



## English Policy Statement and Rationale

This policy reflects St Mary's Catholic Primary School's aims and objectives in relation to the teaching and learning of English. It should be read in conjunction with our Mission Statement and our Learning and Teaching Policy.

This policy is based in the 2014 National Curriculum and the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, which set out the rationale for teaching each area of the English curriculum and specify the skills to be developed by the majority of pupils in each year group. The Letters and Sounds programme should also be read, in conjunction with references to the teaching of phonics. Specific skills, including spelling, handwriting and shared and guided reading are otherwise defined and explained under discrete policies as appropriate.

At St Mary's we are concerned with the development of the whole child; the ability to communicate effectively leads to self-confidence and a healthy self-esteem and it is in this context that this policy is set. Our aim is that all pupils leave us with an ability to express themselves correctly and appropriately, in spoken and written language, and to read accurately, with understanding and with enjoyment. In order to develop in these areas, pupils are taught to:

- use spoken and written language confidently, allowing a variety of interpretations and outcomes without fear of destructive criticism
- use a range of activities and contexts for spoken and written language to entertain, reason, persuade, argue, explain, instruct and describe, including opportunities for interactive learning and for the use of language in relevant, real life contexts
- develop language skills in and through ALL curriculum subjects
- become keen readers across a wide range of texts
- make articulate, perceptive and informed comments about a variety of texts, including media and moving image texts
- recognise that writers manipulate language and form according to purpose and audience
- use materials which reflect cultural and social diversity and which provide positive images of race, gender and disability, free from discrimination and stereotyping.

A variety of teaching and learning styles are adopted to ensure that all children are included and valued and in accordance with requirements of the 2014 curriculum.

## Teaching and Learning Overview

We use a creative curriculum as a basis for all learning. English is at the heart of the curriculum, so that subject matter from other areas is available as content or stimulus for speaking, listening, reading and writing. All curriculum areas are used to teach aspects of English.

### Early Years /Foundation Stage

By the end of Foundation Stage, most children should be able to:

- listen attentively in a range of situations
- listen to stories, anticipate events and respond with relevant questions, comments or actions
- give attention to what others say and respond appropriately
- follow instructions involving several ideas or actions
- answer how or why questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events
- express themselves effectively, showing awareness of the listener's needs
- use past, present and future forms when talking about events
- develop their own narrative and explanations by connecting ideas or events In reading and writing (up to Ph2 and, for some, within Ph3 criteria of Letters and Sounds), most should be able to:
- read and understand simple sentences
- use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately
- read some common irregular words
- demonstrate understanding when taking with others about what they have read

- use phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds
- write some irregular common words
- write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others
- spell some words correctly and others in a phonetically plausible way.

### **Key Stages 1 and 2**

The English programme of study, as detailed in the National Curriculum 2014, is based on the following 3 areas of teaching and learning:

- **Spoken language**
- **Reading**
  - Word reading/decoding
  - Comprehension
- **Writing**
  - Transcription
  - Handwriting and presentation
  - Composition
  - Spelling, grammar and punctuation

By the end of each Key Stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in each area.

### **Spoken Language**

Pupils should:

- Be taught to speak confidently, clearly and audibly in a range of contexts
- Learn to adapt spoken language, varying use and register according to purpose and audience
- Learn to listen with concentration in real contexts
- Learn to take part in discussions, negotiations, debates and presentations, justifying opinions and evaluating and building on others' ideas
- Speculate, hypothesise and explore ideas
- Asking questions to check understanding
- Develop vocabulary and build knowledge
- Selecting the appropriate register for effective communication
- Give well-structures descriptions and explanations
- Participate in performance, in both drama and poetry.

Outside English lessons, the school provides a variety of forums in which to practice these skills. These include School Council meetings, sharing assemblies, public performances and plays.

### **Reading**

At St Mary's, we believe that reading is central to all learning. Teachers need to understand the skills and strategies needed to enable pupils to read accurately for meaning and pleasure, using methods and strategies such as shared and guided reading and systematic, synthetic phonics teaching. It is important for children to see teachers reading for enjoyment.

Pupils should:

- Read for leisure as well a study
- Read a wide range, including media and ICT texts and texts from a variety of cultures and traditions
- Learn to be discriminating readers, with ability to understand layers of meaning
- Learn to make critical responses to what they read
- Explore meanings of text using drama.

Reading for information and other purposes should be reinforced in all subjects.

We seek to foster in our children a genuine love of literature and a desire to read for pleasure, educating them to be discriminating and critical readers. Our aim is that children:

- Gain enthusiasm and enjoyment from the written word and enrich their language and understanding
- Have opportunities to hear a wide variety of texts read aloud
- Have access to a wide range of reading materials in various formats
- Appreciate that books from all genres are produced by authors, illustrators and publishers, and develop opinions about the work of these people
- Are encouraged to use a range of reading strategies in an appropriate way
- Are encouraged to read a range of different texts wider than the school reading scheme books

- Offer personal and critical response to what they read
- Are able to use their reading skills to improve their learning across the curriculum
- Perceive research as an enjoyable and purposeful activity
- Have opportunities to use the school and class libraries
- Develop reading as a lifelong habit.

Reading is taught through a combination of many of the following:

- Reading to and with the child
- The development of phonological awareness
- Whole-word recognition
- Re-telling and prediction
- Using context, picture, syntactic and semantic clues
- Discussing character, plot, themes and style
- Using inference and deduction
- Recognition of grapheme combinations
- Development of presentation skills when reading aloud.

The timetable enables a variety of reading experiences within English lessons, in guided and shared reading sessions, discretely and in a variety of cross-curricular contexts.

Children also read individually to teachers, teaching assistants and/or visiting adults, who invite them to share and discuss their responses.

Parents, friend, and other visitors are welcomed into school to listen to children read, discuss their choices, share their own reading experiences, perform and run workshops.

The school holds an annual Book Day to stimulate the children's interest in reading.

### Writing

Teaching writing is a major focus at St Mary's. Teachers need to demonstrate the choices, skills and strategies used when writing so that children understand the whole process. The thinking involved and organisation of ideas is key to effective writing. It is important that writing is seen as an enjoyable activity in itself as well as a means of communication.

Pupils should:

- Be taught to write fluently and accurately, understanding related rules and conventions
- Learn to write for communication by creating images, describing experiences, ideas and feelings, and organising information in order to engage, inform and persuade
- Learn a variety of forms of writing, such as letters, notes, narrative and poetry
- Be able to choose form and content to suit purpose and audience
- Be able to compose on paper and on screen, using different fonts and layouts
- Learn to respond critically to their own and to others' writing
- Learn to redraft their work to develop and improve content, style and accuracy.

Pupils are encouraged to talk about their ideas before they write:

The aim is for pupils to

- Become independent writers
- Become familiar with a range of writing to suit audience and purpose
- Reflect on their own individuality and creativity

In order to maintain a positive climate for writing, teacher should:

- Ensure that extended writing time is frequently and regularly available
- Provide access to a wide range of quality reading resources including non-fiction, stories, and poetry and play scripts in various formats
- Create frequent opportunities to share and publish writing
- Share their own favourite writing and texts with the children
- Allow opportunities or reading whole texts as well as extracts
- Expose children to a wide range of authors, poets and storytellers, planning opportunities for children to encounter good examples of writing and investigate an author's craft
- Use demonstration as well as shared and supported composition on a regular basis.

## Handwriting

Our aims are that children:

- develop a legible, fluent and comfortable style
- appreciate the aesthetic qualities of handwriting
- gain pleasure from presentation
- ensure that a good standard of handwriting is used and maintained in all areas of the curriculum.

Children are taught handwriting from Foundation Stage and discrete handwriting sessions then help children to progress through three stages:

- Stage 1 – developing correct letter formation, posture and pencil grip
- Stage 2 – learning to join letters and developing a cursive style
- Stage 3 – to be increasingly able to make their first draft their best copy.

Teachers are expected to set a good example by writing neatly and in the style agreed when marking children's work or writing on the board.

## Spelling

Children are taught strategies enabling them to:

- Spell accurately and identify reasons for mis-spellings
- Proof-read their spelling
- Recognise and use word origins, families and roots to build their skills
- Use dictionaries, thesauruses and spell-checks.

The majority of children will be able to spell words specified in the appendices of the National Curriculum 2014 at the end of each school year and/or key stage.

## Grammar, Punctuation and Vocabulary

Teachers should understand, teach and demonstrate in their everyday practice the formal conventions of Standard English language.

They should emphasise their importance to meaning and effect. Teaching in all areas forms part of everyday English lessons, whether discrete or in active context, and should be developed across all areas of the wider curriculum. Grammar, Punctuation and Vocabulary

Grammar, punctuation and spelling are organized by year group and differentiated by ability.

## **Planning and Assessment**

### Planning

- Planning shows learning objectives and the direction of teaching. Tasks are differentiated and flexible to allow for the teacher's formative assessment.
- Planning is in accordance with National Curriculum framework for the coverage of reading, writing, poetry, speaking and listening, drama and role play across a variety of genres
- Where possible English is planned around topics from the creative curriculum as well as separately to other subjects. It follows established schemes of work for phonics, grammar and spelling to ensure developmental learning based on prior knowledge
- Pupils may be grouped by ability, with those entitled to Pupil Premium funding (PPF), with English as an Additional Language (EAL) or appearing on the Register of Special Needs (SEN) given additional or discrete support, which is tracked and monitored. Similarly, there are opportunities for pupils who are Gifted and Talented (G&T) to receive differentiated support and tasks to ensure continued and progressive attainment.

### Assessment

- Pupils are assessed on an on-going basis during every session and practice is adapted accordingly
- Formal summative assessments of reading (both decoding and comprehension) and writing (including spelling, grammar, punctuation and composition) are carried out, tracked and monitored at least termly
- Staff attend moderation sessions at County and Partnership level
- End of Key Stage assessments are carried out in accordance with legislation and results inform the school's SEF, development plan and performance management.

### Assessment of Reading

We assess the following aspects of each child's development as a reader:

- The acquisition of a growing range of strategies for decoding words and making sense of the text
- The ability to use these strategies appropriately and flexibly
- The enjoyment of books and reading, and confidence and motivation in approaching new texts
- The range of reading experiences, both at school and at home
- The ability to reflect on reading and respond personally and critically to written text
- The ability to access, assess and present information from non-fiction texts
- The ability to use ICT to access information.

### Assessment of Writing

- Teachers use assessment as an integral part of the teaching and learning process and link it clearly to learning objectives.
- They record and track each child's progress, showing analysis of achievement in relation to learning objectives and using this to set future targets.
- They use a variety of formative assessment methods and constructive marking strategies, involving children in their own assessment through explicit understanding of learning objectives and target-setting for personal improvement.

### Specific Groups:

Analysis of achievement is carried out termly and pupils who are making slow progress are discussed and plans for made for their continued support and progression.

### Home Learning

Home Learning is provided to support and extend the learning of children. It also provides information to parents and encourages their involvement.

Children are expected to read at home from a range of texts daily and use the Bug Club online programme to increase enjoyment of books and knowledge of how books can be used.