



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

English Policy

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Staff responsible: Emma Woods

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1. Aims

At St Mary’s we are proud to offer the pupils a text-rich learning environment where imagination and creativity can be fuelled. Through our rigorous English curriculum, we ensure pupils develop the skills and knowledge they need to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature plays a key role in such development and enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; only pupils who learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are able to effectively participate in wider society.

This policy for staff aims to:

- Ensure consistency in the approach to teaching English.
- Set out expectations for all members of the school community with regards to the teaching of English.
- Provide appropriate guidelines for ensuring coverage of speaking and listening, reading, grammar, punctuation, spelling, transcription and writing.
- Continue to ensure that every child receives the best education the school can provide them.

Details on the teaching of reading can be found in the Phonics and Early Reading policy.

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 English Leader

Alongside any teaching responsibilities, the English Lead is responsible for:

- Coordinating the teaching of English across the school.
- Supporting colleagues in the development and implementation of planning including assessment.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the teaching of English (for example, via book scrutinies, Standards Meetings, etc) to ensure progression across the school.
- Keeping up to date with developments in English education and disseminating information to colleagues as appropriate.
- Attending regular training within the Umbrella Trust, local authority and independent training as appropriate, and report back to all staff.
- Supporting staff training via INSET days.

2.2 Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Delivering the objectives of the National Curriculum for English, building on the progress from the previous years.
- Planning sequences of work, including differentiation by need and ability.
- Formative and summative assessment allowing for flexibility in planning based upon lesson outcomes and termly formal assessment of reading and writing.
- In addition to the teaching of reading via phonics (see the Phonics and Early Reading policy) English is taught in daily Literacy or cross-curricular lessons.
- Ensuring the needs of every child is met, allowing them to reach their full potential in English.

2.3 Teaching assistants

At St Mary's we recognise that our teaching assistants are an invaluable resource. They work at the direction of the class teacher to support the teaching of English with the class.

2.4 English Governor

The Governor responsible for English is responsible for:

- Monitoring the school's approach to the teaching of English to ensure education remains as high quality as possible.
- Liaising with the English Lead to support the School Improvement Plan.

3. Approach in delivering the curriculum

3.1 Speaking and Listening

We encourage our pupils to speak clearly and confidently and articulate their views and opinions. We teach our children to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose; the children listen and respond to a range of texts across the curriculum, developing the skills of participating effectively in group discussions.

Ways in which we support this include:

- Activities encourage full and active participation by all children, irrespective of ability.
- Children with specific speech and language and auditory problems are identified and specialist help sought where appropriate (e.g. Soundfield system, speech and language interventions).
- Encouraging talk-time at home through 'talk homework' or via reading books.
- Providing opportunities for public speaking, such as poetry recital, school plays, class debates, weekly assemblies, weekly Mass, events within the community and parish events.
- In lessons we employ talk partners, drama / role play.
- We share our feelings and ideas in PHSE, RSE and circle time
- Additional speaking and listening opportunities are provided School Council, lunch time clubs - Funky fingers etc, social skills groups and narrative therapy

3.2 Reading

For details on teaching reading via phonics, please see the Phonics and Early Reading policy.

At St Mary's we are proud to offer the pupils a text-rich learning environment where imagination and creativity can be fuelled. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; only pupils who learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are able to effectively participate in wider society.

The curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions:

- Word reading/ decoding
- Comprehension

Both these elements are essential to success and are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, writing, grammar and vocabulary. Further details on how we support the teaching of phonics and early reading can be found in the Phonics and Early Reading policy.

Over and above learning to read, we want our children to read widely for pleasure and to learn to love reading for itself.

Ways in which we encourage reading at St Mary's include:

- Children are read to every day
- Pupils are supported in learning to read easily and fluently through daily phonics in EYFS and KS1 (see the Phonics and Early Reading policy)
- Children are given regular opportunities to read to adults in school, including guided reading groups and reading partners; they are encouraged to read at home
- Written records are kept of guided reading undertaken in school
- Phonics is taught through Little Wandle Revised Letters and Sounds; grammar and spelling are used to ensure developmental learning building on prior knowledge
- Pupils develop skills in reading for understanding, using a broad range of texts across all genres including stories, poetry, rhymes and non-fiction
- Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure using reading partners, quiet reading time, listening to an adult read
- Children struggling with reading are supported through targeted intervention

3.3 Writing

At St Mary's, we support children with developing their transcription and composition skills by:

- Taking advantage of opportunities to develop writing across the curriculum
- Ensuring writing, editing and handwriting skills are modelled by the Class Teacher
- Linking writing to high quality texts, with modelling and shared/ collaborative writing to demonstrate good practice
- Encouraging building of writing skills through lesson sequencing involving speaking, listening, and role play/drama
- Providing time for planning, drafting, editing and revising
- Providing immediate verbal feedback will be on an individual or class basis during writing/editing lessons; written feedback will be provided for extended writing (further detail can be found the Feedback and Marking policy).
- Teaching joined handwriting through the Kingston Cursive Scheme to support spelling and fluency
- Encouraging children to write from personal experience, including learning out the classroom
- Guiding children to consider the audience and purpose of their writing

3.4 Spelling and vocabulary

In spelling, children are encouraged to make links from known words and investigate etymology (origin of a word) and morphology (the root of a word). Across the curriculum, we focus on subject-specific vocabulary.

3.5 Grammar

Grammar, punctuation and spelling form components of every writing lesson - including cross curricular.

3.5 Book Areas and Displays

- Displays and Book Corners should be appealing, promoting reading for pleasure and supporting learning
- Books in book corners include a range of inclusive texts to reflect the diversity of our pupils and staff
- Displays need to reflect children's work and should include some interactive elements to promote independent thinking
- Displays should be current and reflect the most recent learning; this may be through using working walls

4. Planning and assessment

The national curriculum forms our long-term plan and writing overviews ensure that curriculum objectives are a focus in each year group. All planning, including weekly English plans, are stored in Staff Share.

Reading and writing are formally assessed termly, with ongoing assessment throughout lessons to ensure that the needs of each child are met.

5. Meeting the needs of all

The approach set out above will always be adjusted and adapted to meet the needs of all learners and to ensure that every child gains the building blocks they need. Where a pupil continues to need to support with their English, this will be provided through targeted interventions. Careful thought will always be given to the provision of appropriately structured work for pupils with SEND, often through intervention groups. Our approach is multisensory: oral rehearsal followed by listening, and then the physical process of writing.

6. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our:

Feedback and marking policy

Phonics and Early Reading policy

Staff handbook

SEND policy

Early Year Policy

Assessment policy