

ST PHILIP NERI CATHOLIC SCHOOL

ENGLISH POLICY

INTRODUCTION:

St Philip Neri Catholic School, Northbridge is part of the Diocese of Broken Bay and caters for boys and girls from Kindergarten to Year 6. The NSW Board of Studies English Syllabus is the basis for our teaching of English. Education is highly valued by parents, staff and students who together as a community of learners strive in the pursuit of excellence for all. As language is central to students' intellectual, social and emotional development, students are exposed to a wide range of opportunities to develop their language skills across all Key Learning Areas. They have at least four two-hour blocks of explicit English instruction per week.

PURPOSE:

This policy will ensure that teachers develop, document, implement and evaluate the English curriculum to promote student competency in the use of both spoken and written language. This competence will enable students to learn about the role of language in their own lives, and in their own and other cultures. It has been developed by the staff of St Philip Neri and is underpinned by practices that reflect the principles of Catholic discipleship.

AIMS:

At St Philip Neri we aim to:

- » encourage positive attitudes towards learning English.
- » develop students' ability in using language effectively and with purpose, in order that they may function confidently at school, at home and in society.
- » enable critical reflection on how language works.
- » cater for individual learning styles and needs in a challenging, non-threatening environment.

BELIEFS ABOUT TEACHING AND LEARNING IN ENGLISH

Belief 1

All students have the capacity and the right to learn and the need to experience successful learning.

Therefore

Whole school programs will be continually monitored and evaluated to ensure that the children have experience of quality programs and successful learning.

Belief 2

All students are individuals who learn at different rates, with different strengths and with a variety of preferred learning styles.

Therefore

Class programs will be based on knowledge of individual learning needs and differentiated to cater for these needs.

Belief 3

Learning is lifelong, continuous, developmental and holistic; students need to learn how to learn and to actively evaluate their learning.

Therefore

Proficiency in English is best developed when skills and content are taught in a systematic, developmental, context-based and holistic way. Learning in English is most successful when children learn through lived experiences, good models, explicit teaching, relevance, use, experimentation and reflection.

Belief 4

Teaching and learning need to take place within a context of high expectations and within a positive, supportive environment.

Therefore

The teacher needs to provide structures, scaffolds and challenging learning contexts, where adequate and appropriate resources are provided and sufficient, dedicated time is allocated to the teaching and learning of English.

Belief 5

Effective learning occurs when students are engaged in learning contexts that are collaborative and draw upon prior experiences, knowledge, understanding and skills.

Therefore

Learning in English occurs best when it is in a collaborative environment that structures modeled, shared, guided and independent work and allows for the supportive and critical mutual sharing of experiences, skills and ideas.

Belief 6

Teaching and learning is informed by explicit assessment and feedback, which in turn will inform future learning pathways.

Therefore

Class programs are based on authentic assessment and evaluation.

RELIGIOUS DIMENSION:

Education is primarily about the development of the whole person. The Catholic dimension of English demands that the children learn and develop sound literacy skills being crucial, as they are, to the development of the individual made in God's image and likeness. The teaching of literacy across the curriculum will empower children to be productive and pro-active members of society, operating out of a sense of Catholic discipleship. The notions of uniqueness of the individual, rights and responsibilities, the individual as part of the wider community and social justice are integral to the teaching of English in a Catholic school.

OUTCOMES:

Outcomes for the Students:

1. Develop values and attitudes, skills and knowledge as set out in the NSW Board of Studies English Syllabus.
2. Individually progress through the stages as defined in the syllabus through participation in class programs.

Outcomes for the Teachers:

1. Develop differentiated English programs based on the NSW Board of Studies English Syllabus and this policy, which reflect the individual needs of students.
2. Identify and plan for students with special needs in English.
3. Ensure that expectations are realistic, yet high.
4. Ensure that there are many opportunities to explicitly teach within context (where appropriate).
5. Provide appropriate scaffolding to support the children's learning, ensuring that they experience success.
6. Inform students and parents on individual progress and achievement in English through assessment that is an integral part of the teaching and learning process.
7. Continue professional development in English.

Outcomes for the Parents:

1. Support the learning of the children and value their role in English learning at home.
2. Demonstrate a co-coordinated, systematic and supportive approach to English teaching and learning as evidenced in Whole School Policies and in class programs.
3. Develop understanding of the developmental sequence of English acquisition and skill development.

REFERENCES:

- ∞ NSW Board of Studies Syllabus and Support Documents
- ∞ Diocesan Literacy Plan
- ∞ School Literacy Plan
- ∞ Programming guidelines
- ∞ Assessment and Reporting Policy

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION:

This Policy was developed and implemented in 2002.

The St Philip Neri Literacy Plan was developed in 2002 and finalized in 2003. The Literacy Plans details whole school expectations about timetable allocations (in respect to the 2 hour uninterrupted literacy block four times per week) and approaches to the teaching of talking and listening, reading and writing.

PLANNED EVALUATION:

Staff will ensure currency and relevance by regular reviews of this policy.