



# The Edward Betham CofE Primary School

## English Policy

<b>Ratified on</b>	11th January 2021
<b>Signed by Chair of Governors</b>	<i>R. Bernadine</i>
<b>To be reviewed on</b>	Autumn 2023

Faith, hope, and love; these three things will last forever, and the greatest of these is love.  
1 Corinthians 13:13

With God's **love** at the heart of all we do, we celebrate the unique gifts of every individual. Rooted in Christian **hope**, pupils grow academically and in their **faith**, equipped to live full and happy lives and care for the people and the world around them.

### **Rationale**

At The Edward Betham CofE Primary School, we are committed to creating a secure, caring and stimulating learning environment based on Christian values. We actively promote the principles of positive behaviour management that enable effective teaching and learning to take place.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Teaching and Learning, Marking and Feedback and SEND Policies.

### **Statutory Requirements**

*A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually (National Curriculum, 2014).*

At The Edward Betham CofE Primary School, pupils receive a stimulating and enriching English education, developing the skills necessary to master the English curriculum. Through high-quality teaching and well-planned lessons, we ensure that the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum 2014 are met, alongside its aims:

- to promote high standards of language and literacy;
- equip pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language; and
- develop their love of literature through reading a wide range of quality texts.

### **Curriculum Content**

#### **Reading**

All teachers are responsible for providing a stimulating reading environment, promoting book ownership and recommending books to pupils. Classroom and central displays are language-rich with key vocabulary prominent and good English work celebrated.

Reading at home is regarded as an important part of reading development. Parents are encouraged to listen to their child read every day and respond to their child's reading through Reading Record Records.

Much of the Programme of Study is taught through English lessons and Guided Reading, however English is promoted in other subjects, most particularly History, Geography, Religious Education and Science. Reading is understood to be the foundation of all learning in school, including in Mathematics, which demands a good level of comprehension of terminology and the format of word problems.

#### **Guided Reading**

As a school our aims in teaching Guided Reading are to:

- enable children to read with confidence, accuracy, fluency, understanding and enjoyment;
- foster an enthusiasm for and love of reading for life;
- ensure that all children follow the class text, joining in regularly and reading some parts individually;
- identify accurate levels of attainment in reading for each child;
- ensure that all children make accelerated progress; and
- develop comprehension skills, including inference and deduction.

Guided Reading is the method used to teach individual children to become fluent in reading and comprehension skills, including inference and deduction.

In Years 1 and 2, the majority learn in a whole class setting. However, a small number of children are taught in a small group with a focus on phonological awareness, reading fluency and comprehension. The whole class reading follows the following structure

- Choral, individual and paired reading of a shared text to improve fluency and model phonic decoding of unknown words. Children's understanding of key vocabulary is developed during this time
- Whole class modelling of comprehension skills with pupils annotating their own version of a text
- Independent reading and comprehension activities with a focus on retrieval, prediction, vocabulary and sequencing. Early inference skills are developed throughout their time in KS1.

In Years 3-6, children are taught as a whole class following this structure:

- Starter for Ten: 10 minutes of whole-class teaching to introduce a text and answer a key question about it
- Strive for Twenty-Five: 25 minutes of independent reading and comprehension activities e.g. answering questions, completing a SOLO Taxonomy map. The teacher and TA work with key pupils during this time
- Together Again for Ten: 10 minutes of plenary activity to consolidate and extend the independent work

Guided Reading sessions take place daily in Year 1 and last for 20 minutes. Year 2 have two longer Reading lessons in English each week lasting 1 hour and 15 minutes. Guided Reading takes place twice a week in Key Stage 2 for a duration of 45 minutes each. The texts used for Guided Reading sessions are selected carefully, meeting at least one of these criteria:

- More challenging than the child could read independently
- Texts by significant children's authors e.g. Malorie Blackman, Philip Pullman
- Older literature e.g. AA Milne
- 'Resistant' non-fiction texts i.e. subject-specific vocabulary, unusual layout
- 'Resistant' fiction texts e.g. nonchronological, multiple viewpoints

The texts used in English Guided Reading are monitored by the English Subject Lead, who advises and resources the subject to ensure every text is of high quality.

Many other opportunities are provided for pupils to practise and extend reading in other subjects. Pupils select texts under the guidance of the teacher for independent reading. Most fiction books are colour-coded according to the school's banding system. Teachers monitor independent reading and discuss progress with individual pupils on a regular basis.

An additional comprehension session may be timetabled once a week in year groups that would benefit from more practise of reading skills.

Parents/carers or members of our school community may read with children across the school. Volunteers are given a prompt sheet of comprehension questions when listening to readers.

### Phonics

As a school our aims in teaching Phonics are to:

- blend and segment sounds easily;
- learn that segmenting words into their constituent phonemes for spelling is the reverse of blending phonemes into words for reading;

- spell words accurately by combining the use of grapheme-phoneme correspondence knowledge as the prime approach, and also morphological knowledge and etymological information; and
- use a range of approaches to learn and spell irregular words.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, children have discrete Phonics lessons. Classes are ability-grouped across year groups and focused activities are planned using the Letters and Sounds programme. These lessons take place four times a week for a duration of twenty minutes each.

### Year 1 Phonics Screening Check

The Year 1 phonics screening check is not a formal test, but a way for teachers to ensure that children are making sufficient progress with their phonics skills to read words and that they are on track to become fluent readers who can enjoy reading for pleasure and for learning. The test is delivered over a week in the Summer Term of Year 1. Year 2 children who did not reach the expected standard in Year 1 are tested again during the same week.

### Spelling

In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, a new spelling pattern is explicitly taught each week. The children are introduced to example words which contain this pattern and will have several opportunities to practise the spelling of these words using an appropriate strategy chosen by the teacher or themselves. A list of words, which contain the spelling pattern, are practised and sent home each week as part of Home Learning. These are tested the following week.

At the end of each half-term children complete a spelling assessment of the words taken from the National Curriculum word list. The assessment scores are recorded and progress is tracked throughout the year in each class and year group.

### Handwriting

As a school, our aims in teaching Handwriting are that the pupils will:

- develop a recognition and appreciation of pattern and line;
- understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly;
- take pride in the presentation of their work and therefore practise handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement;
- be supported in developing correct spelling quickly through the teaching of cursive writing;
- be able to write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes; and
- develop a fluent, cursive handwriting style by the end of Year 3.

Pens are used from Year 3, once the child can both form and join letters consistently in the Nelson Handwriting Cursive Style. Most children will write in pen by Year 5. The Junior Deputy Headteacher will agree with the class teacher's assessment before a child writes with pen. If the child's handwriting deteriorates, the teacher may decide it is best to return to pencil until the child's handwriting improves sufficiently. All pupils will use pen by the end of Year 6, in preparation for high school.

### Progression of Skills in Handwriting

#### Early Years Foundation Stage

- Use a pencil, and hold it effectively to form recognisable pre-cursive letters (with 'kicks'/'flicks'), most of which are correctly formed

#### Year 1

- Write all pre-cursive letters, correctly formed and orientated, using a comfortable and efficient pencil grip

- Write with spaces between words accurately
- Children who are ready to start joining their letters in a cursive style may begin to do so in the summer term

#### Year 2

- Children start learning how to join their writing in the school's cursive style
- Write legibly, using upper and lower-case letters appropriately and correct spacing within and between words

#### Key Stage 2

- Children write in the school's cursive style, making sure all letters are correctly formed and orientated
- Most children should start to write in pen in the summer term of Year 3.

Children are taught Handwriting across two or three ten-minute lessons each week. The teacher models the letters or joins to be practised using a variety of methods, e.g. in the air, on the board or on a wall. Children practise and then complete a short exercise in their handwriting book. The teacher ensures that children's posture and pencil grip is correct whilst the children are writing.

#### Writing

As a school our aims in teaching writing are that the pupils will:

- write in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences;
- write in an increasingly cohesive way, using a range of conjunctions and other devices to make links between and across paragraphs;
- write with a clear awareness of the audience and purpose for the piece;
- be increasingly aware of the rules ~~conventions~~ of Standard English, including grammar, punctuation and spelling;
- plan, draft and edit their writing to suit the purpose; and
- form letters correctly, leading to a fluent joined and legible handwriting style, paying increasing regard to presentation.

Teachers teach writing in line with proven best practice following the Talk for Writing teaching sequence:

- familiarisation with genre
- capturing ideas
- teacher modelling (What A Good One Looks Like – WAGOLL)
- teacher scribing, supporting or leading guided writing
- independent writing

Writing is the culmination of a one- or two- week teaching unit on a particular text or genre, and Extended Writing is usually completed on a Friday. Talk Home Learning is set on a Thursday to At least once per year, the children are taught a Talk for Writing unit, in which they learn a high quality text by heart before producing a similar piece independently. Once per half term, children produce a piece of Extended Writing that is linked to their RE topic.

Activities are differentiated through the use of writing frames, spelling banks, collaborative work and peer or adult support.

#### Spoken language

As a school, our aims in teaching Spoken Language are that the pupils will:

- communicate effectively and appropriately for a particular audience, speaking with increasing confidence, clarity and fluency;
- participate in discussions in a variety of contexts;
- listen to the views, opinions and ideas of others and respond to them appropriately;

- give increasingly detailed responses and opinions;
- retell stories and poems which are known by heart; and
- ask questions with increasing relevance and insight.

Teachers provide a wide range of contexts for spoken language throughout the school day. Teachers and other adults speak clearly and in Standard English, correcting non-Standard English when pupils use it. This includes clear diction, reasoned argument, and the use of imaginative language. Listening is modelled, as is the appropriate use of non-verbal communication, respecting the views of others. Teachers are also sensitive in encouraging the participation of reticent children. Spoken Language is a key aspect of all lessons in all subjects.

Pupils have access to a wide range of speaking and listening opportunities that include:

- talking about their own experiences, recounting events;
- participating in discussion and debate;
- Talk for Writing;
- Talk Home Learning;
- retelling stories and poems;
- expressing opinions and justifying ideas;
- listening to stories and class novels read aloud;
- presenting ideas to different audiences;
- taking part in school performances;
- responding to different texts;
- talking to visitors in school;
- listening to the ideas and opinions of adults and peers;
- role-play and other drama activities across the curriculum;
- using dramatic techniques, including work in role to explore ideas and texts; and
- creating, sharing and evaluating ideas and understanding through drama.

### **Organisation of teaching and learning**

We plan from the National Curriculum 2014 and the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework. Our medium-term planning is informed by these documents which map out the English curriculum for each year group. Phonics is taught in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 using the *Letters and Sounds* programme. English (including Guided Reading, Comprehension and Phonics) is taught for a minimum of seven hours per week. In Reception, 1:1 reading takes place with each child weekly.

All teachers plan using an agreed format. This includes learning objective/s, SOLO Taxonomy success criteria, teacher modelling and a plenary. All of these will be used in the context of a key text. Each English unit usually lasts between one and three weeks. Grammar, punctuation and spelling are taught discretely within English lessons, and reinforced throughout e.g. the modelling of fronted adverbials. A range of drama activities are planned in order to develop the children's imaginations and deepen their understanding of the text being studied. Each term a 'Talk for Writing' unit (pioneered by Pie Corbett) is taught.

Learning Objectives (We Are Learning To- WALT) are clear and the SOLO Taxonomy success criteria are explained. A checklist will sometimes be provided for technical features to enable children to judge their own success. The criteria are used to determine whether each pupil has successfully achieved the learning objectives.

English working walls are in constant use, focusing on a particular genre. The learning journey is displayed and, by the end of the sequence, it shows the skills which are being taught and a good example of the piece of writing that is expected, along with key vocabulary.

### **Assessment recording and reporting**

Pupils are continuously assessed using a variety of strategies including observation, questioning and marking, in accordance with our Marking and Feedback Policy.

Specific assessments include:

- termly NTS Reading tests;
- independent pieces of writing, at least two examples each half term;
- half-termly spelling tests; and
- termly Phonics assessments.

Planning is based on prior attainment and teachers tell pupils what they need to do to move on. Where applicable, school issues are addressed through targets linked to Appraisal.

### **Additional Needs**

The English curriculum is pitched at a high level for each year group, to ensure that the more able pupils are challenged. We aim to give all our children the opportunity to succeed and reach the highest level of personal achievement. At the start of each year, all pupils are set aspirational targets. We analyse the attainment of different groups of pupils to ensure all are achieving as well as they can. We also make ongoing assessments of each child's progress. The Senior Leadership Team and teachers use this information when planning differentiated lessons and interventions, enabling them to take into account the abilities of all pupils. Evidence-based interventions are planned for pupils who need support to 'close the gap' (including children with SEND or EAL).

### **Monitoring**

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team, supported by the subject leader and governors. The subject leader for English and the Phase Leaders will monitor this curriculum area through monitoring planning and pupils' books, talking to pupils and observing classroom practice through learning walks, observations and drop-ins. In addition, the work of the subject leader involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English (e.g. providing exemplar planning) and providing continuous CPD so that teachers are fully informed about evidence-based pedagogical excellence in the subject e.g. coaching meetings, INSET.

We judge the impact of our teaching of English by:

- end of Key Stage assessments;
- half-termly assessment and Pupil Attainment Review Meetings;
- book and planning scrutinies;
- lesson observations;
- pupil interviews; and
- learning walks and drop-ins.

The Governing Board will monitor the implementation of the English policy through its Curriculum and Standards Committee receiving regular reports on the curriculum from the subject leader. The Link Governor visits will also focus on areas from the School Development Plan.