asked to support their children by listening to them reading at home and ensuring that their homework is completed.

## **Reading**

Our reading programme consists of two dimensions: word reading and comprehension.

We will ensure that pupils will:

- be given extensive experience of children's literature
- experience texts from our literary heritage
- be stimulated to become an imaginative and enthusiastic reader
- have materials which meet the needs and interests of all children, providing high quality and variety
- be given opportunities to use and extend their reading skills across the curriculum

## **Key Skills**

We will enable

- children to read with confidence and understanding
- children to read aloud, so as to inform and entertain others and read silently for sustained periods of time
- children to orchestrate a full range of reading cues (phonetic, graphic, syntactic and contextual) to monitor their reading and correct their own mistakes.
- acquire a wide vocabulary
- children to use a library proficiently

We will provide:

- a consistent approach to reading so as to enable children to reach their full potential
- opportunities for pupils to widen their vocabulary.

We will develop:

- book knowledge and suitable technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their reading
- an awareness of story plot, character development and setting
- an awareness of patterns and rhymes
- a strong home/school link in reading
- an understanding of a range of non fiction texts
- strategies for information retrieval including the ability to skim and scan
- skills of comprehension and prediction
- an awareness of different authors and their writing styles
- a knowledge of books from our literary heritage

We will encourage children to:

- enjoy reading and love books
- evaluate their own reading
- develop empathy with others' emotions and experiences through literature

## **Writing**

We will ensure:



- that the writing experiences children have stimulate pupils' enthusiasm and develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.
- that pupils are aware of how writers organise more complex texts
- a systematic approach to phonics in *the Foundation Stage and KS1*, continued through to KS2 with intervention programmes for some groups
- children have suitable technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their writing

We will enable children to:

- write with confidence, fluency and understanding
- understand, use and write a range of non fiction texts
- understand and write in a range of genres in fiction and poetry
- understand and be familiar with some of the ways in which narratives are structured through basic English ideas of setting, character and plot
- to understand the correct grammatical terms in English and to use them appropriately in their writing
- to punctuate their writing correctly to secure sentence structure and create effects

We will provide:

- a consistent approach to writing so as to enable children to reach their full potential
- children with a wide range of writing experiences
- opportunities for pupils to widen their vocabulary

We will develop:

- children's ability to write with confidence, fluency and understanding

We will encourage children to:

- plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing both independently and collaboratively
- use grammatically correct sentences and to spell and punctuate accurately in order to communicate effectively in written English
- write with clarity showing an awareness of the audience, purpose and context
- use a range of spelling strategies – visual, auditory and kinaesthetic.

## **Speaking and listening**

We will develop:

- children's confidence with regard to speaking and listening so that they can respond to and participate in discussion and debate
- clarity of speech and expression
- drama as an important aspect of speaking and listening
- opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for a range of audiences
- questioning skills – using Blooms Taxonomy for reference

We will encourage children to:

- listen, understand and respond appropriately to others
- participate in all discussions
- adapt their speech to a widening range of circumstances

We will provide children with:

- a varied and rich range of experiences in speaking and listening
- opportunities to respond to what they see and hear in a variety of media
- opportunities to reflect on their own and others speech and evaluate it



- opportunities to take part in presentations
- opportunities for pupils to widen their vocabulary

## Spelling, grammar and punctuation

### Grammar:

Explicit knowledge of grammar is very important as it gives us more conscious control and choice in our language. Building this knowledge is best achieved through a focus on grammar within the teaching of reading, writing and speaking. Some more complex grammar rules need to be taught explicitly.

EYFS and KS1 have a daily session of phonics, which is reinforced in years 3 & 4 and 5 & 6 if necessary. Letters and Sounds is used for the teaching of phonics with elements of the Jolly Phonics programme. Jolly Grammar materials provide guidance and resources to help teach grammar to children; it is active and multi-sensory, with emphasis on consolidating the children's knowledge from Jolly Phonics and helping them develop an understanding of how grammar works. By teaching key essential grammar rules, it helps children bring diversity to their writing and improve their spelling in a structured way. Jolly Grammar teaches a wide range of language forms including the parts of speech, plurals, punctuation, and the tenses past, present, and future. It also teaches a wide range of spelling rules, including defining aspects such as the short vowels

This is developed further in KS2 through direct teaching during basic skills lessons and the consolidation of skills in extended writing lessons, so that the pupils can build on what they have learnt and become confident in writing for a range of purposes. The children continue to add to their knowledge of linguistic terms, especially those to describe grammar. Grammar is also reinforced during guided reading sessions.

### Spelling organisation:

Spelling rules and patterns are taught during Basic Skills' lessons which are timetabled across the school. Spelling teaching includes:

- differentiated spelling tests
- the teaching of dictionary skills
- spellings taken from:
  - the National Curriculum by reference to School phase
  - word families and collections
  - topic words
  - high frequency words

We achieve this by:

- phonics – various schemes including Jolly Phonics, Letters and Sounds, National Curriculum spelling bank and Support for Spelling
- graphic knowledge
- analogy
- word roots and derivations
- creating mnemonics
- familiarity with common letter strings
- look, say, cover, write, check – *Foundation Stage and KS1*
- SaCaWaC – Say and Cover and Write and Check – *KS2*
- practice of commonly occurring words
- practice of prefixes and suffixes
- learning spelling rules and terminology



- encouraging an investigative approach to finding spelling rules

Not all spelling corrections will be marked (in accordance with our marking policy and guidelines) but there will be evidence that children will be asked to check spellings.

Children are encouraged to become independent spellers and 'have a go' using spelling log books

## **ICT – Information Communication Technology**

ICT is used to support both the learning and teaching of English. On-line resources are used on a frequent basis for shared and group work. Children are given opportunities to produce text using the computer. Use of ICT is recorded in the English planning. Other ICT resources e.g. digital cameras, recording microphones and Interactive Whiteboards are used to support the teaching of English.

## **Handwriting**

The cursive style of handwriting will be introduced from Reception onwards. A copy of the handwriting style is available.

### **Letter formation:**

5 letters are looped to keep the continuous flow:

These letters belong to the same family:

- up, down and off letters
- up, down and up again letters
- off the top letters

- Capital letters do not join
- Capital letters formed with 1 stroke
- Capital letters formed with 2 strokes
- Capital letters formed with 3 strokes

The KS2 classes will be encouraged to adopt this cursive –joined up style of handwriting, but a child who has already developed a good handwriting style will not be made to change it.

We have decided to adopt a cursive style as it aids left to right movement, it eliminates reversals and inversions. It facilitates earlier development of a personal style. It gives potential for speeding up. The smooth flow helps sounds and shapes blend together.

Children will begin to use handwriting pens in year 3.

## **Marking**

- Marking of English is focused against set criteria i.e. the learning objective for the lesson and is used to inform future planning (Assessment for Learning). The whole school marking policy is to be followed.
- Children are encouraged to self assess their work against the target and/or the success criteria.
- There will be opportunities for peer assessment and response partners.

## **Equal Opportunities**

All pupils, whatever their background or needs, should be able to benefit from learning English in school. Whilst we look to provide a Mastery curriculum, differentiated work, given when appropriate, will enable all children to their own levels of ability and so help them to maintain interest and to achieve success in their work.



## Quality First Teaching

English makes considerable demands upon children, particularly in the light of the skills taught in the National Curriculum. High challenges are set for all the children with appropriate support provided to help all children achieve those high expectations. These demands are especially great for children with reading and writing difficulties. At St Thomas' our aim is to make English accessible to all.

We believe that Quality First teaching can promote accessibility in English for all our pupils by:

- Organising reading groups according to ability and providing texts which are - differentiated appropriately
- Spelling groups are organized across the year groups/phases in Key Stage 2 according to ability
- Using success criteria, which have been discussed with the children, to give clear guidelines for the children to follow and so understand the task set
- The use of a peer, classroom assistant, parent or teacher to help them read the texts and support them with their writing when needed
- Children working in pairs co-operatively, sharing information and producing work collaboratively when appropriate
- Word banks, dictionaries, thesauruses and spell checkers are available to children to support them with their spellings
- Writing frames are made available to children who need the support with their writing
- Some children may use pictures to find the information they need, rather than read a text
- Individual reading books are differentiated and reading records are closely monitored on a weekly basis by an adult to ensure that children are reading books at an appropriate level

*This policy of St Thomas of Canterbury School upholds the school's ethos and Mission Statement. It must be read in conjunction with and implemented in accordance to the school's policies for Health & Safety Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Safeguarding. Copies of these policies are available from the school website.*