English Policy

"Teach a child to choose the right path and when they are older, they will remain upon it."

Proverbs 22:6

School Vision

At St Thomas' CE Primary School, we are taught to choose the right path. We build strong foundations that empower us to make the right choices and become valuable citizens, within our community and the wider world.

We model positive behaviours and set high expectations, through the teaching of Christian and British values, ensuring we are equipped with the skills and knowledge to build a positive future.

Ensuring that all pupils at St Thomas'
Learn, Enjoy, Achieve.

Intent

At St Thomas' we plan for an English curriculum that engages, excites and empowers our children. We follow the Literacy Counts Ready Steady Write scheme for our writing and spelling. Our English curriculum reflects the needs of our children and:

- Builds on children's prior knowledge
- Provides relevant and stimulating learning experiences
- Has vocabulary at the heart of outstanding daily practice
- Develops effective and successful communicators of the future
- Develops a love of reading and a passion for writing

Our English curriculum brings together the important skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening equipping our children to be critical thinkers, effective communicators both in written and oral forms. Underpinning all other areas of the learning we believe that our English curriculum equips St Thomas' children with essential skills to enable them to be lifelong learners.

Implementation

The English Curriculum is delivered according to our long-term plan, which was created in response to the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum 2014.

At St Thomas' we teach English in daily lessons across school, with discrete phonics sessions being taught in Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and through intervention groups (if necessary) in lower Key Stage 2. Daily guided reading sessions are timetabled from Reception to Year 6 and discrete spelling sessions, three sessions a week, are also timetabled from year 1 to year 6 as stand-alone discrete spelling lessons. The English curriculum follows the Literacy Counts 'Ready Steady Write' scheme. We believe that children need to develop and acquire a secure knowledge base in English, which follows a clear path of progression as they advance through the primary curriculum. A secure foundation in English is crucial to a high-quality

education and will give our children the tools that they require in order to participate fully as a member of society.

As a school we have created our own pedagogical approach to delivering each subject. This can best be described as follows:

Link it – Learn it – Check it- Show it – Know it - incorporating the 'I do', 'We do', 'You do' sequence within it.

For each stage there are important aspects which has been developed from our deeper understanding of cognitive load theory.

Link it- This is the stage where we work at igniting children's awareness of the topic being studied. In some subjects this works through the use of echo or choral reading of information they are about to learn as part of the topic.

Learn it – This is the stage where the teacher provides new knowledge and is part of the 'I do' sequence in our day-to-day lessons. At this stage we limit the number of questions we are asking children and focus on the teacher's exposition.

Check it – This is an opportunity for the teacher to ensure that there is full understanding happening. This is strongly associated with the 'we do' sequence in the lesson. Questions are encouraged at this stage.

Show it – This is an opportunity for children to demonstrate what they know. In some cases, this can be done orally but, in most cases, it is shown in children's books. This links with the 'you do' sequence in the lesson.

Know it – This is where we get children to retrieve information they have learned. This is normally done at the end of the learning so that children can demonstrate that they have remembered key knowledge for the long-term.

Reading

We aim to inspire an appreciation of reading and to develop a habit of reading widely and often. We prioritise the teaching of reading and invest heavily in books and reading materials to excite, inspire and encourage all children to read for pleasure. We at St Thomas' strive to create a text-rich environment that reflects the key aspects that the children are focussing on in their learning. Each year group has a reading spine based on Pie Corbett, these are read in daily reading timetabled sessions. In addition to this, we have core curriculum texts that support our bespoke curriculum. Our children are encouraged to read a range of text types- fiction, non–fiction, poetry, comics and magazines. In the Foundation Stage and Key stage 1 children read in guided reading and one to one reading sessions with the class teacher and / or

teaching assistant. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 we aim to provide our children with phonetically decodable texts that reflect and support the stage of learning that the children are working at. Accurately matched reading materials enhance children's progress through the phonic phases ensuring our children reach age related expectations at the end of each year. By the end of key stage 1, all children should be able to decode quickly in order for them to be able to develop the depth and breadth of reading and become enthusiastic readers. Any children not making expected progress will be identified immediately and will receive phonics' interventions.

Guided Reading in Reception and Year 1 follows the Little Wandle sequence of: -

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3
Blending and decoding of words.	Prosody – reading with expression, fluency and automaticity.	Comprehension - answering questions linked to the text. (Questions set out in the back of books)
Vocabulary and grapheme exploration linked to the text.		
Level of texts are determined from 6 weekly assessments as set out by Little Wandle and uploaded to the LW excel sheets where phase and set of text is determined.		

In years 2 – 4 a 'Guided Reading Workshop' has been developed; this follows a rolling sequence

Activity 1	Pre Read Task	Children are to read their guided reading text on their own. They are to have the opportunity to be exposed to the focussed text and are to make notes of any words that they are not sure of on post it notes that are to be developed in their Guided Talk session the following day. The teacher may give set chapters to read during this time. They may also pose some questions linked to the groups reading analysis data.
Activity 2	Guided Talk (Teacher led)	Children work with the teacher in ability groups, the focus of the work is linked to the gaps identified from recent reading assessments. Children are taught to read with fluency, the adult models effective reading strategies and teaches the children a pre identified reading skills linked to the reading domains. Teachers use the questions as set out in the guided reading folders

Activity 3	Post read task	The children are set a task identical to the focus of the guided talk session. The reading skill, linked to the reading domain questions, is practised by the children on an independent level that links to a new paragraph, page or chapter of a book. This follows on directly from the previous day in the guided talk session.
Activity 4	1-1 reading (TA led)	In this activity the teacher / teaching assistant listens to the children read with a focus on fluency, automaticity and prosody. The adult is to listen to all children read their 1-1 reading books and is to model prosody to the group. Children to echo the adult. Adult to ensure that the children are reading against the punctuation accurately. IF the children read with fluency and prosody then they can change their books (the books will be changed in the last 2 minutes of the session only)
Activity 5	Oxford Owls (IW) Reading for Pleasure	The children are to use the iPads to log onto Oxford Owls eBooks. The children are to log on with a class login and are to select a text from their reading level linked to their home reader. Children MUST know their reading levels for this task Children are invited to read from the class reading areas.

In years 5 and 6 a 'Guided Reading Workshop' has been developed; this follows a rolling sequence-

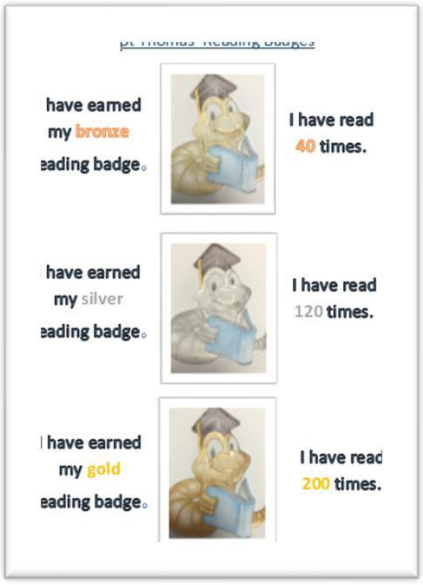
Activity 1	Pre Read / Cold Reading Task	Children are to read their guided reading text on their own. They are to have the opportunity to be exposed to the focussed text and are to make notes of any words that they are not sure of on post it notes that are to be developed in their Guided Talk session the following day. The teacher may give set chapters to read during this time. They may also pose some questions linked to the groups reading analysis data.
Activity 2	Guided Talk (Teacher led)	Planned from the reading domains. Areas targeted as set out in the post NTA regroupings and the next steps documents. Teachers to use the St. Thomas' VIPERS document to support this. Teachers should also consider the scoring from the domains of the last SATs paper complete. Guided reading assessment sheets to be completed at the end of every session.

Activity 3	Post Read Task	The children are set a task identical to the focus of the guided talk session. The reading skill is practised by the children on an independent level that links to a new paragraph, page or chapter of a book.
Activity 4	Comprehension and test like questions	Children are to read a new text, usually a comprehension extract text from the 'Brilliant Publications'. Children are to independently practise their reading strategies when answering SATS like questions. Extracts are selected that focus on identified areas for development and the length of texts.
Activity 5	Oxford Owls (IW) Reading for Pleasure	The children are to use the iPads to log onto Oxford Owls eBooks. The children are to log on with a class login and are to select a text from their reading level linked to their home reader. Children MUST know their reading levels for this task Children are invited to read from the class reading areas.
Year 6	Reading Plus	The children are to use the chrome books to log onto Reading Plus and complete 2 reading lessons in this time.

Reading and Reading for Pleasure are highly valued at St Thomas'. As such we are lucky enough to have two book rich libraries, library sessions are timetabled and a librarian is appointed to support children when selecting books to enjoy. Alongside this each class has an inviting book corner with a varied selection of books, which the children want to engage with.

Independent Reading

There is an expectation that the children will read at home as well as when they are in school we 'Strive for Five' but expect a minimum of three times each week. All children are given a reading book to take home which is changed once a week. Parents are encouraged to write a short comment in their child's reading record or sign their name to show that they have read together at home. Bronze, Silver and Gold reading badges are awarded for reading a set number of times over the academic year. This achievement is recognised in our Golden celebratory assembly each Friday where the children receive their bronze, silver or gold badges. At St Thomas' we believe children should develop their love of reading by exploring a range of genres, both with an adult and independently. As the children move up through school there is an expectation that they will be reading in a more solitary way however, parents are encouraged to discuss reading material with their children.



Selecting a reading level for each child

A child should be on a reading book, which is at their secure, consolidation level of reading with a little challenge. Children who are following the systematic synthetic phonics programme to read should be able to read with fluency and automaticity 90% of the words independently; therefore, using decoding and blending skills to read the other 10% of the book.

When the child's phonic knowledge is secure the focus changes from decoding the text to analysing and understanding the book. This focus is mirrored in all aspects of English such as the class novels, the text used within English lessons, home reading books and Guided Reading texts.

Within Reception and Year 1 Collins Big Cat Phonics from Little Wandle Letters and Sounds revised are used within all Guided Reading sessions. Home readers consist of Pearson Phonics Bug and Oxford Reading Tree phonics texts.

From Year 2 onwards the school follows the Collins model of 20 reading levels and each one has been matched to a Year Group Expectation level. The teacher should use the previous reading assessment to ensure that the child is on a level that matches their assessment. It is important to remember that breadth of reading is crucial in developing a reading habit and the children should not be focused on rushing through the levels. There must be a strong focus on inference and beyond in reading as this is what our children often struggle with. Our questioning must go beyond deduction and information retrieval.

Little Wandle Letters and Sounds revised is used to assess and plan for interventions throughout school where children are working below the expected levels.

Shared Reading

Whole class reading sessions are timetables across school. For Key Stage 1 this session is after lunch and in Key Stage 2 before the end of the school day. In class, texts are frequently shared and analysed with children and used as prompts for a number of lessons. Children engage in discussion about the text with adults and peers. Questions from teachers focus on the reading domain style. Teachers facilitate and further discussion around how authors use a variety of techniques to engage the reader. This then gives basis for children's own writing.

This is a key component to the start of each English unit. The children have the opportunity to explore a number to texts which they can use to inform their end of unit writing opportunities. Children are encouraged to 'magpie' good features or phrases that they have seen and use them in their own writing.

Writing

We recognise the importance of nurturing a culture where children take pride in their writing can write clearly and accurately adapt language and their language style for a range of contexts. There are multiple writing opportunities within the 'Ready Steady Write' scheme which includes both long and short pieces. Where short pieces are written, they are used to inform the longer end of unit piece.

Children are taught through a shared writing process whilst focussing on developing:

- Transcription (Spelling and Handwriting)
- Composition (articulating ideas and constructing them in speech and writing)

It is vital that teaching develops pupils' competence in these two aspects of writing:

- Effective composition skills shall be acquired through developing writer' awareness of audience, purpose and context, as well as developing knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and various sentence structures.
- Effective transcription skills are practised, where children write dictated sentences and discrete handwriting sessions are timetabled in daily English lessons. Children have time to develop transcription skills so that they are secure with handwriting, spellings and sentence structures enabling periods

of reduced cognitive overload. It is important to develop effective transcription skills to prepare children adequately in writing.

Emergent Writers

EYFS children (and older children including SEND where applicable) should be given daily opportunities through planned activities and continuous provision opportunities to practice key writing skills. Emergent writing is celebrated and developed quickly into children being able to write simple sentences competently using their phonics knowledge.

Modelled Write

As part of each English unit, all teachers plan for opportunities to demonstrate how to compose and structure texts. During these sessions, teachers should model (by speaking aloud) thought process of a writer, demonstrating the power of choice- the need to substitute ideas and reach for ambitious vocabulary, as well as to model the importance of reading back writing aloud to edit and improve further.

Shared Writing

Opportunities for shared writing should be provided throughout the exploration of a genre. During a shared write the following aspects should be explored: Purpose, audience, language and structure of a text, use of punctuation for effect, grammar and application of spelling rules. At these times pupils are invited to contribute ideas, magpie ideas from one another and substitute vocabulary to enhance their writing. During shared writing, the teacher acts as a scribe (recording class text) and a mediator to the children's dialogue (pupil's lead writing session).

Independent Write

All pupils should have frequent opportunities to write independently across the curriculum. Pupils should develop the understanding that there are key skills and processes essential for writing. These skills and processes should be embedded in the curriculum.

Spelling

Phonic knowledge should underpin spelling. Children need to understand the role of morphology and etymology. Staff should be familiar with what pupils have been taught throughout school in order to ensure a cohesive, structured approach. Children in years three to six are taught the age-related spelling content using a published scheme 'Ready Steady Spell". Whereas the children in Reception to Year 2

are to follow the Little Wandle phonics programme. This synthetic phonics programme provides teachers with a manageable tool for meeting the requirements of the 2014 National Curriculum, has a clear progression through blocks of teaching units across the year and supports our teachers with the teaching of spelling.

Handwriting

St Thomas' has created their own handwriting policy inspired by Nelson Thornes Handwriting Scheme. We want our students to know the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate effectively. We aim to teach our children to write legibly both in joined and printed styles with increasing fluency.

Each class must follow and teach the handwriting style of school. Handwriting is timetabled every daily, Monday – Thursday, from Year 1 - Year 6. All staff should model the correct formation and style on lined paper and/or line interactive whiteboard background when teaching a handwriting session. For reception, this process begins with activities to develop their gross and fine motor skills. Teachers should also insist on a correct balanced seating position, the use of two hands and the correct book/paper position. Writing aids will be given to children if necessary.

Pens are given to children once they have secured a legible, handwriting style that is consistent in size and shape. Pens may also be used to support a child's handwriting style.

Oracy and Spoken Language

St Thomas' has been accredited with the Voice 21 award.
The National Curriculum for English 2014 emphasises the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. The Learning objectives from the National Curriculum have been split across school. The speaking and listening learning objectives have been teamed with the voice 21 principles. Sentence stems and key elements of speaking are displayed in each classroom.

We know that spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. At St Thomas' the quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are key focus for the whole school. We know this is vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing.

Debate, discussion and verbal analysis are embedded throughout our school curriculum. We also teach our children in their understanding and use of conventions for discussions, debate and public speaking.

All children are enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Through our teaching of English, we allow a multitude of opportunities for children to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. Pupils understand how to take turns and when and how to participate constructively in conversations and debates.

Impact

Cross Curricular Writing

Teachers seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They plan for pupils to practise and apply skills, knowledge and understanding acquired English lessons to other areas of the curriculum. It is expected that the quality of the writing in all subjects reflects the quality in the English books.

SEND, Pupil Premium and Greater Depth

All children at St Thomas' will receive 'Quality First Teaching.' Any child with SEND or Pupil Premium funding may have work additional to or differentiated in order to better support them in accessing the curriculum dependent on their needs. Our school offers a creative and varied curriculum providing children with a variety of opportunities in order to reach their full potential. Our aim for each child to make excellent progress from their individual starting point.

Assessment

All English learning is assessed in line with the school assessment policy that reflect the scheme of Ready Steady Write. Teachers will assess children's work in English against the objectives for the year group using the schemes assessment grids, each child is to have their own sheet which accounts for their writing journey across the year. In writing, there will be three whole school focussed writes and three cross-curricular class writes. Next steps will be identified, and the judgements will be recorded on staff shared.

In years 1 to 6, spelling, grammar and reading will be assessed using the NTA assessments. Next steps will be identified and used as areas to develop and work upon in class.

At the end of Key Stage 1 and 2, SAT tests will assess children's understanding of Reading.

Half termly in house writing moderation sessions take place across school to support the levelling of writing process.

Classroom Environment

In all classrooms, the celebration of English should be clearly evident. This should be up to date with the latest focus, complete with examples of children's learning or prompts for grammar. Displays should include : -

- Examples of the schools handwriting policy
- Hand writer of the week
- Spellings taught, updated termly
- Vocabulary banks collected from key texts shared linked to different features, for example setting, characters, story openers
- Magpie ideas so that the children can witness the teacher alter and repurpose good features that authors have used in the class model write
- Grammar features taught as written examples and key grammar vocabulary
- A WAGOLL for the end of unit writing outcome
- Example of the plan that is to be used / tool kit for the genre of writing

Home/school Links

At St Thomas', we believe that parental support is vital to aid the progress of the children. We aim to involve our parents in English as much as possible through:

- Parents evenings
- Parent workshops – guided reading and phonics
- A clear overview of English within the class matrix
- Exhibitions and celebration to showcase children's work
- 'Parent read' sessions
- Clear communication via the child's reading record book
- Sharing of assessment data and next steps in learning.

Leadership and Management

The subject leader's role is to hold a high level of subject pedagogical content and an understanding of the critical endpoints that come before and after. Analysing and building the appropriate provision in all areas of English, whilst cultivating the staff's pedagogical content knowledge to maximise learning across their school.

Subject leaders will support staff in the following areas:

- Disseminating relevant information and providing relevant training for staff (direct or through other professionals)
- Demonstrate a commitment to keeping up to date in current issues and matters whilst developing CDP for themselves and staff members
- Leading by example through modelling quality first lessons and teaching styles
- Having a high-quality knowledge and materials to ensure progression in the subject and to make certain these are explicitly clear for staff to follow and plan from
- Identifying and supporting development needs for staff- including providing induction to associate teachers, Early Career Teachers (ECTs) and new members of staff on subject content
- Monitoring standards, attainment and progress across school including providing feedback to share good practice and develop further to raise standards.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The quality of teaching and learning is monitored as part of the appraisal process through lesson observations and the progress and attainment document. Progression across the school is monitored by the subject leader including the implantation, impact and assessment of learning. The subject action plans and advisors identify actions to raise standards.

The subject leader will also provide an annual summary report to the Headteacher and governors. This will evaluate the success and areas for development. A named member of the governors is allocated to Teaching and Learning. The Link governor will meet at least every term to discuss, monitor and evaluate current provision.

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