

# William Gilpin CE VA Primary School

## English Policy

### 1. Aims and objectives:

The use of English in spoken and written form is the foundation of all learning. At William Gilpin CE VA Primary school, we believe that literacy and communication are key life skills and that through the English curriculum, using cross curricular links where appropriate we should help children develop the skills, knowledge and thinking skills that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively with the world at large.

#### 1.1 Speaking & Listening:

##### We aim to:

- Enable children to order their thoughts and express them clearly and audibly in ways which take account of the listener;
- Encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- Develop a positive attitude to speaking and listening and use language confidently in a range of contexts adapting how and what is said to suit the purpose and audience;
- Participate in conversation, listening to others and responding appropriately, thinking about what has been said and the language used;
- Become aware of the characteristics of standard spoken English and understand that language varies through dialect and purpose.

#### 1.2 Reading

##### We aim to:

- Develop an enthusiasm and love of reading for life;
- Encourage children to read a wide range of texts;
- Enable children to read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding;
- Develop use of a full range of reading strategies e.g. phonics, word recognition, graphic knowledge, picture and context clues;
- Provide children with a wealth of texts and story patterns for their own writing;
- Develop the skill of silent reading;
- Develop imagination and critical awareness through reading experiences of the best examples of traditional and modern literature;
- Provide experience of group, shared and individual reading.

#### 1.3 Writing:

##### We aim to:

- Provide a real purpose for writing, so that it is interesting and enjoyable;
- Write in a range of genres in fiction and poetry;
- Develop an understanding of how narratives are structured through basic literacy ideas of setting, character and plot;
- Enable children to write in a range of non-fiction genres structuring text in a style suited to its purpose;
- Develop accurate use of grammar and punctuation;
- Develop their phonic knowledge, skills and understanding of spelling conventions and use them to read and spell accurately;
- Develop a fluent, neat and eventually joined handwriting style;
- Be developing the powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness;
- Develop a suitable technical vocabulary to enable pupils to articulate their responses;
- To increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing techniques to improve their work.

Overall, we aim to use speaking and listening, reading and writing as essential tools in developing thinking.

## **2. Teaching and Learning:**

We are increasingly aware of the varied learning styles and needs of our pupils and therefore, use a variety of teaching methods to accommodate these as recommended in the New Framework for Literacy.

All children receive a daily Literacy based lesson which consists of a balance between whole class teaching, teacher directed group work and independent working as defined in the National Literacy Strategy, the National Curriculum and the Foundation Stage Guidance. One of these sessions will usually be an extended writing session based on the principles of Ros Wilson's 'Big Writing'. There will also be dedicated sessions for phonics (KS1) and learning spelling rules (KS2). Guided reading groups will be used to explore texts in greater detail.

Every effort is made to base the Literacy curriculum around texts and topics that engage the children and, where possible, cross curricular links are made to the 'International Primary Curriculum' (IPC) topic.

## **3. The Foundation Stage:**

Children entering school in reception will have already had a wide range of experiences in literacy and we value and build upon these individual experiences using role play, writing areas, the out door area and book corners to develop these skills. We relate the English aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals for Communication, Language and Literacy which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five.

All the children are given a good grounding in phonics which underpins all reading skills. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their range of vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore, enjoy, learn about and use words and text in a range of situations.

## **4. Planning:**

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum, and we use the New Revised Literacy Framework as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English.

Planning is carried out in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The Revised National Literacy Strategy Framework for Teaching gives a detailed outline of what we teach in the long term. The suggested units do not have to be taught in the order they are given but, to ensure balanced coverage, the units for each year group should be taught together over the course of the year. As classes are in mixed age groups a two year rolling programme will be followed – e.g. Year 5 units in Cycle A and Year 6 units in cycle B. At the long term planning stage we try to make links between areas of the curriculum so that the children experience a connected curriculum that gives literacy a purposeful setting.

Our medium-term English plans, which are adapted from the Framework, give details of the main teaching objectives, and outline the expectations for the end of that unit of work. They should give an indication of how the tasks and expectations will be differentiated for the lowest and highest achievers in the class. The medium term plans reflect the structure suggested by the Literacy Strategy and ensure that children have time to read and talk about each genre before attempting to write in that style. Any assessment opportunities and cross curricular links are also noted. These plans are reviewed periodically by the Literacy co-ordinator.

Class teachers may complete weekly (short term) plans for the teaching of English for their own benefit. These weekly plans outline the specific learning objectives for each lesson and give details of how the lessons are to be taught. They may also include details of what each group of children will be learning.

Planning should take into account children's individual and group targets. At regular intervals teachers will agree a whole school target for reading and writing. These will relate to the strands from the primary framework and provide a progressive focus across the whole school.

## **5. Inclusion:**

At our school we teach English to all children, whatever their ability. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children.

Through our English teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs, matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. In some lessons this is through differentiated group work, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their ideas in different ways. We use Teaching Assistants to support some children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of the individual.

Teachers provide help with communication and literacy through:

- Using texts that children can read and understand;
- Using visual and written materials in different formats;
- Using ICT and other technological aids;
- If necessary, using alternative communication, such as signs and symbols;
- Using translators and amanuenses.

Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels. Opportunity will be found for more able children to extend their understanding. Where appropriate, and with parental consent, intervention programmes will be used with children who are finding it more difficult to access the English curriculum and therefore making insufficient progress.

## **6. Links with Home:**

Homework is used to support English in a number of ways. Children right through the school are encouraged to read and share books with an adult at home. Children in KS1 and 2 are given a reading record in which parents are asked to regularly comment on a reading or book based discussion session they have had with their child. Spellings that conform to a rule taught in class may be given to be rehearsed. Other English based homework may be in the form of research, a specific skill to practise or part of a project.

## **7. Assessment & Reporting:**

We follow the guidance set out for 'Assessment for Learning', making informal judgements as we observe pupils during lessons. Written work and pupil self-assessment aid a teacher's judgements about what has been learnt and inform future planning.

On completion of a piece of work, the teacher marks the work and comments as necessary in accordance with our marking policy.

Written work at the end of a unit will help the teacher make a judgement about how successful that child has been at meeting the success criteria. It is at the teacher's discretion as to whether that judgement is shared with the child.

Extended writing, which may be used as an opportunity to reinforce previously taught genres or linked to other curriculum areas, will be collected together in a file. This bank of evidence will be used to aid period assessments made using the APP (Assessing Pupil's Progress) guidelines.

The APP format for Reading and Speaking and Listening will also be introduced when appropriate and used to aid teacher assessments.

Teachers will meet periodically as a staff, and with staff from other schools, to moderate our judgements against the standards set down in the National Curriculum.

At agreed times of the year, formal assessments are also made in line with the school assessment policy to further support teacher assessment. Year 2 and Year 6 undertake the national tests.

The data from these assessments is used to track the progress of individual pupils and groups. Teachers use this to help them set appropriate targets to ensure children make progress.

Children's progress and appropriate targets are reported to parents at parent's evenings and annually in the reports issued in the spring term.

#### **8. Monitoring & review:**

It is the responsibility of the English subject leader to monitor the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching in English. The English subject leader is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, for being informed about current developments in the subject and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school through contributing to the school development plan.

A range of children across the school are tracked by the subject leader to highlight trends and monitor progress for target groups.

#### **9. Resources:**

Teachers and pupils have access to a range of resources.

The school:

- Is committed to reviewing the position and use of English resources;
- Will ensure the efficient deployment of existing resources;
- Is committed to updating and renewing their replacement when necessary, considering further purchasing to meet future needs.

This policy will be reviewed in the Autumn Term 2014 or in the light of new guidance.

**Signed**

**Date:**