



Loving minds ♥ hearts ♥ hands.

English Policy 2023-2024

Approved by: Headteacher

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**Following review
due by:** Sept 24

This policy has been written in light of the school's mission statement and should be read in conjunction with the Teaching and Learning Policy.

Intent

At St Ambrose, we recognise the crucial importance of studying the English language. Improved performance at reading, writing and spoken language will enable our pupils to express their thoughts and ideas more fluently, accurately and, ultimately, to their greater satisfaction. This will also help them deal more successfully with other curriculum subjects while enriching their lives beyond school. The teaching and learning of language skills are, therefore, given a high priority in our school.

Our overarching aim for English is to promote high standards of language and literacy by providing pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

We aim for our pupils to:

- Read easily, fluently and with a 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 accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.
- Use discussion to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas.
- Are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

At St Ambrose, we encourage all children to become independent learners and be confident in all learning strands. The children will be given opportunities to speak in various contexts and learn to listen to and value the views of others.

Implementation.

Reading.

At St Ambrose, we intend that all of our children will become fluent, confident readers who can successfully comprehend and understand a wide range of texts and develop a lifelong love of reading. We ensure not only that our children 'can' read but 'do' read. By the end of their time at primary school, all children should read fluently and confidently across the curriculum. They have developed critical thinking skills through discussions of what they've read that will last a lifetime. Reading enables children to build on what they know and widen

their knowledge and braced with these skills; our children are empowered to become global citizens and advocates for change.

The Reading curriculum has been designed around the requirements of the National curriculum. We have carefully selected the Read Write Inc Phonics programme, which provides a rigorous and structured approach to teaching phonics, ensuring appropriate challenge and progression to meet the curriculum needs of our younger children. When ready, children progress to the Literacy and Language programme. This is carefully planned and implemented to suit the needs of our children and the curriculum as a whole.

Alongside our programmes, we use *Cracking Comprehension*, which provides carefully chosen texts and supporting questions to enable children to analyse and understand texts at an appropriate level and in-depth.

Good quality texts are identified for each year group which enrich the curriculum. These are read with the children. This ensures positive modelling of how reading should sound. Books are celebrated through corridor displays and special events such as World Book Day and author visits.

Children accessing the Read Write Inc programme take home a phonically matched decodable book and a book that will help promote a love of reading and can be read with someone at home. There is an expectation of daily reading at home and school. Early Years and KS1 have a home/school lending library. This gives families access to a range of fiction and non-fiction books to share at home. Parent/carers are encouraged to read to their children, talk about the stories/information and bring them into school to change every week. Teachers and teaching assistants will complete miscue analysis' each term for children who have completed the Read Write Inc programme and through summative assessments will track the reading age of the children. The children then take home the appropriate level reading book for their reading age. The reading books are from a range of schemes, predominantly Oxford Owl, Badger and Project X. The schemes ensure that children have access to a wide range of texts, and allow for pupils to develop their skills within a level before moving to the next level.

The children continue to learn and develop their reading skills through the RWI Literacy and Language scheme (KS2) and *Cracking Comprehension* programme. Texts are carefully chosen and supporting questions help children learn how to analyse and understand a text. The literacy scheme also enables the children to explore language, literary devices and comprehension skills outlined in the National Curriculum Content Domains.

Phonics

The teaching of phonics is through the delivery of the Read Write Inc scheme. These units comprise learning different graphemes, focusing on oral and aural phonological skills and sight vocabulary. During these sessions, children are explicitly shown how to apply their

developing skills to their writing. Using these skills is reinforced throughout the curriculum. Children are grouped by their individual needs and are in phase appropriate groups.

The scheme provides teachers with a precise sequence of lessons beginning with teaching individual sounds, moving on to blending and introducing children to the multi-letter sounds (e.g. 'ay', 'igh', 'ough'). From here, children learn to read and write words and sentences using their knowledge of letter sounds. Throughout the programme, the children work in ability groups, and lessons move at a pace suitable for the children. Teachers regularly check children's understanding and reading capability through their practical and recorded work, asking effective questions to understand children's abilities.

The children are assessed by the RWI leader every six weeks to ensure progress is being made. Children who are making slower progress are supported through the Green Frog Army. This is regular 1-1 or small group support to ensure the children's learning needs are met.

Writing, including Handwriting.

At St Ambrose, we ensure a progression of writing skills across the school, using the objectives outlined in the National Curriculum. Teachers model high standards of writing to secure high expectations and enthuse writers. The children are taught to recognise the range of social functions that writing can perform, e.g. persuade, instruct, inform, and entertain, which enables the children to demonstrate the ability to choose the appropriate form and content to suit the purpose and audience.

Collaborative planning meetings take place each term to support staff in creating a clear sequence of lessons. Literacy and Language planning is centred around a good quality text- using our love and enthusiasm for reading as a gateway to our writing. The progression of skills is carefully linked to the choice of writing purpose, allowing children to experience a wide range of writing opportunities and develop these skills as they progress through school. This ensures the children acquire the disciplinary knowledge needed to become fluent writers.

In EYFS, the children are encouraged to make marks using a variety of media, and they are exposed to writing within the learning environment. They begin to learn letter formation using RWI Phonics. When ready, the children put these letters together to write words using the Fred Fingers method. This continues throughout KS1. Through RWI Phonics, the children are encouraged to write confidently, with a strong focus on grammar and vocabulary, spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds, and acquire good handwriting. In KS1, the Penpals scheme of work is used.

Penpals is an interactive and engaging handwriting scheme used from Year 1 - 6 to develop writing, and our high expectations are consistent throughout the school. Regular handwriting lessons are delivered, and interventions are carried out to ensure catch up for any children where needed.

The RWI Literacy and Language programme follows a layered approach for teaching reading – from the 'bare bones' of a text to 'think and link', 'power words', paired reading and drama to deepen understanding. This is taught through various engaging activities based on a rich text, such as 'What if Not?' and 'Big Questions'. Grammar and punctuation are taught through the scheme and in line with the expectations of the National Curriculum.

In KS2 and Year 2 (when the RWInc programme is completed), children are discretely taught spellings using the RWInc spelling programme. This builds on the strategies that they are taught in RWInc to help them learn phonics. It is a proven approach underpinned by phonics, retrieval strategies and fast-paced lessons.

Knowledge organisers are used in KS2 to identify the key grammatical terminology for the unit, topic-specific vocabulary previous knowledge and reading which will help them in the current unit. Children verbally rehearse and plan for writing, working with partners to discuss and record ideas. In Key Stage 2, children use the writing process to plan, draft, write, proofread and edit their final piece.

Weekly opportunities for extended writing across the curriculum are carefully planned so that the children can practise and develop their writing.

The assessment of writing is done in several ways. Teachers regularly check children's understanding through their spoken and recorded work, asking practical questions and setting the next steps to assess children's learning. Children are given effective verbal and written feedback, and the next steps allow the children to respond and improve their writing. They are taught how to edit and improve their work, and these skills develop throughout the key stages. Termly internal writing moderation meetings ensure accurate and consistent judgements are made on pupils' work. The children complete a summative spelling, grammar and punctuation assessment every term.

Spoken Language.

The four strands of spoken language: speaking, listening, group discussion and drama, permeate the whole curriculum. Children are encouraged to develop practical communication skills in readiness for later life. We aim for children to be able to speak clearly, fluently and coherently, to be able to listen attentively with understanding, pleasure and empathy and contribute to group discussions effectively.

We achieve this by:

- Giving our children confidence in themselves as speakers and listeners by showing them that we value their conversations and opinions. We also encourage respect for the views of others.
- Being aware that we provide a model of speaking and listening in our day-to-day interactions with them and with other adults.

- Helping them to articulate their ideas and provide purposes and audiences for talk within a range of formal and informal situations and in individual, partner, group and class contexts.
- By providing opportunities to perform to a larger audience, in assemblies and productions, where children's efforts and skills are acknowledged by staff, parents, carers, visitors and peers.
- By providing a range of experiences where children can work collaboratively and participate in opportunities to reflect on talk and explore real and imagined situations through role-play, hot-seating, drama and discussions.
- By developing the children's ability to listen with attention and understanding in all curriculum areas and, where necessary, asking and responding to questions appropriately.

Impact

The impact of the English curriculum can be seen by listening to our children who are fluent, confident readers who successfully comprehend and understand a wide range of texts but more importantly in the way in which our children can articulate their love of reading and the breadth of genres and authors they enjoy. Children will have a rich vocabulary, which grows every day and one that they can draw upon when writing. It can also be seen in their written and verbal responses and opinions to texts. All pupils will acquire a wide vocabulary, a solid understanding of grammar and be able to spell new words by effectively applying the spelling rules they learn throughout their time in primary school. Throughout the planning and writing process, children can articulate what they have done and why- commenting on grammatical choices, vocabulary and sentence structure. As they progress through school, they develop independent editing skills, improving their work and recognising writing as an ongoing process that can be modified and improved. Pupils will have a good knowledge of how to adapt their writing based on purpose and audience. They will be able to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language selections and style appropriately.