St Cuthbert's Primary School
English Policy

Vision:

In our family school, we strive to be the best for today, for tomorrow, for ourselves, for each other, the wider world and for God.

As a Christian family we nurture an understanding that we are all of equal value and infinite worth.

In the safety of our unique family, we will flourish and grow towards being Global Citizens and Courageous Advocates.

('You are now citizens together with God's people and members of the family of God'. Ephesians 2:19)

Mission statement:

Learning to love, loving to learn in the family of Christ.

('Encourage one another and build each other up'- 1 Thessalonians 5:11)

Intent

Through using high-quality texts, immersing children in vocabulary rich learning environments and ensuring new curriculum expectations and the progression of skills are met, the children at St Cuthbert's Primary School will be exposed to a language heavy, creative and continuous English curriculum which will not only enable them to become primary literate but will also develop a love of reading, creative writing and purposeful speaking and listening. Because literacy is central to children's intellectual, emotional and social development, it has an essential role across the curriculum and helps pupil's learning to be coherent and progressive.

Implementation

Our family school's curriculum is built around the National Curriculum for English 2014 to enable all children to:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn and share their own ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

We work to achieve these outcomes at St Cuthbert's Primary School by using a variety of teaching styles in English lessons to enable all children to succeed. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in English. We follow Ready Steady Write as our chosen scheme of work.

There are children of differing ability in all classes at St Cuthbert's Primary School. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons, we achieve this through adapted group work while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas.

In addition to fostering a love of reading in our pupils, we strive to ensure that by the end of Key Stage 1 our pupils are able to accurately and fluently read age-appropriate books and demonstrate an understanding of what they have read. They can answer questions, make some inferences and explain what has happened so far in what they have read. By the end of Year 2, the majority of our pupils are able to write well-structured narrative or factual texts, demonstrating the range of skills that they have learnt throughout Key Stage 1.

At the end of Key Stage 2, we aim to ensure that our pupils leave St Cuthbert's Primary School with a broad range of reading skills that allow them to demonstrate active reading strategies when reading a variety of texts. By the end of Year 6, the majority of our pupils are able to write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences (both fiction and non-fiction texts) demonstrating the range of skills that they have learnt throughout their school journey.

We want all our pupils by the end of Year 6 to be able to:

- Read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding
- Be able to orchestrate a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual) to monitor their reading and correct their mistakes
- Have fluent, joined and legible handwriting
- Have an interest in words and their meaning and a growing vocabulary
- Know, understand and be able to write in a range of genres in fiction and poetry, and understand and be familiar with some of the ways in which narratives are structured through looking at the author's use of setting, character and plot
- Understand, use and be able to write a range of non-fiction texts
- Plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing
- Have a suitable technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their reading and writing
- Be interested in books, read with regularity and enjoyment and evaluate and justify their preferences
- Through reading and writing, develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness

Phonics and Early Reading

At St Cuthbert's Primary School, we teach phonics through the use of the ELS Phonics scheme. We aim to provide children with a secure Phonics basis for reading and for writing. We believe that being able to read is one of the most important skills that children will learn in their early schooling and that in providing the skills to secure fluency in reading we will help children to develop a love of reading that will stay with them throughout their lives.

Phonics teaching is discrete and systematic and each session follows the same structure:

Revisit – recap on previously taught sounds

Teach – teach a new sound or word

Practise – provide opportunities to practise saying and reading the sound through games and activities for children

Apply – apply the new skill to read and write words, captions and sentences

Please see **Phonics Policy** for further information.

Reading

The Staff and Governors of the school recognise each pupil's entitlement to a rich and comprehensive programme of reading which will endeavour to ensure that each pupil develops an enjoyment of reading through the acquisition of skills, knowledge and concepts. To this end, the school places the highest priority on the teaching, resourcing and monitoring of books and reading throughout St Cuthbert's Primary School.

At St Cuthbert's we aim:

- to employ successfully strategies in reading including phonic skills, word recognition and the use of picture and contextual cues.
- to develop reading comprehension skills
- to develop increasing independence in reading for enjoyment, and in selecting and using books and other printed material as sources of information
- to develop the facility to discriminate critically in terms of what is useful, what has quality and what gives personal satisfaction.

At St Cuthbert's we have a variety of ways in which children experience our 'Reading Diet'. These are:

- Whole Class Shared Reading - Children working with challenging texts, usually as a class to learn new structures, vocabulary etc.
- Guided Reading - Children working in a small group on a text at their level. These sessions work on fluency and comprehension. They develop children's
- Personal Reading - Children working with self-selected material including familiar text.
- Focussed 1-1 reading - Children working individually with an adult to use develop their fluency and understanding of what they are reading.
- Class novel – When an adult reads a selected novel for enjoyment with the class.
- Reading in other subjects
- Home reading

Children have access to a wealth of texts in school and to take home. The reading schemes we currently use include: ELS Phonics, Smart Kids Letters and Sounds, Rising Stars, Oxford Reading and the addition of Scholastic.

Along with these, children are encouraged to select books for pleasure from our library and have access to age-appropriate graphic novels, non-fiction texts, magazines, comics and newspapers to give the extra variety in their reading.

At St Cuthbert's Primary School, we strive for all children to move onto the next stage of their education with a strong ability to read for both pleasure and purpose. We deliver a selection of reading intervention programmes that are designed to support and develop any children who may be working slightly below their peers. Staff are highly trained in developing reading ability, comprehension and confidence with texts.

Writing

At St Cuthbert's, our writing curriculum is designed to provide a broad and balanced education that meets the needs of all children. It provides opportunities for children to develop as independent, confident and successful writers, with high aspirations, who know how to make a positive contribution to their community and the wider society.

We have high expectations for all children and our intent is for all pupils – irrespective of their needs, abilities or background – to learn to write fluently, developing their own writer's voice. We aim to meet, and where possible exceed, the expectations laid out in the Early Learning Goals and National Curriculum, with pupils progressing appropriately across school. We recognise that spoken language underpins the development of Writing. The quality of language that pupils hear and speak is vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding Writing. We believe that children need to develop a secure knowledge-base in Literacy, which follows a clear pathway of progression as they advance through the primary curriculum. We believe that a secure basis in literacy skills is crucial to a high-quality education and will give our children the tools they need to participate fully as a member of society.

We cultivate a love of Writing and communicating through vocabulary rich and high-quality literature, using **Ready Steady Write** by Literacy Counts. By inspiring and developing an appreciation of our rich and varied literary heritage and providing meaningful and exciting provocations to write, we develop a habit of writing widely and often. We recognise the importance of nurturing a culture where children take pride in their Writing; can write clearly and accurately and adapt their language and style for a range of contexts.

Organisation and Curriculum Coverage

Ready Steady Write empowers teachers to provide high-quality teaching of writing through high-quality literature. These detailed units of work centre on engaging, vocabulary-rich texts, with a wealth of writing opportunities within and across the curriculum. They provide:

- Clear sequential Episodes of Learning
- Vocabulary learning and contextualised spelling, grammar and punctuation
- Wider reading for the wider curriculum
- Example Texts linked to writing outcomes
- A wealth of supporting resource

Our English curriculum is developed around a sequence of high-quality age-appropriate texts, using Literacy Count's **Ready Steady Write** units of learning. We use each book to create opportunities to:

- develop grammar and punctuation knowledge and understanding to use and apply across the wider curriculum, through sentence accuracy sessions;
- explore the Writing structure and features of different genres, identifying the purpose and audience;
- plan and write an initial piece of Writing with a clear context and purpose before evaluating the effectiveness of Writing by editing and redrafting.

Building on this foundation, we teach literacy using a range of strategies which include:

• Group Discussion – Children discuss and interrogate new ideas in a small group or whole class setting. They listen to and value each other's ideas whilst taking on board feedback so as to improve their own explanations.

• Partner Talk – Children work in partners to discuss their ideas. They are able to explain their ideas about texts they have read and prepare their ideas before they write.

• Questioning – Teachers use a range of questioning strategies to establish children's current understanding and develop their learning.

• Modelled Writing – Teachers model Writing and editing to demonstrate the high expectations they have. They verbally 'think aloud' in order to make the Writing process explicit and provide a rich and varied vocabulary for the children to utilise in their own work. This happens daily, through sentence accuracy

• Shared Writing – Teachers use the ideas from the children to create shared pieces of Writing. This enables the children to see the Writing process in action as well as having pride and ownership over the finished piece.

• Editing – All children are signposted to regular opportunities for reviewing and editing their own and the work of others.

• Working walls – Teachers and children regularly update working walls to ensure learning is documented within a unit of work.

Class teachers ensure that the Writing process is clearly evident on working walls, with modelled examples being available to all pupils as the sequence of lessons develops.

Resources

Each class has a resource box with their **Ready Steady Write** vehicle texts, reveal objects and supplementary texts which support the themes and genre being taught for that half term. The lesson plans, resources and leadership support is found on the membership homepage online. The Enhancements for the units can be seen in our indoor and outdoor areas in EYFS.

Working Walls and Table Resources

Each class is expected to develop an English working wall which adapts daily with teaching. Displays should model the writing process and scaffolds needed for children to apply to their own writing. Spellings, handwriting and supporting phonics materials should also be displayed within the classroom to aid children's writing. Sentence accuracy checkers are available to all children, both in their books and in the environment. Staff will model the expectations throughout the curriculum.

Planning

The entire writing curriculum is mapped out on coverage and progression documents. Then, the **Ready Steady Write** units include all of the resources needed for each teacher to plan and deliver lessons. There are a range of scaffolds and supporting resources and teachers tweak and shape the units to meet the specific needs of their children. There are also assessment proformas which are completed half termly and identify next steps for children.

Pupils with Additional Needs

Some children experience learning difficulties, which affect their progress in English. Class teachers inform the SENDCO if they are concerned that a child may have underlying learning difficulties. Some children then receive SEN support. This may include:

- scaffolds and supports to develop writing ideas and language acquisition
- technology to support the generation of ideas, develop words banks and plan and write
- explicit instruction, including the modelling of sentences, paragraphs, planning and editing – with opportunities for the children to practice modelled techniques
- a focus on cognitive and metacognitive strategies to help children articulate their learning
- flexible groupings to ensure peer support and appropriate level of challenge

Pupils with English as an additional language

It is vital that children who have English as an additional language have English modelled accurately by all staff at school. Collaborative work with peers (where English is their first language) is essential and EAL children should be provided with consistent opportunities for this verbal interaction. All teachers include a range of strategies to support children with EAL which includes:

- Teacher and peer modelling and consistent use of visual support
- Repetition and recasting of language features
- Word banks and scaffolded speaking and listening activities
- Resources that include images to secure language understanding
- Use of technology to support interpretation of Example Texts

Teachers work with the SENDCO to best meet the needs of individuals within their classes. Children who are new to English are assessed and support is put in place by the SENDCO to help them make rapid progress.

Assessment and Recording

Teachers draw upon observations and continuous assessment to ensure children are stretched and challenged and to identify those children who may need additional support. Formative assessment of Writing is completed through teachers' daily feedback to inform future planning. Teachers use the children's everyday writing and adapt models and input to meet their current needs. Teachers also complete a Reflecting on Unit outcomes document after each half termly unit, to identify next steps and the subsequent units are amended to include these focuses. Daily sentence accuracy work is carefully monitored to ensure children are constructing sentences both coherently and accurately. Termly staff meetings allow for whole school moderation of writing to deepen understanding of standards.

Subject leaders will analyse termly data and address areas for curriculum development. Children's attainment, progress and barriers to learning will be discussed in half termly Pupil Progress Meetings

with senior leaders and clear actions to work on will be planned together, to support pupils and staff in closing gaps.

Speaking and Listening

Teachers provide a wide range of contexts for speaking and listening throughout the school day. Teachers' model speaking clearly; this includes clear diction and annunciation, reasoned argument, using imaginative and challenging language and use of Standard English. Listening is modelled as is the appropriate use of non-verbal communication, respecting the views of others.

Speaking and listening roles are shared with pupils: sometimes a pupil will be the questioner, presenter, etc. Learning takes place in a variety of situations and group settings. For example, these could include reading aloud as an individual, working collaboratively on an investigation, reporting findings as a newscaster, interviewing people as part of a research project, acting as a guide for a visitor to school, responding to a text in shared or guided reading.

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

- Planned teaching and learning of speaking and listening skills,
- Drama, group discussion and interaction
- Talking about their own experiences, recounting events
- Participating in discussion and debate
- Talk for writing
- Retelling stories and poems
- Expressing opinions and justifying ideas
- Listening to stories read aloud
- Presenting ideas to different audiences
- Taking part in school performances
- Responding to different kinds of texts
- Talking to visitors in school
- Listening to ideas and opinions of adults and peers
- Role-play and other drama activities across the curriculum.
- Philosophy for children

Impact

The innovative practice across the school provides a strong foundation and opportunities for children to collaborate and develop social skills both indoors and out. This curriculum design ensures that the needs of individual and small groups of children can be met within the environment of quality first teaching, supported by targeted, proven interventions where appropriate. In this way it can be seen to impact in a very positive way on children's outcomes. High quality visits and visitors to the school enhance the curriculum and provide opportunities for Writing for a purpose. Children have opportunities to share their learning with each other, their parents and carers and other learners through school-based and external exhibitions, performances, competitions and events involving other schools. Developing their independence and motivation as learners and their sense of responsibility as future citizens is at the heart of all our teaching and learning. As a result, we have a community of enthusiastic writers who enjoy showcasing their developing literacy knowledge and skills. They are confident to take risks in their writing, and love to discuss and share their ideas.