



## PRIORY INFANT SCHOOL

# ENGLISH POLICY

### AIMS

- To develop children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write effectively for a wide range of purposes.
- To enable children to use language to learn and communicate ideas, news and feelings.
- To enable children to express themselves creatively and effectively as they become enthusiastic, critical and life-long readers and writers of stories, poetry and plays, non-fiction and media texts.
- To ensure children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its structures and patterns.
- To enable children to use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking, writing and reading in a range of different situations and across the curriculum.

### OBJECTIVES

- To enable children to speak clearly and audibly taking account of their listeners.
- To encourage children to listen with concentration and be able to identify the main points of what they have heard.
- To enable children to evaluate their own and others' contributions.
- To develop confident, independent readers who enjoy reading and are able to reflect and make choices and preferences.
- To develop the skills to be able to write with accuracy, meaning and imagination.
- To develop the children's ability to plan, draft and edit to improve their work.
- To develop a comfortable, legible and neat style of handwriting.

*Our English curriculum is based on the Literacy objectives found in the  
New Primary English Curriculum September 2013*

# ***SPEAKING, LISTENING, GROUP DISCUSSION AND DRAMA***

## ***Aims***

We aim to enable our children:

- To communicate effectively.
- To speak confidently and to express themselves clearly in a variety of situations.
- To listen attentively and respond to others, having respect for the different opinions of others.
- To develop the skills needed for group discussion.
- To participate in and respond to drama.

## ***Approaches:***

Speaking, listening, group discussion and drama activities are integrated into our teaching across the curriculum and are seen as fundamental to teaching and learning. In Literacy, we use and adapt the Primary English Curriculum teaching sequences which place a strong emphasis on the Spoken Language.

When children start in Yr R or are new to the school, they are screened individually with Speech and LanguageLink. Children with specific speech and language needs are highlighted immediately and offered appropriate provision both in class and with our school-based SALT.

For some children, symbols and signing are used to support communication and comprehension. Staff training supports the use of this across the school.

# ***READING***

## ***Aims***

We aim to enable our children:

- To read independently, fluently and expressively, with understanding and enjoyment.
- To read a wide range of texts, including text on screen both for pleasure and for information.
- To engage with and respond to what they read.

## ***Approaches***

We encourage a love of books and of reading by providing a rich reading environment in our classrooms and in our school library.

Throughout the school, teachers read aloud to children on a daily basis. We read a wide range of good quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry.

Our children are taught to read in many different ways. The books we use to teach decoding and comprehension skills are 'book banded'. This means that they have been colour banded into 11 different levels of challenge. Teachers assess the children and assign them to a colour level. Children will then choose

their own books to read at home from within a broad and varied colour band which includes fiction, non-fiction, real and scheme books. Children move through the colour bands until they become a 'free reader'.

Word decoding skills are developed systematically throughout the school. We use the Sounds-Write phonics programme to teach children how to link letters with sounds to read and write. We also use additional phonic programmes including the National Strategy Letters and Sounds materials and Gap House Phonics to play phonic games in Year R and as an intervention resource in KS1.

Children practise and extend their reading skills on a daily basis through daily quiet reading, individual, shared and guided reading sessions, Sounds-Write and literacy lessons. They are also given opportunities to read in all other areas of the curriculum.

Teaching children how to read is at the heart of all we do at Priory. Through Pupil Progress Reviews, children who are not making sufficient progress as readers are highlighted for additional individual or small group support. Provision includes extra literacy support from specialist teaching assistants, daily reading and intensive reading tuition through BRP (Better Reading Partnerships), Reading Blitz and Precision Teaching.

Teachers and parents work together to teach reading skills and engender a love of books. All children have a Reading Record book and parents are invited to attend a series of reading and phonics workshops every year.

We assess children's reading through the school's National Curriculum-linked assessment booklet, KS1 SATS materials and the PM Benchmark kit. Year 1 and some Year 2 children also undertake the Phonic Screening Check in June each year.

## **WRITING**

### **Aims**

We aim to enable our children:

- To write clearly, accurately and confidently for a variety of purposes and audiences, including word processing with ICT
- To develop a consistent, clear and fluent handwriting style and to be aware of the importance of presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively. Children begin to adopt a cursive script when teachers feel it is appropriate (see appendix X).
- To understand the conventions of writing, including grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- To plan, draft and edit their writing.
- To feel valued as writers and to appreciate the writing of others.

### **Approaches**

We provide a wide variety of reasons and purposes for writing and in the early years provide many opportunities for child-initiated and role-play mark making and writing.

As soon as children are able to form most letters correctly and have a good pencil grip, we teach a cursive handwriting style. We also teach children the keyboard skills necessary for word processing.

We encourage children to 'have a go' at writing as soon as possible and to use their phonic skills and knowledge to spell. In KS1, each child has access to a word wall of high frequency words and prompts to develop punctuation and vocabulary.

Teachers regularly model writing in Shared Writing sessions and we provide regular opportunities for children's writing to be shared, displayed, published and celebrated. Basic writing skills are part of every Literacy lesson and these skills are applied in all other areas of the curriculum.

Children who need additional support to develop pencil skills, fine and gross motor control are offered weekly sessions with our specialist teaching assistant. These sessions include Fizzy and CleverHands.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

*All children have an entitlement to participate fully in English, regardless of gender, race, age or ability, in accordance with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy.*

*Children whose second language is English receive appropriate support as necessary.*

## **PLANNING**

**Long term and medium term planning** is being revised to reflect the new English Curriculum (September 2013). Teachers are encouraged to plan their units of work in a way that supports good cross-curricular links. Planning is saved electronically on the shared R:drive.

**Short term planning** is produced on weekly plans that show the objectives and success criteria for the week taken from the Primary English Curriculum teaching sequences. These plans are expected to show differentiation where appropriate and progression over the week in specific areas, eg in phonics or sentence skills. Teachers plan to include a range of teaching strategies ensuring a balance between audio, visual, and kinaesthetic techniques. Plans are shared with teaching assistants and are annotated and adapted in the course of a unit in response to on-going assessments.

At the end of each week, evaluation takes place to inform further planning and teaching. The plans are monitored on a regular basis by the Headteacher and the Literacy Subject Leader.

## **ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING**

Assessment is at the heart of the teaching and learning process. In the EYFS, teachers assess children's learning using Development Matters. Most of the observations for assessment are based on those activities that children initiate and engage with independently across the range of provision.

As children move on through the school, teachers continue to observe and note children's progress on a day-to-day basis. Staff are expected to update their records on a fortnightly basis. At the end of each term, assessments of Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening are recorded using the school's assessment criteria booklet, old SATs papers and tasks, PM Benchmarks, SoundsWrite, work scrutiny, pupil comments and teacher observations. These are discussed in Pupil Progress Review meetings with the Headteacher and Inclusion Leader.

Writing moderation takes place three times a year to ensure assessment is fair and consistent throughout the school. There are also opportunities for cross-school and cross-phase moderation within WRAP.

## **FEEDBACK ON WRITING**

Feedback is essential to help children move forward as writers. With younger children, feedback on writing will usually be verbal and immediate. With older children, feedback may be verbal or written. Children are also encouraged to evaluate their own work by using a traffic light system of self-evaluation.

## **REPORTING TO PARENTS**

Parents receive regular informal or verbal feedback as to their children's progress in Literacy. Each child has a reading record book to record progress in reading at home and school. The practising of spellings and other written work may be set in accordance with the Homework Policy. In addition, parents also have at least three opportunities a year to meet with the staff to discuss progress and to see work.

Parents receive an annual written report at the end of the school year. This includes details of their child's progress and areas for development, including SATs results at the end of Year 2 and results of the Phonics Screening Check in Year 1 and in Year 2.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

In order to monitor standards and progress, the following systems are in place:

- At Pupil Progress Reviews three times a year, the class teacher, SENCO and Headteacher monitor and evaluate the progress of children in Literacy
- The Literacy Subject Leader is given time to observe lessons and monitor planning, assessment and progress. Staff meet regularly to engage in whole school moderation
- The school's Literacy Action Plan is part of the School Improvement Plan – this is reviewed and updated annually by the Literacy Subject Leader and Headteacher

**REVIEW** This policy will be reviewed in 2016