

Drifffield Church of England  
(VC) Infant School



*'Learn to let your light shine'*

Matthew 5:14-16

# English Policy

September 2024

## **Statement of intent and ethos**

Drifffield CE Infant School welcomes all God's children and their families and is a place where children of all faiths and none flourish and are inspired by the Christian character and values of our school and learn to love God, one another and themselves (Mark 12:30-31) in order that they can 'Live life in all its fullness' (John 10:10)

It is this ethos and the words from Matthew 5: 14-16 'Learn to let your light shine' that underpin our expectations for progress and achievement in all curriculum areas, including, speaking and listening, reading and writing in English.

## **Introduction**

Our approach to language development begins with the individual, building on the knowledge and experiences, which a child brings to our school setting. We extend this through the teaching and learning of speaking and listening, reading and writing skills.

We understand that a key influence on language development is the provision of an environment rich in spoken and written language. We provide such an environment throughout the school and, through liaison with parents, encourage the sharing of these values in the home. The school's English Curriculum is written in line with the National Curriculum in England 2014. It incorporates progression through the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised phonics programme.

## **Aims and Objectives**

Our overall aim in English is to provide children with opportunities to develop their skills in order to communicate effectively in speech and writing in order to express themselves freely, with creativity and imagination. We hope to foster a love of reading and help children to develop as enthusiastic and critical readers across a range of genre; including fiction, poetry and non-fiction texts. Children should gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children should use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations and for different purposes.

Teaching and learning in English should:

- inspire a life-long love of reading
- develop fluent and confident readers
- develop purposeful, accurate and engaging writers
- spark the imagination and excitement required to bring texts to life
- provide a vocabulary rich environment that enables all children to be articulate

## **Organisation**

### **Speaking and Listening**

In Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, communication and language development is key to a child's overall development and progress. We ensure that we provide a rich language environment, where children speak and listen in a range of contexts. We encourage children to be able to speak clearly, fluently and coherently, to be able to listen attentively with understanding, pleasure and empathy and to contribute to group discussions effectively. Speaking and listening skills are developed both discretely and through embedding the teaching of these skills throughout the curriculum. These include:

- circle time
- presentations in worship and church services
- the use of talk partners
- individual, group and whole class reading sessions
- story and rhyme time
- collaborative activities across the curriculum
- drama
- music lessons
- small-world play
- role play
- being taught subject specific key vocabulary in all areas of the curriculum

### **Phonics and early reading**

We follow the Little Wandle systematic and synthetic phonics programme for the teaching and following of early reading. Please see the 'Phonics and Early Reading' policy for further details.

### **Writing**

We encourage children to become expressive and accurate communicators in their writing. Children are guided to write in a range of ways, for different purposes and develop the stamina and skills to write at length, using accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.

In teaching writing, we consider two main dimensions:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas in speech and writing)

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods.

### **Talk for Writing**

Developing pupils' oracy is paramount and a crucial element of the writing process. This is exemplified in our extensive use of talk prior to writing, including oral composition, storytelling and drama. We draw on a range of different stimuli for writing, including texts, video-clips, visits and visitors, wherever possible providing a real purpose and audience for writing. Pupils are given opportunities to write at length.

## **Progression in Writing**

During writing sessions, children are taught how to write in a particular genre and to understand the features of that genre. This is done through teacher modelling, shared, paired and individual writing. Through revisiting different genres throughout EYFS, Year One and Year Two, children become familiar with how to structure their writing for different purposes.

## **Grammar and punctuation**

We teach grammar and punctuation in the context of pupils' writing, as well as using discrete exercises and word games. Children are provided with extensive opportunities to apply new grammatical and punctuation skills to their writing.

## **Editing and re-drafting**

We teach children to become critical readers of their own writing by emphasising self-evaluation. All children are encouraged to re-read their work whilst writing and sometimes read this to an adult.

Towards the end of Year One and in Year Two children are explicitly taught to evaluate their own work against a writer's checklist. They use this to re-draft and edit, making changes where appropriate.

## **Assessment and Target Setting**

In EYFS and KS1, we recognise the value and importance of providing children with immediate verbal feedback in order to make improvements to their English skills and to develop as a communicator. This formative, ongoing assessment feeds into developing short-term planning in speaking and listening, reading and writing. It is used to develop next-steps in these areas.

Half- termly assessments are made, against the National Curriculum.

## **Role of parents and carers**

In order to secure the very best outcomes for children, in English, it is crucial that we work in close and collaborative partnership with parents and carers. We value the essential role they have to play in developing their child's English skills. In order to support this partnership we:

- share content about teaching and learning in English, through curriculum maps, on the school website.
- hold annual meetings for all parents and carers, where we outline the school's approach to teaching reading and phonics.
- hold annual meetings about transition into other year groups and share the expectations for learning in English.
- hold an annual event in which parents and carers are invited to help promote the love of reading.
- request that parents and carers hear their child read their 'learning to read book' at least three times per week, at home and that they share their 'reading for pleasure book with them weekly.
- request that parents and carers help their child to learn any sounds given

## **Related policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- SEN
- Marking
- Pupil Premium
- Handwriting
- Phonics and early reading

## **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Headteacher and members of SLT including the SENCO, who will make any necessary changes and communicate these to all members of staff.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2027