

# POLICY FOR LITERACY



ST FRANCIS RC PRIMARY

2023-2024

St Francis Catholic Primary School, SE15 1RQ

## **Vision and Mission Statement and Gospel Values**

### **Our Vision**

*Providing every child with the tools to choose their path to success.*

### **Our Mission**

In St Francis children succeed because:

- ✓ We are an outward looking Catholic Primary school, which welcomes all children from the surrounding area. We work together to nurture our pupils, helping them to become resilient and inspired learners, who will become responsible global citizens of the future.
- ✓ We cultivate our pupils through our broad and diverse curriculum and loving Catholic Parish community
- ✓ We provide a welcoming, safe and supportive environment that helps children feel respected, confident and motivated to achieve their goals.
- ✓ We also foster a spiritual and moral view of life that provides children with a sense of self-worth and a strong Catholic ethos

### **Our Gospel Values**

*Love*

*Honesty*

*Courage*

*Tolerance*

*Justice*

### **Jeremiah 29:11**

“I alone know the plans I have for you, plans to bring you prosperity and not disaster, plans to bring about the future you hope for”



## **Policy for Literacy**

### **Introduction**

At St Francis School we use a thematic approach to the teaching of primary English that places children's literature at its core. As a whole-school approach, children explore high quality literary texts and experience significant authors as they move through the school. Our children explore a wide range of Poetry, Fiction and Non-Fiction texts.

We provide a complete coverage of all National Curriculum expectations for writing composition, reading comprehension, grammar, punctuation and vocabulary, as well as coverage of spelling and phonics. All plans lead to purposeful application within a wide variety of written outcomes.

We intend that our pupils develop their skills in Language and Literacy, so they continue to improve their ability to:

- Communicate effectively in speech so they can talk appropriately with confidence to different audiences
- Listen attentively with understanding
- Express themselves clearly in writing using appropriate spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Write in ways appropriate for an intended audience and/or for the intended purpose
- Produce well-presented work using clear, cursive handwriting and using age appropriate standards of computing
- Through embedded practices, develop their abilities to draft, edit and publish work
- Develop reading skills so that they become confident readers and be able to use these skills to infer and deduce
- Develop reading skills so that they can analyse and extract meaning from increasingly challenging texts
- Develop skills to comment on authors word choice and the effect that those words have on a reader
- To link and identify themes shared throughout texts and make connections from these books to their own experiences
- To develop a passion and pleasure for reading

### **Aims and Objectives**

- To provide children with the opportunity to read, write and speak with confidence, fluency and understanding
- To develop children's key reading skills, assess and plan appropriate next steps using the National Curriculum's statutory and non-statutory requirements and the STAR document
- To develop children's key writing skills, assess and plan appropriate next steps using the National Curriculum's statutory and non-statutory requirements and the STAR document
- To provide opportunities for the development of speaking and listening skills through all areas of learning, through creative and language rich activities

- To give children an environment which is safe and secure and which provides encouragement for the development of all aspects of Literacy
- To ensure there is equality of access and opportunity for all children to develop their Literacy skills
- To seek to ensure that all children achieve their full potential in all aspects of Literacy as they move through each phase
- To continually challenge and inspire all pupils

### **Teaching and Learning**

Teachers must work together to plan, deliver and evaluate the teaching of Literacy, to ensure that the teaching is balanced, creative and engaging. The planning must include, higher order questions, open and closed questioning, alongside time for Think, Pair, Share, group discussions and Modelled tasks by teachers.

Across the year group, teacher will teach the same lessons with the same experiences, without exception. All sessions must include differentiation – AA (More Able), A (Average), BA (Below Average), SEN (Special Educational Needs) and assessment for learning (AFL). All teachers will also be expected to plan for the teaching of handwriting and extended writing, Guided reading, phonic and spelling.

Teachers will listen and respond to children in a sensitive and supporting manner, discussing and evaluating children's successes. Plans and sequences provided (Literary Leaves, Spelling Seeds, Literary Curriculum writing sequences) must be used, but maybe adapted. Yearly overviews are available and any changes that a teacher wishes to make to this overview, must be discussed with the Literacy Lead first. We use a Cross-Curricular approach; teachers will provide opportunities for developing Literacy skills across the curriculum.

A range of teaching strategies will be used including:

- Demonstration / modelling
- Explanation
- Questioning
- Talk for writing
- Role play and use of props
- Drafting and editing
- Analysing texts
- Publishing
- Discussion
- Consolidation
- Evaluation
- Reading for meaning in/out of context

Planning will ensure that in addition to the requirements of the Literacy curriculum, there are frequent and regular opportunities for:

- Extended writing – which will be based on and will develop further skills covered in the Literacy Lessons (both Fiction and Non-Fiction) in order to facilitate children's ability to develop as independent writers.
- Extra reading activities – use of school library and the opportunity to change home/school reading books
- Home Reading journal – being accessed and used weekly
- Handwriting development
- Spelling - using RWI Spelling and Spelling Seeds within sequences as appropriate
- Spelling test to be carried out weekly
- RWI Phonics - taught weekly and assessed every 8 weeks

## **Guided Reading**

Guided Reading Lessons are taught daily (45 minutes) in from Year 2-6. Objectives for these focused sessions are taken from the STAR Reading performance indicators.

From Years 2-6 we use the Literary Leaves, which are book-based comprehension resources designed to support teachers with the teaching of reading, using whole books, rather than extracts. We teach as a whole-class Guided reading sessions, where the skills of reading comprehension are taught. This allows readers to engage in texts that make increasing demands on comprehension, inference and links to other texts and authors.

Each Literary Leaf has session notes, each focussing on a particular skill or two, ensuring that children secure these. The same question stem is used several times to ensure we model how to answer this type of question, before the children have the opportunity to apply it themselves.

KS1 are encouraged to take a reading for pleasure book home weekly, as well as their RWI books, or focused reading book at their reading level. Reading Record Books provide a valuable communication between home and school as evidence of children's reading progress and achievement. Reading books are brought to school every day from Nursery to Year 2. More able readers in Year 2 and KS2 pupils choose books from the library to read at home and they also have a Reading Journal to record their reading journey in. Parents are encouraged to write comments for children in Nursery through to Year 3. Children from year 3-6 complete their own reading journal to track their individual reading journeys, as well as collaborative tasks to engage with at home with their parents.

Each class has a reading area, which the children are encouraged to access daily. The Reading Area provides opportunities for them to recommend books to their peers, as well as to read books recommended by their class teacher. We as a school participate in World book day each year, and have an embedded Reading for pleasure culture. We have Adult Reading Champions, who support 1:1 Reading across the school.

STAR is used for Reading assessment and progress measures, by teachers and TAs throughout the school. Moderation Sessions are held at the end of each term. Running records and 1:1 reading provide further evidence to support teacher assessment, teachers are advised to carry these out at least once a term. Teacher also use optional SATS and past papers along with Rising Stars Reading assessment to help support their teacher judgements.

## **Writing**

The Literary Curriculum from the Literacy Tree is a thematic approach to the teaching of primary English that places children's literature at its core.

As a whole-school approach, children explore high quality, literary texts and experience significant authors as they move through the school.

It provides complete coverage of all National Curriculum expectations for writing composition, reading comprehension, grammar, punctuation and vocabulary, as well as coverage of spelling and phonics. All plans lead to purposeful application within a wide variety of written outcomes.

Teaching is based on immersion in a quality text before key skills are taught, enabling the children to write independently in a variety of genres (Extended Writing). Teachers will also use opportunities for developing different genres of writing across the curriculum using the creative curriculum approach, including themed weeks, authors' visits etc.

The Literacy Curriculum Quality Teaching is at the centre of our integrated curriculum - Language and Literacy opportunities are interwoven within an innovative, creative curriculum. This curriculum is continually being developed and refined. Speaking and Listening including drama, roleplay and philosophy have an increasingly prominent place in our classrooms.

Extended writing – which will be based on and will develop further skills covered in the Literacy Lessons (both Fiction and Non-Fiction) in order to facilitate children's ability to develop as independent writers. Teachers plan for a weekly extended writing session to ensure that children have the opportunity to write creatively across the curriculum. These sessions are planned for on the medium-term planners. This enables pupils to take pride and see themselves as authors in all areas of curriculum.

The STAR document for writing is used as part of an ongoing assessment process by teachers and TAs and is used to assess and give standards to children's progress from Year 1 to Year 6. EYS use the Development Matters document to moderate standards. Moderation Sessions are held at the end of each term.

### **Shared Writing and Modelled Writing**

Shared writing is a whole class activity where the teacher models the writing of text. In shared writing, the children will contribute to the text by suggesting words or sentences to be used; they are critical partners for the teacher. The teacher demonstrates how to write and explains decisions. S/he will model thinking, rehearsing sentences, writing and re-reading constantly generating words and ideas. Across the school, teachers will focus on the, audience, level of formality, structure and organisation of the text.

### **Guided Writing and Conferencing**

The teacher or teaching assistant guides a group of children through a piece of writing, helping and supporting them. It addresses the needs of a specific group/child allowing the adult to give immediate feedback on the successes and areas for development (e.g. the use of capital letters or commas).

### **Independent Writing**

In independent writing, the children are given the opportunity to showcase and apply the strategies taught throughout the sequence. Teachers must plan for the magpieing of ideas, drafting or editing and finally publishing.

### **Handwriting:**

#### **Aims:**

- To use a well-formed, cursive style of handwriting.
- To raise attainment for all pupils in handwriting through a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting throughout the school
- To ensure that we as a school are consistent in the way in which we form individual letters

- To ensure that teachers and support staff use all opportunities to model the agreed cursive style of handwriting when writing on the board or marking work
- To ensure teachers, support staff and pupils use all opportunities for writing as handwriting practise, regardless of subject

## **EYS**

- In EYS the teaching/modelling of letter formation is undertaken regularly
- Through play children have daily opportunities to develop their fine motor skills
- In EYS teaching of handwriting can be formal or through the areas of provision e.g. paint, sand, play dough, outside using water and painting on the wall / ground
- Activities for independent writing are provided in all areas of the classroom, not just in the writing areas
- Letter are displayed in classrooms in both typed and written for to add letter formation
- Fine and gross motor skills are developed through the activities provided daily, such as threading, painting, kneading dough etc
- Developing a correct pencil grip is a focus at this time

## **Key Stage 1**

- Children practise their handwriting skills in their handwriting books daily
- Year 1 children continue to practise correct letter formation according to guidelines and the schools agreed letter formation
- Cursive handwriting starts in Year 2
- Where possible, Year 1 and 2 children are to practise handwriting in conjunction with spelling e.g. in year 2 when revising the long /a / sound, children practise joining ai and ay
- When required, advice will be requested from Occupational Therapists or other relevant agencies to help with specific individual problems, with support from the SENCO
- Remedial measures are to be included in IEPs where relevant, supported by SENCO

## **Key Stage 2**

- In KS2 the children undertake formal handwriting practice when needed, children are formally awarded a pen license once they show consistent cursive style and joins
- The children practise their handwriting using a blue pen
- In Year 3 children continue to practise correct letter formation according to guidelines and the schools agreed letter formation. The emphasis is on building upon the joins established in Year 2 and using spellings as a basis for handwriting practise
- In Years 5 and 6 guidelines assume handwriting skills should be established and that children should have their own developed cursive style
- Children in Year 5 and 6 should also be given opportunities to practise handwriting in conjunction with spellings
- When required, advice will be requested from Occupational Therapists or other relevant agencies to help with specific individual problems
- Remedial measures are to be included in IEPs where relevant
- Handwriting practice can be included in homework in KS2

## **Phonics**

### **Aims**

- To establish consistent practice, progression and continuity in the teaching and learning of spelling and phonics throughout the school
- To differentiate spelling and phonics work according to the needs of pupils, so that all pupils are given sufficient challenge at a level at which they can experience success
- To give children word work strategies that will enable them to become fluent readers and confident writers
- To learn the 44 sounds and the corresponding letters/letter groups using simple picture prompts
- To learn to read words using sound blending
- Read lively stories featuring words they have learned to sound out
- After meaningful discussion led by an adult, children show that they comprehend the stories by answering questions
- Learn to write the letters/letter groups which represent the 44 sounds
- To learn to write words by saying the sounds and graphemes
- To learn to build sentences orally using adventurous vocabulary

### **Spelling**

Spelling is taught through RWI Spelling for 45 minutes to an hour a week and is supplemented by Spelling Seeds within the literacy writing sequences as appropriate

Spelling tests are carried out weekly from Year 1 to Year 6. Tests are planned using the National Curriculum Spelling banks and the RWI Scheme of work.

### **Spoken Language**

Spoken language is taught through all lessons. Teachers should be aware of and capitalise on opportunities, which will arise every day, for children to develop their speaking and listening skills across the curriculum. Spoken language will also be developed through Drama and activities such as hot-seating and freeze –framing.

### **Marking and Assessment**

Marking will be carried out daily and in accordance with the school's marking policy.

Assessment: informally using STAR document in all years. RWI phonics assessment carried out by Literacy leads, every 8 weeks in KS1. Children are assessed in their Reception Year using the Development Matters document.

Testbase Optional termly tests are used by year 2 -6 as a diagnostic tool to inform the teacher. They are formally assessed at the end of each Key Stage (Year 2 and 6 SATS). Year 1 Phonics screening takes place in June.

Termly progress of Reading and Writing is recorded on Pupil progress data grids (SIMS). These grids show the standards at which the children are currently working. These documents also show progress in terms of end of Key Stage targets. Moderation and tracking using the STAR document for Writing and Reading is used in Years 1-6. Birth to five document is used in EYS.



Teachers regularly discuss and amend next steps with pupils and celebrate achievement. Reports are completed before the end of the Summer Term and parents are given the opportunity to discuss their child's progress. Teachers use assessment information to help them comment on individual children's progress.

Year 2 and Year 6 take part each year in a moderation cycle, with the Local Authority, cluster schools and in house.

### **Assessment for Learning**

We assess children's work in Literacy from three aspects (long-term, medium-term and short-term):

We make short-term assessments which we use to help inform our short-term planning. These are closely matched to the teaching objectives and will often be made from day to day observation by children and adults.

Our medium-term assessments measure the progress against the key objectives and help us plan the next unit of work. We make these judgements with the help of the STAR document and Extended Writing samples.

We make long-term assessments towards the end of the school year and use them to assess progress against school and national targets. We can then set targets for the next school year and make a summary of each child's progress before discussing it with parents and collating it in the child's end of year report.

### **Special Needs Provision**

#### **Literacy and inclusion**

It is part of the school Curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. We provide learning opportunities that match the needs of children with learning difficulties and those learning Literacy as an additional language, as well as providing appropriate challenges for those children who are working at Greater Depth.

#### **SEND Children**

The SENCO will liaise with class teachers to ensure the individual needs of pupils with special needs are met and that appropriate targets are set and regularly reviewed through IEPs/EHCPs .

Daily support within classrooms is provided by LSAs or TAs.

Pupils with specific needs may be withdrawn from class to complete some of the activities, when appropriate, according to identified targets.

#### **Equal Opportunities / Race Equality**

We are committed to an environment that promotes equal opportunities for all children regardless of their race / colour/ gender and any work undertaken reflects this commitment.

### **Monitoring and Review**

Literacy Leads and Phase Leaders monitor planning on a regular basis.

Regular book audits and work scrutinies are carried out and action plans/support are put in place where necessary. Feedback is given to SLT.

### **Policy monitoring and review**

The Head teacher, Senior Leadership Team and Literacy Subject Leaders will monitor the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis. The Head teacher and Literacy Subject Leaders will report to the governing body on the effectiveness of the policy.

We are aware of the need to regularly review our policy to take account of new initiatives, changes in curriculum or developments in technology.

This policy will be reviewed during the Autumn 2024  
(unless any curriculum changes occur before this time)

Reviewed By: Daniela Newell Autumn 2023