

# HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL ENGLISH CURRICULUM



The English curriculum at Holy Trinity has taken many of the content and principles of 'Mastery' in mathematics. We have developed a curriculum which ensures children spend longer being taught the common features and skills in reading and writing in order to have a more coherent English curriculum and therefore be able to develop mastery in English. The curriculum has been adapted using various methods such as: talk for writing, having a strong grammar focus, using high quality novels and books as well as using a range of drama conventions.

The Principles and Features Characterised in Our Curriculum:

- Teachers reinforce an expectation that all pupils are capable of achieving high standards in English.
- The large majority of pupils progress through the curriculum content at the same pace. Differentiation is achieved through additional support and encouraging children's individual flair and fluency.
- Interventions focus on gaps in knowledge and developing a growth mind-set in order to ensure all children achieve.
- Teaching is underpinned by using high quality texts and high quality examples from the teacher which focus on skills to be taught. These texts are then analysed in depth with the children in order for them to learn and apply those skills.
- Grammar and punctuation skills are practised and consolidated until all children have a firm understanding of how to apply them into their own work.
- Teachers use precise questioning in class to develop the children's thinking and explanations, helping children to make literary choices in their writing.

Reading begins in Foundation Stage through sharing books with simple or no text so that the children can learn how to tell a story using images. Children progress through the reading bands accordingly with each book level introducing new reading and comprehension skills. There is an emphasis on children learning to decode through daily phonics teaching and

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developing their sight vocabulary for common exception words. Parents are encouraged to support their child to develop a love of reading through training sessions, one to one meetings with teachers.

Reading is taught through whole class lessons across the week which aim to teach the children essential skills needed in order to become a confident and fluent reader. Children who fail to progress at the expected rate are supported with a reading intervention.

- Children are encouraged to explain and justify their thinking when answering comprehension questions.
- Children have opportunities and are taught to work both collaboratively and independently.
- Structured high quality opportunities for speaking and listening are used to develop children's language skills as well as to support writing and reading.

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## Our Curriculum Intent

In English, our main aim as a school is for all children to develop a love of reading as well as the necessary skills needed in writing for life and also be able to have access to future learning.

English is taught in mixed ability groups for most of the time as we believe all children can achieve. In this approach, all children are exposed to some higher-level thinking questions and problem-solving as well as having the opportunity to collaborate and develop a growth mind-set through working with their peers.

Additional intervention is provided for children working below age expectations in reading and spelling along with extension activities and questions for children working at greater depth.

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## Key features of the mastery approach

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### Curriculum Implementation

A carefully considered teaching cycle is followed throughout the school. The cycle consists of using high quality texts which are interrogated and deconstructed in order for the children to understand the structure and mechanics of writing. This is followed by shared and modelled writing with the teacher, which helps to nurture the children's fluency and creativity. The children then apply their skills in independent pieces of writing which are finally edited and improved by the individual child as well as receiving some input from their peers. Throughout the process, the children are taught to read as writers and write as readers.

### Inspirational learning

As a school we believe in providing the children with as many enrichment opportunities as we can in order to inspire their learning. A few of the opportunities which are promoted through the English curriculum are:

- The Classics – Some year groups study a different classic from 'Tom's Midnight Garden' to Beatrix Potter's "Peter Rabbit". The reasoning behind this is to expose the children to different vocabulary and language structures as well as giving them experience of books which they may not necessarily have the opportunity to read.
- World Book Day – To help promote a love of reading and books we celebrate World Book Day. This is a celebration of reading, books, authors and illustrators and is an opportunity for the children and staff to share their favourite books and stories. Often, authors and illustrators are invited in to work with and inspire the children.

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- Bedtimes stories – this is an event in Key Stage 1. This event helps to promote the love of reading by inviting parents and carers into school to share a book with their child this event is always well attended and enjoyed by all.

## Lesson design

Lessons are carefully planned using input from other teachers and teaching assistants in daily feedforward / feedback meetings, drawing on evidence from observations of pupils in class. Lesson designs are carefully considered to ensure that the children are taught the concepts and structures needed to become competent writers. Children are often given a real purpose to write and the units often have hooks in order to engage and inspire the children's thinking and learning.

## Professional development and training of teachers

We provide high quality professional development to ensure that we are always improving the quality of our teaching so that this impacts upon children's learning. All our teachers have deep subject knowledge and a thorough knowledge of how to teach English. They engage in collaborative planning and are continually seeking to improve their effectiveness.

We have a highly motivated and skilled English Lead Teacher who is committed to their own CPD as well as that of the staff at Holy Trinity. This is to ensure that all teaching and learning in English is of the highest quality.