



Stanley St Andrew's Church of England Primary School

Curriculum Policy for English

As a church school we believe that every person, every child, and every adult is unique and special with God given gifts and talents which is our job to nurture and cherish.

Aims and Objectives

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding.
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information.
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage.
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas.
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Reading

Word Reading and Comprehension

Staff are committed to equipping pupils with the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding needed to be able to read well. We understand that early phonics and early reading is vital, which is why we use Active Learn (SSP) to teach our pupils how to read from the moment they start reception until they leave at the end of Year 6. The expectations for word reading and comprehension are outlined in the English National Curriculum Programmes of Study.

Comprehension

All children from EYFS to Year 6 have access to high quality texts. We use Active Learn to teach reading comprehension. The planning supports whole class shared reading through

carefully crafted units of work. These units of work also help provide essential background curriculum knowledge for foundation subjects. They empower teachers to teach all aspects of comprehension through high-quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts. It provides a clear teaching sequence to reading sessions that explicitly teach reading skills and strategies: -

- *Is sequenced, coherent and progressive.*
- *Uses language-rich texts for vocabulary teaching*
- *Includes all elements of comprehension, taught sequentially across an academic year*
- *Has a clear focus on the skills and strategies needed to be a proficient and confident reader*
- *Uses engaging texts to promote a life-long love of reading.*
- *Includes poetry, non-fiction and fiction that enhances knowledge learning across the curriculum.*

Home Reading

Active Learn Bug Club provides a wide range of exciting resources that the children can access at home. They take home a decodable reading book matched to the sounds they know. Pupils are regularly assessed to ensure that they only read books containing the grapheme-phoneme correspondences they have been previously taught. Once children have completed the phonics scheme, they continue to read this to ensure that children are accessing reading books that reflect their growing stamina, maturity and background knowledge. All children will also have access to an additional library book to share with adults at home. The aim of this second book is not for word reading, but to give children the opportunity to develop their vocabulary and language comprehension by sharing their reading with an adult through reading at home.

Further opportunities

Alongside Active Learn, we teach daily English lessons based around a key text. At the start of every unit the children will immerse themselves in the text and analyse the text as a reader. This allows the children to focus on comprehension, vocabulary and language as well as stylistic features which are all combined to help children to build up to their writing piece. Pupils are also given the opportunity to use and apply their decoding (word reading) skills when writing.

Ongoing assessment of word reading and fluency

Children will be regularly assessed by adults both formally and informally. This will be carried out by adults listening to a child reading their decodable reading text and ensuring that they are reading at an independent level (95% accuracy). The school also carries out regular summative assessments using the assessment from Active Learn as well as Phonics Tracker to assess phonics.

Independent Reading

Children will be encouraged to:

- read daily for pleasure and enjoyment
- have the opportunity to return to familiar texts that they have read.
- pursue favourite authors or types of books.
- learn to select texts that match their interests and expand their horizons
- look, think and predict before reading
- read on and back, predict, clarify, decode unknown words, make mental pictures and use all cueing systems during reading
- elicit a strong response – e.g., curiosity, anger, excitement, laughter, empathy.
- have a strong narrative that will sustain multiple readings.
- extend their vocabulary.
- have content that is engaging and reflects children from all backgrounds and cultures.

- help children connect with who they are.
- help children to understand the lives of people whose experiences and perspectives may be different from their own.

The importance of developing a love of literature and developing healthy reading habits and behaviours is integral to the curriculum. We have awareness and knowledge of the impact of enjoyment on pupils' reading attitudes and attainment. All classes have their own Reading Area, which is well stocked with fiction and non-fiction books, a reading nook, as well as a central library area. Books are changed regularly to promote interest. Activities are planned throughout the school year to promote reading for pleasure.

Spelling

We recognise the importance of spelling, and we aim for our pupils to become fluent and effective writers; accurate spelling is a means to that end. The key to supporting our pupils to become confident spellers lies in teaching the strategies, rules and conventions systematically and explicitly, and helping pupils recognise which strategies they can use to improve their own spelling. The systematic teaching of phonics, including a balanced spelling programme of learning to spell is vital.

In line with National Curriculum Programmes of Study: Appendix 1 Spelling, by the end of year 1, pupils should be able to read a large number of different words containing the GPCs that they have learnt, whether or not they have seen these words before. Spelling, however, is a very different matter. Once pupils have learnt more than one way of spelling particular sounds, choosing the right letter or letters depends on their either having made a conscious effort to learn the words or having absorbed them less consciously through their reading.

Phonic knowledge continues to underpin spelling after key stage 1; teachers still draw pupils' attention to GPCs that do and do not fit in with what has been taught so far. Increasingly, however, pupils also need to understand the role of morphology and etymology. Although particular GPCs in root words simply have to be learnt, teachers can help pupils to understand relationships between meaning and spelling where these are relevant.

Teaching and learning of spelling.

The teaching of phonics plays a vital role in children's ability to spell so great emphasis is placed on the teaching of phonics. Phonics sessions take place daily and are tailored to the children's needs and abilities using the SSP (Active Learn).

Teaching of phonics will continue in key stage two where applicable, then children move onto learning the complex phonics code, spelling patterns, rules, morphology, and etymology.

Active Learn Spelling is a teacher-directed programme for children in Year 2 and above. Assessment is built into the activities for every unit: There are fun games and activities to motivate the children. Spellings may also be taken from the key vocabulary identified across the wider curriculum. Learning these key words (and their meaning) supports application of spelling. It is important that spelling mistakes within the children's writing are identified, and appropriate teaching/intervention is put in place. In line with our marking policy, spelling mistakes are identified and noted on teachers weekly planning. Any spellings that are frequently misspelt must be the focus of attention so that the correct spelling is learned. It is important that we do not discourage children from trying to use more adventurous vocabulary by over correcting spellings, particularly when pupils are using and applying their phonics knowledge.

Home Learning

Children need regular spelling practise at home as well as at school. Spelling practice is included in Home Learning activities.

In Early Years children are given phonemes practise and play games with at home. In Key

Stage 1 pupils are given spellings based on the GPCs they have been taught. In the rest of the school children are also given spellings to take home and practise.

Assessment

Assessment of pupil progress is on-going and forms part of the class teacher's formative assessment. Children are assessed every half term and grouped according to their phonics knowledge. In addition to this, pupils are tracked on our phonics tracking tool (Phonics Tracker). At the end of Year 1 all children take the Phonics Screening Check as part of the government statutory requirements to track accuracy. Formal summative assessments are carried out at the end of KS1 and KS2 and all children are assessed using the SSP.

Writing

Writing is taught and celebrated in a range of ways. It is taught daily across the school following the two main elements of the writing national curriculum: transcription and composition. Transcription (handwriting and spelling) is primarily taught through the school's phonics and spelling programmes. The compositional element of the English National Curriculum (including punctuation and grammar) and the application of transcriptional skills and knowledge is taught using the Read-to-Write Programme.

The teaching of writing uses high-quality literature with engaging, vocabulary-rich texts, allowing a wealth of writing opportunities as well as strong thematic links to the Science, History and Geography curriculum.

Texts are chosen carefully for each class. The children enjoy, explore and respond to the text through a variety of activities that allow the children to develop their reading and comprehension skills whilst also exploring new vocabulary and word choices. The children will also determine the purpose, audience and form of the text to develop their knowledge and understanding. The children are given lots of opportunities to collaborate and discuss their ideas, thoughts and opinions about the text.

During the planning stage, the children will gather ideas and plan their own writing. There will be opportunities to collaborate and discuss, as this is vital before children compose their own work. The class teacher will model how to plan at this stage; the children will then complete their own individual plans ready for the writing stage.

At the start of the writing stage the teacher will explicitly share the writing purpose with the children, this will provide children with a clear understanding of expectations and the intended audience. The teacher will then use the completed class plan to model and guide writing. Throughout the teacher will use a think aloud 'writerly voice' to model composition, editing and evaluating of the writing on each of the shared writes throughout the week. Teachers will also refer to the information on the working walls to ensure all elements taught over the sequence are included in the writing. After shared and guided writing the children will carry out independent writing, and are encouraged to draft, revise and edit their work whilst applying their writers' skills and knowledge.

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.

Guided Writing

The teacher or other adult works with a group on a carefully selected task appropriate to that group's needs and targets. This will focus on a particular aspect of the writing process rather than writing a complete piece.

Independent Writing

Children are given opportunities to apply their understanding of the text type in their own writing. They are encouraged to plan, draft, write, edit and assess their work, applying the skills they have learnt throughout the unit of work on that particular genre.

Dictation activities

Similar to Shared and Guided Writing approaches, pupils are given the opportunity to develop their compositional knowledge without demands on their working memory. Pupils' ideas are recorded by an adult or their peers and then dictated back to pupils, giving them an opportunity to focus solely on transcription. This means they are not thinking about spelling, handwriting and their ideas all at once.

The Teaching and Learning of Early Writing

In the 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, labels etc...

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 green and red words correctly. As children progress throughout the school, they are given many opportunities to write independently and to apply the skills they have learnt and practised in shared and guided writing. Writing is made meaningful by being planned for a specific purpose or in response to a particular experience. Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation is planned and taught as an integral part of each unit of work. Each lesson will start with a sentence accuracy activity which focuses on year group expectations. The objectives are carefully matched to the unit of work to enable them to be taught and learnt within a meaningful context.

Handwriting-

This is a key area of focus embedded within the curriculum, which has specific statutory teaching requirements for each year group. Handwriting is a means of expressing language. It is a physical way of expressing thoughts and ideas and a means of communicating with others. Neat cursive writing is promoted throughout the school. Teachers and Teaching Assistants set high standards for handwriting and presentation at all times. The journey to neat cursive handwriting begins when children can form letter correctly (usually at the end of Year 1 or the beginning of Year 2). This is then practised and developed through every year group.

Grammar and Punctuation

There is a strong focus on 'SPaG' (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) within the curriculum. Teachers will therefore give this the necessary time and attention regularly each week. Punctuation and Grammar is taught using Active Learn's sequence of lessons and then embedded throughout the curriculum. At the end of Key stage Two, national assessments take place which will include a Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar test. There

is an optional assessment for children at the end of Key Stage One.

English across the wider curriculum

Teachers are encouraged to draw meaningful links across subject disciplines. Where there are opportunities to use and apply skills and knowledge from the English curriculum, teachers take these opportunities.

Teaching pupils with SEND

English is planned to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Teachers provide learning opportunities adapted to meet the needs of all children. Work in English takes into account the targets set for individual children in their Pupil Profiles. Teachers provide help with communication and literacy through:

- Ensuring texts are matched to the needs and ability of the children.
- Daily support from Teaching Assistants who will deliver sessions to support these targets during the Literacy lesson.
- Reviews of progress, made by school SENCO, class teacher and teaching assistant, to make sure that targets are being met.
- Using visual and written materials in different formats.
- Engaging children with computers and other technological aids; children who have English as an additional language will be supported in a variety of ways to ensure that they can access the English curriculum and develop a full range of language skills.

Monitoring and Review

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated to ensure policies are updated with the latest initiatives. Evaluation will include: effectiveness, ease of implementation, identifying any amendments needed and additions required to the policy as a result of legislation changes.

Teachers should ensure that they are confident with the subject matter and inform the English Lead of their training and support needs. The English Lead should ensure that they are well-informed of current ideas and developments in Literacy by attending appropriate courses and keeping up to date with new initiatives. They should disseminate gathered information to colleagues.

Policy Review

A named member of the school's governing body is briefed to oversee the teaching of English. The English governor meets regularly with the subject leader to review progress.

This policy was reviewed in May 2026 by Jayne Middleton, Subject Lead for English.

This policy will next be reviewed in May 2029 in accordance with our policy review schedule.

We will review this policy earlier than the scheduled review date should there be any change in guidance or legislation related to this policy or if we feel that an earlier review is necessary.