



St. Mary's RC Primary School

English Policy

Date policy last reviewed: March 2022

Our Mission

We aim to provide a safe, caring, Catholic community where each member is valued and respected and enabled to achieve their potential through a broad and balanced curriculum. This is summed up neatly in our school motto: To learn and grow together in Christ.

INTENT

1. Aims and Objectives

English is the foundation of our curriculum. Our main aim is to ensure every single child becomes primary literate and progresses in the areas of reading, writing, and speaking and listening. We recognise that each child has their own starting point upon entry to every year group. As a result, we measure progress from this starting point alongside attainment against age related expectations. Staff are aware of those groups which may require additional support or challenge, and these groups of children are provided for accordingly, in order that all children may reach their potential. English will be taught discretely on a daily basis, but it also underpins the other areas of our broad and balanced curriculum. It is embedded within all our lessons and we will strive for a high level of English for all. Through using high-quality texts, immersing children in vocabulary rich learning environments and ensuring curriculum expectations and the progression of skills are met, children will be exposed to a language-rich, creative and continuous English curriculum which will develop a love of reading, purposeful and creative writing and a confidence in speaking and listening, enabling children to become primary literate pupils.

Objectives:

- To ensure teaching and learning in school supports the development of speaking and listening, reading and writing in all pupils ensuring all pupils achieve their full potential according to their age and abilities.
- To enable children to communicate effectively, both verbal and non-verbally.
- To ensure children read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding, orchestrating a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct.
- To enable children to become fluent, confident and independent readers who have an interest in books and read for enjoyment.
- To enable children to understand a range of text types and genres and be able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation.
- To provide children with opportunities to develop their literacy skills across the curriculum.

IMPLEMENTATION

2. Statutory Requirements

2.1 This policy reflects the requirements of the *National Curriculum Programmes of Study*, which all maintained schools in England must teach.

2.2 It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014* and *Equality Act 2010*, and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's *Governance Handbook*.

2.3 In addition, this policy acknowledges the requirements for promoting the learning and development of children set out in the *Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework*.

2.4 In the Foundation Stage (Reception) children should be given opportunities to:

- speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities;
- use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum;
- become immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2), children should learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They should begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They should use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

At Key Stage Two (Years 3-6), children should learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They should read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They should explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

3. Subject Organisation

3.1 The English Curriculum focuses on the Key Learning skills outlined in the National Curriculum. The Early Learning Goals are followed to ensure continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage through to the National Curriculum. Pupil provision is focussed on age-related expectations. The teaching of English is divided into the development of skills in reading, which includes word reading and comprehension, and the development of skills in writing, which incorporates vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, spelling, handwriting and composition. A mixture of whole-class and group teaching is undertaken, and teachers vary the style of teaching according to the topic and pupils/s being taught. The curriculum uses a wide range of texts that stimulate varied interests. We also use a range of support resources such as dictionaries, thesauruses, and encyclopaedias. I.C.T. is also used to support learning in the English curriculum, via the use of online dictionaries, for example. We regard English as essential to all other areas of learning, and the skills developed in English lessons are applied, practised and consolidated throughout the curriculum.

3.2 Planning

Curriculum planning is managed in three phases:

- Long Term Planning

This is based on the National Curriculum which details what is to be taught over the year and provides teaching guidelines and overall objectives for each year group for the whole year.

- Medium Term Planning

This organizes the teaching of English into termly or half-termly units. The planning is more detailed and the objectives are more specific in nature. This planning is developed by the teachers, who respond to the needs of their pupils. It ensures a balanced distribution of work is undertaken across each term, and builds progressively on skills

and knowledge as the pupils move through school. This is monitored by the English Leader.

- **Short Term Planning**

This details the English curriculum over the unit. Lessons are planned in detail, listing specific learning objectives and success criteria for each lesson. Teachers plan for differentiated levels of support or challenge, ensuring children are accessing learning appropriate for their year group, and are given every opportunity to reach age-related expectations.

The teachers collaborate on the planning of English to ensure parity in provision and to share expertise.

3.3 Approaches to Reading

Children are encouraged to read a range of texts in a variety of ways. They are given opportunities to develop their skills through shared, guided and independent reading. Shared reading sessions are carried out regularly during whole class activities and are linked to a theme or genre. During shared reading sessions, texts will challenge pupils' word reading and comprehension to extend their skills.

Guided reading takes place daily using our school guided reading scheme, and a carousel of reading activities are provided during guided reading sessions. Guided reading materials support children in achieving specific targets.

A home reading scheme is in place across Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and children are heard read regularly according to their needs. Books are sent home with a reading record for parents to support the children in their reading and to communicate with staff in school.

A selection of fiction, poetry and non-fiction books of an appropriate interest and difficulty level is provided for independent reading in class. Children are provided with opportunities to visit the school library and choose books which are of interest to them. In school, we use the Accelerated Reader programme in years 2-6. The programme provides age-appropriate books which are tailored to the children's interest level, which are then levelled in terms of reading ability. This enables children of all abilities to access texts which are appropriate for their age group. The programme checks children's comprehension via online quizzes, which the children take after completing each book, and it also develops and tests children's knowledge of vocabulary.

3.4 Approaches to Writing

Children are taught writing skills and to recognise different genres through shared, guided and independent activities. They are provided with opportunities to see adults writing, and are encouraged to present their work for wider audiences in order to achieve a sense of authorship. Opportunities for drafting, collaboration and planning are given, and skills are practised throughout the curriculum.

In the Early Years, children are taught the basic letter formation for all letters of the alphabet. When children show signs of emergent writing, they are encouraged to 'have a go' and to write phonetically and independently.

During the shared writing sessions, the teacher provides a role model often acting as a scribe, demonstrating how to form a letter, spell a word, leave a space, or put in a full stop. As the children progress, more sophisticated strategies of modelling, planning, drafting, proof reading or writing in a particular genre are used.

The outcome for each writing unit is for children to complete a scaffolded end of unit write. In order to gain an accurate assessment of each child's writing skills it is essential that children have opportunities to complete extended writing tasks on a regular basis. Extended writing is a dedicated time when all children independently focus on completing a given written task at the same time. Extended writing tasks will either be an end of unit write or an independent write based on another area of the curriculum. An independent write is not necessarily the genre currently being taught, but it will relate to genres previously covered.

For handwriting, we follow the Letterjoin scheme throughout the school. Pupils will be taught to hold a pencil/pen comfortably in order to develop a legible style. They will learn the conventional ways of forming letters, both lower case and capitals, to develop a cursive style of joined writing. They will be encouraged to become aware of the importance of clear and neat presentation, in order to communicate their meaning effectively.

3.5 Approaches to Speaking and Listening

The Four Strands of Speaking and Listening - Speaking; Listening; Group Discussion and Interaction, and Drama - permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

Examples of Speaking and listening opportunities include:

- Group discussions
- Talking partners
- Role play and drama
- Hot seating and freeze framing
- Questioning
- Class productions
- Assemblies
- Prayer and worship

3.6 Phonics and spelling

The aim of the Spelling section of the English Policy is to develop a whole school approach which will enable the child to:

- Become a confident writer and speller
- Acquire good strategies for learning spelling
- Successfully use the Look Say Cover Write Check technique
- Develop dictionary skills
- Develop word awareness

Children are taught phonic awareness using the Essential Letters and Sounds validated programme. Relevant materials are used to support the objectives of the revised Literacy Framework. A variety of approaches are used as a way of teaching children to recognize and recall words.

In Early Years and Key Stage 1, phonics sessions are carried out on a daily basis. Children are taught according to the phase they are working in and take part in activities appropriate to their needs. Children's home reading books in the Early Years and lower Key Stage 1 follow phonics phases until the child is secure in their phonics at Phase 5.

3.7 Cross-curricular links

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through literacy lessons to other areas of the curriculum. Opportunities to use ICT to support teaching and learning in Literacy will be planned for and used as appropriate.

4. Equal Opportunities

4.1 Protected Characteristics and Inclusion

4.1.1 All children in school have regular access to English learning appropriate to their stage of development. Challenge for all is integral to our teaching and we aim to encourage all pupils to reach their full potential through the provision of varied opportunities. We recognise that our English planning must allow pupils to gain a progressively deeper understanding and competency as they move through our school.

4.1.2 Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEN
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEN policy and information report.

4.1.3 The governing body have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that our school strives to do the best for all of the pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, pregnancy, maternity, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked-after children.

5. Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

We support children to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally in a variety of ways in our teaching of English, not least through the sharing of and teaching from a wide range of texts, which open up discussion for children and prompt their thinking on a range of issues. We provide speaking and listening opportunities, and support the children in working together successfully, as well as guiding them to provide feedback to their peers in a constructive way.

6. Assessment and Reporting

Work will be assessed in line with the Assessment Policy. Phonics assessments are based upon the Letters and Sounds programme whilst Reading and Writing assessments are carried out using Target Tracker and Lancashire KLIPs. Termly teacher assessments are recorded in reading and writing.

7. Role of the Subject Leader

7.1 Monitoring and Review

The Subject Leader should be responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through the monitoring and evaluating of:

- pupil progress
- provision of Literacy (including Intervention and Support programmes)
- the quality of the learning environment
- the deployment and provision of support staff

The subject leader will also be responsible for:

- Taking the lead in policy development
- Auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- Purchasing and organising resources
- Keeping up to date with recent subject-appropriate developments

7.2 Resources

8. Role of the Governing Body

8.1 The governing board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

8.2 The governing board will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- Enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the National Curriculum and other statutory requirements
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- It fulfils its role in processes to disapply pupils from all or part of the National Curriculum, where appropriate, and in any subsequent appeals

8.3 Regular reports are made to the governors on the progress of English provision and to our nominated governor for Literacy.

9. Subject Specific Information

See Appendix for Non-negotiables.

10. Linked Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Marking and Feedback

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Assessment
- Behaviour
- Presentation

11. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or as appropriate.

APPENDIX: Non-negotiables

| | EYFS | KS1 | KS2 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Phonics | Daily, to work up to 1h hour/day | Daily x20 mins | Targeted support for individuals |
| Reading | Daily individual reading when required | At least weekly individual reading Daily individual reading when required in Year 1 Targeted support for individuals Year 2 | Fortnightly individual reading Twice weekly individual reading for identified pupils |
| Guided Reading KS2 to record in Reading Journals | Introduced as children are ready | Daily x 20-30 mins Carousel | Daily x 30 mins Carousel |
| Extended Writing (INDEPENDENT) | Ongoing opportunity for children to write independently | End of English unit and as appropriate across curriculum | End of English unit and as appropriate across curriculum |
| GPS | | 10-15 minute GPS starters daily, except in writing weeks | Weekly GPS lesson |
| Handwriting | Letter formation practise | Regular access to handwriting practise (until no longer necessary) | Regular access to handwriting practise (until no longer necessary) |