

ENGLISH POLICY

Rationale:

At Sacred Heart School, we are concerned with equipping children with the vital language skills they need to become effective members of the community, and with the development of their thoughts, feelings and expression.

During the Primary Years the foundation of basic skills, competence and attitudes are laid down. We regard this to be of the utmost importance in empowering all children and enabling them to achieve their full potential throughout their school days and into adult life. Consequently the teaching and learning of English is given an extremely high priority at Sacred Heart School.

Aims & Objectives:

- ◆ to develop the children's competency in literacy skills, including the use of ICT where appropriate
- ◆ to develop a positive attitude to English as a source of pleasure and enrichment
- ◆ to develop the children's ability to use language confidently, fluently, creatively and ambitiously
- ◆ through experiencing a wide variety of literature to enlarge the children's view of the world and their place within it

Organisation:

Children in YR follow the EYFS Curriculum for Communication, Language and Literacy. Y1 – Y6 pupils follow the National Curriculum.

Speaking & Listening:

At Sacred Heart children are positively encouraged to speak confidently but politely and are expected to listen carefully and participate fully in discussions and question/answer sessions. We regard this development of attentiveness and aural concentration as vital to enhancing achievement generally, and so it forms a significant part of many lessons.

Children are encouraged to think carefully about how they speak in different situations using an appropriate style and are frequently reminded to use standard English structures when speaking formally, although in appropriate situations, features of children's own dialects are positively valued. Children's drama experience is developed with particular reference to their speaking and listening skills in the following ways:

- role play
- hot seating
- freeze frames
- re-enacting a story
- acting out short plays in small or large groups, sometimes using published play scripts, sometimes their own writing
- presenting reports 'in the style of...'
- participation in class assemblies/Key Stage productions which involve drama

Reading and Writing:

Children have opportunity to experience a wide range of reading materials. All children have a school reading book which they take home to practise. Alongside this they develop their reading through individual, group reading and whole class text reading within class. The school has its own library and all children are encouraged to borrow a book to read which they change regularly.

All classes also have a selection of books for children to choose from.

Children are encouraged in the skimming and scanning skills of reading through the use of class research books linked to different subject areas.

Children experience a wide range of writing opportunities and are encouraged to write for different ('real') purposes such as entering poetry competitions, pen pal correspondence and producing individual and collaborative books for use in their own or another class.

Handwriting:

The Nelson Handwriting Scheme is used throughout the school. In Early Years in order to encourage the correct letter formation which we regard as critical, handwriting lessons are conducted letter-by-letter with the class or group focusing on direct teacher instruction and monitoring. Children who write with fluency and confidence begin to join their letters in Y1 and this is continued throughout the school.

Pens are provided for all classes to motivate the production of neat, final copies and are used in day-to-day work by Key Stage 2 pupils.

Spelling:

Children are initially encouraged to spell phonetically, focusing on initial and final phonemes, followed by work on c-v-c combinations. Evidence of use of correct or phonetically plausible spelling in the children's own (emergent) writing is greatly praised.

Children are also taught the key words specified for their year group using a combination of methods:

- flashcards
- look/cover/remember/write/check
- memory 'hooks' (OULuckyDuck) etc.

From Year 1, children receive weekly spellings which may be individual or group-based, and are drawn from the keywords, specified phonic or spelling 'rule' categories or from errors which recur in the individual's writing.

Each class uses a range of resources such as word banks and word books and a variety of dictionaries and thesauruses.

Assessment:

Gathering assessment evidence is an integral part of teaching English. Evidence will be acquired through:

- questioning and listening to pupils
- observing children at work
- assessing written work produced
- undertaking assessment tasks/tests
- encouraging children to appraise their own work to help them understand their strengths and needs

All children Y1 upwards have speaking and listening, reading and writing targets which teachers assess against.

At the end of Y6 Key Stage 2 SATS are completed. At the end of Y2 Teacher Assessment in reading and writing is informed by the administration of statutory tasks and/or tests. PIRA reading tests are undertaken by Y1 upwards. Y1 undertake the phonic screening check.

Initial date of policy:	June 1995
Policy last reviewed:	July 2018

It is the intention to review this policy annually.