



Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School, Witney

English and Literacy Policy

Introduction

In this document Literacy includes the skills and knowledge of reading and writing; English includes these, and additionally, speaking, listening and comprehension skills.

Aims

We aim for our children:-

- to speak, listen, read and write with confidence, fluency, accuracy and understanding;
- to develop language skills in all curriculum areas;
- to recognise the importance of their language experience at home and in the wider community;
- to learn how to craft language for particular effects, through an understanding of how texts are created in relation to genre, purpose and audience;
- to practise using language in performance and real life situations such as Mass and Assembly presentations, plays, discussions and debates;
- to have the opportunity to experience a theatrical presentation, a story teller session, an author's visit or similar.

Teaching and Learning

The planning of the curriculum takes into account the following statements, which integrate the requirements of the revised National Curriculum for English and the National Literacy Strategy.

In speaking and listening we aim for our children:-

- to speak confidently, clearly and audibly for different purposes in a wide range of contexts.
- to listen with concentration to a wide range of spoken language in a variety of contexts such as teaching sessions, live talks by other adults, television, CD and film.
- to participate in pupil-led discussion, debate, drama and individual presentations, contributing appropriately.
- to communicate independently, through spoken language, their own views and opinions, and to be able to respond imaginatively and expressively to those of others.

How we teach

Speaking and Listening is taught through the NLS objectives and through regular classroom and whole school activities. These range from listening to and discussing stories, telling news and talking about favourite toys (in FS/KS1) to presenting reasoned argument in debate, delivering reports of games matches and commenting lucidly and critically on literary texts (in KS2).



Drama is an important way of developing language. In our curriculum we aim for pupils to:-

- create, adapt and sustain different roles individually and in groups;
- explore the meaning of texts, including characters, actions, themes, emotions and ideas;
- participate in spoken performances, make presentations at Assemblies and Masses;
- evaluate their own and others' performances.

Reading

We aim for children:-

- to enjoy reading as a pleasurable activity and to recognise its practical value;
- to be able to read confidently a wide range of texts, including books newspapers and other media texts, informational texts and ICT texts;
- to have access to texts from different cultures and traditions;
- to be able to understand layers of meaning and make a critical response to what they read and to be able to discriminate between qualities of text;
- to be able to choose appropriate reading material for themselves;
- to research information in written form for a variety of purposes across the curriculum.

How we teach

Reading is taught through the NLS objectives appropriate to each year group. Methods include:

- shared reading – where the reading of a text (often in large format) is led by the teacher and shared by the whole class. During this reading the teacher demonstrates strategies and skills of decoding print and understanding meaning.
- guided reading – when children work in reading ability groups, reading independently but supervised and led in discussion by the teacher.
- individual reading - children are taught in 1:1 reading sessions with their teacher and/or classroom assistant until such time as they are judged to be confident independently. This time will vary according to the children's ability and achievement.
- independent reading – all children are expected to take home reading books, in order to practise their skills and to reinforce the links between school and home.

Additional strategies: Extended, twice-weekly sessions with a member of the Volunteer Readers organisation are arranged for some KS2 children who need support in their reading. Initiatives such as Early and Additional Literacy Support, Booster groups and Revision Club (Year 6) are offered as and when staff judge appropriate.



Writing

We aim for children:-

- to see writing both as an enjoyable activity and an essential means of communication in real life;
- to be able to write accurately and fluently, understanding how to use the main rules and conventions of grammatical English;
- to write for a range of purposes and to understand that styles of writing vary according to purpose and audience and to adopt the appropriate genre.
- to compose written pieces on paper, whiteboards and computer screen, using different formats and layouts to present work.
- to be able to criticise constructively their own and others' work, to edit and redraft and complete a piece of work following a brief and/or plan.

How we teach

Writing is taught through the NLS objectives to each year group. The links between reading and writing are explored in Literacy lessons. Different genres of writing are studied in the texts chosen for Shared and Guided Reading sessions, then their format and style discussed and exemplified in the following writing activities:

- modelled writing – when the teacher composes a text, making explicit the structure and grammatical features of a particular genre.
- shared writing – the whole class contributes suggestions for a piece of writing, e.g. sentences, phrases, punctuation, while the teacher selects the most appropriate and scribes on the board.
- guided writing – the children, in ability groups and led by a teacher, compose together sections of a text, continue independently and then collaboratively discuss and constructively criticize their writing.
- independent writing – when children apply skills learned in the previous sessions outlined above, working on their own.

Opportunities for cross-curricular writing are identified, when texts relating to e.g. the focus in History or Geography may be studied in the Literacy Hour and pieces of writing of a similar genre produced by the children.

Language Study

We aim for the children:-

- to understand the grammatical features of written, standard English in a variety of contexts;
- to use appropriate punctuation accurately and confidently;
- to spell accurately most of the words they are likely to use in writing and identify reasons for their mis-spellings;
- to recognise patterns and conventions in spelling and, in Junior classes, roots of word;.
- to proof read to check spellings and where necessary to use dictionaries, thesauruses and word books.



How we teach

Grammar is taught through the sentence level objectives and spelling through the word level objectives of the NLS. Strategies include:-

- explicit teaching of different parts of language, such as sentence structure, use of the comma, passive verbs, incorporating use of Grammar for Writing, and contained in discrete sessions in the Literacy Hour;
- application of these techniques in writing sessions, where the genre of text contains examples of the relevant aspects of grammar;
- Spelling lessons based, in the Infant department, on Progression in Phonics, linking sounds to written forms, taught as discrete sessions;
- Use of the KS2 Spelling Bank to group and link words with similar spelling patterns and conventions.
- From the end of Year 1, spellings are sent home weekly to be learned for tests.

ICT

ICT is an additional means of developing language use and is used to support pupil learning in the following ways;

- to use word processing techniques to compose directly on screen;
- to use programs such as Clicker 4 to develop writing skills;
- to use spell checks confidently ,and respond to grammar prompts on screen.
- to select appropriate layouts and fonts for the genre in which they are writing.
- to use computers to read for information, accessing, for example, the Internet and CD-ROMs.
- to use, where needed, Word Shark and Spelling Force programs.

(For further details, see separate ICT policy)

Assessment, Record Keeping and Reporting

Informal assessment is carried out throughout the school year and fed back to children via marking (see separate policy) and strategies involved in the Assessment for Learning initiative, which our school follows.

Assessment of reading, writing and spelling takes place at the end of every year, with Years 2 and 6 taking SATs tests and Years 3,4,and 5 the optional QCA SATs.

Records of reading progress are kept in a child's individual reading diary, in the teachers' individual reading records and in reading age scores and age standardised scores in year end assessments.

Records of writing progress are kept in levelled pieces of written work, stored in a pupil's individual record file, and carried out in the second and fourth term of each year. They are also kept in the formal year end assessment results.

Records of spelling achievement are kept in a teacher's spelling log where appropriate, and in the results of the year end assessments.



Reporting is carried out via year end written reports to parents, which include statements on speaking, listening, reading and writing (including spelling and handwriting). Guidelines for Next Steps are also included. Information about a child's progress is given to parents at parent/teacher meetings, formally offered twice a year.

Equal Opportunities

We aim to ensure that full and effective participation and progression of all pupils in English and Literacy is enabled by:-

- acknowledging and valuing the variety of different experiences, interests, social and cultural backgrounds, race, sex, faith and ability of children and using differences constructively to raise confidence and self-esteem;
- ensuring access to learning at an individual level, through differentiated teaching and learning strategies;
- providing texts from a range of cultures which are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- providing support to children with language and literacy difficulties e.g. large print texts, taped materials, ICT programs and extra time during SATs

(See also our Equal opportunities policy)

Special Educational Needs

Children of all abilities are valued and their learning promoted. In brief, in relation to English and Literacy, the strategies we adopt to support children where appropriate include:

- the inclusion on a child's Individual Education Plan specific and achievable targets relating to this curriculum area.
- teaching in small groups, within and outside the classroom, by the SenCo or STA.
- individual or group spellings and specific reading resources.
- provision, when appropriate, of support in terms of initiatives such as Early Literacy, Additional and Further Literacy Support for 'catch up' teaching; Booster groups, Revision Clubs and Easter School for Year 6 children.
- Volunteer Reader sessions, on a 1:1 basis.

(See also our Special Needs policy)

More able children

Teachers in our school plan carefully to meet the learning needs of those children who have been identified as more able in English. Various strategies are employed to enable these children to reach their full potential. (See our Policy for more able children)

Library

The library contains a selection of fiction and non-fiction books and a computer linked to the Internet for research. It is timetabled for use by all classes. Children use the non-fiction library resources to research topics in a variety of curriculum areas. They are also encouraged to take out books for their own pleasure or research.



Signed by the Chair of Governors.....

Signed by the Headteacher.....

Date.....Review date.....