

# Victory Primary school



*Victory for all!*

## **Literacy Policy**

**November 2012**

## **Rationale**

At Victory Primary School we encourage our pupils to become lifelong learners. We want to give children an education of the highest standard, we aim for excellence in all our school activities and encourage all pupils, whatever their ability to achieve the best they possibly can. We believe that providing pupils with a well balanced, enriching and engaging literacy curriculum will aid them in developing into self-assured communicators. Our literacy policy will ensure that all pupils become confident speakers, listeners, readers and writers, preparing them for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond.

## **Aims**

- To ensure that all pupils are receiving a well-balanced literacy curriculum
- To ensure that each teacher is providing pupils with a consistent approach to literacy teaching
- To ensure that all pupils are given the opportunity to extend their knowledge and skills
- To ensure that all pupils are exposed to different genres and authors

*'The more you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go'*

*Dr. Seuss*

## **Reading Aims**

- To build on the children's language experiences and early reading skills that they have already acquired.
- For pupils to emerge from inexperienced readers to independent readers who read a variety of texts for different purposes.
- To look for higher standards because we have high expectations of our children.
- For children to develop as readers and to be able to enjoy reading for pleasure, alone or as a shared experience with an adult or their peers. We want children to be able to read independently and be able to follow personal interests, use their research skills to extend their knowledge and understanding.
- To provide books in a variety of languages in order for pupils to develop a healthy knowledge of languages other than English and allow pupils of that culture to celebrate their heritage.
- To recognize that reading plays an important part of education and life.

## **Reading at Victory**

Pupils will have regular opportunities to engage in independent and shared reading. Class teachers will provide pupils with daily read aloud sessions where pupils will be encouraged to respond to the text in a variety of different fashions. Each year group will have class sets of books to read with; this will allow all pupils to have a shared experience of a text.

## **Reading Logs**

Pupils will have regular opportunities to change their reading books. Reading books will be provided at the right level for individual pupils. Parents, pupils and class teachers will use the reading logs to communicate about the pupils reading.

## **RWI (Read, Write, Inc)**

Nursery to year 2 follow the Read, Write, Inc (RWI) program from Monday to Thursdays. Children are divided into phonic groups dependant on their reading and phonetic ability. Each RWI group has a tutor who is responsible for the running and phonic assessment of their group. When a pupil is ready to move to the next group it is the responsibility of the pupil's current tutor to speak to the next group tutor and move that pupil on. It is the responsibility of the groups tutor to pass on any concerns about a pupil back to the class teacher. Class teachers are responsible for tracking their children in phonics on a termly basis. Class teachers should monitor the progress of their children by asking the RWI tutor to share their evaluation sheets with the class teacher.

## **Guided Reading**

### **What is guided reading?**

The goal of guided reading is to enable learners to become independent, able readers, who understand and appreciate texts on their own without the teacher's help. Guided reading takes place in a small group, with a teacher or teaching assistant, and focuses on developing pupil's ability to become independent readers, thinkers and learners. The teacher is acting as the expert who guides the children through the text, providing signposts to the most important and most helpful features of the textual landscape. The pupils are grouped by ability and read individual copies of the same text, which matches the reading level of the group. Texts are selected from the school's guided reading resources. Class teachers will have access to the Rising Star comprehension resource. It will allow teachers to use a range of texts and questions to help develop pupil's comprehension skills. It is expected that the pupils in KS2 will have an opportunity once a week to practice their comprehension skills.

### **The strategy check-helping our pupils learn to read**

The purpose of a 'strategy check' is to give the children an opportunity to practice and remember the different strategies they need to apply in order to read and understand texts.

## *Early readers*

### **1-to-1 pointing:**

Children practice pointing using a sentence from the story. Children show and use a pointing finger.

### **Predicting:**

Cover a word – predict what it could be and check. Model predicting a word – checking all searchlights.

### **Checking initial/final sounds – does that look right?**

Cover the first/last letter – predict, then check. Point to the first letter – get your mouth ready to make the sound. Find the letter on an alphabet card.

### **Applying phonics to read words**

List some more challenging words in the text – decode these together using phonics – predict/discuss the meanings.

### **Checking meaning – does that make sense?**

Explain that reading should always make sense. Practice re-reading to check meaning. Read a sentence – check that it makes sense. Give the children two options – which one makes sense? Discuss what is happening on the page.

### **Re-reading to check**

Explain to the children the importance of going back and checking their reading. Model re-reading; practice re-reading.

## *Developing Readers*

Ask children to name the strategies they can use when they are unable to read a word.

Ask the children to share the different things they can do when they don't understand a word, sentence of section or text.

**Inferring meaning of unknown words:** list some more challenging words from the guided book on the board. Ask the children to read the words and predict what they mean. Read them the whole sentence so they can check their predictions.

**Text layout:** analyze a page of text (e.g. non-fiction) – how is it organized? Why? How do we read it?

**Decoding unknown words:** record difficult words from the text on cards or the board. Ask children to decode these words and explain how what they did (i.e. syllables; phonics; knowing parts of words etc) or predict the meaning of the words.

**Checking meaning:** read a sentence from the text which is more challenging; discuss what it means and how they know.

### **Active reading strategies:**

#### **Asking questions while they are reading:**

**Visualising:** read a section of text – ask children to think about what pictures they see in their head.

**Predicting:** read the opening paragraph – summarize what they know so far and predict what might happen next – read the next paragraph to check.

**Reading longer sentences (complex sentences):** record the main clause from a complex sentence on the board – read it and discuss what it means – explain that authors often add more information to the sentence (subordinate clause) – add the subordinate clause and discuss what it means – add it to the main clause and discuss how the two clauses relate to each other – locate the comma and explain that the clauses are usually split by a comma.

**Identifying the main points:** read the opening paragraph of the text to the children and ask them to identify the main points – list these on the board and discuss why other information is not key to the story.

**Scanning:** turn to a page of the text and model how you scan the text for information – use a highlighter.

**Skimming:** model reading a paragraph quickly, looking for specific information (e.g. main characters; clues about setting).

### **How to plan guided reading**

Year 3 to Year 6 should have guided reading sessions planned 5 days a week. Year 1 and Year 2 will have one guided reading session a week when RWI isn't taking place.

Pupils will be grouped by reading level into groups no bigger than 6. Class teachers will choose texts that will link to the learning objective. Appropriate texts will be selected that allow opportunities for work towards specific targets. Texts should match the reading level of the group in terms of fluency—they should be able to read between 90-94% accurately and with understanding. Class teachers will change group books on a regular basis and include a mix of fiction and non-fiction texts, and where possible, texts should match the range being taught to the whole class or which relates to another area of current learning or interest. Most importantly texts must provide opportunities to apply the targets and strategies that form the group's current focus e.g. If trying to extend Level 3 pupils ability to use inference, it is important to select texts that don't make everything explicit.

A guided reading session will follow the sequence of; introduction/recap, a strategy check, independent reading/interaction, return and response, followed by a reading journal activity or reading ahead. The teacher/teaching assistant shares the key objective for the session with the pupils, assesses pupil's progress within the session, gives feedback and next steps in the plenary and records outcomes on the guided reading planning sheet. During the guided reading session pupils will be reading at the same time. The class teacher will dip in and out and listen to each child read. This will give class teachers an opportunity to assess and monitor each pupil's reading skills and ability, whilst still allowing the other pupils to continue reading.

### **Questioning**

Key questions from the book will be planned for in advance and recorded on the plans. Class teachers will need a good knowledge of the text they have chosen for a particular group in order to plan effective questioning. Questioning will link to the learning objective and allow pupils an opportunity to extend and consolidate their reading skills. Questions should develop children's understanding at three levels; literal questions, asking pupils to recall information that is directly stated in the text, deductive or inferential questions asking pupils to work out answers by reading between the lines, by combining information

found in different parts of the text and by going beyond the information given, and evaluative or response questions asking pupils to go beyond the text by, for example, thinking whether the text achieves its purpose, or making connections with other texts. Asking too many questions can discourage children from giving elaborate or thoughtful answers. Alternative strategies can provide more thinking time, allow more children to respond and open up deeper discussion. For example class teachers can start discussions from a key sentence in the text, invite pupils to elaborate on their responses, make a challenging statement and invite children's questions.

### **Guided reading activities**

Class teachers will need to plan a guided reading schedule to ensure they have built in opportunities to listen to all pupils read. While the class teachers/teaching assistants are reading with groups, the other pupils will need to be engaged in reading activities. Pupils will stay with their guided reading group and may move through a variety of activities during the week. The activities may include silent reading, answering comprehension questions, exploring characters, word level work and spelling investigations but should always link back to the group's current target. Reading journals provide an excellent opportunity for pupils to extend and consolidate their reading skills, prepare for their next session or complete a follow up task from their previous session.

### **Equality and reading**

When teaching guided reading to EAL and SEN pupils, it is important to use pictures and visual cues to support discussion in order to aid comprehension. In addition, time should be spent discussing and defining new and unusual words. Ensure that you model how to use specific strategies and give the children an opportunity to practice the strategies a number of times. EAL pupils will have opportunities to read books in dual languages. Class teachers will need to consider IEPS when planning effective guided reading sessions to ensure SEN pupils are being supported appropriately.

Gender equality will be promoted by making sure texts avoid stereotyping and by ensuring boys and girls have access to all the resources available. In order to ensure boys are engaged and excited to read appropriate texts will be chosen that focus on boys interests.

Gifted and Talented children will be well planned for by taking into account their current reading levels and providing them with rich texts that allow them to build on their reading skills and develop their independent learning, reading and thinking skills.

Opportunities to discuss issues of race, gender etc will be provided through the discussion of the resources used.

### **Resources**

The guided reading resources are kept in a central location. It is the responsibility of all adults working in the school to return the resources in their original state.

### **Assessment**

Class teachers should use the Southwark reading guidance to assess pupil's reading levels. Class teachers should use guided reading session, one to one reading and pupil's reading journals to determine what

level pupils are working within. During guided reading sessions the following strategies can be used effectively to assess children; questioning, listening, observing and discussing. Targets will be given to pupils during their guided reading sessions. The learning objectives will link to the children's reading targets. The teaching during a session can also be adjusted due to ongoing assessment. Effective feedback is provided to the children in the group and is aligned closely with their learning objectives. Children are clear about the next steps needed to improve their reading.

**"I love writing. I love the swirl and swing of words as they tangle with human emotions."**

*James A. Michener*

### **Writing Aims**

- To develop pupils in becoming efficient and effective writers who are able to write appropriately for a variety of audiences
- To develop pupils in acquiring the knowledge and skills to communicate effectively within a range of contexts
- To ensure all pupils can use the conventions of written language and grammar
- To ensure that all pupils experience a range of purposes and forms of writing
- To ensure all pupils follow the Christopher Jarman handwriting scheme (KS1 and KS2)
- To ensure all pupils have opportunities to plan, edit, draft and present their work
- To develop pupils to become aware of and appreciate the writer's craft
- To develop pupils love of writing

### **Curriculum coverage**

All pupils should be writing daily in some form across the curriculum using the skills and knowledge acquired in literacy lessons. Class teachers will follow the curriculum map to ensure that children are exposed to all genres and writing forms.

### **Modelled and Shared writing**

Shared writing is a whole class activity where the teacher models the writing of the text. In shared writing, the pupils will contribute to the text by suggesting words or sentences to be used. The teacher demonstrates how to write and explains decisions. S/he will model thinking, rehearsing sentences, writing and re-reading constantly generating words and ideas. Across the key stages, teachers will focus on the purpose, audience, level of formality, structure and organisation of the text. A particular aspect of word or sentence level work provides an additional focus depending on the objectives and targets being worked on at that time.

### **Presentation**

The date and learning objective will be recorded and underlined with a ruler. Pupils who present their work neatly will be awarded with a mention in the good book and their work will be presented on the star

work board. All pupils will begin by writing in pencil. Pupils who can neatly present their work by following the presentation guidelines will be able to apply for a pen licence. Scaffold sheets used to support SEN and EAL pupils should be trimmed and stuck in neatly.

### **Differentiation**

To ensure all of our pupils are making the most progress they can within a lesson the work must be clearly differentiated using AFL via a variety of methods e.g. resources, adult support and level of thinking skills required. Class teachers will be required to fill in a differentiation grid at the beginning of each unit (see planning). Differentiation must not be based on outcome alone but based on the thinking skills the activity requires. Differentiated questioning and high expectations during the main teaching can be used to stretch the more able pupils and develop other pupils.

### **Assessment**

Pupils will complete independent writing assessments once every 3-4 weeks. This will result in the class teacher having a minimum of 3 pieces of independent writing to help assess the pupil against. The assessment will reflect a genre that the pupils have already been taught and will be an opportunity to see if the pupils are able to apply their newly learnt skills. The assessment will be a completely independent task. The assessment will be done on coloured paper and will be marked using the criterion scale. New targets can be set immediately after an assessment using the criterion scale. Class teachers will level pupils using these independent writing assessments and their teacher knowledge of the pupils.

### **Guided Writing**

Guided writing is an excellent way to use AFL and aid children in achieving their targets and making progress. Guided writing is a mini lesson within a literacy lesson itself. Guided writing groups are fluid and change all the time. They may include children from all different ability groups. They may also be target based (so those children who have the same writing target may be included in one guided writing session). The guided writing session may have a separate learning objective to that of the main teaching (for example, the children may be learning to write using different sentence starters, however you have a group of children who are still not using full stops and capital letters properly. Your guided writing session will involve those children learning to use full stops and capital letters properly so they can make the most progress)

### **Targets**

Targets should be set at the beginning of the year and reviewed termly. From year 2 to year 6 target should be kept in pupil's books. In year 1 targets are displayed in the classrooms as visual reminders for the pupils and adults working in the room. Targets should be celebrated when they are met and pupils should be given their next target immediately so they can continue to progress.

### **Planning**

All teachers should use the Victory School planning sheets only. Class teachers are responsible for completing medium term plans to show what genres, specific objectives and key skills will be covered

during each half term. Medium term plans will also show what resources will be used and what the outcome of the unit will be. For each genre taught teachers will be required to complete a differentiation grid (see appendix). The grid will show in detail what thinking skills the children will be using during the teaching of that genre. Class teachers will also be responsible for using weekly plans to show what each daily literacy lesson will entail. Planning should be annotated daily using AFL from the lesson and the marking. Teachers should be making notes after a lesson has been completed on what went well, difficulties and specific pupil(s) that will need extra support in the following lesson.

## **Spellings**

Class teachers are responsible for their pupils learning the spellings appropriate for their year group (see spellings for each year group). Each year group should include spellings in their pupil's home learning books. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to use AFL and planning to ensure the children are learning their spellings. Each week it will be required that the children complete a spelling test to ensure they have learnt their words for that week. Class teachers could also include words searches, spelling games, hangman and spelling bees during guided reading sessions as independent work to help children learn their spellings. The homework could include the phrase 'Can you read them, spell them and do you understand them?'

Reception-one word a week

Year 1-two words a week

Year 2-four words a week

Year 3-six words a week

Year 4-eight words a week

Year 5 and Year 6-ten words a week

## **Homework**

Homework will be sent home on Friday and should be returned by the pupil on Monday morning. Homework will include class spellings and a writing piece that relates to the genre the children are learning about in class. Before school holiday's children will be set a longer piece of writing. The homework task should be differentiated appropriately for each ability group.

Homework must be marked to allow pupils and parents to be able to monitor progress.

## **ICT**

Computer based work is available to all pupils. Pupils will use ICT wherever possible as an integral part of the writing process, including research using the internet. All pupils will have access to ICT for drafting and for the production of finished products. Class teachers, parents and pupils will refer to the e-safety policy for guidelines on computer safety.

## **Handwriting Aims**

- To produce clear, concise, legible handwriting
- To provide equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve success in handwriting
- To present work to a variety of audiences neatly
- To develop accuracy and fluency
- To help children recognize that handwriting is a form of communication and as such should be considered important in order for it to be effective
- To display neatly presented work around the school and in classrooms as a model of excellence for others to aspire to
- To encourage pupils to take pride in their work

## **Development of learning and teaching handwriting**

Teachers need to have high expectations, asking pupils to rewrite work if not written neatly.

In Reception children will use the RWI phonic scheme to learn how to form their letters. From KS1, class teachers and pupils will follow the Christopher Jarman handwriting scheme. Handwriting should be taught discreetly twice a week in lessons. All children will use the red handwriting books.

All children will write in pencil. Once children have presented their work neatly in all of their books they may see the literacy coordinator (head teacher in his/her absence) to apply for a pen license. Children will then receive a certificate congratulating them on receiving their pen license and they may use a pen in their topic and literacy books.

## **Talk for Writing Aims**

Talk for writing allows developing writers at Victory Primary to explore the creative and thinking processes in writing through talk. The talk allows the children to begin to think and talk like a writer.

The talk for writing (story telling approach) includes:

- Learning and repeating oral stories
- Extending the oral stories into writing
- Creating new stories orally

The story telling approach should include imitation (repeating the stories), innovation (changing and developing the stories and finally invention (creating a new story).

Talk for writing will expose all pupils to oral storytelling. Each year group will have a minimum of three oral stories that the pupils will learn each year. These stories will be an opportunity for pupils to learn and use different connectives. The benefits of the talk for writing approach are that the pupils will build a bank of good vocabulary and narrative patterning. It will also help build confidence so that children can build their own creative stories. The talk for writing approach gives opportunities for class teachers to

build in role play/drama (story whoosh's, hot seating, conscience alley) and to build in different word games (tell me about, building a picture).

Each year there will be a storytelling week. This week will involve all pupils across key stages learning the same story. At the end of the week there will be a celebration of the pupils work from that story. Each class will create a class book to demonstrate the learning they have completed during that week.

Each class will have pictures with their pupils doing the connective actions. The pictures will go up with the class each year to the next class teacher. Connectives may either be displayed in the classroom or kept in envelopes for children to have on tables and use in lessons. The connective pyramid can also be used on tables to remind children of what connectives to use in their writing.

### **Speech and Language Aims**

- To have all pupils develop into confident communicators
- To prepare pupils to communicate with a variety of audiences

Speech and language will be included in daily literacy lessons. Speech and language is an effective way to differentiate and challenge our more able pupils. Speech and language can be used in drama activities, partner talk, and class discussions.

Speech and language objectives will be taken from the APP assessment guidelines.