



**St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School**

# **English Policy**

## **St Cuthbert's Mission Statement**

God made us all unique  
To learn, live and grow  
To show care, concern and friendship  
To be the best we can  
Showing Christ's love in all we do.

# English Policy

## 1 Aims and objectives

**1.1** The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, so using language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. It enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

**1.2** The aims of English are:

- to enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners;
- to encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- to enable children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- to develop children's abilities to reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used;
- to enable children to evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama activities;
- to develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge;
- to encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers through contact with challenging and lengthy texts;
- to help children enjoy writing and recognise its value;
- to enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction;
- to increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.

## 2 Teaching and learning style

**2.1** At St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary **School** we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in English. We do this through a daily lesson that has a high proportion of whole-class and group teaching. During these lessons children experience a whole-class shared reading or writing activity, a whole-class focused word or sentence activity, a guided group or independent activity and a whole-class session to review progress and learning. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and use a range of resources such as dictionaries, thesauruses and phonic paddles to support their work. Children use ICT in English lessons where it enhances their learning, as in drafting their work and using multimedia to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning. Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

- 2.2** There are children of differing ability in all classes at St Cuthbert's. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons we do it through differentiated group work, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use classroom teaching assistants to support some children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

### **3 English curriculum planning**

- 3.1** 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.
- 3.2** We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The National Curriculum and our yearly Step Grids detail the objectives we teach in the long-term. Our yearly Curriculum Maps identify the topics in English that we teach to each year and in each year group.
- 3.3** Our medium-term plans, which we also base on the Step Grids, 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. The English subject leader is responsible for keeping and reviewing these plans.
- 3.4** Class teachers complete a unit (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives for each lesson and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of what each group of children will be learning. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, and the class teacher and subject leader often discuss them on an informal basis.

### **4 The Foundation Stage**

- 4.1** We teach English in Early Years as an integral part of the school's work. The format for the daily lesson is similar to that used in the rest of the school following a similar structure and format but lessons are shorter and, of course, age appropriate. We relate the English aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their range of vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore, enjoy, learn about, and use words and text in a range of situations.

### **5 Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas**

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

## **5.2 Mathematics**

English contributes significantly to the teaching of mathematics in our school. Children in the Foundation Stage develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these areas with adults and other children. Children in Key Stage 1 meet stories and rhymes that rely on counting and sequencing. Children in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to read and interpret problems in order to identify the mathematics involved. They explain and present their work to others during plenary sessions and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language.

## **5.3 Information and communication technology (ICT)**

The use of ICT enables children to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. Younger children use ICT as a source of information and as a way of enabling them to present their completed work effectively. Older children use the Internet when searching for information about a different part of the world, or when using desktop publishing to design a class newspaper. Children use the planning and proofing tools in a word processor when checking their draft work. We encourage all children to use ICT as a resource for learning, whenever they feel it is appropriate.

## **5.4 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship**

English contributes to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship. We encourage younger children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. In their science work they talk about things that improve their health and about rules for keeping them safe around the school. Older children research and debate topical problems and events. They discuss lifestyle choices and meet and talk with many visitors who work within the school community. Planned activities within the classroom encourage children to work together and respect each other's views.

## **5.5 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

The teaching of English develops skills through which our children can give critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their work. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts brings them into contact with their own literary heritage and texts from other cultures. The organisation of lessons allows children to work together and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and results.

# **6 Teaching English to children with special educational needs**

**6.1** At our school we teach English to all children, whatever their ability. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our English teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum and our Step Grids allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against their expected outcomes.

**6.2** 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, differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

**6.3** Intervention and assessments will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special educational needs. The IEP may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to English.

**6.4** We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning English. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a theatre trip, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

**6.5** Teachers provide help with communication and literacy through:

- using texts that children can read and understand;
- using visual and written materials in different formats;
- using ICT, other technological aids and taped materials;
- using alternative communication, such as signs and symbols;
- using translators and amanuenses.

## **7 Assessment and recording**

**7.1** Teachers assess children's work in English in three phases. The short-term assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson help teachers to adjust their daily plans. Teachers match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. They use medium-term assessments to measure progress against the key objectives, and to help them plan for the next unit of work. They use a Step Grid which includes all of the English objectives for the year as the recording format for this. Children's achievements against the Step Grids are collated, analysed and appropriate targets and interventions set. Teachers make long-term assessments towards the end of the school year, and they use these to assess progress against school and national targets. With the help of these long-term assessments, teachers are able to set targets for the next school year and summarise the progress of each child before discussing it with the child's parents. The next teacher also uses these long-term assessments as the basis for planning work for the new school year. These long-term assessments are made using end-of-year tests and teacher assessments. Children undertake the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, plus the optional national tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. Teachers also make annual assessments of children's progress using the age related expectations of the National Curriculum as detailed on our Step Grids.

**7.2** The subject leader keeps children's English books at the end of each year which typifies children's achievements at each Step in each year group. This demonstrates what the expected standard of achievement is in English in each year of the school. Teachers meet regularly to review and moderate work against: the national exemplification material produced by the DfE.

## **8 Resources**

**8.1** There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and a range of age-appropriate small apparatus. Each classroom has a speaking and listening area with a tape recorder and a range of audio texts. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. Children have access to the Internet through their classroom computer. Access to the Internet is also available in the library area. Audio-visual aids are also available from the central storage area. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research.

## **9 Monitoring and review**

- 9.1** Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English subject leader and the leadership team. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The English subject leader produces a written action plan at the beginning of each academic year, outlining the main areas for development in English to ensure high standards are maintained and that the quality of teaching and learn, The leader has specially-allocated regular management time in order to enable him/her to review samples of the children's work and undertake lesson observations of English teaching across the school. The named governor responsible for the Curriculum and Teaching and Learning meets regularly with the subject leader in order to review progress.

This policy will be reviewed as a when necessary.