



## ENGLISH POLICY

### **Our Vision..... Inspire, Support, Believe, Achieve**

#### **Our Mission.....**

Our values-based schools nurture curiosity and creativity through an inspiring, broad and engaging curriculum, where learning is at the heart of all that we do. Our children learn to become resilient and self-assured in an environment where safety is paramount. Everyone is challenged and encouraged to thrive and achieve as individuals, preparing them for their role as caring and active citizens in modern Britain.

The Federation is committed to the personal development of all involved and aim to provide life- long learning.

We aim to provide extended facilities in both our schools in order to support each child on their learning journey.

We believe that every child has the right to achieve their full potential in all areas of English and that literacy and communication are key life skills. Through the English curriculum, we will help children develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively through spoken and written language and equip them with the skills to become lifelong learners. We want children to enjoy and appreciate literature and its rich variety. Literacy is at the heart of all children's learning.

#### **Aims and Objectives**

We aim to develop excellence and enjoyment in English within an integrated programme of Speaking & Listening, Reading, Writing and Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation. Pupils will be given opportunities to develop their use, knowledge and understanding of spoken and written English within a broad and balanced curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught literacy skills.

At West Tyne Church Schools we strive to ensure all pupils are readers and writers in all areas of the curriculum. Pupils who leave Year 6 will:

- read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct;
- love reading and have a desire to read for pleasure;
- have an interest in words and their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms;
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- understand a range of text types, media types and genres;
- be able to write clearly, accurately and coherently in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation;

- use their developing imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness;
- have a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their responses.
- use discussion in order to learn –explain clearly their understanding and ideas

### **Roles and responsibilities:**

#### **Role of Subject Leader**

The Subject Leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in Literacy through monitoring and evaluating on a half-termly and ongoing basis:

- pupil progress;
- provision of literacy;
- quality of the learning environment and resources;
- 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;
- monitoring the use of assessment guidelines;
- delivering CPD as appropriate;
- observations of teaching and learning;
- discussions with pupils;
- book scrutinies;
- maintain staff literacy files;
- parental questionnaires and feedback opportunities;
- linking with other providers who are 'outstanding' in this area;
- developing links and supporting the partnership schools;
- developing links with specialist advisory teachers and external agencies.

#### **School Staff:**

- To promote a confident, positive attitude towards the learning and use of English, making it an enjoyable experience.
- To promote confidence and competence in the skills of speaking and listening; reading and writing.
- To promote the ability to communicate effectively in a variety of forms.
- To promote the skills of communication through speaking and listening in a range of contexts.
- To promote the range of skills required in reading in order for children to read for meaning, understanding and enjoyment.
- To provide opportunities for the development of skills in writing across the whole curriculum.

#### **Children:**

- To develop an enjoyment of learning through practical activity, exploration and discussion.

- To develop confidence and competence in the skills of speaking and listening, reading and writing.
- To develop the ability to communicate effectively in a variety of formats.
- To develop the skills of communication through speaking and listening in a range of contexts.
- To develop the range of skills required in reading in order to read for meaning, understanding and enjoyment.
- To develop a range of skills in writing across the curriculum.

### **Parental Involvement:**

We aim to involve parents directly in the life of the school, and thus in the development of children's skills, knowledge and understanding in English.

There are opportunities each term when parents can discuss their children's progress with their teacher. They also emphasise the importance of reading. Parents are encouraged to read both with and to their children at home in order to promote reading. In Nursery and Reception, workshops are held to encourage/support the parents of our youngest pupils to read/share stories from a very early age. Strategies for supporting children are shared at the reading workshops.

### **The Governing Body:**

The designated governor will:

- meet with the English co-ordinator at least once a term to find out about:
  - a) The school's systems for planning work, supporting staff and monitoring progress;
  - b) The allocation, use and adequacy of resources;
  - c) How the standards of achievement are changing over time.
- Visit school and talk to pupils about their experiences of this curriculum area.
- Attend training and other events relating to this curriculum area.
- Report jointly with the English co-ordinator:
  - a) For the Federation websites;
  - b) To the Governing body.
- To be understanding and supportive of our aims in learning and teaching English.

### **Statutory Requirements**

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum Document (2014) and in Early Years Outcomes, within the Literacy (specific areas), Communication and Language prime areas of learning in Early Years Foundation Stage. The West Tyne Church Schools follow the Cornerstones Curriculum, which links specifically with the National Curriculum. Staff plan an overview of each unit to be taught and then develop a weekly short term plan which is reviewed daily to reflect Assessment for Learning, in order to meet pupils' needs.

**In the Foundation Stage (Reception),** the children follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. The 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 opportunities to communicate.
- Ignite their interests of reading and writing by accessing a wide range of reading materials
- Become emergent writers with self confidence in their “abilities” as writers.
- Read to others
- Develop self confidence

In Reception children have daily discreet systematic, synthetic phonics lessons using the Local Authority recommended ‘Letters and Sounds’ framework. Children use the ‘Letterjoin’ programme to develop cursive handwriting from the outset. They also take part in daily guided reading sessions. They also have individual reading conferences each week and have regular story times. Children have opportunities to develop their communication, language and literacy skills on a daily basis in both planned adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Pupils are involved in planning their own learning e.g. planning the curriculum and related practical areas using their interests as a starting point.

Communication, Language and Literacy activities are planned to reflect different ways children learn.

Effective lessons give opportunities for children to:

1. Investigate and experience a range of texts
2. Actively learn by giving children opportunities to encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements
3. Create opportunities to develop their own literacy ideas and think critically about their own and others’ work.

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

### **Key Stage 1**

In Key Stage 1, school staff use the objectives from the New English National Curriculum to support their planning for English alongside and through the Cornerstones Curriculum. Children also receive daily discreet phonics lessons and their learning is personalised to enable all children to make progress from their individual starting points. The children also receive daily handwriting lessons and follow the ‘Letterjoin’ programme to develop a cursive handwriting style. Children take part in both guided and individual reading sessions and have regular story times to develop a love of reading. Literacy skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes and differentiated class teaching.

**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.

## **Key Stage 2**

In Key Stage 2, school staff use the objectives from the New National Curriculum to support their planning for English alongside and through the Cornerstones Curriculum. Children have daily Literacy lessons including grammar and punctuation and spelling. They have opportunities to plan and write extended pieces of work. Additional literacy sessions include guided reading, handwriting (using the 'Letterjoin' programme, 1:1 reading conferences and class novel. Literacy skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes and differentiated class teaching.

### **Approaches to Spoken Language**

Pupils are taught to listen and respond to adults and their peers, to ask relevant questions and use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary. Pupils are encouraged to speak audibly and fluently at a level appropriate to the age of the pupil. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards and we follow 'Talk for Writing' approach by Pie Corbett. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. Opportunities to develop these skills include: School Council, debating, class assemblies, talk partners, drama and school performances.

We recognise the need for all pupils to speak, read and write Standard English fluently and accurately, while acknowledging that a pupil's own dialect, or other language is of prime importance. It is our school policy to promote the use of Standard English.

### **Approaches to Reading**

Teachers model reading strategies during shared reading sessions, whilst children have the opportunity to develop reading strategies and to discuss texts in detail during guided reading sessions. Independent reading provides time for both assessment and 1-1 teaching. Pupils have a reading journal in which parents are encouraged to comment and this forms an ongoing record of the books read. E-Reading is also encouraged through the use of Reading Eggs, which pupils can access at home and at school.

### **Approaches to Writing**

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. Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. Teachers model writing strategies and the use of phonics and spelling strategies in shared writing sessions. Guided writing sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals, whilst children have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions.

The children are given frequent opportunities in school to write in different contexts using quality texts as a model and for a variety of purposes and audiences. Children will also be given the opportunity to use ICT for their writing. We use the 'Letterjoin' handwriting

scheme in school to help children develop fluent, clear and legible joined up writing. A pen licence is given once children reach a certain level of presentation, but this can be revoked should the presentation deteriorate.

Emergent writing is developed in the Foundation Stage through the use of a variety of role play areas and real life opportunities to write.

### **Cross curricular Opportunities for English**

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 literacy lessons to other areas of the curriculum. Children are taught a wide range of English skills that are necessary to access the whole curriculum. English is seen as the 'keystone' which enables children to access other areas of the curriculum and to function effectively as developing citizens. Opportunities are used for English experiences through a range of activities in other subjects to enable children to apply and use English in real life and academic contexts. Within other lessons across the curriculum it is also necessary to incorporate the good practice seen within English lessons as follows:

- a) Insisting on, and having high expectations of, children's handwriting;
- b) Identifying, highlighting and correcting the poor use of punctuation – insisting on the application of non-negotiables.

### **The Use of ICT**

We recognise the important role ICT has to play in our school in the development of Literacy skills. ICT is used on a regular basis to enhance the teaching of literacy and to give all children the opportunity to experience, read and write multimodal texts and develop visual literacy. iPads are used frequently to support pupils' research in English and other areas of the curriculum.

### **Assessment and Target Setting**

Work will be assessed in line with the Assessment Policy. We have developed Assessment guidelines (POS), based on the demands of the new curriculum, to assess progress in reading and writing. Moderation of writing and teacher judgements takes place termly. Assessment for Learning (AfL) is ongoing and is used to ensure every pupil reaches their potential. Rigorous and focused marking ensures relevant feedback is given to pupils and new areas for development are targeted. Teachers highlight aspects of written work which pupils have to correct, dedicated time is given to this at the start of lessons. Older pupils are encouraged to use self-assessment and peer assessment. EYFS Assessment of Literacy and Communication of Language is based on ongoing observation and assessment. Assessments are based primarily on observations of daily Literacy in which staff particularly note the learning the children demonstrate spontaneously, independently and consistently in a range of contexts.

### **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. Pupils with SEND will have

targets appropriate to their ability and learning will be tailored to meet their individual needs. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided. Progress of all groups of pupils will be carefully tracked and monitored.

### **Equal Opportunities**

West Tyne Church Schools have universal ambitions for every child, whatever their background or circumstances. Children learn and thrive when they are healthy, safe and engaged. All pupils are provided with equal access to the English curriculum and we aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender or ethnicity.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Handwriting Policy
- Marking policy
- Feedback Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- ICT Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

### **Monitoring and Review:**

The Executive head and English Co-ordinator will monitor the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis. They will report to the governing body on the effectiveness of the policy annually and, if necessary, make recommendations for further improvements.

**Debbie Clarke - English Subject Leader – January 2018**

To be reviewed January 2019