

St Lawrence C of E Primary School

English Policy

Intent Statement

At St Lawrence, children are empowered by developing a lifelong love of the spoken and written word. They are enabled to communicate their creativity, ideas and emotions through the exploration of the richness of literature, and thereby 'soar on wings like eagles'.

Overview

Our curriculum is designed and delivered in order to ensure that children are able to progress through each lesson, week, term and year, developing a wide range of interconnected skills and competencies which will help them to achieve their potential in their educations and in their wider lives. English lessons have clear purpose, build on previous learning and make links to the wider curriculum and to children's experiences. English is a core area of the curriculum but extends far beyond it, with English skills being applied and developed in most lessons. We believe that all children have the right to a rich, varied and purposeful English curriculum and our curriculum reflects this.

Speaking and Listening

At St Lawrence, we know that developing strong speaking and listening skills is key to our success in English, across the curriculum and in our lifetimes.

We achieve this in the following ways:

- Children regularly share ideas orally in class, including with a partner, in group tasks and speaking in front of the class. There are incidental speaking opportunities as well as more formal tasks such as 'show and tell' or giving short presentations.
- Children are taught to listen and respond to each other in a way appropriate to their age and the task.
- Children in Little Lawrences and Reception are identified for additional support through the Welcomm and NELI (Nuffield Early Language Intervention) programmes. Staff are specifically trained to support this.
- Each class is involved in a school performance each year (EY and Y1/2 at Christmas, Y3/4 at Easter and Y5/6 in the summer term).
- Further opportunities for performance or speaking in front of others include memorising and reciting poetry, helicopter stories, sharing prayers or giving presentations.
- We demonstrate in our communications with children that we value their voices and opinions, ensuring they feel confident to speak up and be heard and express themselves.
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Phonics

Through the teaching of systematic phonics, our aim is for children to become fluent readers by the end of Key Stage One. This way, children can focus on developing their fluency and comprehension

as they move through the school. Attainment in reading is carefully assessed throughout each year using both summative and formative methods of assessment. Attainment in phonics is measured by the Phonics Screening Test at the end of Year 1. However, we firmly believe that reading is the key to all learning and so the impact of our reading curriculum goes beyond the results of the statutory assessments.

We achieve this in the following ways

- Through the systematic and discreet teaching of our phonics programme, Sounds Write, the children are taught the essential skills needed for reading. Staff throughout EYFS and KS1 are specifically trained to deliver Sounds Write.
- Phonics is taught daily to all children in the EYFS and KS1. Extra support is provided through small group interventions for those children who are working below expected levels.
- Children are systematically taught the relationship between sounds and the written spelling patterns, or graphemes, which represent them. Phonics is delivered to the whole class or small groups. This enables teachers to ensure application across subjects, embedding the process in a rich literacy environment for early readers.
- Pupils have regular reading sessions with an adult we ensure the pupils are regularly practising and applying their phonics knowledge. In the EYFS the continuous provision matches the pupil's current knowledge and understanding whilst ensuring the children are suitable challenged.
- Teachers regularly assess the pupil's phonics knowledge and children have carefully matched phonics based reading books to practice what has been taught. Children are encouraged to read regularly at home as well as completing phonics homework tasks. This ensures parents are aware of children's current phonic ability.
- Reception parents are invited to a phonics talk in the Autumn term to help them support their children at home.
- Phonics remains a key strategy that all staff in the school use when teaching strategies for spelling and reading and as an intervention.

Reading

We aim for all children to leave year 6 as fluent and enthusiastic readers, with the reading stamina and positive attitudes which will enable them to read and understand a wide range of texts. We want children to value reading and develop positive reading habits; as such, reading permeates our entire curriculum and we aim to create a strong culture of reading. We aim to develop readers who can read for a variety of different purposes and goals: reading for specific information, for research, to inspire and inform their writing, to widen their horizons or for pleasure.

We achieve this in the following ways:

- From the very start of their school journey, children are engaged with rich discussions about shared books, carefully-chosen to expose children to diverse and engaging texts and often linked to other areas of learning.

- Children develop their decoding skills through phonics and are taught this daily throughout Early Years and KS1 (see above).
- Whilst children are still developing fluency, they are heard read on a weekly basis, either one-to-one or as part of a group. Other strategies to promote fluency are used including reading in pairs, choral reading or echo reading.
- Children in KS2 have dedicated reading lessons from Monday to Thursday. These could be based around whole books or using extracts. They incorporate a range of interconnected skills including retrieving information, developing vocabulary and making inferences. Older children are encouraged to understand the choices that writers make and apply this to their own writing.
- English lessons and writing opportunities are often linked to class texts.
- Reading is incorporated into the wider curriculum: for example, a history lesson may involve conducting research from a range of sources or an RE lesson could involve summarising a Bible story they have heard in picture form.
- Children have access to a class library stocked with a range of age-appropriate books. KS2 children have time in school to read a book of their own choosing. Staff help children to find books that suit them and promote reading for pleasure. Recommended reading lists are available for different age ranges.
- We particularly promote a rich and wide vocabulary and a love of words by encouraging children to record and use new vocabulary from their reading.
- Each class has a class book/read-aloud.
- We seek additional opportunities to encourage a love of reading including author visits (in person or online), book fairs and World Book Day.
- School staff are encouraged to share their love of reading with the children and to be reading role models. This of course includes magazines, newspapers and online reading as well as traditional books.

Writing

We aim for children to leave St Lawrence able to express themselves through writing and being able to adapt their writing to different purposes in order to communicate effectively and with confidence. We hope to inspire and motivate children to write, as a creative endeavour unto itself as well as an important skill for education and future jobs.

We achieve this in the following ways:

- Children are taught writing skills discretely, including spelling lessons, handwriting practice and lessons based on different grammar and punctuation features.
- Our teaching is progressive, with key skills taught towards the beginning of the week, building upon prior learning, and culminating in opportunities to apply these skills to more independent writing tasks, including weekly extended writing tasks, in English lessons and across the curriculum.
- Spelling lessons are initially based on phonics but later, also teach children about patterns linked to grammar and morphology.
- Sentence-level work is prioritised across the school. Teachers explicitly model sentence construction, variation and cohesion.

- Oral rehearsal is used before writing to support composition and confidence.
- Writing tasks are purposeful, with clear audiences and outcomes, enabling children to understand how language choices affect the reader.
- To help with composition, children explore model texts, gather ideas and plan as a group. Older children are gradually given more freedom in planning their writing.
- Feedback on writing tasks links to topics covered in class. In KS2, children take greater autonomy in editing their writing independently of an adult and in response to their targets.
- We hope to promote a love of writing through giving opportunities for children to write varied and engaging texts, often linked to their reading. This includes creative writing and writing tasks linked to other subject areas. Author visits also help to promote and inspire writing.

Handwriting

At St Lawrence Primary School, handwriting is taught using the Penpals for Handwriting scheme across the whole school.

This ensures:

- Consistency of approach from Little Lawrences to Year 6
- Correct letter formation and posture from the earliest stages
- A clear progression towards fluent, joined handwriting

Handwriting is taught regularly and reinforced across the curriculum, supporting children to write neatly, comfortably and with confidence.

Assessment of English

Teachers conduct ongoing, informal assessments (formative assessments) as part of their daily teaching. They adapt their teaching to help address the needs of their pupils or identify those who made need extra support.

Formal assessments (summative assessments) for reading and writing are reported each term. Internal moderation is used to support assessments. In addition, teachers may moderate with other schools or participate on other external moderations. Assessments are monitored and analysed to identify areas for development through the use of the Insight Assessment tool.

Further information is available in the feedback policy.

Interventions

We aim to quickly identify where children may need extra support over and above the whole class provision to ensure support is targeted to help those children to progress. (Please also refer to SEND Policy).

We achieve this in the following ways:

- We identify children who are not making expected progress (see assessment) and assess where they are in terms of the small steps of progression and where there may be gaps.

- Support may be provided in the classroom. This could involve teacher or TA support individually or as part of a smaller group. However, we also aim to increase independence by providing support and scaffolding in other ways, such as through spelling or word lists, writing frames, sentence starters and tailored tasks or texts.
- Where needed, interventions are put in place outside of the classroom. These could be during the lesson time or at other times of the day. We aim to ensure these are targeted to the specific need and are regularly reviewed to ensure they are having impact.
- In Little Lawrences, Welcomm is used to identify speech sound and speech development delays in children. Interventions are completed daily, with referrals to SALT if progress not made.
- Further speech and language interventions include the Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI), and other speech and language support under the guidance of speech and language specialists.
- Reading interventions may include extra phonics, extra reading fluency practice, vocabulary work or general comprehension work.
- Writing interventions may target spelling, handwriting or grammar and punctuation.
- Where needed, we draw on the expertise of external specialists to help assess or put in place recommendations to help children progress.

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