



***Reynalds Cross Vision:***

*To be the best of the best; to be a place where "Every Individual" really does matter, to maximise independent learning and enjoyment in line with school aims; and to be a, positive, happy and fun learning environment with outstanding features.*

# English Policy

**Date adopted: 21<sup>st</sup> May 2019**

**Next Review date: May 2022**

Signed: Charlotte Vale  
Chair of Governors

Signed Jane Davenport  
Head Teacher

**English co-ordinator: Lisa Wood**

# English Policy

*English* in the National Curriculum 2014 is divided into three key areas; Reading, Writing and Spoken Language. English is a statutory entitlement in all key stages (KS) including Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), KS 1, 2 and 3. It also features part of the 14-19 Curriculum.

The decision whether the strands of English are timetabled discreetly or delivered together is the responsibility of each individual class teacher.

The proportion of time dedicated to English is dependent on the needs of pupils in each particular class. It may be timetabled as literacy, reading, phonics, writing, speaking & listening, PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System), Colourful Semantics, shared attention activities, Intensive Interaction, Makaton/signing, Drama or communication.

In particular, English offers pupils with learning difficulties opportunities to:

- develop the ability to respond, to listen and to understand
- interact and communicate effectively with others in a range of social situations
- make choices, obtain information, question and be actively involved in decision making
- develop creativity and imagination
- have access to a wide range of literature to enrich and broaden their experience.

(QCA 2009)

The Curriculum for English has been planned using EYFS documentation, the QCA guidance 'Planning, teaching and assessing the curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties' (refer to Curriculum & Assessment Policy), the National Curriculum for England 2013 and ASDAN Personal Progress (14-19). The schools Long Term Map (LTM) can be found on the computer network at Shared: ALL WORK: CURRICULUM: NEW CURRICULUM: Long Term Map. This sets out the genre focus for each class for each term. The range of genres on the LTM were selected from the range suggested in the new National Curriculum. Only the genres that are meaningful to each group of pupils were selected and were linked to the overall topic of the term where possible. Each term pupils study a fiction genre and a non-fiction genre giving them a broad range of literature across the key stage.

A Medium Term Plan (MTP) is provided for each class each term and can be found on the computer network at Shared: ALL WORK: CURRICULUM: NEW CURRICULUM: Medium Term Planning. This sets out the learning opportunities to be provided during the term and the expected learning outcomes by the end of the term, taken from the guidance as mentioned above. Teachers are expected to identify learning objectives relevant for each individual pupil and add these to the MTP (refer to Curriculum & Assessment Policy). They are also expected to indicate on the MTP an overview of the activities they will be providing that support the specified learning opportunities and also provide opportunities for pupils to achieve their learning objectives. Resources required for these activities should also be specified, as should key vocabulary to be reinforced during the course of the term. Once completed, the MTP should be saved to the computer network in the 'Planning' folder for the term to which it corresponds (for example the date of the current academic year) by the date given on the annual calendar issued at the start of the school year.

In the short term, teachers are encouraged to provide individual lesson plans (although some teachers may opt for a daily/weekly overview, refer to planning guidelines-Shared: ALLWORK\CURRICULUM\Planning Guidelines for the necessary content and exemplar proforma).

On lesson plans for other curriculum subjects teachers are asked to identify links to any English strands and are encouraged to incorporate aspects of English into other lessons where appropriate.

### **Speaking & Listening/Communication**

Class teachers are responsible for providing opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills, including communication, whether verbal or non-verbal. In addition to this, pupils' Speech and Language development may suggest the need for a referral to the Speech and Language Therapist (SALT). As such, individual pupil Educational Health care plans (EHCs) may make reference to such consultation/guidance. Involvement within the SALT team may result in a dedicated programme of work used to address identified targets but these should also be reinforced where possible across the school day. Staff are trained in the use of a range of strategies including PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System), Makaton, Colourful Semantics, 'word level' work, shared attention strategies and the use of various electronic communication aids including switches and iPads.

The whole school also participates in 'Quiet time' (See 'Quiet time' Protocol on the school website) before each lesson and assembly to help them to focus and get ready to learn.

Reynalds Cross use a Shared attention program which aims to create opportunities for commentary on events and activities through adult repetition and modelling. All staff received training on the strategy (Dec 2017) and are encouraged to complete sessions daily at the relevant level for their pupils'. Shared attention sessions aim to promote engagement and communication through exciting, sensory experiences with the aim that engagement will assist pupils' ability to sit, look and listen throughout activities as well as develop their commentary and interaction skills.

The strategy is progressive, with pupils progressing through 4 stages as their attention skills develop.

- 1) Attention bucket- aimed to focus pupils' attention
- 2) Attention builder- an activity aided at sustaining pupils' attention for longer
- 3) Attention game- a turn taking activity with the lead adult, aimed to shift attention between two participants
- 4) Table activity- an independent activity which requires pupils to make a transition to a group table

A priority development area for the academic year 18/19 is to continue to embed and develop this strategy to support curriculum areas.

A core vocabulary of 50 key words have been compiled collaboratively and all teaching staff are encouraged to sign accurately using Makaton. Staff share the flip book with pupils, modelling the sign and 'Communicate in Print' symbol that goes with it. The school has one Makaton tutors (Jane Bellion) who supports this approach across school to staff, pupils and parents.

All classes also have access to My Choice, a Makaton app, via classroom iPads. Staff have received support using this tool in class. The app allows staff and pupils to have instant access to signing support through videos and tutorials, as well as having the opportunity to develop 'grids' which can be used to support pupils' core vocabulary or to create topic specific 'grids' with subject related vocabulary.

## **Reading**

Reynalds Cross uses the Read, Write, Inc phonics programme. We do however continue to use the songs from Jolly Phonics as pupils enjoy these and find them very motivating.

It aims to build pupils speaking and listening skills in their own right as well as to prepare pupils for learning to read by developing their phonic knowledge and skills. It sets out a systematic programme for teaching phonic skills with the aim of being able to read text fluently by the end of the programme. There is equipment and activities to support the teaching of phonics in the library, including level banded reading books. The school also subscribes to 'Phonics Bug' and 'Jolly Phonics' interactive whiteboard resources located in 'network programmes' and there are a range of phonics resources located outside the library. It is expected that teachers will use their professional judgement to decide a pupil's readiness for reading. Staff are expected to record progress made in reading through individualised targets and reading records which records how often pupils can access books or other reading materials.

The dedicated reading co-ordinators support a growing number of pupils during 1:1 reading sessions and coordinate our Reading volunteers. In these sessions they work on both reading skills and comprehension activities.

Classes are being actively encouraged to ensure that reading is a priority within the school day. A reading proforma, compiled for use to help track progress in reading, is being used across school (these forms are scrutinized by the SIP group to identify areas for development).

It is recognised that not all pupils will have the ability to learn to read written text. Staff are however expected to encourage all pupils to have an interest and enjoyment of books. Pupils are therefore exposed to a range of genres through the literacy schemes of work as described above and to increase enjoyment they are delivered in multi-sensory ways. For pupils that are unlikely to become confident readers of words there will be a greater emphasis on functional reading. This includes teaching pupils to recognise social sight vocabulary (name, days, places of importance) to support their continual development of reading, as well as 'reading' using symbols.

The school uses a programme called 'Communicate in Print' to produce symbol supported text. For those pupils who are dependent on symbols to enable them to read, there is also a recording chart being used to track their progress and identify next steps.

## **Writing**

Reynalds Cross use a range of writing resources to support all of our learners' fine motor and writing progression. These include access to 'PenPals', a scheme which sets out the order in which letters should be introduced and the appropriate and agreed formation of each letter; and online resources such as those available on BusyThings.

Guidance regarding progression of pencil hold, writing patterns and letter formation is available for all staff and can be found at S:\ALL WORK\APP\progression of writing.

Pupils initially learn to write with pencils but during the secondary phase of the school, pens may be introduced where it is deemed appropriate.

It is also recognised that not all pupils will develop the ability to form letters/words or compose pieces of writing. Staff are expected however to assist pupils to record their work using a means that is appropriate to them and by differentiating resources as appropriate e.g. the use of writing slopes and pencil grips. This may include a photographic record, mark making, addition of a key symbol or symbolised phrase/sentence. Because of the nature of some of pupils' physical or learning difficulties, it may be inappropriate to persevere with the teaching of handwriting; in such cases the pupils will be taught alternatives to writing such as keyboard skills and use of word processors. These skills are taught to all pupils (where appropriate) alongside handwriting skills.

Classes are encouraged to have a 'finger gym' box with activities to develop fine motor skill. In addition to this, pupils are encouraged to practice functional fine motor control during everyday tasks such as opening doors by the handle and fastening their shoes. Staff are able to track pupils fine motor progression using SOLAR assessment system (PSD self help skills- fine motor).

A priority development area for year18/19 is to explore how we can support our pupils more with their fine motor skills, with attention being brought to functional fine motor skills such as using cutlery, zipping their coats and other skills that promote independence.

### **English in the 14-19 Stage**

When pupils reach the 14-19 Stage they continue to have English sessions which contain elements of speaking, listening, reading and writing as per the statements above. However, due to the age of the pupils, the teaching of English has a greater emphasis on developing functional skills i.e. equipping learners with the practical communication, reading and writing skills needed to live, learn and, where appropriate, work successfully. Across school there may be classes where there are fewer discrete English sessions as a more cross curricular approach is taken. As such, once new skills are learned they can be tried out in a practical way (e.g. reading instructions on a packet when using the microwave, writing a symbolised shopping list or reading environmental signs).

Students in the 14-19 Stage work towards English themed Asdan qualifications. For the majority of students this is Asdan Personal Progress and examples of modules that they will study include 'Developing Reading Skills', 'Providing Personal Information' and 'Developing Communication Skills'. For students working at the lower end of Entry one their modules are more sensory based.

Each module takes one year to complete so, rather than just having one English focus lasting a year, classes may work towards collecting evidence in different strands throughout the course of the year.

### **Monitoring**

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through scrutiny of planning, learning walks, lesson observations, achievement of annual and end of KS targets, scrutiny of work, and end of year reports (refer to Curriculum & Assessment Policy).

This Policy will be evaluated through discussion amongst staff, Curriculum co-ordinator and English co-ordinator (Lisa Wood) – alongside the Link Governor for English. It will be reviewed every three years in the light of those discussions and will also take into account local and national policy. The English co-ordinator/Link Governor will report to the "Learning and Pupil Progress" Committee of the Governing Body as requested.

## **References**

Reynalds Cross Curriculum & Assessment Policy