

Victory Primary School



Victory for all!

English Policy

September 2017

Rationale

At Victory Primary School we encourage our children to become lifelong learners. We aim for excellence in all our school activities and encourage all children, whatever their ability, to achieve the best they possibly can. We believe that providing pupils with a well balanced, enriching and engaging English curriculum will aid their journey to becoming highly self-assured communicators through speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Aims of the English Curriculum

- To ensure that all children are receiving a relevant and well-balanced English curriculum.
- To ensure that all teachers provide pupils with a consistent approach to English teaching throughout the curriculum.
- To ensure that all children are given the opportunity to extend their knowledge and skills.
- To ensure that all children are exposed to quality texts and engaging experiences.
- To ensure children use their abilities in English to access all other areas of the curriculum.

“English is the language of the future, ...the most important tool you will ever need, no matter what career you choose. You have the right to English. Make it your right!”

Benjamin Zephaniah

Reading Aims

- To extend and develop readers throughout their time at school.
- For children to emerge from inexperienced readers to independent readers who can use a range of reading strategies to read for different purposes.
- To develop higher order reading skills to support children’s comprehension.
- For children to be able to enjoy reading for pleasure, alone or as a shared experience with an adult or their peers.
- For children to be able to use their research skills to extend their knowledge and understanding.
- To read a wide range of books and media texts on paper and on screen.
- To provide books about different cultures and books in a variety of languages, in order for pupils to develop their knowledge of cultures and languages other than English and allow children of different cultures to celebrate their heritage.
- To recognise that reading plays an important part of education and life.
- To read, recite and perform poetry.

Reading at Victory

Pupils will have regular opportunities to engage in independent, group and shared reading. Class teachers will provide pupils with regular read aloud sessions where pupils may be encouraged to respond to the text or just enjoy listening to a story for pleasure. Each year group has class sets of books to read; this will allow all pupils to have a shared experience of a text. The school literacy room, school library and class book corners also provide teachers with a collection of quality texts.

RWI (Read, Write, Inc)

Reception to year 1 have phonics lessons based on the Read, Write, Inc (RWI) program for 30 minutes on Monday to Thursday. Children are divided into phonic groups according to their reading and phonetic ability. Each RWI group has a tutor who is responsible for the running 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 group's 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 half termly basis. The literacy leader updates the groups every half term and ensures the groups the children are in match the children's reading assessment and performance in the phonics screening 'checks' (year 1). See below.

Phonics Screening Check

In June of year 1, children take the Phonics Screening Check which assesses their ability to phonetically decode pseudo and real words. In addition to RWI, year 1 will be taught phonics in literacy, ICT, guided reading sessions and in targeted intervention groups. This teaching will focus on phonetic knowledge and blending. Children in year 2 who do not reach the threshold of the screening check in year 1, will receive phonics intervention in order to retake the phonics check in June. Children who still do not pass the check in year 2 will receive TA intervention in year 3. Children in year 1 (and year 2 if threshold not reached in year 1) take a phonics screening check on a half termly basis. The results are analysed and shared with the RWI tutors, class teachers and TAs. The intervention groups delivered by the literacy leader are based on this analysis.

Helping our Pupils Learn to Read

Children need opportunities to practise 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.

Images

Use the pictures in a text to support the other cues. Do not use as a stand alone cue.

Segmenting

Break the word down into syllables eg hand -bag = handbag

Graphic

Using part of a word to work out a whole word eg stop becomes stopping.

Contextual

What word makes sense in the story?

Syntactic

Knowledge of grammar e.g. his or her

Developing Readers

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 in the whole sentence so they can check their predictions.

Text layout: analyse a page of text (e.g. non-fiction) – how is it organised? 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 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. Refer to other parts of the text and the strategies listed above.

Five finger test: supports children to choose ability appropriate books to extend them.

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 – summarise 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 discuss when 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: looking for key words, phrases, sentences or paragraphs to find particular information.

Skimming: Reading a piece of text quickly to get an overall idea of its content. This may involve not reading every word.

Home/School Reading

Children will be encouraged to take books home from school to develop their reading skills, develop reading for pleasure and open up a positive dialogue about reading between school and home. In EYFS and KS1, the teacher will change the child's book on, at least, a weekly basis. We use the Big Cat reading scheme from nursery to year 2. In KS2, the children will be responsible for changing their own book. In EYFS and KS1, the teachers will choose books for the child at their reading level and the children will also be given the chance to choose their own books. This may mean they choose a book that they can access on their own or that will need reading to them. They may even keep the same book for a while or have the same book more than once. Parents and teachers can communicate about a child's reading in their home reading log.

Guided Reading

Guided reading aims to allow children to become independent, able readers who can decode using a range of reading cues and comprehend what they are reading. Guided reading takes place in a small group, with a teacher or teaching assistant, and focuses on developing children's ability to become independent readers, thinkers and learners. Children 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. In guided reading sessions, children will also have the opportunity to practise their comprehension skills, read for pleasure and complete word and sentence level activities linked to guided reading or literacy work.

How to plan guided reading

Year 2 to Year 6 have guided reading sessions 5 days a week.

Reception and Year 1 have one guided reading session a week when RWI isn't taking place.

Pupils are grouped by reading level. Each group has a reading target taken from the STAR. For developing readers, the target is based on teaching reading strategies, especially phonics. For more developed readers, comprehension is the focus. This target is then broken down into steps which become the learning objective for a lesson. Class teachers choose texts that link to the learning objective. Appropriate texts are 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 change group books on a regular basis and include a mix of fiction, non-fiction and poetry 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 a pupil ability to use inference, it is important to select texts that don't make everything explicit.

A guided reading session follows the sequence of; introduction/recap, a strategy check, independent reading/interaction, return and response, plenary/feedback. 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 read at the same time. The class teacher will dip in and out and listen to each child read. This gives 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 about the book are planned in advance and recorded on the plans. Class teachers need a good knowledge of the text they have chosen in order to plan effective questioning. Questioning is linked to the learning objective and allows pupils an opportunity to extend and consolidate their reading skills. Questions 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.
- 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. Book Talk can provide more thinking time, allowing 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 and responses. Book talk enables children's ideas and questions to lead a discussion.

Guided reading activities

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, reading for pleasure in the book corner or reading topic books, answering comprehension questions, exploring characters, phonics and word level work and spelling investigations. 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.

Story Time

All children in the school have a regular story time. This gives children the opportunity to listen to stories for pleasure, share quality texts, access a wide range of vocabulary and develop their listening skills.

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 have opportunities to read books in dual languages. Class teachers consider IEPs when planning effective guided reading sessions to ensure SEN pupils are being supported appropriately.

Gender equality is promoted by making sure texts avoid cultural and gender stereotyping and by ensuring boys and girls have access to all the resources available. Texts are chosen to engage boys and excite them to read. Texts also reflect the interests and the cultural diversity within the school.

Gifted and Talented children are 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 reading and thinking skills.

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

Reluctant readers will be encouraged by choosing texts based on their interests, engaging them with quality picture books or information texts. Big Cat progress readers for KS2 and Project X books provide support for struggling and reluctant readers. Children may also be offered additional support with their reading by reading with TAs or volunteer readers. This may involve reading for pleasure or developing word recognition skills, phonics or comprehension.

In EYFS, parents are encouraged to stay and read with their child on Friday mornings.

Buddy reading takes place on a half termly basis across the key stages.

Resources

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

Assessment

Please refer to the assessment policy.

Writing at Victory

Writing Aims

- To develop children in becoming efficient and effective writers who are able to write for a range of audiences and real purposes.
- To ensure all children can use the conventions of grammar and spelling as set out in the new national curriculum.
- To ensure that all children experience a range of writing genres.
- To ensure all children follow the Nelson Thornes handwriting scheme (KS1 and KS2)
- To ensure all children have opportunities to plan, edit, draft and present their work for a real audience and purpose
- To develop children's ability to sustain a piece of writing on a regular basis.
- To write and perform own poetry
- **To engage, enthuse and develop children's love of writing**

Curriculum coverage

Every week, all pupils experience writing across the curriculum using the skills and knowledge acquired in literacy lessons. Curriculum links to literacy are made explicit in the literacy curriculum map.

Modeled and Shared writing

Modeled writing is when 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 writing decisions. S/he models thinking, rehearsing sentences, writing and re-reading to generate words and ideas and checking against the success criteria of a lesson. Across the key stages, teachers 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 based on assessment, for the first minutes of a literacy lesson.

Presentation

The long date and learning objective will be recorded and underlined with a ruler. SEN/LA pupils in KS1 may have the date and LO written for them on a slip of paper, which they will stick into their books. SEN pupils may have a separate LO from the main class. Also, scaffold sheets used to support SEN and EAL pupils should be trimmed and stuck in neatly. All pupils will begin by writing in pencil. Pupils who can present their work by following the presentation guidelines will be able to apply for a pen licence. These guidelines are displayed in classrooms and the literacy room. Teacher's handwriting must always be a good model for the children to follow.

If children word process work for presentation, the font **Comic Sans MS** should be used. NB *Bradley Hand ITC* also has the letter 'k' presented as the children will see it in the phonics screening check, 'k'.

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 or literacy skills required. Differentiation must not be based on outcome. Differentiated questioning must be planned to stretch and develop pupils thinking.

Assessment

Children and teachers will set targets together after a pupil consultation. Pupils receive feedback in their books including their next steps for learning 2 or 3 times a week. Children also complete peer and self assessment on a regular basis. They correct and extend their work using green pen. Pupils complete independent, extended 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 pupils against each term. 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. Each term during assessment week, the children from years 1-6 will complete a piece of writing using the same writing prompt. All assessments will be completed on coloured paper. The assessment is also reported to parents in termly reports. At the end of key stage 1 and 2, the children complete their SATS. At KS1, teacher assessment supports the test results for reading. At the end of both key stages, writing is assessed using the interim framework.

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. They may include children from 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.)

Planning

All teachers use the Victory School planning format and plan using the new literacy map which is line with the new national curriculum and STAR. The map offers suggestions for writing outcomes, speaking and listening opportunities, cross curricular opportunities and recommended texts.

Class teachers are also responsible for using weekly plans to show what each daily literacy lesson will entail. Planning is annotated daily using AFL from the lesson and the marking. Teachers make 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. Daily lessons include a 'starter' activity based on AFL of phonics, grammar or spelling. Teachers also write what the purpose and audience for each lesson is. SC is split into must, should and could. Plans also indicate which thinking skills activities require and indicate adult support.

Talk for Writing

Talk for writing allows children to explore the thinking processes involved in writing through talk. The talk allows the children to begin to think and talk like a writer.

Talk for writing includes:

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

The TFW 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 and to the language and conventions of stories. The TFW approach can be embedded into a normal literacy sequence of lessons. TFW is also an opportunity for pupils to learn and use different grammatical structures, such as sentence openers and conjunctions. The benefits of the TFW 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 TFW approach gives opportunities for class teachers to build role play and drama into literacy lessons.

The TFW approach can be applied in different genres, for example letter writing or writing information books.

Spelling

Class teachers are responsible for their pupils learning the spellings appropriate for their year group. In the new curriculum there are spelling rules for years 1-6. There are also word lists for years 3-6. 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 and spelling rules. Each week the children complete a spelling test to ensure they have learnt their words for that week. Class teachers may also include words searches, spelling games or hangman during guided reading sessions, as independent work, to help children learn their spellings. Spelling rules will also be included in the 'starter' session in relevant literacy lessons.

SPAG

Children in year 2 (optional) and 6 take a SPAG test in May with their SATS (spelling, grammar and punctuation). Children are supported with the test through teaching in literacy lessons. They are also tested on a regular basis. Assessment of the SPAG test is then used to inform teaching in class.

Homework

Homework includes class spellings and a writing piece that relates to the genre the children are learning about in class. Before school holidays, children will be set a longer piece of writing. The homework task is differentiated appropriately for each ability group. The literacy weekly plan includes a homework box. 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 final presentation piece of writing. 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 teaching of 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 Nelson Thornes handwriting scheme. Handwriting is taught discretely once a week. All children use handwriting books to practice their handwriting. Year 1 and reception children also have pupil books to practice their handwriting in.

All children begin the year writing in pencil. Once children have shown consistent and neat presentation of their work over a period of time, in all of their books, they may see the literacy leader (head teacher in his/her absence) to apply for a pen licence. Children will then receive a certificate congratulating them on receiving their pen licence and they may use a pen in their topic and literacy books. If their writing is not maintained, the class teachers have the authority to take the pen away from the child and the child will have to reapply for a pen licence.

Spoken Language

Aims:

- All pupils to develop into confident communicators
- To prepare pupils to regularly communicate to a variety of audiences

Opportunities for spoken language are included in the literacy map, as well as the foundation curriculum. Poetry has been placed in the map at the beginning of every term, in every year group, to support spoken language. Opportunities to develop children's spoken language should be included in the weekly plans. It is an effective way to differentiate and challenge our more and less able pupils and EAL pupils. Pupils are encouraged to orally rehearse their words, phrases or sentences prior to writing.

Drama

Ideas for using drama are incorporated into the literacy map. Drama should be used to help stimulate talk for writing, practice success criteria orally, talk in role, perform, deepen understanding of character and plot and debate issues in texts. Drama is often incorporated into the writing sequence to engage and immerse children in preparation for writing. Ideas for drama include freeze framing, physical story boards, hot seating, conscience alley and telephone conversations.

Multimedia

At Victory, quality texts are used to stimulate children to write. As well as texts; film, television, art, real life events and music can be used as a stimulus for writing. Ideas for multimedia texts are incorporated into the literacy map.

Next review date: September 2019