

*St. Joseph and St. Bede  
R. C. Primary School*



*Literacy  
Policy*

**2018**

*Reviewed by Literacy Coordinators;  
Miss C Lowe and Miss A Burke*



## Literacy Policy

Our school is a welcoming, Catholic community, with Christ at the centre.

Through worship, we come together to listen and speak to God, to spread the Gospel message and to move forward in faith together. As 'Guardians of life and creation'; we work together with respect, understanding, honesty and joy, to develop love, tolerance and justice for all.

We strive for greatness in our learning, we develop our unique talents and each day we take pride in all our efforts and achievements.

### Principles and Rationale

At St. Joseph and St. Bede Primary School, we provide children with an enriching literacy curriculum, providing cross-curricular links where possible and ensuring that children have the skills to be successful in reading, writing, speaking and listening. We adopt a fully inclusive, mind-friendly approach to teaching and learning in Literacy where children are challenged sufficiently in a supportive environment. Assessment for Learning is used to empower children to know how to be successful, how to move forward and also, to allow teachers to adapt their planning and delivery of Literacy.

#### **Aims:**

Our children should:

- speak clearly and audibly, with confidence, in ways which take into account their listeners;
- listen with concentration to develop their understanding and enrich their empathy of others;
- use the appropriate technical vocabulary to discuss their own reading and writing and that of others;
- read and write with confidence, enthusiasm, fluency and understanding;
- be interested in books, read with enjoyment and evaluate and justify their preferences;
- use a full range of reading cues and strategies;
- understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately;
- have fluent and legible handwriting;
- know, understand and be able to write in a range of genres in fiction and poetry, and understand some of the ways in which narratives are structured through basic ideas of setting, character and plot;
- understand, use and be able to write a range of non-fiction texts;

- plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing.

### Planning our English Curriculum

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the National Curriculum as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English; reading, writing, speaking and listening.

We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long term, medium term and short term.) The new National Curriculum provides the teaching details that we teach in the long term. We use Early Years - Development matters guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage to teach our Nursery and Reception children.

Our medium term plans work on a two year rolling programme and give details of the main teaching objectives for each term. These plans define what we teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. Medium term planning will usually be carried out by individual teachers, who liaise with other teachers in their phase group ie Early Years, Years 1 & 2, Years 3 & 4 and Years 5 & 6.

Class teachers complete a weekly (short term) plan using PowerPoint for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objective for each lesson. It also identifies what groups of children are learning, support arrangements for SEN pupils and details use of Computing to support learning.

At St Joseph and St Bede, we use Assessment for Learning strategies to ensure that our curriculum is designed to meet our children's needs.

Teacher's planning in English should contain:

- clear differentiated learning challenges;
- clear differentiation;
- opportunities for speaking and listening;
- opportunities for reading;
- opportunities for writing;

In KS1 planning is based around the topic:

4 Literacy lessons;

GOLDEN WRITE sessions (can be cross curricular);

Daily Opportunities for Developing Letters and Sounds (20 mins in Class groups extra phonics if required);

Handwriting 10 mins daily;

Whole Class Reading; (Altogether Reading)

Guided and modelled Writing;

Additional Reading Sessions;

Spelling bag sessions.

In KS2 planning is based around a novel and non-fiction texts:

4 Literacy lessons;

One GOLDEN WRITE session;

Daily Grammar activities;

Daily opportunities for developing spelling (10-15 mins);

Whole Class Reading; (Altogether Reading)

Guided and modelled writing sessions;

Handwriting/spelling bags 10 mins daily;

Phonics sessions if required;

**Kagan co-operative learning - Mind Friendly and Active Learning**

We know that children learn best when they are engaged and active participants in their learning. Mind-friendly learning gives teachers opportunities to challenge children's thinking in a non-threatening way, whilst embedding learning.

We recognise that English lessons should not be dominated by teacher talk. Children can be active using whiteboards, talking partners, mind maps, iPads, storyboards and other alternative methods of recording.

### **Solo Think Time**

Children should be given thinking time before answers are expected, Kagan opportunities to share ideas with a partner and then a group before feeding back to the class. This reinforces learning and develops speaking and listening skills.

### **VAK**

Opportunities should be created in English teaching for children to experience visual, audio and kinaesthetic learning. Allowing children to learn in different ways improves understanding, enjoyment and retention of what is being taught.

### **Time for Reflection - Self evaluation**

It is paramount that children are given time to reflect on their learning at the end of every lesson. Rather than being a time to show examples of good work, children should be given a range of ways to reflect on their learning journey. This will help consolidate learning and highlight misconceptions. Reflection time should involve the whole class through a variety of activities. Children are required to colour a box next to the L.C to show how they have felt about the work, (Red, Amber, Green). Children also place their books into a Red, Amber, Green pile so that the TA can take the children for a hot spotting session that afternoon to go through any misconceptions.

## Record Keeping and Assessment

At St Joseph and St. Bede Primary School we believe that formative assessment is fundamental to the success of our learning and teaching strategies. We want our children to be active participants in their assessment and to value the next steps in their learning. FW (further work) comments are used where the children have to go back and 'polish it'.

Target Tracker objectives are evaluated and marked off when a child has demonstrated that objective independently and on more than one occasion.

## Assessment for Learning

Assessment for Learning should be an integral part of all literacy teaching. Every lesson should have three clear differentiated learning challenges. Where possible, children should be involved in writing success criteria and explaining their choices. Children should routinely refer to the criteria throughout the lesson and at the end when opportunities for both self and peer assessment should be built in. The children should be able to identify strengths and ways forward in order to become more independent learners.

All self and peer assessment must then be carefully observed by the teacher and future teaching and learning adapted accordingly.

Whole class feedback can be given and evidence kept by the teacher. Evidence of children's editing will be seen in green pen.

## Literacy Targets

Children have targets in their English and golden writing books and are encouraged to tick these off when the work has been marked. These are displayed in the children's books. Teachers should refer children to their targets throughout the term and focus on them in guided reading and extended writing sessions in particular.

## Writing Assessments

Children's writing is formally assessed half termly and progress tracked. However Target Tracker must be used regularly to update records from the child's Golden Write session. Target Tracker is used and ways forward identified relating to this. The writing assessment itself should take the format of a normal extended writing and short writing session. A range of genres should be assessed throughout the year. Half Termly data is entered into Target Tracker.

## Reading Assessments

Reading is teacher assessed half termly. Each term, NFER/SATs/Miscue analysis/Running Records are completed. Children should also be miscued/running record completed to check they are on the correct reading book for their level.

- Teachers are continually formatively assessing children's learning through open and closed questioning, observation and marking their work;
- On entry to Nursery children are assessed by the class teacher and teaching assistant through the Development Matters Ages and Stages;
- Ongoing assessment of reading and writing against the Development Matters Ages and Stages using Tapestry, which enables parents to take an active part in their child's assessment.
- Half termly phonological assessments (phonics tracker);
- Half termly high frequency reading and spelling assessments;
- Year 1 phonics test - Involves decoding of 40 words;
- Year 2 children are assessed at the end of the year by SATs;
- Years 1, 3, 4 and 5 children are assessed using the NFER-for the Year group Stages.
- Year 6 children are assessed by the end of year KS2 SATs;
- A piece of every child's independent writing is levelled by the class teacher each half term, using an equal mix of fiction and non-fiction writing. (Target Tracker);
- Children are also responsible for self assessment of their own learning through various means, for example, thumbs up or down, learning partners and checking their work against success criteria (marking ladders)
- Children on the SEND register are assessed by the class teacher and new targets are set in the way of a Provision Map.

### Promoting Reading

We aim for our children to be enthusiastic and confident readers.

We use a range of strategies to promote reading at St Joseph and St. Bede Primary School. We aim to provide children with opportunities to interact with reading alone, at home, with partners and in group and partner situations. (Reading partners to support less confident children)

### Whole Class Reading (Altogether Reading)

Whole class reading (Altogether Reading) should take place each week with all children experiencing quality reading in each keystage. (SEND children should have access to a whole

class reading session and to daily individual reading to an adult whenever possible. This could be three times to a teacher and twice to a TA)

Whole class reading should not be viewed as an opportunity to purely hear children read aloud. Children should be taught how to become active readers of a text and develop inference and deduction skills, prediction skills, empathy etc through teacher lead group discussion. 'Scoop it up' and 'Echo it back' should be used.

A wide range of texts should be provided for children - narrative, information books, poetry, menus, leaflets, newspapers etc. Pictures and songs and film clips should also be used.

Reading targets should be taught and assessed through whole class reading through questioning and observation.

Texts for whole class reading should be used a minimum of three times, to ensure familiarity.

Reading assessments should be inputted into Target Tracker half termly.

### **Individual Reading Home/School Diaries.**

Each child has a home/school diary and these are returned to school each day. A record is kept of the book given and children are encouraged to read at home each evening. Each teacher keeps a weekly overview sheet. Reading books are organised into book bands and the use of miscue analysis enables teachers to ensure that each child is reading a text at the appropriate level.

Minimum number of miscues/running record;

- Higher ability 2/3 times per year.
- Middle ability 3 times per year.
- Lower ability every half term.

### **Reading Champions.**

Children who read the most at home across the week have the opportunity to come to school in their own clothes on a Friday. They wear the reading champion medal all day.

### **Reading within Lessons**

During both literacy lessons and in other subjects, children should be given stimulating texts in a variety of formats including websites, electronic books. They should understand the purpose of their reading and use high quality texts to identify the features of different genres. It is essential that we

ensure that our children have the opportunity to explore a breadth and depth of literature.

It is absolutely essential that we promote high quality reading skills in all aspects of our curriculum.

### School Library

Children in nursery take home a picture book of their choice to share with an adult and this can be changed when returned

Children in the Reception, KS1 & KS2 have a weekly timetabled session to visit the library, when they choose from a wide range of books. They take the book home on their allocated day and bring it back to school the following week to choose a different one.

The school library in the main building is under an electronic system. It is open for children and their parents on a Wednesday until 4:30pm.

### Promoting Writing

Children should be given the skills to write for a range of purposes and audiences.

We use a range of strategies to promote high quality writing at St Joseph and St. Bede Primary School. We believe that children should view writing as an effective form of communication and develop the skills that enable them to express themselves effectively. Writing is developed in Literacy lessons and across the whole curriculum.

Writing is celebrated and promoted through the use of class blogs and Twitter.

Our key message is that the writing skills that have been learnt and developed, should be evident in all pieces of writing, in all areas of the curriculum.

### Adapting the Literacy Curriculum

At St Joseph and St Bede Primary School, we adapt the units of work in the Literacy Framework to develop units of work with a writing focus. Where possible, we aim to develop units that integrate the skills and focus of our integrated curriculum topics. All classes plan for literacy lessons and a longer writing session

### Writing

Writing is closely linked to reading - the two activities reinforce each other. It is important that children learn to write independently from an early age and think of themselves as 'writers' as soon as they begin school.

Children become competent writers through having:

- 1) Talk and discussion- in the form of class, group & partner discussions before writing.
- 2) Clear expectations for written outcomes- the children know what they are going to be writing before they start.
- 3) Links between reading and writing- the children have read and analysed examples of the text type that they are going to be producing themselves before they start to write. Ideally the first part of a unit should be spent reading.
- 4) Teacher modelling and demonstration- children need to see what the writing process looks like before they can do it themselves. As a teacher, you may be the only person they see writing.
- 5) Opportunities to apply learning- giving children lots of opportunities to practice their writing skills. Develop cross-curricular links and chances to write for real purposes and audiences.

Each week there should be an opportunity for extended writing (a Golden Write), which will be based on and will develop further skills covered in the literacy lesson and which will include both fiction and non-fiction in order to facilitate children's ability to develop as independent writers.

Children should be made clear about the audience and purpose of their writing and should be writing approximately one side of A4 from Year 2 up. The teacher should leave children to work independently but give time reminders and hints for things to check in their work, referring to the success criteria.

In all lessons, but particularly in extended writing, children should be given opportunities to practise the writing voice. When they become more experienced writers, they should also be involved in setting the success criteria for their own writing and checking they have met the criteria.

### **Rainbow Writing**

The children follow a Rainbow Writing approach from Rec-Year 6. This enables children to rehearse their writing and has actions for all the components necessary.

### **Grammar Actions**

Noun- tap head

Adjective - jazz hands

Verb - running motion

Adverb - Running motion with jazz hands

Preposition - Point as if on/under

Pronoun - point to self and away

### Colours

Red is to be used for capital letters and full stops.

Green is to be used for conjunctions.

### Handwriting

Children are taught fully cursive handwriting from Reception. It needs to be taught and practised regularly to ensure standards in presentation are not lost. This can be done through a variety of kinaesthetic ways - skywriting; sand trays; different pens/pencils/paints etc. In KS1 handwriting practice is daily for 10 minutes.

Phonic blends should be taught joined so children see them as building blocks of words.

Please refer to the separate policy for handwriting for further advice.

There should be high expectations of handwriting in all subjects and not just English.

Teachers & TAs must model cursive handwriting when writing in children's books and on the board.

### Developing Speaking and Listening Skills

Give children many varied opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills through debate, conversation, drama and role play, group discussion, reporting, explaining, through developing speaking and listening skills in most lessons.

Speaking and listening are our children's fundamental literacy skills. They are extremely important as they;

- Ensure that our children can communicate;
- Allow our children to access learning and the curriculum;
- Essential in order to develop children's creativity and problem solving skills.

Children should have opportunities in a range of group dynamics for talk for writing. This gives children chances to practise ideas and to articulate their thoughts clearly.

Group/paired discussion also supports less confident children creating a non-threatening environment. Children should learn debating skills to get their point of view across in all subjects.

Drama and role play should be incorporated into planning, giving children the opportunity to get into role; empathise with characters; understand situations. It is a powerful tool to stimulate less enthusiastic writers, providing a hook for their learning.

Digital voice recorders, iPads and microphones are invaluable for children to self-assess and improve their work.

Audio books are an excellent way to develop listening skills and it is intended that these resources will be built up over the coming year. At the moment listening centres are shared between classes.

Teachers and teaching assistants should model excellent speaking and listening skills.

## Word Building and Spelling

### **Nursery**

Children experience all seven aspects of Phase 1 'Letters and Sounds'. Phase 1 includes sound discrimination, rhythm, rhyme, alliteration and early oral blending and segmenting. They begin to look at graphemes that correspond with the sounds they are hearing.

In Reception, they are prepared to begin Phase 2 letters and Sounds for up to six weeks with continuing daily assessments to check for learning and to inform future planning. They are taught a daily 20 minutes phonic lesson. Time is then spent ensuring children are confident in blending and segmenting orally and using written sounds from Phase 2. In Phase 3 children are taught more graphemes. Children continue to practice CVC blending and segmenting and apply this knowledge to reading and spelling simple two syllable words and captions. They are taught and learn letter names and learn to read and begin to spell some more tricky words. Phase 4 is taught for up to six weeks and as with previous phases the children are continually assessed to check for learning. The children learn to read and spell decodable high frequency words.

### **Keystage 1**

High frequency words should be taught at the appropriate level for individual children.

We set children for phonics and spelling according to their ability. Children take regular phonics tests using Phonics Tracker to ensure that phonic gaps can be closed. Phonics is planned and delivered using the Letters and Sounds material and Spelling is taught following the National Curriculum.

Every child in reception and KSI receives 20 minutes phonics/spelling 5 days a week.

We teach phonics and spelling using a range of strategies:

- A structured phonics and spelling programme.
- Using a variety of approaches - VAK.
- A quick pace and moving the children on quickly.
- Regular spelling homework based on their focus sounds/spellings.
- Encouraging our children to 'have a go'.
- Children are organised into the correct Phase group.

## Key Stage 2

Phonics/spelling should be taught in year 3 class to continue the good practice in key stage 1 and support those on Provision Maps.

Children who are identified to have spelling weaknesses should be targeted and appropriate intervention be implemented to raise standards.

Children are to be taught using the spelling guidance from the New National Curriculum. When children are below National Curriculum Level 2 within, reading & phonics should be used to teach the earlier stages of spelling. The children are taught in class for ten to fifteen minutes each day. The class is divided into 2/3 groups according to broad spelling ability. The teacher alternates the groups she teaches and those who complete the practice and assessment activities. Children below this level should be following phonics work as planned by the teacher with a T.A.

Children should work with a partner and say the letter names to rehearse the spellings. They can have more fun learning and can help each other as well. When children are discussing the words they are learning to spell, it is more likely they will remember them.

Assessment is integral to the programme. Each unit of work starts with teaching activities and follows with partner and individual assessment and practice activities.

As the programme progresses, children learn that there are essentially three groups of words;

1. Words they know they can spell.
2. Words they can often spell, but sometimes misspell when they are engrossed in writing; these are the words that children continue to practise. These words are collected in their spelling logbook.
3. Unusual and adventurous words they have a go at spelling phonetically "legally" while writing, which is corrected, lightly, by the teacher when marking.

### **Homework & Marking**

Spelling homework should be sent out weekly and should include a spelling pattern which the children are encouraged to learn in a variety of ways until they find a way most useful to them. See spelling strategies appendix. Homework should be engaging and linked to class work. Teachers should refer to the appropriate lists for each group from the National curriculum.

Spelling Shed can be used to set spelling homework.

A maximum of 3 spelling mistakes should be highlighted in books for children to correct and, where possible, linked to high frequency words or phonics/spelling objectives covered in class. Children should complete corrections 3 times and make plausible attempts before asking for help.

Independent spelling strategies including use of dictionaries are to be encouraged.

Children should not look in a dictionary while writing as this stops the flow of writing and ideas.

### **Additional Needs Provision**

All learners are entitled to a broad, balanced literacy curriculum. This should be delivered at the appropriate level regardless of ability, gender, religion, race, social circumstances or first language.

Children should work in groups organised according to their ability in particular areas (reading, writing, phonics, drama, listening etc).

Children with additional needs should be supported accordingly.

All staff should refer to the SENDCO for further advice if required. No child should be discriminated access to the curriculum because of any impairment or disability. We are fully committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in this school. With careful planning and consideration most issues can be addressed. Please consult the head teacher, the assistant head teachers or the SENDCO if further support is required

Children may benefit from having a provision map for reading, writing, spelling or speaking and listening if they are making little or no progress; they are off track to meet predicted levels; they have a significantly low spelling or reading age; they have a specific learning difficulty e.g. dyslexia; they have English as an additional language.

### English SEN Interventions

- F.F.T. (Y1)
- **Further Literacy Support (Y5)**
- Reading partners 1:1 (children and adults)(child and child)
- Look say Cover Write Check - Key words spelling
- Additional phonics,(planned by teachers for groups)
- Additional reading
- Accelerread/Accelerwrite
- Memory Magic
- Nessy
- Dyslexia Quest
- Spelling bags
- Precision Teaching
- Rainbow Writing
- PAT programme

It is dependent on TA support, resources and pupil needs as to whether all or some of these interventions are run.

### Computing and Visual Literacy

Computing is an excellent way to inspire reluctant readers and writers. Use of the internet, video editing, voice recorders, multimedia presentations, animation, story board software stimulate literacy and produce exciting finished products.

Word processing is an important skill as it allows children to edit and improve their work without having to cross out or start again. It also allows children to up level prepared pieces of writing in a quick and motivating way.

Interactive white boards should be used to model and stimulate writing. Interesting images can be used as an inspiring way to get children thinking creatively, talking creatively and ultimately writing creatively. Children should be taught how to ask and answer questions about an image and to be confident in expressing their interpretations and ideas.

Film is also an extremely effective way to inspire writers. BFI short films and resources can be used as well as short films from the internet. Inference and deduction skills can be developed through planned discussion without the children having to access text.

## Appendix 1

## Reading Journal Activities

- Draw one of the characters and make up another episode/adventure for them.
- Draw a poster to persuade someone to buy your book in a book auction.
- Make up a play about your favourite part of the story.
- Write a book review- The funniest part of... Is when...  
The sad thing about this story is...  
I did not enjoy the part where... I could not stop laughing at...
- If I had to buy a present for the main character, it would be..., because....
- Make a beautiful bookmark advertising your book or an author or a series of books.
- Make a strip of cartoons, retell part of the story in cartoon form.
- Design a book cover, which will make others want to read the story.
- Make a family tree of characters in the story.
- Write a summary of the main points/ events in sequence.
- Write a list of places where most of the action takes place.
- Make a timeline of events from your book.
- Find other books dealing with the same theme- list them.
- Write a list of words to describe a character who was very brave.
- Write a list of characters with a thumbnail sketch for each.
- Draw a picture of the most important event in your book.
- Write a newspaper report about your book.
- Write a short story about the book you have just read, in pencil. Leave the first two sentences as they are, but rub out every 10<sup>th</sup> word in all other sentences. Now ask another person to see if they can find words to fill in the gaps.
- Write the title of you book. Draw a picture of the most important person in your book. Now draw a picture of that person 10 years later and write about the changes.

- Write down the name of one person from your book. Draw a picture of a pet that person would like.
- Draw a picture of a friend for the person in your story. Think about the kind of person that friend would have to be and write some notes.
- Write a conversation between two of the characters from your book.
- Design a board game based on your book. Use hazards/moves based on incidents/ events in the book.
- Write a different ending for your story.
- Make a little character fact book to go inside your reading journal.
- Make up a quiz about your book.
- Make up a poem using the same theme as the book you have been reading.
- Write about your own opinion of an issue raised in the book- e.g. bullying, friendships etc.
- Write a letter to a character from the book or the author.
- Write your own story using ideas from the book you have just read.