



St. John's Church of England Infant and Nursery School



English Policy

Statement of Intent

As a church school everything we do is rooted in our Christian values. At St. John's we teach the children about these core values:

Love, respect, honesty, forgiveness, friendship, courage, cooperation, peace, perseverance, trust, patience and understanding.

This is reflected in all our relationships between staff, children, parents, governors and the local community. It is reflected in how we teach, what and how our pupils learn within and beyond the classroom.

These values are fundamental in the implementation of this policy to ensure that we maintain our distinctive Christian character of which we are proud.

English Policy	
Written by:	Davinia Leggett
Date:	March 2017
Approved by:	Development Committee
Date:	12.03.17
Review frequency:	Every 3 years
Target Audience:	All Stakeholders

The governing body shall conduct the school with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement. St John's CE Nursery and Infant School is committed to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different groups. These factors were considered in the formation and review of this policy and will be adhered to in its implementation and application across the whole school community.

At St John's school we aim to help all children develop a love for the English language through the spoken and written word. We believe that literacy and communication are key life skills. The acquisition of literacy skills enables pupils to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, to communicate effectively with others, and thereby participate with confidence, awareness and success in the communities in which they live.

Aims

We aim for all children to be able to:

- express themselves confidently in a variety of situations and for a variety of audiences,
- be active listeners and make appropriate responses to what others are saying,
- read with confidence, fluency and understanding,
- have an interest in books and read for enjoyment,
- become independent learners across the curriculum,
- have an interest in words and develop a growing vocabulary,
- become independent and confident writers for a variety of purposes and audiences,
- produce well-formed and legible written work.

Writing

It is essential that we inspire our children to write by providing them with exciting, shared experiences.

The aims for our children are that through opportunities for writing they will:

- Learn to write with confidence, enjoyment and fluency showing creativity, understanding and an awareness of the reader.
- Understand and use phonics and spelling rules to spell accurately.
- Have fluent and legible handwriting as well as develop word processing skills.
- Write effectively in a range of fiction and non-fiction genres.
- Use planning and drafting techniques as an integral part of the writing process.
- Incorporate a growing vocabulary and literary devices to enrich their writing.

Our approach to writing

At our school we 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 to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. The children are given frequent opportunities in school to write in different contexts and for a variety of purposes and audiences. They may be asked to produce their writing independently or as part of group. Our children are encouraged to take care with their presentation and to be proud of their work.

Our school has a cross-curricular approach to the curriculum and links to other subject areas are routine. This gives children the opportunity to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to all areas of the curriculum.

We use a range of methods to teach spelling in order that the children become independent spellers. Throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 the emphasis is on phonics and keywords, using the 'Letters and Sounds' framework.

Phonics

Throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, phonics and keywords are taught, using the 'Letters and Sounds' framework alongside the LCP phonics scheme of work.

Aims:

We want pupils at St John's:

- To benefit from a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics from entry to school at 3 years of age.
- To enjoy the discreet teaching of phonics utilising a synthetic approach to phonics.
- To have regular access to high quality phonic teaching which secures the crucial skills of word recognition that enables children to read fluently, freeing them to concentrate on the meaning of the text.
- To enjoy a multi-sensory approach to learning phonics ensuring that the visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning styles of children are engaged.
- To have secured automatic decoding skills allowing children to progress from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn'.

At St John's we ensure the efficiency of our phonic teaching by ensuring that:

- It is part of a broad and rich curriculum that engages children in a range of activities and experiences to develop their speaking and listening skills and phonological awareness.
- It is multi-sensory, encompassing simultaneous visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities that are fun and engaging for all.
- It is systematic and follows the progression laid out in 'Letters and Sounds'. This reinforces and builds on previous learning to secure children's progress.
- It is taught daily, discretely and at a brisk pace.
- There are opportunities to reinforce and apply acquired phonic knowledge and skills across the curriculum in activities such as shared and guided reading. Children's attainment is carefully assessed to ensure progression.

Phonics is taught as whole class in the Foundation Stage. In KS1, the children are grouped across years 1 and 2 based on their phonic ability.

Reading

Reading is the key to independent learning and we strive to provide a broad and balance curriculum that provides a wide range of reading opportunities and challenges.

We deliver a thematic curriculum to ensure that all children are able to read and interpret a range of texts confidently. We support children's development as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry, drama, non-fiction and media texts. We want children to develop a love for literature. Children will have a raised awareness of how print, pictures and visual media can all convey meaning. We strive to build upon a wide vocabulary base and develop a capacity to convey meaning through a range of high quality texts. We believe that becoming a fluent reader plays a vital role in preparing our children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Our approaches to reading.

Guided Reading is a core part of the reading strategies at our school. We provide daily high quality guided reading sessions to all out learners which:

1. Enables the teacher to plan/ assess and tailor the teaching to the needs of the group
2. Facilitates the teaching and learning of individual children
3. Provides the adult with the opportunity to extend and challenge more able groups
4. Encourages children to be active participants in discussions about reading
5. Builds confidence-the group are all grappling with the same issues
6. Allows the adults to give immediate feedback on success and the opportunity to discuss further areas for improvements and next steps to move children on in their learning.

Through our shared reading sessions, children gain access to more challenging text whilst developing their comprehension skills and vocabulary.

All our children from Reception to Year 2 read with an adult at least once a week. Parent Booster Reading sessions are run daily for children who are working below ARE. All children take part in a whole class daily story time session at the end of the school day.

Handwriting

Handwriting is taught using the “Penpals” scheme, with teachers modelling correct letter formation. Our aim is for pupils to begin learning joined handwriting in Y2.

Y1- Taught in classes 3x10 minutes per week

Y2- Taught in classes 3x10 minutes per week

Speaking and listening

We recognise the importance of speaking and listening in developing children’s language skills.

“A recurring message from the research into spoken language is that talk is fundamental to children’s development and learning and has a central role to play in developing their knowledge and understanding” – the new primary framework.

The use of sentence stems to model and rehearse correct language structures is used across the curriculum.

Targets

Children in KS1 have their own personalised writing target cards. Targets are set by the class teacher and are shared with children. They are placed in children’s writing books and their homework books.

We are an inclusive school, and aim to meet the needs of all our children in English.

Assessment and moderation

Assessment is the key to knowing what children need to learn next. At St John’s the following assessments are made to ensure all pupils’ progress is closely monitored;

Foundation stage

- Pupils progress towards the Foundation stage profile updated termly.
- Phonics knowledge and skills assessed half termly, this is then used to inform future planning re-adjust grouping, and plan intervention strategies where necessary.
- Ongoing spontaneous observation of children’s achievements
- Collection of work samples
- Spotlight weeks
- Narrative observations

Key stage 1

- Half-termly judgments about the children’s attainment in writing. This is supported by an independent piece of writing and other recent samples being assessed using the Herts Steps Assessment Criteria. Where this piece of writing is not a true reflection of the child’s usual performance, teacher assessment based on other pieces of work is used.
- Phonics knowledge and skills assessed half- termly, this is then used to inform future planning, re-adjust grouping and plan intervention strategies where necessary.
- Half-termly judgments made about the children’s attainment in reading. Reading is assessed using Herts Steps Assessment Criteria.



As well as these assessments that enable progress to be tracked at termly pupil progress meetings, on-going assessments are made by staff on a daily basis to ensure work is matched to children's current understanding.

Moderation

Writing moderation meetings take place twice a year as a whole school to review individual examples of work against Herts Assessment Criteria. Moderation also takes within key stage meetings throughout the year. Samples of agreed Age related work are kept in a portfolio. This exemplifies work at each age related level from Nursery to Year 2.