English

At Holy Trinity Primary School it is our aim that our children are surrounded by a rich, literate environment and are taught with skill and enthusiasm. We endeavour to foster and develop the interaction of all English skills needed for self-expression and effective communication.

The ability to speak and listen with confidence, and to read and write fluently enables all of us to function well in the society in which we live and provides access to all areas of learning.

Using our school scheme of work and the teaching objectives set out in the Northern Ireland Curriculum, all teachers plan appropriate and purposeful activities for all our children.

In Holy Trinity Primary School each child will acquire the basic communication skills of Talking, Listening, Reading and Writing to the best of their ability.

Reading

We believe that reading is a great source of pleasure, as well as information and our class and school libraries are well stocked with a variety of fiction and non-fiction books.

The newly purchased reading scheme books are colour banded according to their level of difficulty. All reading schemes are accompanied with ICT resources for the interactive whiteboards, which are installed in every classroom. The children can take a banded book at their own reading level home to read to you, or a general fiction or information book of their choice to share. Some of the books are also graded for difficulty and the children are encouraged to take class books home to independently or with you. Information about how we teach reading is given to parents at regular curriculum meetings.

We aim to have pupils reading fluently and accurately with understanding. Research and reference skills are developed as the children progress. The reading schemes used in the foundation and key stage one are Big Cat, Rigby Star, and Oxford Reading Tree.

The reading schemes used at the upper stages of the school are New Ginn 360 and a selection of newly purchased novels. This provides a vast array of reading materials and allows the development of comprehension skills. Our pupils also make use of fiction titles as reading books. The children are encouraged to read for both enjoyment and information.

Phonics

All our teachers have been trained on the Linguistic Phonics programme. This phonic programme has been implemented throughout all classes primary 1 to Primary 7. The central rationale of Linguistic Phonics is that children understand the relationship between their spoken language and the written word.

Research into Linguistic Phonics carried out by Stranmillis University College, during 2005-6, indicated that the Linguistics Phonics approach has been particularly successful in raising reading standards among primary school pupils.

Parents indicated that their children were significantly more likely to enjoy reading and to read books other than their schoolbooks than parents of children using other phonic approaches.

Talking and Listening

The children are encouraged to talk and listen to each other, in groups, to the class, to the teacher, and to a wider audience throughout all areas of the Curriculum. This helps to develop their skills as both a listener and talker and develops a sense of audience awareness. Situations which allow discussion occur at all stages of the school and we try to develop and progress the skills as the pupils mature. All classes follow the Circle Time programme.

Writing

We encourage the children to develop their writing skills through a variety of means: - personal writing, imaginative writing and functional writing. A wide range of published materials are used to assist writing development. Pupils in Primary 1 and Primary 2 follow a common course which involves emergent writing. Older pupils develop skills in spelling, grammar and punctuation. All classrooms have computers and pupils are exposed to using the computer as a word processor. This enables the children to record information, stories, poems etc., on the computer and provides an attractive presentation of their work, in which the children take great pleasure.

English links available

The best on the Web:

- Wordcentral - excellent word games and codes!
- Rhyming Dictionary - perfect poetry - check it out
- Websters Dictionary - fast and accurate resource.
- Wordsmyth English Dictionary - superb
- Roget's Online Thesaurus - massive database of words - Excellent.

Some useful and fun Internet links:

- Kids News - excellent writing ideas!
- 200+ Proverbs - loads to learn here.
- Crazy Story Maker - brilliant language game!
- Sunshine - very good literacy resources.
- National Year of reading & Authors Online - try their challenges.
- Literacy activities - by Ginn and Heineman - educational publishers.
- Kids on the net - fun writing activites.
- Guess the word - ace word definition game.
- Online Picture Dictionary - letters, pictures & Internet links - great!
- Childrens Literature Website - many great ideas and links.
- Online Books Database - read hundreds of books on the Internet.
- The Readin! - fantastic reading ideas - links around the world!
- Literacy time - part of the Virtual Teacher Centre.
- Stories from the age of fairy tales
- Aesop's Fables
- Alice's Adventures in Wonderland
- Authors on the web
- Bedtime stories
- Story books online
- Deep in the bush - stories from Africa.
- Disney stories.

Authors and Publishers Online:

- Complete poetical works by Wordsworth - loads of local influence here!
- "Dr Seuss" - popular site with many games and activities.
- The Enid Blyton Website - information and activities.
- "Treasure Island" - read the story online - with activities!
- Roald Dahl Pages - all about this popular children's writer.
- Winnie the Pooh - ever popular - excellent site!
- Beatrix Potter - discover Peter Rabbit Online!
- "Goosebumps" - online
- Eric Carle - the author of "The Very Hungry Caterpillar"
- Oxford Reading Tree - a popular series of books
- Puffin Books - reviews and info.
- Penguin Books
- Scholastic - they organise our Book Club!