



## St Mary's C of E Primary School Literacy Policy – Autumn 2017

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### Philosophy

This policy is to ensure consistency in the content and organisation of Literacy teaching across the school. The study of Literacy develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, views and feelings. Children become empowered to interpret the world around them and to make sense of their experiences; in this sense Literacy is a tool for both our thinking and learning.

Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of non-fiction and a range of multi-media. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins; ensuring that they are at the heart of the learning experience.

### Aims and objectives

- To enable children to speak with clarity, confidence and expression, and to take account of their audience, purpose and differing situations.
- To encourage children to listen with concentration to others, to respond and build on their ideas and views and to identify features of language used for specific purposes.
- To show children how to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands.
- To teach children effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal, through a variety of drama activities.
- To use phonological awareness to decode and encode words.
- To help children to be able to read with fluency, accuracy, understanding and enjoyment.
- To help them become confident, independent readers, through contact with challenging and substantial texts.
- To help the children to develop an understanding that writing is both essential to thinking and learning and enjoyable in its own right.
- To enable children to write creatively across all subject areas within a context that is relevant to them.
- To give children opportunities for writing across all subject areas.
- To ensure rapid and sustained progress in writing across the school.
- To enable children to learn to communicate meaning in narrative and non-fiction texts, spelling and punctuating accurately for a range of purposes.
- To enable the children to improve their planning, drafting and editing of their own work.

### Content

- The content of our Literacy teaching is based on the aims and objectives as set out in the National Curriculum.
- An overview of genres and skills to be covered for each year group is followed by all teachers.
- We follow the Letters and Sounds phonics scheme to teach phonics and early reading in Foundation Stage and KS1. Phonics is taught daily in classes.
- Our reading programme grades books into 13 different levels of difficulty, each linked to the National Curriculum levels. Books are graded using book bands and provide a range of reading materials, including a mixture of reading scheme and 'real' books, both fiction and non-fiction. We have reading



## St Mary's C of E Primary School Literacy Policy – Autumn 2017

---

scheme books by Oxford Reading Tree, Ginn Lighthouse, Rigby Star, Storyworlds, Bug Club and Big Cat Collins.

### **Teaching and Learning Style**

At St Mary's C of E Primary School, we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our Literacy lessons to ensure all children are included, valued and suitably challenged, as recommended through our whole school overview and through the National Curriculum. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding to ensure rapid and sustained progress in both reading and writing. We do this through creative cross-curricular Literacy lessons which take place daily and provide optimum opportunities for writing. Children experience a range of activities suited to their unique personal learning style; including whole class reading or writing through the use of book studies; explicit weekly grammar lessons in line with the SPAG recommendations; guided teaching activities linked specifically to the children's individual needs; independent learning and whole class sessions to review progress and learning. Whilst there is a high proportion of whole-class and group teaching, the independent activities give children an opportunity to talk and collaborate and so embed and enhance their learning. Children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts to support their work with a variety of resources, such as dictionaries, thesauruses, phonic cards, puppets and a range of interactive tools using ICT. ICT, such as the use of Learnpads, is also used in Literacy lessons to record, review and analyse the children's work. Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum to ensure children can make clear links to their lives and the world around them.

In all classes, children have a wide range of abilities and learning styles and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability and learning style of the child. We achieve this by ensuring that all lessons are differentiated at least three ways through differentiated success criteria. Where appropriate, children's work is given next steps to identify how they could make even more progress.

### **Planning**

Literacy is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use this, our whole school Literacy overview and progression in skills document as a basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for Literacy.

We carry out the curriculum planning in Literacy in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The National Curriculum and our whole school overview details what we teach and cover in the long term. The progression in skills document identifies the key objectives that we teach to each year, these are then adapted, through the use of the new assessment grids, to suit the needs of individual classes and children.

Our medium-term plans, which we also base on the National Curriculum, give details of the main teaching objectives for the term. These plans, along with the creative wheels, define what we teach and ensure appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. (The subject leader is responsible for reviewing these plans).

Class teachers complete a weekly creative (short-term) plan for the teaching of Literacy. Each genre is taught for 2-3 weeks and includes a book study each term. This lists the specific learning objectives and differentiated success criteria for each lesson and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also gives details of what each group of children will be learning and the guided teaching group focus. All planning is kept on the schools network for access by all staff.



## St Mary's C of E Primary School Literacy Policy – Autumn 2017

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### **Contribution of Literacy to teaching in other curriculum areas**

The skills that children develop in Literacy are linked to and applied in every subject of our creative curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work at school.

### **Literacy and Inclusion**

At our school we teach Literacy to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. Literacy forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our Literacy teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents and those learning English as an additional language to reach their full potential.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style and differentiation – so that we can take additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against the End of Year Expectations for their year group, or the nearest year group to their own. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

Intervention groups for reading, writing, handwriting and spelling are in place across all year groups for children who are below their expected levels. This will ensure that all children have the opportunity to make more rapid progress.

We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning Literacy. The use of Visual Literacy, Literacy workshops, theatre productions and Author visits enable all learners to fully access the learning.

Teachers provide help by using:

- Texts that children can more easily read and understand.
- Visual, kinaesthetic and written materials in different formats.
- ICT, other technological aids including cameras and CD recordings.
- Alternative communication, such as signs and symbols.

### **Assessment in Literacy**

Teachers assess children's work in Literacy in three phases. The short term assessment that teachers make as part of every lesson to help them to adjust their daily plans. They match these to the objectives and children's personal targets. Written or verbal feedback is given to help guide children's progress. All children are encouraged to respond to marking and feedback and next steps for learning are given.

At the beginning of each unit, children will carry out a 'Cold Task' where personalised targets are set for each child. These targets are then reviewed following the 'Hot Task'. Children's work is assessed using the children's targets from the End of Year Expectations.

Teachers make formal assessments towards the end of each term and they use these to assess progress against school and national targets. With the help of these formal assessments they are able to update children's targets.



## St Mary's C of E Primary School Literacy Policy – Autumn 2017

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Summative assessments are based on end-of-year tests and teacher assessment using the End of Year Expectations. Children in Year 1 take a national phonics test at the end of the year. Children undertake the national SATS tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. PiRA tests are taken termly by children in Years 1 – 6 to assess Reading Comprehension. Spelling and grammar tests are taken half termly. Teachers use these to identify any gaps in learning, and then use this information to plan future lessons.

Termly moderation meetings take place with all staff to ensure consistency in teacher assessment across the school. Training on the use of writing and reading targets, linking to guided teaching, is provided in staff meetings.

### **Resources**

There are a range of resources to support the teaching of Literacy across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries, thesauruses and a variety of age appropriate texts and resources. All classes have a selection of fiction and non-fiction books.

### **Monitoring and Review**

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and quality of teaching in Literacy is the responsibility of the subject leader. This involves monitoring planning, marking and feedback and pupil interviews. The work of the subject leaders also involves supporting colleagues in their teaching, being informed about current developments in the subject and providing a strategic lead and direction for Literacy in the school. The subject leader provides the head teacher with action plans, evaluated and adapted, and reports evaluating strengths and weaknesses, indicating areas for further development.

Policy written by: Jo Leafe (Literacy Co-ordinator)

Next review due: Autumn 2018