**Thingwall Primary School**

**Together Promoting Success**

**English**

**A policy for staff and parents**

At Thingwall Primary School we believe that literacy and communication are key life skills. Through the English curriculum, we will help children develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively through spoken and written language and equip them with the skills to become lifelong learners. We want children to enjoy and appreciate literature and its rich variety.

Literacy is at the heart of all children’s learning. Literacy enables children both to communicate with others effectively for a variety of purposes and to examine their own and others’ experiences, feelings and ideas, giving these order and meaning. Because literacy is central to children’s intellectual, emotional and social development it has an essential role across the curriculum and helps pupils’ learning to be coherent and progressive.

By the time children leave our school, we expect them to communicate through speaking and listening, reading and writing, with confidence, fluency and understanding and in a range of situations. We want every child to take pleasure in reading across a range of genre and have a strong motivation to read for a variety of purposes.

By the end of each key stage we expect the majority of children to be working at or above national age related expectations.

**English Intent**

**Reading**

The intent of our reading curriculum is to enable pupils to:

* develop positive attitudes towards reading so that it is a pleasurable and meaningful activity;
* use reading skills as an integral part of learning throughout the curriculum;
* read and respond to a variety of texts whilst gaining increased levels of fluency, accuracy, independence and understanding
* develop different strategies for approaching reading and be able to orchestrate the full range of strategies

**Learning Through Reading at Thingwall Primary School**

Reading is VERY IMPORTANT. Reading opens up the world of learning to our children.

In the long term our aim is to-

**Develop a passion for reading to be able to read fluently for lifelong learning and for pleasure.**

In order to support you as parents in making a positive difference regarding your child’s reading, Thingwall Primary School provides a wide range of reading materials for children to read from at home and within school.

**Reading at Home and at Thingwall Primary School-A Partnership**

We aim to ensure that the link between reading at home and school is positive. From FS2 up to Year 6, our children will be given or able to choose, from ability appropriate reading books.

We use a number of reading schemes, predominantly Bug Club and Accelerated Reader for our banded books, promoting a wide variety in both genre and style.  Each child is given a reading record at the beginning of the year in which you as parents are positively encouraged to write when you hear your child read at home. As children progress through Thingwall Primary and become more independent in their reading, the role of the Parent is to support through more questioning to ensure your child is still understanding the text and the vocabulary being used. Recording in the reading record remains important through KS2 as a record of the frequency and variety of books read. Staff will also record individual reading and Guided Reading sessions here.

In addition, each class has a vibrant reading corner where children are encouraged to spend time reading for pleasure. Each day also has timetabled whole class reading time where teachers and teaching assistants will read to the whole class from books chosen from our literary spine.

**Writing**

The intent of our writing curriculum is to enable children to:

* write in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences
* be increasingly aware of the conventions of writing, including grammar, punctuation and spelling
* plan draft and edit their writing to suit the purpose
* use IT as a literacy medium for presenting work and manipulating text
* form letters correctly, leading to a fluent joined and legible handwriting style, giving increasing regard to presentation

**Learning through Writing**

From the earliest days in school children are encouraged to see themselves as writers. The teacher’s role is one of a facilitator providing a model, support and material, and purposes for writing.

Children are encouraged to write for real purposes and to understand that purpose and intended audience will have a direct influence on the style and tone of writing.

The classroom environments are supportive with work banks and/or dictionaries and thesaurus available at all times. Children have access to a variety of writing tools to allow for the variety of writing demands they will meet. Writing materials are available in different areas of the classroom e.g. role play areas in Early Years classrooms to reinforce the notion of writing for real purposes.

We follow a whole school genre map which ensures coverage from Reception to Year 6. Half termly children are assessed through an independent writing session. We use resources from our Assertive Mentoring system to support planning and re-drafting.

**Handwriting**

Children are taught to form their handwriting in the style of the New Nelson Handwriting scheme. The emphasis is on clarity, legibility and flow so that a child’s thought is not hampered by an inability to write quickly and fluently.

Important areas to address are:

* A comfortable pencil hold/grip: An incorrect pencil grip can hamper flow and result in poor control of the writing implement.
* Position of paper/book: This depends on whether the child is left or right handed. The child should be seated in a balanced position facing the table. Right-handed children should have the paper turned at a slight angle to the left. (Left handed children to the right). The paper should be held in position securely by the non-writing hand.
* Pressure: A light and even pressure should be used in handwriting. Too heavy a pressure prevents fluid movement demanded in handwriting.
* Style: Size, shape and fluency of letters.

Towards the end of Key Stage 2 children are not discouraged from developing their own style of handwriting **provided** it is clear, legible and fluid.

**Grammar**

The intent of our grammar curriculum is to enable children to:

* Whole class teaching of specific grammar and punctuation rules
* Daily inclusion of grammar and punctuation teaching through English lessons and through writing
* Grammar focuses to be prevalent in writing targets and expectations
* Using grammatical knowledge in real life contexts
* Applying skills in cross curricular contexts

**Learning using Grammar knowledge**

Throughout key stages 1 and 2 specific grammar lessons are taught weekly and followed up through writing lessons. We use the Assertive Mentoring ‘Grammar Hammer’ system which allows children time to develop their understanding of grammatical vocabulary and to regularly practise their skills. For more information on the expectations of grammatical knowledge please refer to the English Glossary attached.

**Spoken Language**

The intent of our spoken language curriculum is to enable children to:

* Communicate effectively, speaking with increasing confidence, clarity and fluency
* Participate in discussions and debate in a variety of contexts
* Listen to the views, opinions and ideas of others with increased interest
* Articulate ideas and thoughts clearly with appropriate tone and vocabulary, recognising audience
* Respond to questions and opinions appropriately
* Retell stories and poems which are known by heart
* Ask questions with increasing relevance and insight

**Phonics and Spelling**

The intent of our phonics curriculum is to enable children to:

* Blend and segment sounds easily
* Learn that segmenting words into their constituent phonemes for spelling is the reverse of blending phonemes into words for reading
* Spell words accurately by combining the use of grapheme-phoneme correspondence knowledge as the prime approach, and also morphological knowledge and etymological information
* Use a range of approaches to learn and spell irregular words.

**Learning through phonics**

Phonics is an approach to helping children learn the link between the sounds that they use to talk, listen, read and write.  It is part of our English curriculum for emerging readers and writers.  It runs alongside other teaching methods to help children develop as confident talkers, readers and writers.

**What exactly is phonics?**

Words are made up from small units of sound called phonemes. Phonics teaches children to be able to listen carefully and identify the phonemes that make up each word. This helps children to learn to read words and to spell words

In phonics lessons children are taught three main things:

**1.  GPCs**

They are taught GPCs. This stands for grapheme phoneme correspondences. This simply means that they are taught all the phonemes in the English language and ways of writing them down. These sounds are taught in a particular order. The first sounds to be taught are s, a, t, p.

**2.  Blending**

Children are taught to be able to blend. This is when children say the sounds that make up a word and are able to merge the sounds together until they can hear what the word is. This skill is vital in learning to read.

**3.  Segmenting**

Children are also taught to segment. This is the opposite of blending. Children are able to say a word and then break it up into the phonemes that make it up. This skill is vital in being able to spell words.

**How is phonics taught?**

Phonics sessions are entirely made up of games, songs and actions and the sessions only last for 15-20 minutes per day.

At Thingwall Primary School we teach the letters and sounds phases.  There are 6 phases of development that are taught from Foundation 2 to Year 2 before children progress to the school's spelling scheme. Phase 6 looks particularly at grammar.

**Spelling**

When the children have completed the phonics stage of their learning they progress to spelling.

Children are taught:

* Common spelling patterns and rules.
* How complex words are constructed using common prefixes and suffixes.
* How words are altered to form plurals, abstract nouns etc.
* Strategies to help them develop as confident spellers.
* Exception to common rules to help them spell 'tricky words'.
* A range of strategies to help them remember unusual words.

Children in Years 1-6 are given weekly spelling lists to learn. Children will then be tested on these words weekly.

Some of the strategies used to teach spelling may include:

* sounding words out: breaking the word down into phonemes (e.g. *c-a-t*, *sh-e-ll*) – many words cannot be sounded out so other strategies are needed;
* dividing the word into syllables, say each syllable as they write the word (e.g. *re-mem-ber*);
* using the **Look**, **say**, **cover**, **write**, **check**strategy: look at the word and say it out aloud, then cover it, write it and check to see if it is correct. If not, highlight or underline the incorrect part and repeat the process;
* using mnemonics as an aid to memorising a tricky word (e.g. *people*: *people eat orange peel like elephants*; *could*: *O U Lucky Duck*);
* finding words within words (e.g. *a rat*in *separate*);
* making links between the meaning of words and their spelling (e.g. *sign*, *signal*, *signature*) – this strategy is used at a later stage than others;
* working out spelling rules for themselves – a later strategy;
* using a dictionary as soon as they know how to.

**Teaching and Learning**

The National Curriculum 2014 forms the basis of teaching and learning. All children receive at least the minimum entitlement of a daily English lesson.

Teachers work towards independent learning and plan for different working groups. Teachers employ a range of generic teaching strategies. Additional adults are used to support the teaching of English.

All children receive English teaching on a daily basis. Intervention programmes will be implemented for children with special educational needs or if a specific learning need is identified. Teachers and teaching assistants plan programmes together and monitor progress of these pupils.

The needs of children with English as an additional language will be met through planning and appropriate authority support where appropriate. This is supported by our equal opportunities policy.

**Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Assessments are made in line with the school assessment policy.

Teachers use effective assessment for learning to ensure planning is based on prior attainment and that pupils know what they need to do to achieve the next steps. Group or individual targets are set accordingly. Marking is in line with the school marking and feedback policy.

Analysis of assessment data is used to set targets. Class targets are derived from the school’s key skills and are regularly reviewed. Where applicable, school issues are addressed through targets linked to Appraisal and Pupil Progress Meetings.

Children are informed of their own targets for learning and supported to make progress towards them. Children are also involved in reviewing their progress towards these through self, peer and teacher assessment. Opportunities are built in for reflective written and verbal feedback.

Targets are sent to parents termly and discussed with the class teacher encouraging continuity at home and at school. Yearly reports are sent home in the summer term detailing achievement and ways forward in all subject areas.

**Staff Development**

Training needs are identified as a result of whole school monitoring and evaluation, performance management and through induction programmes. These will be reflected in the School Development Plan. The English leads will arrange for relevant advice and information, such as feedback from courses or newsletters, to be disseminated. Where necessary, the English leads lead or organise school based training.

Additional adults who are involved with intervention programmes will receive appropriate training that may be school based or part of central training.

**Resources**

A comprehensive range of resources is available in school. Every class has a selection of reference books e.g. dictionaries, thesaurus etc. and a class library.

Teacher resources are located in classrooms. Guided reading books are kept within Key Stage areas. These books are banded accordingly. Individual banded reading books are kept in key stage areas.

Teaching environments support teaching and learning in English through the use of a Working Wall, grammar, punctuation, spelling and handwriting displays.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Head teacher and the English Leads and teachers monitor English. Having identified priorities, the SLT and English Leads construct an action plan that form part of the School Development Plan. This forms the basis for any monitoring activities and will clearly identify when, who and what is to be monitored and how this will take place e.g. classroom observation, planning scrutiny, work sampling etc. This plan is shared with the school governors and reviewed termly at the Standards and Strategy committee meetings. All staff follow ‘non-negotiables’ for each aspect of English, these are reviewed and rewritten each year.

**Review**

This policy will be reviewed July 2020 and points to address added to the School Development Plan.

Appendices:

1. Thingwall Primary School Genre Map (to be updated September 2019)
2. Thingwall Primary School VIPERS across the curriculum
3. Pie Corbett Grammar Progression
4. Writing Assessment Checklists
5. Guided Reading Domains
6. English Glossary

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