

# English Policy

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## **Our Schools' Curriculum Aim:**

The staff of St. Cuthbert's and St. Sebastian's will work to give each child full access to a broad and balanced curriculum, relevant for our school community and the diverse experiences of our children, encouraging in each individual a sense of self-worth and self-esteem.

## **Introduction**

At St Cuthbert's and St Sebastian's we believe that all pupils regardless of ability, ethnicity or cultural background have the right to achieve their full potential in school.

We aim to help them achieve this by creating a school community where;

- Pupils are stimulated and motivated.
- Pupils are given the opportunity to flourish and achieve.
- Pupils' independence and responsibility are fostered.
- Everyone is valued and respected.

## **Statement of intent**

Language is central to all learning. Through language, we explore, organise and make sense of experience. At St. Cuthbert's and St. Sebastian's, we believe that it is our responsibility to help children to develop the skills necessary to communicate their thoughts effectively and to have a greater understanding of their world.

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Children of all abilities will be encouraged to participate in a stimulating and challenging English education, from children with specific needs, to those deemed "Able, Gifted and Talented"- both in the teaching of English as a subject and through their curriculum subjects.

## **Safeguarding**

Our schools are committed to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children; and expect all staff, parents and visitors to share this commitment.

## **Creative Challenge Curriculum**

Staff of the Federation has collaborated closely to devise a new and inspiring Creative Challenge Curriculum. This creative curriculum has been implemented with a view to improving further the quality of our teaching and learning. We endeavour to ensure our children are motivated and inspired to want to learn by providing a broad and balanced curriculum with sound stimulating cross curricular links and skill based learning with an emphasis on progression.

## **Equal Opportunities**

At our schools we will strongly promote self-respect for all in our school irrespective of race, creed or gender. Our school communities have zero tolerance towards discrimination or prejudice of any kind (homophobia, biphobia or transphobia). Care will be taken to ensure that Creative Challenge Curriculum planning, resources and workshops do not present stereo-typical images, rather role models from diverse backgrounds and cultures reflecting the multi-ethnic nature of our society.

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## **S.E.N.D**

Assessment determines planning and teaching objectives will be directed specifically towards the needs of all children. Pupil Profiles (Key Stage 1 & 2) and Play Plans (Foundation Stage) are made available to address any children identified as having particular Special Educational Needs & Disabilities. These plans are shared with and reviewed with the child and their parents, ensuring that they are informed of specific objectives, strategies in place and the impact of such provision.

At St. Cuthbert's and St. Sebastian's, the approach to English is such as to allow all children to cover as much as they can at their own appropriate level. The work should be challenging enough, realistic and achievable.

Children with specific learning difficulties are supported and encouraged to find and use their own coping strategies. Staff diagnostic analysis of progress allows for informed, effective action plans whereby appropriate interventions are devised, for appropriate groups and individuals.

Interventions include: Reading Recovery, Successful Reading Partnership, Read to Write and NESSY. Precision teaching is to be introduced in the autumn term 2015.

## **Able, Gifted and Talented**

Able, Gifted and Talented children are those who have one or more abilities developed to a level significantly ahead of their year group, (or with the potential to develop these abilities). In England the term 'gifted' refers to those pupils who are capable of excelling in academic subjects, 'talented' refers to those pupils who may excel in areas requiring visio-spatial skills or practical abilities such as games and PE, drama or art. Some gifted and talented pupils may be intellectually able and also appear on the SEND register for behavioural, literacy or physical difficulties.

The provision for A, G and T pupils as with all pupils is a question of equity; they have a right to an education which is suited to their practical needs and abilities. They need to be presented with work which challenges, stretches and excites them on a daily basis, in an environment that celebrates excellence and

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is supportive of those who may in years to come break the boundaries of what we know and understand. The Creative Challenge Curriculum has been devised by teachers to ensure that ALL children have extensive opportunities for self-challenge.

Exceptional Education Plans (EEP's) are devised for a very small minority of pupils who are considered to be in the top 2% nationally in any particular area. Criteria are hard to define, as there are such a wide range of talents, we therefore use our rigorous teacher assessment in order to inform the process of compilation.

## Computing

As a Federation we are committed to enhancing our Creative Challenge Curriculum by providing and maintaining a seamless provision of computing across all curriculum areas. We aim to equip all teaching staff with up to date, relevant and inspiring resources as a means through which the quality of our children's learning will be enriched and extended. We are gradually initiating the use of apps on our ipads.

If we are to equip children with the literacy skills they need to thrive and flourish in the present and future world, then these must include skills of accessing and creating texts through information technology. Our children must use computing both as a text in its own right and as a tool to support literacy development.

It is our aim that computing is an integral part of the English lesson, and throughout the curriculum, whereby strands and targets can be met. Staff are required to state any use of computing in planning.

Currently, all classes have interactive white boards in school and a selection of electronic books / CD Rom etc which are regularly reviewed and updated by the co-ordinators in collaboration with teaching staff.

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## The Role of the Co-ordinator

### The Role of the English Co-coordinator is:

- To take the lead in policy development and the production of units of work designed to ensure progression and continuity in English throughout the school.
- To support colleagues in their development of detailed work plans and implementation of the units of work and in assessment and record-keeping activities /target setting.
- Take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central English resources.
- To keep up to date with changes to the English curriculum and inform colleagues of any such changes.
- To provide appropriate in -service training and seek external training, as appropriate.
- To monitor standards and progress across the Foundation and the Key Stages.
- To offer support via demonstration lessons/ team teaching.
- To train staff in the implementation of the renewed Primary Framework.

### Aims

- **To develop children's ability, to listen with understanding and communicate effectively.**
- **To develop speaking and listening skills across the whole curriculum.**
- To enable children to express themselves as independent readers, responsive and enthusiastic.
- To develop the skills necessary to write for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- To develop the skills necessary to speak, write and read Standard English.

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## Objectives

### **Speaking and listening:**

- Speaking and listening is implemented into the English planning and across the 'Creative Challenge Curriculum' to encourage children to listen and respond effectively.
- To develop the ability to confidently express and articulate their thoughts and opinions.
- To actively participate in improvised and scripted drama.

### **Reading:**

- To encourage children to read widely with enjoyment and independence.
- To develop the ability to read stories aloud, perform poetry and present reports.
- To develop the ability to read and use a variety of non-fiction materials.
- To become critical readers of newspapers, magazines, reports etc.

### **Writing:**

- To use writing to develop, organise and communicate ideas.
- To use appropriate genres of writing in accordance with the renewed National Curriculum (2014) supplemented by LA English Plans.
- To develop legible cursive handwriting with fluency.

### **Phonics:**

- 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 carry out Phonics Screening in Years 1, 2 & 3 (2016) so robust planning supports learners needs and interventions are used to narrow the gap of attainment.

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## **Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling (GPS):**

- To focus on grammar, punctuation and spelling within the teaching of reading, writing and speaking.
- To consolidate knowledge and promote deeper understanding of Standard English.
- To recognise and use accurate grammatical terms; and use the terminology through discussion and practice.

## Curriculum Organisation and Implementation

The English curriculum has been planned to ensure progression and balance across both Key Stages.

In Key Stage 1 and 2 the children receive 4 sessions of English as a subject per week, (with an additional session for extended writing) as well as writing through other subjects.

Basic skills sessions are timetabled 4 times a week on a carousel style rotation to ensure regular application of skills including: spelling, grammar, handwriting, punctuation and guided reading.

In both key stages a weekly 'Reading Skills' lesson is timetabled to develop comprehension and understanding of a variety of text types.

Years 1 - 6 currently use unit based planning pro-formas in line with the revised National Curriculum. During the planning process departmental staff are encouraged to collaborate regularly in order to share good practise. Staff use the LA plans as a guide to inform their planning.

Teachers are encouraged to be imaginative, creative and flexible in the teaching of the English lesson. Staff are encouraged to use a variety of resources and actively seek new and exciting resources to enrich and inspire the English Curriculum.

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Within their class children are set according to their abilities and needs to ensure that a personalised and effective English curriculum is in place for all learners.

Across the Creative Challenge Curriculum teachers regularly plan opportunities for writing through other subjects covering a range of genres.

All teachers and learning support assistants continue to receive full training as appropriate, in line with school priorities and interventions.

## Reading

- Across both schools, home reading and guided reading books are banded. Our Reading Recovery Teacher ensures that book banding is up to date and staff are regularly trained in taking running records - thus enabling informative assessment of correct Reading Recovery levels (Benchmarking Kit).
- We ensure that every group has guided reading at least once per week, in accordance with the reading skills coverage (word reading, themes and conventions, making inferences, comprehension and language for effect). Teachers work closely with Learning Practitioners (LPs) so that each area is addressed and groups are targeted towards these in guided sessions. This ensures that ability groups receive quality teaching according to their needs.
- Comprehension skills are taught once a week. These skills will be taught, as in the guided session style, though by the teacher and to the whole class. Emphasis is to be placed on this comprehension/guided reading style teaching within the English lesson and also in other subjects. This will enhance the children's techniques in addressing the reading skills areas and also reinforce guided reading work.
- Home reading is an area of continued emphasis. Our children and parents recognise the importance of regular reading practice. In Foundation

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2/KS1, LPs hear children read 2-3 times per week and are supported in this by the Reading Champions. The children are encouraged to change their own book at the appropriate level. LPs also monitor reading material, so that a balance of fiction and non-fiction is read by our children. A number of children who are experiencing some problems with their reading development are assessed and take part in the Reading Recovery programme.

- Running records are completed by LPs twice each year.
- In KS2 teachers work closely with LPs and Reading Champions to strive towards replicating this system as much as possible. A number of reading intervention programmes are in place, such as Successful Reading Partnership and Nesy with precision teaching to be introduced in the autumn term and children are selected for these programmes according to need.
- Each day, USSR (Uninterrupted sustained silent reading) is timetabled, where possible at the start of the afternoon session.
- St Cuthbert's classes each have their own class library of fiction and non-fiction books. Each teacher monitors the children's use of the library resources and timetables its use. St Sebastian's library is centralised, though children also enjoy their class library.

## Reading for Pleasure

At the federation we believe that children deserve a rich curriculum which encourages extensive reading of whole books and other kinds of texts. We believe that active encouragement of reading for pleasure is a core part of every child's educational entitlement, whatever their background or attainment because we know that extensive reading and exposure to a wide range of texts make a huge contribution to students' educational achievement. UNESCO says 'reading for pleasure is the single most important thing that will make a child successful in life'.

We at the federation aim to promote the concepts of reading for 'fun', 'enjoyment' and 'pleasure' and we include a range of real books within our Creative Curriculum as well as the opportunity for sustained reading from a

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range of other self-chosen fiction and non-fiction texts from our school and class libraries.

We believe the encouragement of reading for pleasure in our school will:

- Have a positive impact on attainment in reading and writing
- Improve the children's use and understanding of vocabulary
- Encourage a passion for reading later in life
- Improve a child's self confidence in reading and encourage them to see themselves as readers

We aim to promote reading for pleasure by:

- Having an attractive, comfortable and inviting reading area designated to every classroom
- Celebrating exciting Literacy events such as World Book Day
- Providing children with opportunities to learn about famous authors and their work
- Having an annual book fair alongside reading competitions
- Allowing children and staff the facility of 'Book Swaps'
- Training selected children to be Reading Revolutionaries (Yr4 & Yr5) in order to facilitate regular peer lead reading sessions
- Having Reading Ambassadors in each class to promote 'a love of reading'
- Involving the community in reading opportunities
- Encouraging a love of reading by displaying what the adults in our school are reading
- Having links with central and local libraries to encourage visits to watch authors and storytellers, whilst promoting the free use of public libraries to access books and other resources
- Organising peer reading sessions to promote reading
- Offering children the opportunity to take part in extra curriculum reading for pleasure clubs before and after school
- Share reading events with our parents via our websites and twitter accounts
- Taking part in local and national competitions/events
- Allowing children to have access to a school/class library with improved resources which are in good condition, up to date and relevant to our children's needs and interests
- Freely available access to book reviews allowing the children an informed choice from fellow peers

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- Having reading displays/events around the school and on the school websites to get children talking about books and their favourite reads
- The school environment embraces reading, in all its forms, with particular emphasis on our Pupil Voice.

## Phonics

- Teachers use multi-sensory resources, homework or otherwise, to engage the children (magnetic letters, flash cards, alphabet cards, etc.)
- Phonics is one of a number of strategies helping to link reading, writing and speaking within the Federation and assist with general language acquisition as the absence of this is perceived to be a barrier to general learning and imagination.
- Phonics is delivered and consolidated intensely - every day in Foundation and KS1 and 3 times per week in KS2 (added support is given where needed, in the form of booster groups.)
- We differentiate the phonics for different groups. All children will be screened, foundation, KS1 & KS2.
- Children are encouraged to be active participants, blending and sequencing words for themselves.
- All teachers and TAs are trained in a resource based synthetic phonics school approach (letters and sounds).
- All parents/carers are invited to be partners in what we want to achieve.
- Transfer of learning is important and we encourage children to practise and apply decoding skills in other areas of the curriculum.
- We use regular formal and formative assessment and observations to note the progress of any children who may be needing some extra support or extension.
- The schools train staff to make appropriate use of resources to encourage planning structures and promote a fast pace of learning.
- Knowledge of high frequency words are revised.
- Knowledge of grammar and spellings are taught - the LA Spelling programme is used in Year 1 upwards, as appropriate, for the children.
- Ability and confidence to have a go at decoding words is encouraged.
- Letters and sounds are to be used to teach and develop phonological skills.

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- All initial sounds are systematically taught following the order from Letters and Sounds.
- Only children demonstrating secure knowledge of all initial sounds will progress to the next phase as outlined in the Letters and Sounds programme.
- Individual records are kept and updated on a regular basis.
- In order to consolidate the phonological skills the phonics and spellings can be sent home.
- Each teacher has a phonics file for planning /resources /assessments. Individual records are kept here.
- Co-ordinators have an overview of phonics /spelling groups -children at each phase / spelling and review progress each term.

## **Writing**

- Staff are encouraged to develop ways whereby we may enthuse our children to want to write. Our children write for particular audiences, and with an exciting balance of fiction and non-fiction writing.
- During the English lessons children have the opportunity to plan, draft, edit and publish their writing.
- KS1 and LKS2 follow the same editing process which is supported by the teacher, while UKS2 are encouraged to be independent in their editing.
- In line with our enhanced Creative Challenge Curriculum, 'Writing Across the Curriculum' is embedded in the topic plans for each year group.
- Basic Skills are taught through the English lessons and during the basic skills carousel.
- Opportunities for extended writing are timetabled each week with children having the chance to edit, redraft and publish their work where appropriate.
- Writing is assessed half termly, with moderation of writing taking place across the federation.

Assessment is currently under review in accordance with NC14 changes.

## **Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling (GPS)**

- A whole school approach is dedicated to preparing children for the end of key stage Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling SAT. A daily session of

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basic skills is delivered in both key stages with a different focus each day.

- The introduction of the new KS1 SAT for Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling means that this is a particular focus for this year.
- All staff across the federation are encouraged to use correct Standard English at all times.
- Staff are encouraged to correct children when using non-standard English at all times.

## Resources

A variety of resources are used in the teaching of English throughout the school. No single resource or publisher fits the need of all aspects of the curriculum or of all areas in the scheme of work. Teachers select, adapt and supplement published resources, and produce their own as required.

Resources are selected to be relevant according to the full range of requirement of the National Curriculum.

These resources are to be attractive and interesting to children whilst reaching their need and providing a rich diet of language experience.

Resources for English are monitored and selected to be free from racial or gender bias, adherence to PSHE and Citizenship. Resources have been selected to include literature from different cultures and countries and to feature positive gender images. Many resources for the library are currently being acquired.

Main Reading Schemes - Stanley Thornes /First Class/ All Aboard / PM/Oxford Reading Tree (skeleton scheme and phonics based material)/Reading Recovery . All schemes are currently being book banded. Support materials are available e.g. Pelican are now located in classrooms.

All the above, provide resources for guided reading sessions.

St. Sebastian's has a main school library located in KS2 area, to support class libraries and reference materials. The library has been recently developed, reorganised under the Dewey system and new resources are being purchased.

St. Cuthbert's have libraries located in each classroom and comprise a balance of fiction and non-fiction reading material. Children's use of materials is closely monitored by the teachers.

Across the Federation, much funding has been allocated to the purchase of reading material linked to our Creative Challenge Curriculum themes, with each

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department benefitting from the great addition of exciting, varied reading material for the children.

## Additional Support

- As a result of the close and regular analysis of data pupils in need of additional English support are highlighted by staff and receive interventions to facilitate their learning needs.
- Current interventions include: SRP, NESSY, Reading Recovery and Read to Write A2Z, precision teaching to be introduced in the autumn term 2015. Interventions are regularly reviewed and their impact monitored.
- English coordinators regularly liaise with practitioners delivering the interventions to assess their impact and action planning for the future provision.

## Assessment and Record Keeping

We believe that assessment forms an integral part of teaching and learning. At St. Cuthbert's and St. Sebastian's, assessment decisions, based upon teacher judgement form the basis of the child's future learning.

## Assessment

Assessment of pupil's progress and attainment in English is carried out:

1. To show what individual pupils, know, understand and can do in English.
2. To inform staff of the next steps for learning to ensure progression.
3. To help parents and pupils understand the progress that has been made by pupils.
4. To compare standards in English across the Federation with those nationally.

To do this effectively and reliably assessment:

- ❖ Must be carefully planned -Assessment For Learning.

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- ❖ Should be a continuous process -reinforcing teaching and learning and carried out as an integral part of the day to day classroom activities.
- ❖ Should be recorded carefully and methodically so that it supports and informs NC and with S.A.T.s helps to determine National Curriculum attainment levels at the end of the Key Stages.
- ❖ Teachers systematically track pupil progress -at interim and end of year points. This is monitored by the English and Assessment Co-ordinators.
- ❖ Teacher diagnostic analysis of progress enables the implementation of action plans - these action plans outline interventions needed.
- ❖ Children are encouraged to assess their own and each other's work through peer and self-assessment systems.

**Assessment is currently under review in line with the renewed NC14. We are part of the LA pilot assessment scheme and are implementing assessment under their guidance whilst still awaiting further guidance.**

## **Assessment decisions are based upon evidence from a variety of sources:**

Teachers analyse child data - track data and FFT and use this to predict end of year levels, and end of Key stage levels, in reading and writing. Staff are encouraged to give ambitious predictions, based on available Foundation /KS1 data, so that we reflect our high expectations of the children. Targets are ambitious, yet achievable.

Assessment of speaking and listening is on-going and is carried out in small groups, through discussions and observations, as well as during the English lesson.

Guided reading records are kept, for each child, to indicate progress in strands of each year. These are based on reading skills criteria, therefore, individual children are monitored.

Baseline assessment takes place at the start of the year in reading and writing. Formal summative assessment takes place in February and May. Year 1 complete NFER tests, in Spring Term; year 2 complete Schonnel Spelling and Burt Reading tests. Years 3 - 6 complete SAT papers for the previous year.

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In May, S.A.T.s for Y2 , Y6, optional S.A.T.s for Y3, 4, 5. Y1 phonics testing. The results of which, are used to inform planning, target setting and set lists. Intensive diagnostic analysis here provides an essential tool for monitoring progress.

In September teachers give a detailed analysis of the S.A.T.s and recommendations for future teaching.

Moderation of writing takes place each term, using writing from all subjects, to ensure consistency when writing in other subjects. Moderation will occur across the Federation.

**Assessment is currently under review in line with the renewed NC14. Awaiting outcomes of LA pilot assessment scheme and further LA guidance.**

## **Guidelines for Assessment**

Collect a variety of evidence e.g. written work, CDs, photographs and pupil voice to support judgements.

Complete all diagnostic analysis to effectively track progress and devise action plans for cohorts /groups.

Continuous assessment in all 3 areas of English (speaking and listening, reading and writing) should take place as integral activities throughout the Curriculum.

## **Points for Action**

- Support years 2 and 6 and NQT's in the planning and delivery of new curriculum.
- Monitor planning and books for teaching of writing in other subjects / learning walk. (Autumn, Spring & Summer Term)
- Monitor closely 'where Pupil Premium children are' in comparison to non PP pupils.
- Further develop knowledge of KS1 SPAG to prepare for new tests.
- Monitor the teaching of basic skills in English through observations and learning walks.

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- Audit existing teacher materials / purchase new materials to support the delivery of curriculum. (Autumn Term)
- To raise the profile of writing through writer of the month and entering local and national writing competitions.
- To liaise with Early Years Team to monitor 'communication and language' in Foundation Stage.