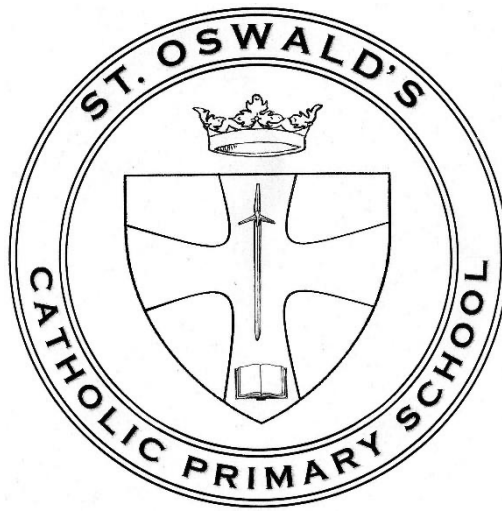


St Oswald's Catholic Primary School



English Policy

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| Approved by: | Approval date | Renewal date |
| Full Governors | 7 th December 2023 | Autumn 2024 |

This English Policy is set within the context of the whole school aims and mission statement:



Together with Jesus,
We will Learn and Grow in Faith

It reflects the school's values, philosophy and mission statement in relation to the teaching and learning of the English Language. It outlines our approach to the development of language in communication (speaking and listening) reading and writing.

Rationale

At St Oswald's we recognise that without effective communication, little achievement can be made. We aim to develop the abilities of all children in our school to communicate their ideas effectively in speech and writing. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of non-fiction and media texts. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

Aims

- To provide a language rich environment that promotes a culture of communication, reading and writing;
- To develop in pupils an interest in and a love of books and literature that will not only support their learning across the curriculum but also enrich their lives;
- To develop the ability to read easily, fluently and with good understanding;
- To develop a strong command of the written and spoken word in order to communicate and respond effectively;
- To teach children the craft of writing, including handwriting, in order to develop the confidence and skills to write well for a range of purposes and audience;
- To improve the planning, drafting and editing of their written work;
- To teach the basics – spelling, handwriting, grammar and punctuation – to ensure accuracy within creativity;
- To foster in pupils, the confidence, desire and ability to express their views and opinions.

To develop our pupils as Speakers and Listeners we:

- Give time for children to initiate discussions from shared experiences and have conversations with each other.
- Give thinking time for children to decide what they want to say and how they will say it.
- Set up collaborative tasks, for example, construction or story making through role-play.
- Give them opportunities to express their ideas to a range of audiences.
- Give them opportunities to take part in group discussion and drama activities.
- Encourage them to listen and respond appropriately to others.

- Help them to understand the need to adapt their speech to different situations.
- Give them opportunities to evaluate and reflect on their own speech.
- Encourage them to use the vocabulary and grammar of Standard English whenever appropriate.

Ways in which we support this include:

- Class debates, group and individual discussions
- School Plays
- Class assembly
- Events within the community
- School Council/Reading Advocates
- Talking Partners
- Drama / role play
- PSHE and circle time

At St Oswald's we believe that speaking and listening skills are an intrinsic part of the writing process. A child needs to be able to say a sentence before they can write it. Children use talking partners to articulate their ideas and make focused oral responses and questions during learning times.

Drama

Drama may form a part of literacy lessons for every class and is incorporated into the planning of units or through opportunities provided within the continuous provision in the EYFS. This may be on a weekly basis or less frequently according to the unit of work. Drama activities can take place effectively within a classroom space or in the outside areas. Authors, poets, storytellers and visiting theatre groups are invited in to enhance the children's experiences.

Reading

'The more you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go' Dr Seuss

To develop our pupils as readers we:

- Teach them to read accurately and fluently using a range of strategies.
- Help them to understand and respond to what they read using a range of reading strategies including inference and deduction where appropriate.
- Encourage them to read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books and read for pleasure as well as information.
- Encourage them to read independently and with enjoyment, enthusiasm and confidence.
- Teach them how to seek information and learn from the written word.

‘To learn to read is to light a fire; every syllable that is spelled out is a spark.’

Victor Hugo, Les Miserables

Reading for Enjoyment

‘There is more treasure in books than in all the pirate’s loot on Treasure Island.’

Walt Disney

At St Oswald’s we recognise that reading is a core tool for life and we aim to foster a love for reading in our children. We have identified the need for children to be heard reading and to be read to regularly, and throughout the curriculum all adults in school model positive attitudes to reading and, in doing so, encourage the children to do the same.

Staff are confident in teaching reading and promoting reading for pleasure within the curriculum. A range of expertise is used to support staff, including effective use of School Improvement Liverpool, and Read, Write inc mentoring which underpins school practice. Reading is school wide. Pupils have regular opportunities to engage in independent and shared reading. Classrooms have attractive reading corners and displays where children can read a range of fiction, non-fiction and picture books. Consistent approaches to the teaching of reading and reading for pleasure are evident in all classrooms and the curriculum.

Poets and storytellers visit the school and hold workshops with the children to encourage them to experiment with reading different genres and inspire them to read and write poetry. St Oswald’s children also participate in World Book Week every year when reading for enjoyment is widely promoted across the school.

Storytime takes place daily in EYFS and Key Stage 1, and takes place three times a week for 10-15 minutes in Key Stage 2. Key stage 2 has class novels which can be read during this time which are challenging but enjoyable and accessible. The class teacher reads the novel aloud to model reading strategies and promote a love of reading.

Raising Standards in Reading

Raising standards in Early reading is a top priority in school. Starting with the Read Write Inc Phonics programme, which integrates both decoding and comprehension skills, children learn to become confident and fluent readers from an early age. This allows them to access the wider curriculum as they progress through school.

Home Reading

Children in all year groups take home a reading for pleasure book of their choice each week to share with families. Children accessing the Read Write Inc scheme will additionally take home a home reading book matched to their phonics ability.

Children in Nursery take home a new reading for pleasure book each week to promote a love of reading and develop early skills of talking about characters and settings in books. These are a mixture of well-known children's books and books with no words. Reading records are introduced in nursery and parents are provided with guidance to help support their home reading. Children in nursery who have begun to access the Read Write Inc nursery scheme will take home sound blending books towards the end of the Summer term to prepare them for Reception.

Children in Reception and KS1 will be grouped according to their phonics ability and each week take home a book from the scheme matched to the sounds and work done in phonics lessons that week. This provides children with the opportunity to celebrate their progress in reading with their parents as the book has been covered in depth throughout the week in school.

Throughout school, pupils are expected to read a minimum of three times per week for between 10-20 minutes approximately depending on their age, for example children in Reception may only retain focus for between 5-10 minutes.

In Key Stage 2, the children may choose a fiction or non-fiction book to read according to their ability level from their class library.

Some children in KS2 will still be accessing the Read Write Inc phonics scheme and will take home age appropriate materials based on their phonics ability.

Throughout the school, children are expected to read these books at home and will have regular opportunities to change them. Parents, pupils and class teachers will use the reading logs to communicate about the pupils' reading.

Key Stage 2 whole class guided reading

During these sessions, children are explicitly taught the skills of reading outlined in the national curriculum and KS2 test domains. During a typical session the teacher will share which content domain/s the children will be focusing on in that session. Teachers select up to four key vocabulary words from the chapter they are studying that session. Teachers plan three key questions each session based on the content domain being focused on. A range of texts are studied often linking to other curriculum area subjects.

Comprehension

Throughout the school, children are encouraged to develop their comprehension skills. This is taught through shared reading, guided reading and one to one reading. Reception and Year 1 children develop their comprehension skills through daily Read Write Inc lessons where they answer questions about the text and explore characters and storylines. EYFS

also use oral comprehension strategies based on Reciprocal Reading during storytime and small group work.

Year 2 and KS2 are taught a weekly comprehension skills lesson focusing on the Content Domains.

Phonics

Read, Write, Inc. Phonics is an inclusive programme for all children learning to read. Starting in the Summer term of Nursery, children begin to learn the 44 common sounds in the English language and how to blend them to read and spell. The use of pictures and memorable phrases is used to aid children's retention and recall of phonemes for reading and spelling. All children are given ample opportunities to orally explore characters' action, thoughts and feelings and to rehearse their writing.

The R.W.I sessions occur each day with no exceptions, as the continuity and pace of the programme is key to accelerating the progress of children's reading development. All staff (including those who are not classroom based) are trained and the expectation is that these staff will provide cover for staff absence, should the need arise. In this way, daily provision is consistent and uninterrupted.

Pupils work within ability groups which are defined by their performance on R.W.I. phonic assessments. Pupils are re-assessed every 6 weeks and the groups are reorganised accordingly.

See separate Phonics Policy for additional information.

Equality and reading

When teaching guided reading to EAL and SEND pupils, picture books and visual cues are used to support discussion in order to aid comprehension. Gender equality will be promoted by making sure texts avoid stereotyping and by ensuring boys and girls have access to all the resources available. In order to ensure boys are engaged and excited to read, appropriate texts will be chosen that focus on boys' interests.

More able children will be well planned for by taking into account their current reading levels and providing them with rich texts that allow them to build on their reading skills and develop their independent learning, reading and thinking skills. Children will be encouraged to use and develop higher order thinking skills in reading in many subject areas. Extension activities will be used to broaden the child's understanding and children will be encouraged and given opportunities to increase the breadth and depth of their reading. Opportunities to discuss issues of race, gender etc will be provided through the discussion of the resources used.

Writing for Pleasure

"I love writing. I love the swirl and swing of words as they tangle with human emotions."

James A. Michener

To develop our pupils as Writers we:

- Foster an enjoyment of writing amongst pupils, and a recognition of its value through providing a stimulating curriculum and school environment, which places the development of writing skills at its heart.
- Engage in a wide variety of opportunities to write throughout the school day and beyond.
- The importance of Writing is promoted by all adults, and quality writing is routinely celebrated.
- Teach them to write effectively for a range of purposes and a range of reasons, adapting their vocabulary and style as appropriate.
- Encourage them to write with interest, commitment and enjoyment.
- Show them how to write in a variety of forms such as stories, poems, reports and letters.
- Show them how to evaluate and edit in order to improve their own writing.
- Show them how to use punctuation to make meaning clear to their reader.
- Give them the knowledge and the strategies to become confident and accurate spellers.
- Teach them a fluent and legible style of handwriting, promoting an understanding of how to present work appropriately.

The teaching of writing is embedded across our curriculum. The key skills of composition, planning and drafting, punctuation, spelling, grammar and handwriting are taught explicitly in the context of literacy lessons but also indirectly through cross-curricular writing in other subjects.

Raising Standards in Writing

Writing is held to high standards across St. Oswald's, following a process of immersion, analysis and write.

The immersion stage begins with developing pupils' speaking and listening skills and wider understanding of language through immersion of the topic to ensure children are familiar with the genre. This supports children to practise essential skills for effective writing, as well as capturing ideas and the opportunity for oral rehearsal.

This leads into our analysis stage where pupils are taught to use strategies for planning and monitoring their writing. Children will be introduced to, then practise, these skills with feedback from the teacher and peers. The aim is for them to increase the fluency of these skills and techniques so that they may become automatic. Pupils also need to learn about text structure, and how texts in different genres are formed.

Finally, we lead on to the write stage where the teacher provides appropriate initial support, through Shared and Guided writing, that is gradually reduced so the child is ultimately capable of completing the activity independently. Children do this through a process of plan, draft, proofread and edit and finally publish.

The Writing Process

Children begin this process through using their knowledge of the genre to plan their final piece. This can be done in a number of ways, depending on the genre. The children write their first draft of their piece.

After writing this, children proofread and edit their work using an editing checklist targeted at the grammar, punctuation and spelling for their year group. They then use a process of peer assessment to assess their own and other's writing. This is an integral part of the writing process as peer assessment enables children to give each other valuable feedback so they learn from and support each other. It creates a supportive, non-threatening environment where it is safe to share thoughts without the worry that any demoralising, destructive comments will be allowed. The focus should be kept tight, ensuring that you don't ask the children to try to look at too much at once. Initially, anonymous work should be used from another class or, even better, a previous year so children do not feel stressed assessing the work of a classmate until they are confident.

Finally, children use their proofreading and editing to write their final draft which is called 'publish'. Children are then given the opportunity to share their work with their peers and other adults in school.

Modelled, Shared and Guided Writing

Modelling Writing- The teacher, as the expert, demonstrates the writing process. The teacher articulates the process and emphasises specific teaching points related to the lesson objectives. This gives the children the opportunity to understand the choices a writer makes during the process of writing.

Shared writing-The teacher involves the children in composition by asking for their ideas and structuring discussion. The teacher then takes the children's ideas and refines them before scribing. This allows the children to concentrate on composition without worrying about transcription. It also offers further opportunities to be active participants in the writing progress.

Shared writing- Supported Composition-This is used during or after shared reading. Children work in pairs to discuss choices. This allows the teacher to immediately assess understanding and revises and consolidates shared work

Shared writing is a whole class activity where the teacher models the writing of the text. In shared writing, the pupils will contribute to the text by suggesting words or sentences to be used. The teacher demonstrates how to write and explains decisions. They will model thinking, rehearsing sentences, writing and re-reading constantly generating words and ideas. This is an integral part of the literacy lesson where teachers and children construct a piece of writing together, giving opportunities for the teacher to model writing using the

children's ideas.

Guided writing is used during literacy lessons to reinforce and develop key aspects of writing. This can be done as a whole class, in small groups or individually.

Raising standards in Spelling

Spelling is seen as an important part of both children's writing and reading journeys. Teachers promote fluent written transcription skills by encouraging extensive and effective practice and explicitly teaching spelling. Pupils must learn to form letters, spell words correctly and write in joined-up handwriting.

Teaching of spelling

Read Write Inc. spelling is for children in Years 2 to 6 (P3–7) who have completed Read Write Inc. Phonics and for children who have met the English National Curriculum expectations for reading in Year 2.

Direct teaching underpins the programme. Spelling is taught cumulatively and systematically, with deliberate, focused practice. Constant revision and practice are key to children's success.

Children learn the routines and behaviours necessary for each activity, and practise these until they use them automatically. This allows them to focus on what matters most – learning to spell.

The spelling programme:

- builds upon teaching strategies and spelling activities from Read Write Inc. Phonics.
- is organised in daily, 15-minute well-paced lessons
- provides plenty of writing practice, with a clear record of children's progress

The programme also makes learning to spell enjoyable for children.

The programme's core activities teach:

- alternative spellings of vowels
- alternative spellings of consonants
- homophones
- the impact of adding prefixes and suffixes to root words
- how to spell plural nouns
- 'silent' letters
- unusual letter strings
- word families.

In both Key Stages, common exception words are taught for their age group throughout the year. The modelling of spelling is shown and taught throughout all curriculum areas to ensure spelling is seen as a high priority in all classrooms.

Vocabulary

We encourage our pupils to develop a wide and growing vocabulary in a number of ways, these include:

- Spelling lists/ key words to take home and learn
- Display of key words linked to topics and subjects
- 'Wow word' wall, spelling rule of the week and word of the week displays

- Using the correct vocabulary orally
- Using dictionaries, thesaurus and similar programmes
- Carrying out systematic testing and providing feedback to pupils
- Targeted one to one/ small group support, where appropriate

Grammar and Punctuation

Throughout the school, children are introduced to the basic principles of grammar and punctuation appropriate for their age range. They learn through a wide range of activities such as: singing rhymes, conversations with adults, stories, interactive educational programmes, phonics, reading and writing.

Classroom displays

As well as large communal area displays tracking the reading and writing journey of pupils in school from EYFS to Y6, each classroom is expected to have a range of displays linked to current genre, phonics/spelling, key vocabulary and reading.

Working walls

Every classroom in KS2 has an English working wall. Working walls aid memory, raise the importance of work done in whole class inputs and provide teaching opportunities at the wall. Headings on a working wall are as follows:

-We are learning about...

-Gathering content/exploring

-Success checklist/genre checklist

-Planning

-Drafting

-Improving/editing and revising

-What a good one looks like (WAGOLL)/Finished example

In EYFS and KS1, working walls are age appropriate. In each area where Read Write Inc phonics is taught, simple/complex speed sounds posters and wall friezes are clearly displayed and references during phonics sessions.

Vocabulary

Each class has vocabulary linked to topics and subjects on display. In EYFS this may include labels of resources and items in continuous provision. A 'Wow word' wall/area displaying new vocabulary used in class reading, writing and discussion helps extend children's vocabulary and can be referred to when modelling writing. Word of the week displays/boards will also be present in classrooms.

Teaching and learning

At St Oswald's we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our Literacy lessons in order to meet the needs of all our pupils. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding. Literacy is taught on a daily basis and is supported and enhanced through other curriculum areas.

In all classes children have a wide range of abilities, and we seek to provide suitable

learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. Staff have high expectations that all children can achieve their full potential.

Wherever possible, Teaching Assistants work in class, supporting all ability groups, specific individuals or groups of children, ensuring that work is matched to the needs of the child. Speaking and listening activities are embedded throughout the Curriculum. Children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts, and to support their work with a variety of resources, such as dictionaries, thesauruses and individual word banks. Staff provide balanced and varied learning opportunities within the classroom, i.e. VAK, content and organisation. Children use ICT in Literacy lessons where it enhances their learning, as in drafting their work and in using multimedia to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning. Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the Curriculum.

Good practice in reading and writing is shared and modelled in whole class teaching and during child-initiated activities within the Foundation Stage.

Teachers use a variety of adaptive teaching methods to deliver the curriculum and achieve set learning objectives.

Handwriting

See Handwriting policy

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

- All children are given access to a broad and balanced English curriculum regardless of gender, ability, race or religion.
- Provision will be made for individual needs in individual Provision plans.
- Equal opportunities are provided for boys and girls, also for children with special needs, those who are talented or gifted and children from different cultural backgrounds.
- Children with English as an additional language (E.A.L.) will be given access to additional resources and teaching to support their learning and to ensure they make maximum progress from their individual starting points.
- A feeling of self-worth will be engendered throughout the activities.

Special Educational Needs and interventions

As in all other areas of the curriculum, additional provision will be made for more-able children and those with special educational needs. This may take the form of work differentiated by task or outcome, additional support, adaptive teaching or use of specific equipment. The class teacher will be responsible for identifying and planning for those needs with help from the Literacy Co-ordinator and/or SENDCO if applicable.

Reading and writing interventions

Read Write Inc Intervention and additional support

Pinny Time – Teachers and TAs in Early Years and KS1 use the flashcards and word

reading cards to provide additional phonics practise in afternoon sessions for targeted children.

KS2 RWI intervention – In lower KS2, RWI speed sound lessons are delivered as an intervention in the afternoon for identified children.

1:1 Fast track tutoring – Additional 1:1 tutoring is provided for targeted children to ensure they are able to 'keep up not catch up', consolidating previous learning and preparing them for future lessons.

Fresh Start Intervention- Read Write Inc. Fresh Start is a systematic synthetic phonics intervention programme for identified pupils in years 5 and 6. The programme gives older children who have not yet cracked the 'code of reading' the chance to catch up and become confident, fluent readers.

Using all the strategies that are so successful in Read Write Inc. Phonics, children are taught the 44 sounds systematically in lively, fast paced phonics lessons and quickly start to blend them to read words.

Fresh Start Modules and Anthologies provide specially written age-appropriate stories and non-fiction texts which the children have the phonic knowledge to read, building their confidence from the start. Writing is developed alongside the reading programme.

Beat dyslexia - The Beat Dyslexia series is a step-by-step multi-sensory literacy programme for all pupils struggling to acquire literacy skills, especially those with dyslexia. It takes pupils from the earliest stages of letter recognition through to full literacy.

Assessment

Children in the Foundation Stage have their attainment on entry assessed through observations and their progress is tracked to see whether they are showing typical development for their age, are at risk of delay or are ahead for their age. The Foundation Stage profile will indicate if children are reaching expected levels by the end of Reception and will be used in transition into Key Stage 1.

At the end of Year 2 (optional) and Year 6, children take SATs in Reading, English grammar, punctuation and spelling and Maths. Years 1, 3, 4 and 5 complete NFER tests in the same subjects in Summer 2. Analysis of assessments feeds into pupil progress meetings, which allows for targeted, precision teaching within the classroom so that children are learning what is needed to help them to progress. Pupil progress meetings also enable teachers to analyse gaps in learning and focus on the next steps needed for progress. Moderation of writing is carried out several times a year within year groups and across the phase.

Monitoring

Monitoring of standards takes place through learning walks, observations, planning, book scrutinies and pupil voice interviews. Written feedback is given where necessary to teachers on the quality of work, presentation, marking and attainment evident in their books. This process allows us to share good practice. Lesson demonstrations and paired observation

provide support to raise attainment where needed.

Policy Review

This policy was written by the Literacy Lead, Phonics Lead and Literacy Team in consultation.

Reviewed by governors: