

English Curriculum – Intent, Implementation and Impact

Intent

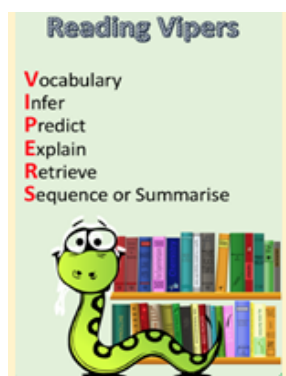
At St.Robert's First School we believe that a quality English curriculum is essential to nurturing children's love of reading, writing and use of language. We prioritise the sequential development of reading skills, including the rigorous use of the RWI phonics programme, and also promote reading for pleasure starting in Nursery and progressing through to Year 4. We recognise the importance of nurturing a school-wide culture where children take pride in their writing, and have the skills to write clearly and accurately, adapting their language and style for a range of contexts. We want to inspire children to speak and communicate confidently and articulately in meaningful ways that enhance their learning and personal development. We believe that developing a secure knowledge-base in English, which follows a clear pathway of progression throughout the school, is vital to enabling children to successfully access the high quality curriculum which St.Robert's provides for all children.



Implementation

Phonics: The systematic teaching of phonics has a high priority throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. We rigorously implement the RWI phonics scheme and children in Reception, Year 1 and, where necessary, Year 2, have a daily phonics lesson. Children are grouped by ability (informed by regular assessment) and each lesson also incorporates a guided reading session.

Reading: We use the Bug Club reading scheme throughout school from Foundation Stage to Year 4. Children in Nursery select books from the school library to share with parents at home. The initial stages of Bug Club are phonics based to align with our phonics teaching. RWI reading books are also used within phonics lessons. The scheme is used up to Year 4. When class teachers' assessments indicate that children are ready, they become a Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2 free reader. We have a good selection of high quality books for children to choose from. Teachers and parents liaise closely via reading records and parents send home reading videos via Class Dojo.



As well as guided reading sessions as part of phonics lessons, children are heard read regularly on a 1-1 basis in Foundation Stage and KS1. Whole class reading is introduced when considered appropriate in Year 1 and then continues to take place regularly in Year 2 – 4. Reading comprehension is taught systematically in Year 1 – 4 using the VIPERS format where the focus is on vocabulary, inference, prediction, explanation, retrieval and sequencing or summarising.



Writing: Writing is taught systematically and in developmentally appropriate ways. Each class has a yearly overview of the writing genres, both narrative and non-fiction, that they will teach. These have been planned to ensure correct coverage of the key genres as well as build on skills from year to year. The outcome of a unit is often an extended write which is used to assess the children's skills against the agreed success criteria. Most units are linked to a text that acts as a stimulus for teaching the identified text, word and sentence level features that children will be expected to include in their extended writing outcome for that unit.

Handwriting: We use the Penpals scheme throughout school to systematically teach letter formation and joins. Children generally leave the school with joined handwriting.

Spelling: Spelling is taught from Year 2 to Year 4 using the RWI Spelling programme. Once children have completed the Phonics programme, they move onto the Spelling programme, usually in Year 2. Each class teacher liaises with parents to inform them of the current focus and children learn spellings at home. Children have a weekly spelling test which is used for assessment and differentiation.

Punctuation and Grammar: Punctuation and Grammar knowledge and skills are taught through English lessons as much as possible. Teachers plan to teach the required skills through the genres of writing that they are teaching, linking it to the genre to make it more connected with the intended writing outcome. Teachers sometimes focus on particular grammar and punctuation skills as stand alone lessons, if they feel that the class need additional lessons to embed and develop their understanding or to consolidate skills.



Assessment: Phonics is assessed each half term following the RWI assessment schedule. Outcomes of these assessments inform the grouping of children within Foundation Stage, Year 1 and, where appropriate, Year 2. Reading and writing are assessed and recorded on Target Tracker as part of twice yearly core subject data drops. Class teachers also assess reading comprehension, CEW, SPAG and handwriting using PenPals, Rising Stars, Headstart, NFER and checklists on a regular basis to inform next steps and grouping. Timely intervention is implemented for any children whose attainment and progress in English falls below age related expectations.

Impact

As a result of our intent and implementation, we have a school community of enthusiastic speakers, readers and writers who can recognise their progress, are confident enough to take risks within their learning and enjoy nothing more than celebrating their English skills and achievements. Our results in the Phonics Screening Check and KS1 Assessments are consistently above National Average and NCC average.

