

St Gabriel's C of E Primary School



English Policy



St. Gabriel's CE Primary School

English policy updated July 2020

INTRODUCTION

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of English at St. Gabriel's CE Primary School.

A. AIMS

In accordance with the 2014 National Curriculum aims for English, our aims in teaching English are that all children will:

1. Read a wide range of materials, both for pleasure and information, easily, fluently, often and with good understanding.
2. Acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions, for reading, writing and spoken language.
3. Appreciate our rich and varied literacy heritage.
4. Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.
5. Be competent in the arts of speaking and listening; elaborating on and clearly explaining their understanding and ideas, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

B. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

St. Gabriel's is committed to equal opportunities and all children, regardless of race, gender, special educational need, disability, first language, class or religion, will have equal access both to the English curriculum and to English resources. When the results of standardised tests are monitored, comparisons are made between significant groups to ensure equality of opportunity and attainment. Work will be differentiated to meet pupils' differing needs, with children being challenged by going deeper in their understanding and where appropriate, pupils may follow the programmes of study from younger year groups and/or receive additional adult support to ensure that each child realises his/her potential.

C. PRINCIPLES OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ENGLISH

Reading

At St. Gabriel's, we believe that effective reading is a combination of effective decoding (of letters, sounds, whole words and texts) and comprehension (of words, sentences, texts and books).

To teach pupils to decode effectively we teach synthetic phonics in Reception and Key Stage 1, using 'Essential Letters and Sounds'. All pupils in Reception and Key Stage 1 have a

discrete session of phonics each day. Children are also encouraged to use blending and segmenting as their first strategy when reading and writing.

To teach pupils to decode and comprehend effectively, we provide thirty minutes of guided reading daily for each pupil. During guided reading sessions pupils have the opportunity to take part in differentiated activities that aim at developing the range of reading skills from the National Curriculum. Children will also be given the opportunity to read independently or with an adult during these sessions. Guided Reading lessons begin at the end of KS1 and Phonics interventions may continue for some children into lower KS2

In addition, we have developed reading lists for each stage of our pupils' education to help them develop a love of reading and to give them an experience of reading that they might not ordinarily have. The reading lists were developed by staff using their knowledge of exciting, interesting and stretching literature.

Writing

At St. Gabriel's we believe that the process of writing is: driven by inspiration; consolidated by the opportunity for high-quality practice; reliant on the provision of effective context and a strong emphasis on audience and purpose and contingent on high quality feedback from a variety of sources including pupils' own self assessment; teacher feedback through conferencing and marking; feedback from support staff and peer assessment.

D. STRATEGIES FOR THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ENGLISH

Time allocation

Key Stage 1:

30-45 minutes phonics teaching daily

60 minutes writing lesson daily

Key Stage 2:

30 minutes guided reading daily

60 minutes writing lesson daily

Phonics

Children are assessed on a half-termly basis. The children are taught as one whole class and some children are provided with phonics interventions that aim to allow children to 'keep up' rather than having to 'catch up'. Phonics sessions take place daily and are led by class teachers and supported by Teaching Assistants and Learning Support Assistants. Interventions are carried out by Senior Leaders, TA's and LSA's.

Guided reading

- All children from Year 2 upwards have a daily planned guided reading session. Pupils in Reception have individual reading sessions with an adult at least once a week to support them in developing vital early reading skills.
- Timetables are organised to ensure that teaching and support staff are available to support daily guided reading.
- Guided reading is a core subject at St. Gabriel's and should be planned, resourced and taught with the same focus on learning and progress as Mathematics and Writing.

- Guided reading planning follows an agreed format. Planning should be completed in advance, annotated during the guided reading session and kept in the class guided reading folder as evidence for assessment.
- The planning of Guided Reading sessions should take into account the current assessments of the children.
- Each guided reading lesson should have a learning objective for each group, set to ensure pupils' progress against the weekly reading focus on the literacy medium term plan.
- Children are grouped by ability for guided reading and as many groups as possible should read with an adult. All available adults should be reading with a group or supporting children to complete a follow-on exercise based on previous reading. All children read with a teacher at least once a week.
- Children working independently are to undertake a follow-on activity based on the book/text they have read. This activity is set by the adult leading the group and should further advance the learning objective.
- Each group has a weekly reading focus which is outlined in the literacy medium term plan and relayed to the pupils, so they know what they are learning.
- Adults should record the progress made by individual children and next steps for the group in a teacher journal.
- Adults use pre-planned questioning, linked to the text and learning objective, to ensure pupils' progress against the weekly reading focus.
- It is also important that when possible children are read to daily, in the context of a shared class book. This gives children a model of how readers behave. Teachers should read from a broad range of texts to encourage children to read widely and to gain knowledge across the curriculum.
- Children should choose a book that reflects their current reading ability to take home each night to read with their parents/carers and make a note in their reading record log. Reading books in KS1 are changed weekly in order to support children in developing key word recognition and comprehension skills.

Reading lists

- Reading lists have been developed for Reception, Year 1, Year 2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6.
- Each child has a copy of the reading list in their Reading Log.
- The expectation is that each child will read at least one book from the reading list each term.

Writing lessons

Writing (long term):

- Important non-fiction forms re-visited annually interspersed with fiction forms and poetry.
- Pupil voice surveys are sometimes undertaken at start of each genre to ensure pupils are writing about topics they are interested in and know something about.

Writing (medium term):

- Each form lasts for two to four weeks, depending on the length of the form in the St Gabriel's Curriculum Map. Each block should follow the following format, adapted to meet the length of the form.

- Week 1: Deconstruction lesson; inspiration lesson; planning lesson; lesson focussing on the beginning of the piece; lesson focussed on the middle of the piece; lesson focussed on the end.
- Week 2: Planning and conferencing lesson; lesson focussing on the beginning of the piece; lesson focussed on the middle of the piece; lesson focussed on the end; editing lesson.
- Week 3: Planning lesson focussing on the beginning of the piece; lesson focussed on the middle of the piece; lesson focussed on the end; lesson allocated to produce independent writing sample.

Writing (short term):

- All forms, purposes and lessons to be inspirational to inspire interest and interesting writing.
- Differentiated success criteria (SC) sheets to be used for every form and stuck in children's books.
- All lessons to focus on pupils learning to write against their differentiated success criteria
- Modelled writing is to be displayed on the literacy working wall and referred to.
- Strong focus on success criteria for higher level punctuation, spelling and grammar utilising a specific sentence level approach and on text organisation using specific paragraph expectations in the success criteria.
- Carpet time to be kept to a minimum, with pupils learning through practice and maximising opportunities for self-assessment against the success criteria.
- Different groups of pupils to be stretched differently in every lesson and at different parts of the lesson.
- All lessons to include opportunity for pupils to respond to previous marking and use it in their writing.
- Children in Years 3 to 6 are to use the next step from their marking the previous day to write a 'My focus today is...' statement under their date and learning objective.
- All lessons to include Assessment for Learning (AfL) techniques to ensure pace and ensure that misconceptions are dealt with and in particular opportunities are taken to extend all groups into unknown learning.
- Pupils to have opportunity to write on beautifully presented sheets to produce published work.
- Pupils to refer to their next steps from their most recent writing assessment.

Homework

Homework is used to support English through:

- The home-school reading partnership which involves each child taking a book home to read every evening with a parent.
- The learning of spelling lists every week, expected of all children from Year 1 onwards.
- Regular dictionary work, encouraging children to broaden vocabulary.

Role of adults in supporting the teaching of literacy at St. Gabriel's

The role of the literacy co-ordinator is to:

- Ensure the National Curriculum and school policy are fully implemented in all classes and deliver training for new initiatives and curriculum changes.

- Take the lead in policy development and the production and regular review of schemes of work designed to ensure progression and continuity in English throughout the school.
- Support colleagues in their adherence to the policy, implementation of the schemes of work and in the development of detailed planning, assessment and record keeping.
- Monitor progress in English and advise the Head teacher on action needed.
- Take responsibility for the purchase of new resources and the organisation of centrally stored resources.
- Keep up-to-date with developments in English and disseminate information to colleagues as appropriate.

Primary helpers, parents, Governors and local volunteers assist in the teaching of English in the following ways:

- In the classroom (or nearby rooms) by hearing children read in a 1:1 context, by working with them on names and sounds of letters of the alphabet and by assisting those in the early stages of writing.
- On outings and visits by fostering discussion and questioning among small groups.
- By providing other help such as support for children working on the computer, assisting with book-making etc.

Resources

- We are well resourced for guided reading books – ALL staff are responsible for ensuring that they are cared for and that the integrity of group sets of books is retained.
- Key Stage 1 children should read a mixture of phonetically-decodable and whole language texts. Phonetically-decodable texts should be picked from the books which match the group's current phase in phonics. Whole language texts are levelled using coloured book bands.
- Key Stage 2 children should have a reading book that is appropriate to ensure further progress in their reading. As often as practical, this should be taken from the class reading lists.

The school uses:

- Reading scheme: Phonics Bug decodable readers.
- Phonics resources: Essential Letters and Sounds.
- Libraries: class reading areas, the school library and half-termly visits to Pimlico library.

E. ASSESSMENT

English is assessed across the school in the following ways.

Writing:

- From Year 1 onwards each child is to complete an independent extended piece of writing to be at the end of each form in their writing sample book.
- Teachers are to assess each child's writing sample against their differentiated success criteria for the form. This is stuck into their literacy book to inform children of the next steps in their learning.

- Teachers are to assess each child against statements and steps on Target Tracker at the end of each form using evidence from their literacy work and writing sample book.
- At the end of Years 2 and 6 children's writing is to be assessed against the teacher assessment frameworks for the end of Key Stage 1 and 2.
- In Reception assessment of writing is ongoing. Children are to produce an independent writing sample each half term to support ongoing evidence. Target tracker steps are to be continually updated for each child.

Reading:

- Ongoing assessment of children to take place during guided reading sessions, with planning annotated and Target Tracker statements and steps continually updated.
- From Year 3 onwards children are to complete Rising Stars NTS Assessments at the end of each half term, with Target Tracker then updated.
- At the end of Years 2 and 6, children are to complete the end of Key Stage tests in May.
- In Reception assessment of reading is ongoing with the collection of evidence. Target Tracker steps are to be continually updated for each child.

Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling:

- Ongoing assessment of children to take place using evidence from literacy books and weekly SPAG sessions with Target Tracker statements continually updated.
- Half-termly, Rising Stars, assessments are available for each class.
- At the end of Years 2 and 6, children are to complete an end of Key Stage test in May.

Handwriting:

- Handwriting is continually assessed using evidence from literacy books and from across the curriculum. Target Tracker statements are continually updated.

Speaking and Listening:

- Speaking and listening is continually assessed using evidence from literacy books and from across the curriculum. Target Tracker statements are continually updated.

Phonics:

- Each child in Reception, Year 1, Year 2 and all other years (if applicable) is to be assessed at the end of each half term using Essential Letters and Sounds Assessment.
- In June each year, Year 1 children take the National Phonics test. Children who do not pass retake the test when they are in Year 2.

F. MONITORING, MODERATING AND REPORTING

Monitoring

The implementation of the English policy is monitored in the following ways:

- The Head teacher, Deputy Head teacher and Literacy Co-ordinator make regular observations of classroom practice.
- Samples of children's books are monitored regularly by subject lead. Notes are made and the impact of this feedback is monitored.
- Weekly plans are monitored by subject lead and feedback is given to staff and the impact of this feedback is monitored.

Moderating

Moderation takes place at staff meetings when time is set aside once a term to assess children's work in relation to the National Curriculum objectives for each year group. Moderation is also carried out with other schools. Annually, the school moderates all writing levels before pupils move to the next year group – using outside support where possible to ensure accuracy of judgments.

Reporting

Pupils' attainment in reading and writing are reported to parents at the end of each big term and at the end of the academic year. At the end of each Key Stage, the results of the end of key stage tests are sent to parents with their report. Pupils' progress is also reported to parents at parent's evenings in the autumn, spring and summer terms.

Target setting

Marking is used to inform children of their next steps. From Year 3 onwards, children write a 'My focus is...' statement with their target from the previous day's marking under their date and learning objective.

At the end of each form, teachers assess each child's writing sample against their differentiated success criteria. This is stuck into the back of their literacy book to inform children of the next steps in their learning.

G. SPEAKING AND LISTENING AT ST GABRIEL'S

- a) In accordance with the 2014 National Curriculum for spoken language, our aims in teaching speaking and listening are that all children will:

1. Speak audibly and fluently in order to communicate their ideas and emotions, with an increasing command of Standard English.
2. Listen and respond appropriately, asking relevant questions to extend their understanding, knowledge and vocabulary.
3. Listen to and actively participate in conversations, discussions, presentations, performances, role play, improvisations and debates, articulating and justifying their ideas, arguments and opinions.
4. Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contribution of others.
5. Know the differences between the spoken and written forms of English.

- b) Speaking and listening at St. Gabriel's is taught in the following ways:

- Speaking and listening activities are planned across the school as part of the “inspiration” that supports effective writing. Activities such as ‘telephones, conscience alley, paired talk, word tennis and role play’ are used to support written work at the beginning of lessons, or as whole lessons at the start of a new topic. Where photographs are used to provide evidence of speaking and listening activities, they are to be of the individual child accompanied by an explanation.
- ICT equipment (such as ‘Tuff Cams’, story sequencers, class cameras) are used to develop speaking and listening skills.
- Through practice towards: the presentation of work in assembly; reading in mass; reading in whole school services or when rehearsing for the end of year production.
- Through listening to story tapes and stories read aloud by class teachers
- By making recordings of themselves.
- Through other areas of the curriculum when time is specifically set aside to discuss and explain new topic-related vocabulary.

c) Classroom resources

Key Stage 1 classrooms have a CD/tape-player, a set of headphones and a selection of pre-recorded audiobooks with accompanying books. Children should have opportunities to record themselves speaking using microphones and other recordable technology. Children should be taught to operate the CD-player as early as possible.

d) Assessment and Record Keeping

All classes use the National Curriculum statutory requirements for spoken language to assess each child’s development each half term.

H. READING AT ST. GABRIEL’S

In accordance with the 2014 National Curriculum aims for reading, our aims in teaching Reading are that all children will:

1. Be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live.
2. Establish an appreciation and love of reading.
3. Gain knowledge across the curriculum.
4. Be able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education.

a) Reading at St. Gabriel’s in Key Stages 1 and 2 is taught in the following ways:

Reading is taught according to The Simple View of Reading.

- Synthetic Phonics
All children in KS1 are given a discrete phonics programme at a level appropriate to their current attainment. Each teacher and TA uses the Essential Letters and Sounds programme, in order to ensure consistency across the school.
- Guided Reading
Each child from Year 2 onwards reads as part of a group daily. Guided reading is an opportunity for active teaching of skills, with a focus on comprehension, and reinforces the teaching of phonics.

The school uses books and audio books and phonetically decodable readers and book-banded texts from a range of published schemes. (Teachers' Manuals are also available).

All the Key Stage 1 texts have been levelled and a coloured sticker placed on the spine indicates the level. The simplest texts are labelled with pink stickers followed in levels of difficulty by red, yellow, dark blue, green, orange, light blue, purple and gold stickers. Children begin the programme at an appropriate level, which is determined by the outcome of a running record and progress through each level at their own pace. 'Big books' are also available to support teaching in Key Stage 1.

b) Home - School Partnerships:

We are very keen to involve parents in the teaching of reading and provide *all* children with suitable reading material for reading regularly at home. Therefore, children are given a reading record book. Key Stage 1 children should be encouraged to spend up to 20 minutes per night reading while Key Stage 2 children should be reading for at least 30 minutes per night. The child and/or a parent should make a daily comment in the reading record book. Teachers will rarely write in the record book, except for 1:1 reading in Reception or for specific children, as they keep other records of reading. Children should be given the chance to take home daily a book that has been chosen from a selection in their classroom, and which is at the same level as the books they read in guided reading sessions. Children in KS1 have their books changed weekly. Reading record books should be checked in daily. Teachers should contact parents immediately if books are not being returned and must ask parents to pay to replace lost books.

c) Coverage:

All class teachers plan to cover the National Curriculum statutory requirements for reading using a range of fiction and non-fiction texts. Teachers relate guided reading sessions to writing genres and class topics, using the weekly reading focus from the literacy medium plan as the basis for weekly planning. This ensures children receive a broad and balanced range of reading experiences across different genres and use reading to gain knowledge across the curriculum.

d) Governors and voluntary reading helpers (VRH's) assist specially selected pupils in learning to read.

e) Each class teacher must allocate approximately 30 minutes throughout the week, to model reading with expression and clarity by reading aloud to the class. Texts for this reading will include speeches and poems in Key Stage 2 and have been identified as part of the process of preparing reading lists for classes.

f) Classroom resources:

- Every classroom should have a book area. Books in the book area must include reading scheme books, 'picture' or fiction books chosen from the school library and changed regularly, non-fiction books related to current topics, Pimlico Library books and a selection of dual-language books. Other suitable reading material to be considered for the book area includes song books, catalogues, joke books, home-made books, comics, magazines, newspapers etc. All reading material should be displayed in an inviting and attractive manner and the accompanying display should be changed regularly.
- All classes must have a set of dictionaries, thesauri and atlases.

g) Libraries:

1. Pimlico Library

The library co-ordinator draws up a timetable of visits to Pimlico Library each term. A librarian at the library leads this visit and the activities arranged vary from teaching library skills to author visits, poetry recitals and recommending recently published material. Any Key Stage 2 class teacher may arrange an additional book exchange visit to the library at any time of the day/week throughout the year simply by telephoning a few days in advance.

2. The School Library

Teachers are encouraged to utilise the school library regularly to support learning. During these visits the class teacher teaches library skills and children have the opportunity to develop research skills.

h) Assessment and record-keeping:

1. Key Stage 1

- Phonics assessment to be carried out half-termly.
- Guided reading records, used by the teacher to inform assessment.
- Ongoing target tracker assessment every half term.
- Reading comprehension test used each half term in Year 2 and Year 1 (if appropriate) to assess comprehension skills.
- End of Key Stage assessment in May (Year 2 only).

2. Key Stage 2

- Guided reading records, used by the teacher to inform assessment.
- Ongoing target tracker assessment every half term.
- Reading comprehension test used each half term to assess comprehension skills.
- End of Key Stage assessment in May (Year 6 only).

I. WRITING AT ST. GABRIEL'S

In accordance with the 2014 National Curriculum aims for writing, our aims in teaching Writing are that all children will:

1. Develop effective transcription skills – spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between letters and sounds and understanding the morphology and orthography of words.
2. Develop effective composition skills – articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader, showing clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar.

a) Writing at St Gabriel's is taught in the following ways:

- St. Gabriel's has identified the most important purposes and forms for writing and these are revisited on an annual basis. These include different narrative forms; persuasive writing; explanatory writing; discursive writing; instruction texts; newspapers; letters; diaries; play scripts and poetry.
- Differentiated success criteria are used in each year group to ensure consistency and a progression of skills throughout the school. These success criteria are used in writing lessons to support children's work and as a basis for high level writing modelled by the teacher at the beginning of lessons.

- Children are given 3 extended writing opportunities per week. These are supported by speaking and listening activities and sentence level work.
- Writing is regarded as a process and children are encouraged to go through the following stages:
 1. Ideographic writing:
Children use signs, graphics and symbols to convey meaning. They are able to distinguish between writing and pictures and can understand that pictures or logos can represent words.
 2. Letter-like forms:
Children may 'scribble' patterns of letter-like forms across the page. They make up their own letters and begin to recognise, copy and experiment with familiar letters by reversing, inverting or combining them.
 3. Strings of letters:
Children begin to combine familiar letters, particularly those in their own name, into long strings. They become aware of directionality and page arrangement and begin to use appropriate organisation of letters and 'words' on the page.
 4. Alphabetic:
Children begin to understand that sounds in speech can be represented as symbols on paper. They notice that the same letters are consistently used to represent the same sounds and realise that by remembering the sound-symbol relationships they can write words that can be recognised by others.
 5. Recognisable words and sentences:
Children use their phonic knowledge to write words. There is often still some confusion between similar sounds, but they begin to appreciate that words can be broken down into phonemes and recorded as graphemes. These can be combined in a variety of ways to make different words. They also become aware that letters can be combined to make entirely new sounds. They become familiar with the unpredictable spellings of high-frequency words and begin to spell these correctly from memory. They begin to write sentences and develop an awareness of punctuation.
 6. Conventional writing:
Children write and spell most monosyllabic and polysyllabic words correctly and use appropriate grammar, syntax and punctuation.

Throughout each of these stages teachers will provide support for developing writers in the following ways:

- * by writing down what the child says his/her writing says above the child's whole text,
- * by writing correct spellings above the child's incorrect words to make meaning clearer,
- * by ticking letters or sounds that are correct in a word written by a child (Class R and Class 1 until they are fluent writers),
- * by modelling writing,
- * by setting next steps for children's writing and teaching editing as an explicit skill,
- * by responding to the content of the child's writing by a verbal personal response and highlighting, in orange, an area for children to improve their work. Teachers allow time for children to respond to feedback in next lesson.

c) Assessment and record-keeping:

Key Stages 1 and 2:

- Writing samples are produced by each child at the end of each form. This will be used as an indication of the child's independent writing ability and used alongside the portfolio of work that the child has produced in their book and across the curriculum to assess their writing each half term.
- End of key stage tests in May (Years 2 and 6 only).

J. HANDWRITING AT ST. GABRIEL'S

Our aims in teaching Handwriting are:

1. To realise the importance of good handwriting as an important means of communication.
2. To teach a uniform, cursive style, which facilitates speedy transference of thought to paper. This is recognised to have particular benefits for children with learning difficulties.
3. To encourage pride in the aesthetic appearance of completed work.
4. To ensure that the 2014 National Curriculum objectives for handwriting are followed.

a) How handwriting is taught at St Gabriel's:

Foundation Stage

In the Foundation Stage children take part in activities to develop gross and fine motor skills and recognition of patterns. Individual letter formation is taught, modelled and practised in working towards the objectives listed below at Key Stage 1. Handwriting is also taught in conjunction with phonics and spelling. It is acceptable to end letters with a flick where appropriate, but it is not necessary to begin teaching entry points on the line.

Key Stage 1

Children are taught how to form both lower case and capital letters and how to join them, whilst still developing fine and gross motor skills with a range of multisensory activities. Handwriting is demonstrated daily and can be linked to the phonics session. The children are taught to:

- Write from left to right and from top to bottom.
- Start and finish letters correctly, with exit points on the line.
- Be consistent with the size and shape of letters and the spacing of letters and words.
- Have the correct pencil grip.
- Find a comfortable position for their page.
- Have the correct posture and position.

Key Stage 2

During this stage the children continue to have direct teaching and regular practice of handwriting. We aim for them to develop a clear and fluent style and by the end of Key Stage 2, should be able to adapt their handwriting for the following different purposes:

- A neat legible hand for finished, presented work.
- A faster script for notes.

- Print for labelling maps or diagrams

b) Guidelines for teaching handwriting:

- All adults are expected to model handwriting in line with the school's handwriting policy when marking books and when writing on the interactive whiteboard or on flipchart paper.
- Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. If they have difficulty this will limit fluency and inhibit the quality and quantity of their work.
- Cursive handwriting teaches pupils to join letters and words as a series of flowing movements and patterns. The style is quick and easy to learn, particularly when it is practiced from an early stage.
- Pupils will learn to form individual letters appropriately and accurately first, and then in Year 2, pupils will begin to join their handwriting, in accordance with the New National Curriculum.
- Handwriting skills are demonstrated regularly and systematically. They should be taught weekly.
- Handwriting lessons should be linked to the teaching of spelling.
- All teachers should teach the agreed cursive style of handwriting. (In Reception, children should begin to learn letter formation, ending the letters with a 'flick' where appropriate).
- When marking or writing comments, members of staff use cursive handwriting as appropriate. It is most important that teachers and other adults themselves model a good handwriting style at all times in books and on the board.
- Patterns are used initially, by writing with a variety of tools and using multi-sensory methods, to help free flowing hand motions.
- Correct pencil hold and letter formation are taught from the beginning, and writing is linked with spelling.

c) Teaching Points:

- Children should be taught that letters have 'exit points' ending on the line.
- We do not join from a capital letter.
- The 't' should be $\frac{3}{4}$ the height of the other ascenders.
- Guidance on letter formation and teaching sequence can be found in Appendix 2 of the St Gabriel's CE Primary School Handwriting Policy.
- As a starting point, it is good to begin with letters that have similar shapes and similar joins.

d) Left-handedness:

At least 10% of the population are left-handed. Left handed children should always sit on the left side of right-handed children, so their elbows don't bump. They are encouraged to find a comfortable orientation for their paper, usually slightly to the left of centre of their body, and to have their fingers about 1.5cm from the point of their pencil. They are encouraged not to loop their hand over their writing.

e) Resources and writing materials:

- Children are given experience of a variety of writing tools, but the children should use pencil in all exercise books until such time as they have developed an excellent style of cursive handwriting. It is the aim that all children will be writing in pen by the end of Year 3.

- When a child's handwriting is consistently neat, they will be awarded a pen license, enabling them to write in their exercise books using a black pen. It is hoped that this system will encourage all children to develop a good style. However, pencil will continue to be used in maths books.

f) Scheme of work:

We follow the St Gabriel's CE Primary School Handwriting Policy alongside the National Curriculum statutory requirements for handwriting for each year group. We use CGP Handwriting books in classes 1 and 2

g) Assessment and record-keeping:

All classes use the National Curriculum statutory requirements for handwriting to assess each child's development each half term.

h) Special needs:

Children who have been assessed as having specific handwriting difficulties will be offered a combination of the following strategies:

- use of a different writing implement e.g. a thicker pencil, more freely flowing pen etc.
- use of a triangular grip pencil holder
- use of an alternative pencil grip called the two-finger victory grip
- letter forming aids e.g. 'Roll n Write'
- individual teacher or TA support

K. SPELLING at St. Gabriel's

Our aims in teaching spelling are that all children will:

1. Have an extensive knowledge of word families, phonological patterns and rules of spelling and be able to use this to spell regular and irregular complex polysyllabic words correctly in the course of their own writing.
2. Recognise inconsistencies in phonological patterns.
3. Be able to use dictionaries and thesauri efficiently.
4. Use correct terminology when discussing aspects of, or matters relating to, spelling.

a) The following findings of three recent studies have influenced our strategies for the teaching of spelling:

- * The linkages between written symbols (graphemes) and spoken sounds (phonemes) must be taught explicitly, and these are best learnt by engaging all the senses simultaneously, and also by ensuring that there is understanding. Therefore, auditory tasks should always be complemented by visual aids and vice versa.
- * Approximately 80% of the English language conforms to known patterns or follows established rules. Therefore, these patterns and rules will be taught.
- * Twelve words make up one quarter of all reading/writing/spelling and one hundred words make up one half of all reading/writing/spelling. Therefore, children will be encouraged to learn these words as early as possible.

b) Spelling at St Gabriel's is taught in the following ways:

- Explicit teaching of common exception words in Key Stage 1 and statutory spelling words in Key Stage 2, according to the 2014 National Curriculum for English and as set out in the literacy medium term plan.
- Regular, systematic and explicit teaching of word families, phonological patterns and rules of spelling throughout both Key Stages, as set out in the literacy medium term plan.
- Use of the '*look, say, cover, spell, check*' method of learning to spell new words.
- Weekly learning and testing of word lists set out in the literacy medium term plan; consisting of a set of common exception, high frequency or statutory spelling words as well as a spelling rule, a phonological pattern or a word family expected of all children from Year 1 onwards. Children should be given up to, but no more than 20 words per week.
- The collection of words by the whole class e.g. table displays, wall pockets, posters, big book of sounds.
- Teaching of strategies to enable children to independently locate words e.g. looking around the room, using story books and/or own writing, paying close attention to corrections made by the teacher when marking, using word banks, word books, word cards and dictionaries.
- Encouraging children to 'have a go' at spellings by listening to the sounds they can hear and recording their efforts in their books.
- Playing spelling games (e.g. *Hangman*).
- By using brightly coloured, tactile resources (e.g. magnetic and sponge letters).

c) Marking:

- All children must spell the days of the week and learning objective correctly. Incorrect spelling of these must be picked up on when marking.
- Teachers are expected to go back to the previous day's marking and tick the correct spelling of words if this has been set as a development task to ensure children are spelling the word correctly.

d) Time allocation:

- In Reception, spelling is taught during daily phonics sessions.
- In Key Stage 1, spelling is taught in SPAG sessions, daily phonics sessions and a weekly spelling test session.
- In Key Stage 2, spelling is taught in SPAG sessions and a weekly spelling test session.

e) Classroom Resources:

- Each Key Stage 1 class has its own laminated alphabet frieze which should be displayed prominently at a level visible to the children.
- Each class should have a set of dictionaries and thesauri.

f) Scheme of work:

We follow the National Curriculum statutory requirements for spelling for each year group.

g) Assessment and record-keeping:

- Every child will be tested, in a manner appropriate to their age and ability, on weekly spelling tests and monthly or half-termly tests may be conducted at the discretion of the class teacher.

- Throughout Key Stage 1 (and 2 if applicable) every child will be tested on their ability to correctly spell the high frequency words as indicated in the Letters and Sounds phonics scheme.

h) Terminology:

We have agreed on the following terminology in order to maintain consistency and to enable us to communicate effectively on the subject of spelling:

- * grapheme: a symbol of a sound as printed on paper
- * phoneme: a sound
- * vowels: a,e,i,o,u
- * consonants: b,c,d,f,g,h,j,k,l,m,n,o,p,q,r,s,t,v,w,x,y,z
- * blend: when two or more letters keep their original sounds but are run together e.g. fl, br,
- * digraph: when two letters together make a new sound e.g. sh, ch, th
- * contractions: a shortened form of a word e.g. can't, should've
- * onset: the initial consonant(s) of a word e.g. h-and, br-ing, str-ong
- * rime: the following vowel and any final consonants e.g. h-and, br-ing, str-ong
- * homonym: words with same sound and same spelling but more than one meaning e.g. saw
- * homophone: words with same sound but different spelling and meaning e.g. flour/flower
- * synonym: words with similar meanings e.g. said, called, shouted, screamed
- * prefix: letters or words added to the beginning of a word to change meaning
- * suffix: letters or words added to the end of a word to change meaning
- * acronym: a word formed from initial letters of a longer set of words e.g. SCUBA

L. GRAMMAR AT ST. GABRIEL'S

Our aims in teaching grammar are that all children will:

1. Develop the necessary skills to use the English language confidently, appropriately and accurately to the best of their ability.
2. Recognise and understand the grammatical features that distinguish standard English and to use these in our writing.
3. Use correct terminology when discussing aspects of, or matters relating to, grammar.

a) Grammar at St. Gabriel's is taught in the following ways:

- formally, through explicit daily SPAG sessions,
- formally, through teaching across all subjects,
- informally in the context of speaking and listening, reading and writing tasks related to the reading and writing programmes implemented in the school.

b) Scheme of work:

We follow the National Curriculum statutory requirements for vocabulary, grammar and punctuation for each year group.

c) Assessment and record-keeping:

- Children are continually assessed on the knowledge, understanding and use of grammatical features that distinguish Standard English using ongoing evidence from their literacy books, daily SPAG sessions and writing samples at the end of each genre.
- From Year 1 onwards children complete Rising Stars Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling tests at the end of each half term.
- At the end of Years 2 and 6, children complete an end of Key Stage test in May.

d) Terminology:

Please see the glossary in the 2014 National Curriculum for English for definitions of all grammatical terms and the expectations for each year group.

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