



English Policy

Headteacher: Dr. Ninette Fernandes-Viana

Approved: Dr. Ninette Fernandes-Viana

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Speaking and Listening

Rationale

At St. Joseph's we believe that the ability to speak and listen is fundamental to pupils' language and social development. It is an essential tool for all areas of the curriculum because talk underpins learning and thinking. It is vital that its significance is recognised by pupils, parents, support staff and teachers. Pupils need to be provided with many and varied contexts for talk but they also need direct teaching in the skills of speaking and listening.

Aims

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School & Nursery

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- To communicate effectively, speaking with increasing confidence, clarity and fluency
- To participate in discussions and debate in a variety of contexts
- To listen to the views, opinions and ideas of others with increased interest
- To articulate ideas and thoughts clearly with appropriate tone and vocabulary recognising audience
- To respond to questions and opinions appropriately
- To retell stories and poems which are known by heart
- To ask questions with increasing relevance and insight
- To have an interest in words and their meanings with a growing vocabulary
- To listen carefully during discussions, making contributions and asking questions
- To learn a range of drama strategies and conventions.

Action and Implementation

Due to the nature of Speaking and Listening, children at St. Joseph's Primary School are encouraged to develop and enhance their communication skills across the whole curriculum. Children should be able to:

- Listen and respond appropriately to adults and peers
- Give well-structured descriptions and explanations
- Ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and build vocabulary and knowledge
- Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- Gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s)
- Maintain attention, participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments
- Use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesizing, imagining and exploring ideas
- Speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English
- Participate in discussions, presentations, performances and debates
- Select and use appropriate registers for effective communication
- Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others

Teaching and Learning

Pupils have access to a wide range of speaking and listening opportunities that include:

- Talking about their own experiences, recounting events
- Participating in discussion and debate

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- Retelling stories and poems
- Expressing opinions and justifying ideas
- Listening to stories read aloud
- Presenting ideas to different audiences
- Taking part in school performances
- Responding to different kinds of texts
- Talking to visitors in school
- Listening to ideas and opinions of adults and peers
- Role-play and other drama activities across the curriculum
- Using dramatic techniques, including work in role to explore ideas and texts
- Creating share and evaluating ideas and understanding through drama and role play

Teachers provide a wide range of contexts for spoken language throughout the school day. Teachers and other adults in school model speaking clearly. This includes clear diction, reasoned argument, using imaginative and challenging language and use of Standard English. Listening is modelled, as is the appropriate use of non-verbal communication, respecting the views of others. Teachers are also sensitive in encouraging the participation of retiring or reticent children.

Learning takes place in a variety of situations and group settings. For example, these could include reading aloud as an individual, working collaboratively on an investigation, reporting findings as a newscaster, interviewing people as part of a research project, acting as a guide for a visitor to school or responding to a text in guided reading. Spoken Language is a focus across the curriculum and across the school day in a variety of settings.

Speaking and Listening Opportunities

- Opportunities are provided where speaking and listening are the focus of the teaching such as reciting and performing poems in our October Poetry competition; presenting book reviews or character profiles during our Book Week celebrations; presenting persuasive speeches on a particular theme such as showing the advantages of one fictional character over another; organising an interview with an 'expert', considering the role of the questioner, the range of questions to ask and the pace of the interview.
- Pupils have opportunities to use talk to investigate, evaluate or report, when another area of the curriculum is the focus for the teaching e.g. demonstrating how to do a scientific investigation or explaining how to solve a two-step word problem in Mathematics.

Home/School links

Summer Project homework (National Curriculum spellings, Poems, Common Exception Words and Reading Presentations) is sent home in July in order to aid the transition from one class to the next. Parents are encouraged to support their children in the learning, reciting and performing of poems.

Reading

*Part of the Saint John Southworth Catholic Academy Trust
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Rationale

At St. Joseph's we believe that pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Reading is of the utmost importance because it impacts on all aspects of the curriculum. With the gift of reading, children have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Reading is also closely linked to writing. It is by reflecting upon and discussing texts that pupils come to understand how writers write and to develop an awareness of the relationship between author and reader. At St. Joseph's we immerse our children in a rich language environment using quality texts and engaging teaching methods to encourage the analysis and appreciation of the written word.

Aims

- To become independent readers who orchestrate a full range of reading clues (phonic, syntactic, graphic, and contextual) monitoring and self-correcting their reading
- To be interested in books, read with enjoyment and evaluate and justify their preferences
- To read for different purposes
- To value and thus care for books
- To gain an understanding of their own and other's worlds and thus develop their personal intellect
- Through reading, to develop their powers of imagination, creativity, inventiveness and critical awareness
- To use their reading skills to retrieve information as part of their learning across the curriculum
- To be able to discuss the books they have read, relating to plot, characters and themes

Action and Implementation

Reading at St. Joseph's Primary School is taught daily across the school and across the curriculum. We follow the National Curriculum which states that children should "read widely and often, for both pleasure and information" that they should also be given opportunities to "appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage" and, crucially, to use "discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas."

The National Curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions:

- Word Reading and Decoding
- Comprehension

Both of these elements are essential to success and are clearly linked to the other aspects of Literacy: speaking and listening, writing, grammar and vocabulary. Reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning. We encourage and praise children at every stage of it.

Teaching and learning of reading across the school

Children at St. Joseph's Primary School first learn to decode, segment and blend words through rigorous, daily phonics teaching, following the Jolly Phonics programme (**See**

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Phonics Policy). Particular attention is paid towards vocabulary extension and basic comprehension strategies. Once pupils have moved on from the programme (most children are off the programme by the beginning of Year 2), they participate in daily English lessons where they continue to learn reading through Shared and Guided reading. Teachers actively model comprehension strategies and make use of Talk Partners to further develop children's inferential skills and knowledge of authorial intent. Reading is taught in its own right, as well as a valuable tool which permeates the entire curriculum. Children read outside the daily English lessons for information gathering, research and for pleasure. All classes have regular opportunities to listen to and enjoy texts that are beyond their own reading ability.

Reading is taught in a range of ways:

Guided Reading

Guided Reading is taught in small groups to enable children to become fluent in reading skills such as prediction, summarizing, inference, deduction, word meaning or author purpose and layout. In the Foundation Stage, the daily teaching of reading is initially done as shared reading with the class teacher and teaching assistant. Children then begin to participate in 'Guided Reading' sessions. This may only be for 5 or 10 minutes in the very early stages, in groups of 3-4 children. Our aim is that by the end of the Foundation Stage the majority of children will be participating in guided reading on a weekly basis. In Key Stage 1 and 2, all classes have an allocated guided reading slot in the timetable that allows for multiple sessions across the week. Each child has at least one Guided Reading session a week with the teacher, and additional sessions are carried out by Teaching Assistants or independently. Guided Reading includes introducing and explaining the reading skill, listening to children read individually and within the group, key questioning and developing discussion techniques. Guided Reading is also assessed and moderated through follow up tasks and pupil and teacher evaluation using reading target sheets based on National Curriculum English Programmes of Study. Follow up tasks also include skill based activities focusing on the book being read in the group, poetry skills, SPAG or Phonics tasks.

Guided Reading Aims and Objectives

- To foster a love of reading as an enjoyable, stimulating and worthwhile activity
- To work with small groups of children who are working within a similar reading stage
- To provide a high quality discussion/debate forum with the Class Teacher to develop pupils' comprehension skills, e.g. inference, word choices and author viewpoint
- To encourage children to respond to a range of quality texts independently through tailored follow up activities
- To enrich pupils' acquisition of new vocabulary and grammatical structures both in fiction and non-fiction texts so that this language is transferred into their talk and writing
- To promote 'Reading for Pleasure' through the use of the Book Corner, where pupils can browse and make personal selections, and talk with real passion about their favourite/least favourite texts
- To target all groups to read with the support of a Teacher/Teaching Assistant to focus on decoding and retrieval skills

Shared Reading

The teacher models the reading process to the whole class as an expert reader, e.g. reading with fluency and expression. Teaching objectives are pre-planned and sessions are

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characterized by explicit teaching of specific reading strategies, oral response and high levels of collaboration. The teacher's role is that of the expert reader who models how the text is read. The pupils join in where appropriate with the reading of the enlarged text - singly and/or chorally. The texts selected are rich and challenging, being beyond the current reading ability of the majority of the class. Identified children are further supported by weekly visits from volunteer readers including Beanstalk, former and current school governors.

Regular Independent Reading for Pleasure

Children are given the opportunity of hearing a book read by the Class Teacher at the end of the day, as well as many opportunities during free choice time. The 'Book Corner' based in each classroom is used to engage all pupils to read for pleasure and purpose and across a wide range of reading resources, e.g. poetry, fiction, non-fiction. Pupils have weekly timetabled slots to read for pleasure in the Book Corner in order to make personal selections, in addition to learning how to locate and use all the texts. We celebrate Poetry Day in October and World Book Day in March and organise our own annual 'Book Week' with emphasis on involving members of the community in sharing their favourite books. To support the enjoyment of reading we encourage cross-phase paired-reading, where the children in older classes share books with younger children.

Home Reading Scheme

From Reception-Year 6, children have a scheme of graded books that compliments the current Guided Reading stock, so that children are reading two books at home independently and at a level that they are suited to. One to two books, per week, are chosen independently from their Book Corner that motivates pupils to read for pleasure and purpose at home. Reading workshops for Parents and Carers have been organised to develop skills in decoding strategies and reading for meaning.

Assessment

Assessment is used to inform the planning and the teaching of reading. This takes various forms:

- The National Curriculum Objectives have been implemented in Year 1-6, as a weekly tool in our planning and assessment process, along with assessment during independent guided reading sessions and observations made by adults.
- Children also use these self-evaluation sheets based on National Curriculum Objectives (National Curriculum English Programmes of Study) to foster responsibility and awareness of children's learning as well as encouraging independence.
- In Year 2, teacher assessment and SATs provide an accurate end of KS1 assessment for Reading.
- In Year 3-5, teacher assessment is used to make judgements based on National Curriculum Objectives.
- Year 6 SATs provide an end of year Reading level based on comprehension.

How Reading is monitored:

1. Termly Observations
2. Book monitoring
3. Moderation
4. Pupil Voice

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5. Data analysis

Home/School links

Parents are strongly encouraged to be actively involved in their children's reading routines at all ages by listening to their children read for a minimum of 10 minutes each day, reading to their children, and by promoting a home environment where books are valued. All pupils are provided with a Home Reading Record, which provides a good link between home and school, for parents to sign when they have heard their child read. In KS2 pupils are encouraged to record their own reflections from reading at home with the support of their parents.

Writing

Rationale

At St. Joseph's we believe that the ability to write with confidence and accuracy is an essential life skill. Writing is a complex process that draws upon more than handwriting and spelling. It is the ability to effectively communicate ideas, information and opinions through the printed word in a wide range of contexts. Successful writers understand the social function and characteristics of writing in order to use different genres appropriately, matching it to audience and purpose. Writing also requires the writer to understand and accurately apply the conventions of syntax, spelling and punctuation. We aim to equip children with the skills necessary to achieve this, throughout the curriculum.

Aims

Our aims are for all children at St. Joseph's to:

- Write with confidence, clarity and imagination
- Understand and apply their knowledge of phonics and spelling
- Understand how to write in a range of genres (including fiction, non-fiction and poetry), using the appropriate style, structure and features
- Plan, draft, revise and edit their own work, and learn how to self- and peer-assess against the success criteria
- Develop a technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their writing
- Develop their imagination, creativity, expressive language and critical awareness through their writing

Action and Implementation

Writing at St. Joseph's Primary School is taught and celebrated in a range of ways, and is taught daily across the school across a range of subjects. We aim, wherever possible, to create cross-curricular writing opportunities, as we believe that in order for children to see themselves as successful writers they need to be involved in writing for a purpose.

We follow the National Curriculum requirements which ensures that a range of genres are covered, including narrative (e.g. extended stories, stories by the same author, myths and legends, adventure stories and traditional stories), non-fiction (e.g. persuasive texts, non-chronological reports, information texts, recounts, reports and letters) and poetry (e.g. rhyme, nonsense rhymes, shape poems, acrostic and descriptive poetry).

Genres are taught and learnt considering the:

- purpose
- form
- audience

Throughout each genre, the links between reading and writing are made explicit – we read as writers and we write as readers. The progress throughout each unit of work shows the

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transition between reading as writers (focusing on structure, characterization and language features) to writing as readers (composition, planning, editing and revising).

Teaching and learning of writing across the school

In Early Years, emergent writing is encouraged through the use of different writing materials, including felt tipped pens, crayons, chalk, sand, magnetic letters, big brushes, water, paint and computers, as well as writing in the role-play areas, such as postcards, menus, invitations or labels. Alongside this, children take part in activities to encourage and develop gross and fine motor skills necessary to write in a legible script.

Daily phonics lessons build their phonic and spelling knowledge to enable them to sound out words and spell high frequency words correctly. At St. Joseph's we use Jolly Phonics Resources to support the delivery of Phonics while children throughout the year groups have spellings to learn relevant to their age, and these focus on high frequency words or a particular spelling pattern. Each year group has a specific spelling list incorporating National Curriculum objectives and Common Exception Words.

Early Years Foundation Stage

The emphasis at this stage is multi-sensory with the linking of the teaching and practising of letter shapes and patterns with the development of pupils' ability to listen to, and discriminate between sounds which make up a word. Much of this occurs through games and activities which encourage focused listening. Pupils learn at an early stage how to discriminate and make connections between letter sounds used in reading and letter names used in spelling. Developmental writing is encouraged to give pupils confidence. They use their emerging knowledge of phonics to write words. Support is given to spelling by providing aids such as letter charts and simple word banks.

Children should be able to: blend and segment sounds easily, learn that segmenting words into their constituent phonemes for spelling is the reverse of blending phonemes into words for reading, spell words accurately by combining the use of grapheme-phoneme correspondence knowledge as the prime approach and also morphological knowledge and etymological information. Children are also encouraged to use a range of approaches to learn and spell irregular words.

Pupils have access to a range of phonics opportunities that include at Early Years and KS1:

- Whole class teaching of specific spelling patterns and phonics teaching using the Jolly Phonics programme on a daily basis
- Dictation to sound out and spell.
- Using phonics knowledge in real life contexts
- Applying skills in cross curricular contexts

KEY STAGE 1

Pupils continue to build upon their phonic knowledge. The emphasis is on the pupils' ability to segment words into phonemes and then match the most likely letter or letters to each sound. The pupils learn how to spell a number of sight words, high frequency words and common irregular words as listed in the National Curriculum and Jolly Phonics Programme. They investigate and learn how to use common spelling patterns. Weekly spelling tests are then carried out throughout Y1 and Y2.

KEY STAGE 2

Building on the approaches introduced in Key Stage 1, there is an emphasis on developing confidence and independence. It is expected that pupils assume increased responsibility by identifying their own spelling errors. Pupils begin to recognise letter strings, visual patterns and analogies and the application of spelling conventions. Spelling 'rules' are taught formally and it is expected that these rules are then followed closely in the pupils writing. The weekly spelling test continues to be carried out.

Pupils have access to a range of phonics opportunities that include at KS2:

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- Whole class teaching of specific spelling conventions and rules
- Discrete phonics teaching as part of an intervention group using Jolly Phonics, where gaps in phonological knowledge have been identified
- Using phonological knowledge in real life contexts.
- Applying skills in cross curricular contexts

Writing is taught in a range of ways:

Modelling Writing

The teacher talks aloud the thought processes as a writer. They model strategies in front of the children, communicating the strategies being used. Teachers may model writing skills such as punctuation, rehearsal, proof reading, editing, word selection, sentence construction and paragraphing.

Shared Writing

This is a collaborative approach in which the pupils contribute their ideas and thoughts for the teacher to write. The teacher models and teaches specific writing skills and there is the opportunity for discussion to choose the most effective or suitable ideas.

Talk for Writing

Integral to the process of writing is speaking and listening. 'Talk for writing' enables children to articulate their thoughts, use visual representations to retell stories through story-boarding, orally create new stories and orally rehearse what they are going to write and re-read what they have written. From imitation through to the innovation and invention process, children are able to draw their story, plan their beginning, middle and end but also formulate their own plot or character development basing their ideas on good quality texts in fiction and non-fiction.

Extended Pieces of Writing

Creative Writing is the development of the 'writing voice' and is based on the premise: "If a child can say it, they can write it." Pupils talk in their 'writing voice' in a dedicated Independent Writing session and at other points in the week. Our Writing is taught with the principles of 'Talk for Writing' – games / story maps. Each genre is taught over a 1-2 week block with at least one hour per week of extended, independent writing. In KS2 children need time to redraft and edit. In KS1 children are also given opportunities to correct or improve their work in small group editing sessions (1:1, 1:3). The focus and text type will have been introduced and reinforced throughout the week leading up to the independent writing session.

Cross-Curricular Links

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links, developing their knowledge and understanding of non-fiction genres as covered in History, Geography and Science lessons (including information reports, letter writing or biographies). They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through literacy lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

Spelling, punctuation and grammar is planned and taught as an integral part of the English curriculum. This is of particular importance given the weight placed on the same in the Interim Assessment Frameworks for End of KS1/KS2 introduced in 2016. Class teachers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Glossary of terms in the National Curriculum, to review their grammatical knowledge against the same, to understand the terminology used (for example, 'simple sentences' are now referred to as 'single clause sentences', exclamation sentences have to start with either "how" or "what" and must have a subject and a verb). There is a considerable amount of 'new' grammatical knowledge which many teachers may need to learn, including: subordination and coordination, the continuous/progressive verb form, use of conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions to express time and cause or the active and passive voice. Spelling, punctuation and grammar and punctuation must be taught

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through direct teaching and through application in writing to make it more effective, exciting and purposeful.

Handwriting

Continuity from Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) through Key Stages (KS) 1 and 2 is vitally important. It is paramount that children are taught correct letter formation from the very beginning of their time in school. As soon as the children are ready, they should be taught to sit properly in order to have the correct posture for writing, hold a pencil in the correct tripod grip and develop a legible and joined handwriting style. All children initially write with a pencil, with older pupils moving on to using a pen when they gain their 'pen license'. It is expected that all members of staff model the school handwriting style at all times, i.e. when writing on the board or in children's books. Children are taught the diagonal and horizontal strokes are needed to join letters together with those letters that are best left un-joined. There is an increased emphasis on legibility and the quality of pupils' handwriting. By the end of Key Stage 2, all children should be displaying an efficient, quick, neat and legible handwriting style that is effective in recording their ideas.

Expectations

In all lessons, teachers will provide children with examples of writing to allow children to see high-quality models that give examples of the genre and SPAG expectations for their year group. This does not replace modelling within lessons, but is in addition to it. Teachers will also provide children with subject specific word banks to support and enrich their vocabulary.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

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. Gifted children are identified and suitable learning challenges provided. All children are given equal access to the English curriculum regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

Assessment

Teachers in Early Years, KS1 and KS2 continually and these form part of wider pupil attainment discussions, such as Pupil Progress Meetings. Teachers use these judgements to inform their electronic record-keeping on 3BM and SIMMS on a half-termly basis. Moreover, all teachers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Assessment Frameworks for End of KS1 and KS2. Monitoring takes place to ensure that all pupils know their own strengths, targets and next steps. These targets are shared with parents during parental consultations to enable a collaborative home-school approach to the teaching and learning of writing. Triangulation takes place at Coordinator/SLT level with Book Scrutinies, Lesson Observations, (In house and with cluster groups) and Pupil Performance Data.

Home/School links

Weekly homework focusing on a range of word-level, sentence-level and text-level work is also sent home to support class learning. Children are encouraged to share their published pieces with their parents to celebrate their achievements and parents are invited for termly book looks. Additional information for parents is available on the school website.

Policy Statements

For Teachers:

- To develop an informed interest in words and their meanings and a growing vocabulary
- To nurture children's pride in their presentation and handwriting skills
- To foster independent writing
- To give opportunities to write for a wide range of purposes and audiences
- To plan experiences to write in a variety of genres in fiction, non-fiction and poetry
- To create a positive writing environment

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For children:

To write as a means of enjoyment as well as a means of communication

To become fluent and confident writers using models of good writing to develop their own skills

To plan, draft, revise and edit their writing

To evaluate their own work and that of others, discuss their writing with peers and adults

To use and apply a technical knowledge of language and its component parts focusing on age appropriate grammatical skills

To develop a fluent and legible handwriting style

To understand and use spelling systems and strategies to spell accurately

To use and apply their phonics knowledge to sound out, spell or correct their work

To develop their powers of imagination, creativity, inventiveness and critical awareness

Further information can be found below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-1-and-2-national-curriculum-tests-information-for-parents>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7ccc06ed915d63cc65ce61/English_Appendix_1_-_Spelling.pdf

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-assessment-frameworks-at-the-end-of-key-stage-2>