



# **St Thomas's CE Primary School**

Secure in Faith, Learning Together

'Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path'  
Psalm 119 Verse 105

## English Curriculum Policy

School:	St Thomas's CE Primary School
Date adopted by Governing Body:	February 2018 Latest review April 2024
Signed: (Chair of Governors)	
Signed: (Headteacher)	

## Introduction

The curriculum encompasses all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning, personal growth and development. It includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum but includes what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. We are committed to developing the whole child. We aim to teach children how to grow into positive, responsible people, who can work and co-operate with others while developing knowledge and skills, so that they achieve their true potential.

At St. Thomas's we aim to develop children's English abilities within an integrated curriculum of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Children will be given opportunities to interrelate the requirements of English within a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of English across the curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught English skills.

## Values

- We value the way in which all children are unique and our curriculum promotes respect for the views of each individual child.
- We respect each child in our school for who they are and we treat them with fairness and honesty.
- We aim to enable each child to be successful and we provide equal opportunities for all the children in our school.
- Parents are informed about the curriculum and kept up to date about events through our website, homework activity sheets, Class Dojo and weekly newsletters.

## Aims and Objectives

The aims of our English curriculum are for children to:

- read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding, developing a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct.
- have an interest in books and read for pleasure.
- have an interest in words, their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms.
- understand a range of text types and genres – be able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation.
- develop the powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.
- develop an increasing technical vocabulary to articulate their responses.
- be provided with opportunities to use role play and drama as a tool to support both speaking, listening and writing.

## Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum English Document (2013) and in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2024).

## English within the Early Years Foundation Stage

The Reception children will experience communication and language, comprehension, reading and writing as part of the areas of development as laid out in the statutory framework. Through careful planning, teachers will ensure that the foundation stage children's needs are provided for through activities linked to early years curriculum, which are progressive and support development.

Speaking and listening skills are vitally important as they underpin all learning at this early stage. The communication & language programme of the Foundation Stage builds on the language skills that children bring from home. Development of these skills is encouraged through activities such as listening to stories and poems, joining in with rhymes and songs, participating in drama and imaginative play, responding to simple instructions, talking to accompany play etc. Knowledge about books is developed through activities such as retelling a story in their own words, reading a book with the teacher, re-reading favourite stories and listening to stories linked to the curriculum the Reception children receive.

Phonics is taught on a daily basis following the 'Supersonic Phonic Friends' scheme of learning. The phonics teaching the children receive follows a clear progression of learning (see Supersonic Phonic Friends progression document). The reading books the children read at home and at school are carefully matched to the phonic ability of each child. This is monitored through carefully monitoring and half termly assessments. The Reception children are also given the opportunity to visit the school library on a weekly basis to choose a book they would like to share with an adult at home.

Children in the Foundation Stage are provided with opportunities to write in both focused activities and within continuous provision. Writing is also a feature of the application element of the daily phonic teaching the children receive.

## Speaking and Listening

Children are given opportunities to speak in pairs, small groups, in front of the whole school during worship and are encouraged to speak in front of their peers. They share their news, feedback information from reading and research and give opinions in circle time and across the curriculum. Through the same range of activities, children are encouraged to listen to others, respect turn taking within conversations and ask appropriate questions.

Role play and drama activities are used within English to encourage imagination and plot development. Children are encouraged to use a range of dramatic forms to express feelings and ideas both verbally and non-verbally. Children are encouraged to appreciate drama, both as participants and observers.

Children are involved in larger presentations and performances at Christmas in Year Two and throughout the year during class assemblies. Individuals are also invited to celebrate their achievements in a weekly assembly, during which time children tell the rest of the school about their awards in sports, music or other areas of enrichment.

## Reading

- Children within the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One are introduced to **phonics** through daily Supersonic Phonic Friends lessons.
- The teaching of phonics continues within Key Stage Two using **Fast Track Phonics**, this uses a diagnostic tool to identify areas of weakness and children are taught in targeted groups to meet their specific learning needs.
- Children are encouraged to recognise **key words** and word patterns on a weekly basis.
- Children are encouraged to read for meaning and through **context**.
- Children are introduced to a full range of texts through **shared reading** in whole class groups.
- Children each follow an individual **independent reading** programme monitored by class teachers and the English subject leader.
- Children are encouraged to make free choices of books based on their own interests from the library to supplement their instructional **independent reading**.
- Reading skills are further developed across the curriculum.
- Children are expected to complete regular home reading and within the Key Stage Two classes work towards winning the 'Reading Owl' on a weekly basis.
- Weekly **RIC** reading sessions take place in each class, during which time the children learn to interpret a text to answer questions from the content domains of both the Key Stage One and Key Stage Two National Curriculum. The children work in differentiated groups during the **RIC** session which are based upon a pupil's prior assessment attainment.
- A **Reading Spine** has been developed throughout the school. This provides the children with a rich diet of texts by a wide variety of authors (see Reading Spine document).

## Writing

- Teachers model writing of all genres through **shared writing** activities.
- Writing skills are further developed in group **guided writing** sessions.
- Children practise writing through **independent writing tasks**.
- **Talk for writing** and **Colourful Stories** are used as a tool to support narrative writing.
- A rich variety of texts are used to stimulate writing using the **imitate, innovate** and **invent** pattern to learning.
- Children are given opportunities to plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing.
- Children use their writing skills to communicate across the curriculum.
- Grammar is taught in line with the National Curriculum expectations for each year group.
- The teaching of handwriting takes place on a daily basis. Within Reception and Year One infant print is used. Once the children enter Year Two a cursive style is taught and continued throughout the school.

## Spelling

### EYFS and Key Stage One

Spelling is taught daily within both Reception and Key Stage One through the daily phonics session. The Infant spelling scheme runs hand in hand with the programme for the teaching of phonics.

Common exception words for Key Stage One are taught within the daily English/Phonics lesson and a record of a child's ability to read them can be found on the back of the individual guided reading assessment sheets.

The common exception words are also included in the Year One and Year Two spelling scheme.

### Key Stage Two

Children within Key Stage Two take part in a spelling lesson four times a week. This is linked to the year group expectations for spelling and the individual needs of each child following the Fast Track Phonics assessment.

The year group spelling lists for Key Stage Two are recorded on the back of the individual guided reading assessment sheets and are included in the spelling scheme.

## In class children are encouraged to:

- develop dictionary skills to support their spelling.
- attempt words for themselves using a range of strategies.
- write an increasingly wide range of words from memory.
- Use a variety of resources to help with spelling e.g. dictionaries, word banks, classroom environment, computer spell-check etc.

The spelling of necessary technical vocabulary is introduced throughout the curriculum. Marking supports self-correction and learning of correct spelling.

## Equality Duty

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

## Organisation and Planning

Long term planning is carried out in year groups and in collaboration within each key phase: EYFS, Key Stage One and Key Stage Two.

The English subject leader has drawn up a long term plan to ensure the National Curriculum (2014) is covered appropriately.

Year group plans indicate the areas of the English National Curriculum to be covered and include an outline of the learning objectives.

Our short-term plans are those that our teachers write on a weekly/daily basis, these are for writing and reading. They are shared with Teaching Assistants to ensure clarity of their role, the lesson objective and to give feedback from groups they have worked with.

The English long term plan is closely monitored by the subject leader; advice is given to ensure complete coverage of content and skill progression. This is built in as part of our termly cycle of monitoring. Work is recorded within the individual pupil's English book, RIC book or Context for Learning book as a cross curricular approach to the teaching of English is used throughout the school.

## Assessment and Feedback

Work is marked in line with the policy and feedback on improvements, written or verbal, is given. Monitoring by SLT and the English lead ensures standards are high. Parents are informed of

attainment and progress in speaking & listening, reading and writing verbally at parents evening and in the end of year written report.

### The Role of the English Subject Leader

- To promote subject good practice throughout the school and extend good practice among colleagues and classes
- To implement and contribute to new initiatives
- To be involved in long term and medium term planning
- To investigate whole school progress and performance in line with National Curriculum requirements-reporting to headteacher
- To prepare the subject policy document
- To organise, plan and lead INSET as needed
- To maintain an up to date stock of resources and equipment to ensure effective curriculum delivery
- To arrange and co-ordinate subject based events
- To celebrate their subject within school and the wider community
- To maintain a subject leader file and website subject page which includes a portfolio of evidence to support good practice

### Inclusion

Teachers are required to set high expectations for every child ensuring work sufficiently stretches all children, including those children who are working above the expected standard. In addition, work is planned at the appropriate level for those children who are working below expectations or who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Teachers are required to set ambitious targets which children are aware of and are able to talk about. Teachers ensure that all planning evidences that there are no barriers to progress and attainment. The teaching opportunities for children for whom English is an additional language help develop their grasp of English and aim for children to access all subjects. Children are encouraged to debate various issues, as well as being encouraged to develop high level questioning skills in order to steer their own learning.

### Monitoring and Review

Our governing body's Learning and Well-being Committee is responsible for monitoring the way the school curriculum is implemented through: termly HT report, core subject reports to governors by subject leaders, book scrutiny, engagement with children, parental questionnaires and attending subject training sessions.

The Headteacher is responsible for the day to day organisation of the English curriculum.

The English lead has responsibility for monitoring standards and ensuring that teachers have the skills and resources they need. The English lead will monitor the way English is taught throughout the school by: checking planning, drop in sessions, scrutinising books and completing pupil interviews, to ensure that appropriate teaching strategies are used. Feedback to individual teachers and generically at staff meetings celebrates and challenges to maintain high standards.

## Appendices

The English National Curriculum (2013)

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2024)

## Review

The Governing Body will review this policy statement annually and update, modify or amend it as it considers necessary to ensure the policy meets the needs of the children

Louise E. Blackledge January 2023

Reviewed: April 2024

Next review: April 2025