

St Francis Xavier Primary School

English Policy

Rationale

At St. Francis Xavier Primary School, English plays a vital role in the learning and growth of all students. It is essential that we foster students' knowledge, understanding, and communication skills in English through Reading, Viewing, Writing, Speaking, and Listening. The ability to comprehend texts and understand how language functions within them is crucial for literacy development. By engaging with various texts, students gain the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to read, view, comprehend, listen critically, and express themselves clearly in both speech and writing.

Purpose:

At St. Francis Xavier Primary School, our goal is to nurture in all students:

- A passion for reading, encouraging them to read regularly for both pleasure and information.
- The ability to read accurately, fluently, and with strong comprehension.
- A solid command of both written and spoken language to communicate and respond effectively.
- A keen awareness of audience, with the ability to adjust language and style for different purposes and genres.
- An interest in words and their meanings, fostering a broad vocabulary.
- Strong phonological and phonemic awareness skills.
- A solid understanding of grammar and punctuation, and the ability to apply this knowledge in literacy.
- Clear, fluent handwriting and the confidence and skill to produce high-quality writing.
- The ability to use imagination, creativity, and critical thinking.

Implementation:

At St. Francis Xavier Primary School, our teaching practices align with the Vision for Instruction set out by MACS, ensuring a unified and effective approach to literacy education. A key element of our approach is the **explicit teaching of systematic synthetic phonics**, which is foundational to developing strong reading and writing skills for all students. Additionally, we prioritise the **explicit teaching of spelling** and the **development of vocabulary** through the use of rich mentor texts to enhance students' language skills.

We believe that:

- Literacy is the cornerstone of success across the curriculum.
- Knowledge of how language functions and how it reflects and shapes social attitudes helps students develop a deeper understanding of themselves, their culture, and the world around them.
- Focused, data-driven instruction enables us to address and develop the individual abilities of each child.
- The English program should cater to children of all levels and abilities.
- Creating a challenging and stimulating learning environment, where children are encouraged to take risks and solve problems, is essential for their progress.
- Children learn in different ways, so teachers need to employ a variety of teaching methods and strategies in line with the Vision for Instruction.
- In addition to classroom teaching, extra support and enrichment programs should be available for children with additional needs whenever possible.
- A language-rich environment is crucial to promoting a culture of reading and writing.

At St. Francis Xavier Primary School, our English curriculum:

- Provides a sequential learning program from Prep to Year 6, based on student needs and aligned with the Victorian Curriculum as a standard measure, incorporating the principles of **English 2.0** to enhance teaching and learning outcomes.
- Ensures a minimum of 1 hour and 40 minutes focused Literacy teaching daily.
- Includes Spelling, systematic synthetic phonics, and explicit spelling instruction.
- Focuses on developing vocabulary through the use of rich mentor texts, enabling students to explore and engage with diverse language structures and words.
- Includes small-group focused teaching to meet the needs of individual students.
- Offers resources tailored to the learning needs of students at different stages, including targeted intervention and enrichment programs.
- Uses a combination of formal and informal assessment and evaluation strategies to track student progress, learning styles, and future needs. (*Refer to our Assessment & Data Policies for further information*)
- Encourages a collaborative approach to monitoring and assessing student progress, with teachers working together to determine the next steps for each student.

- Integrates Digital Technologies into the literacy program to enhance learning.
- Provides opportunities for family involvement in literacy learning, such as home reading initiatives.

At St. Francis Xavier Primary School:

- We will appoint a Literacy Leader who will oversee, with the Learning and Teaching Leader, the development and implementation of Literacy across our school.
- Agreed planning guidelines, proformas, and planning documents will be used by all staff.
- The Literacy Leader, in consultation with staff members, will develop budgets based on the needs of the students in the English curriculum for the following year.
- Back-to-back planning will be provided for classroom teachers where possible, allowing them to design an English program that meets the needs of all students and lead by the Literacy Leader.
- L.E.E.P teachers (Intervention & Enrichment) and Learning Support Officers will be appointed to work with and support students with additional literacy learning needs.
- Professional learning in English will be available for staff each term during Staff and Professional Learning meetings, as well as others learning provided by MACS.

Evaluation:

This policy will be revisited yearly and reviewed as part of the School's Review cycle or as changes are made to the Victorian Curriculum.