



In God's love we believe and achieve



St. Michael's

Catholic Primary School

English Policy

St Michael's English Policy

This policy reflects the school's values and philosophy in relation to the teaching and learning of English. St Michael's Catholic Primary School considers English to be a vital part of the whole curriculum and is not just a standalone subject.

Philosophy

At St Michael's Catholic Primary School we believe that English is a pivotal part of everyday life and is therefore an essential life skill. It is our aim for children to speak, read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding, enabling them to become independent, confident and creative learners. It is our philosophy that children should engage in a curriculum that inspires their reading, writing and spoken language. We value the importance of cross-curricular teaching and learning opportunities that develop children's creativity to the full. We feel that English teaching and learning is at the heart of this process and our creative curriculum framework is rich with purposeful reading, writing and speaking and listening opportunities. English and literacy is at the forefront of our priorities as a means of impacting on a broad and balanced curriculum.

Aims

At St Michael's Catholic Primary School, we aim to develop pupils' abilities within an integrated programme of speaking and listening, reading and writing. Pupils will be given the opportunities to interrelate the requirements of English within a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of English across the curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught literacy skills. English will be promoted in all areas of the curriculum, in order for our pupils to:

- be effective, competent communicators and good listeners;
- express opinions, articulate feelings and formulate responses to a range of texts both fiction and non-fiction using appropriate vocabulary;
- foster an interest in words and their meanings; and to develop a growing vocabulary in both spoken and written form;
- have an interest in books for enjoyment, as well as applying their reading skills across the curriculum;
- enjoy and engage with and understand a range of text types and genres;

- be able to write in a variety of styles and forms showing awareness of audience and purpose;
- develop powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness;
- use grammar and punctuation accurately to write in a range of creative ways;
- have a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their responses;
- understand spelling conventions;
- produce effective, well-presented written work.
- Have legible handwriting, where both joined up and printed styles are used when appropriate;

Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum English Document (2014) and in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021)

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) children should be given opportunities in:

Communication and Language (Prime Area)

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Literacy (Specific Area)

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. In order to develop language comprehension in EYFS, adults will talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Children will also use their phonic knowledge to decode regular words and also read some common irregular words. They will use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds and will write some irregular common words. They will be encouraged to write simple sentences that can be read by themselves and others.

The National Curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic
- learn conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

The statutory requirements of the national curriculum are set out in the programme of study for each key stage/year group published by the Department for Education.

Spoken Language

In the early years, attention is focused on children being able to listen attentively to the teacher, other adults and to each other. They are encouraged to communicate orally to express their needs, feelings and observations. This is developed through circle-time, role play, story telling, puppets, games, multi-media activities, exploratory play and creative and social experiences.

As children move through the school, speaking and listening skills are developed through more specific tasks, eg. discussion, drama, oral presentation, debates, giving explanations and communication with a variety of audiences in social and formal situations. The children are given opportunities to listen to authors, visitors and theatre groups. It is important that as a school, we provide children with good role models and demonstrate high expectations of the spoken word. Respect should be given to all children as we develop their communication skills and sensitivity should be shown to those who have pronunciation difficulties, have a pronounced regional dialect and for those whom English is not their first language.

Reading

At St Michael's Catholic Primary School, we wish to develop passionate readers for life and whilst developing children's skills in word reading we also place a strong emphasis in developing their ability to derive meaning from a text in order to maximise enjoyment.

Phonics

We use Read, Write Inc phonic scheme to plan and deliver phonics sessions. Daily phonics sessions take place in EYFS and Key Stage 1. For children who do not pass the phonics screening test at the end of Year 1, extra provisions are put in place eg. Indirect Dyslexia Learning (IDL) and phonic/spelling intervention programmes to help support these children in making further progress.

Shared Reading

Shared reading takes place within the English lesson; the teacher models the reading process to the whole class or group as an expert reader, providing a high level of support. Learning objectives are pre-planned and sessions are characterised by explicit teaching of specific reading strategies, oral response and high levels of collaboration. The children join in, where appropriate with the reading of the text. The texts selected are quality texts that reflect the learning objectives. We follow a scheme called 'Pathways to Write' which includes exposure to a variety of texts, including fiction, non-fiction and poetry. In addition to our Pathways sessions, children have daily reading sessions with access to further high quality texts.

Whole Class and Guided Reading

We aim to instil a passion for reading in all our children, therefore daily whole class and guided reading sessions are integral in our school curriculum. In these sessions, particular reading strategies and reading skills will be taught and embedded. Some children will also receive regular individual reading sessions with an adult or take part in reading intervention programmes. Whole class reading lessons are sequenced using a weekly plan to ensure all skills are being taught on a regular basis. We also use volunteers and adult helpers to read with the children on a 1 to 1 basis. This happens daily throughout school but mainly in Key Stage 1.

Individual Reading

Children have access to a range of picture books, transition chapter books and longer reads to support the development of their individual reading skills. Children start the colour book bands in the Foundation stage and continue through the bands until they become competent, independent readers.

In EYFS children have daily access to books that are phonetically decodable. They also have access to quality texts in the reading area. Teachers are responsible for ensuring that children are taking home books appropriate for their reading level regularly.

Priority 1 to 1 reading with an adult must take place every day for children that are below national expectations or target expectations (numbers of children will vary per class - lowest 20%), These children will be closely monitored to allow them to make appropriate progress.

Home Reading

In EYFS we send home phonic based books, which focus on a current sound a child is learning, as well as picture and early reading books. Children in EYFS are invited to complete a simple phonics activity with parents/carers on a weekly basis. This helps to rehearse key sounds of the week as well as providing parents with the opportunity to get involved with phonics at home.

In KS1 and KS2, children take home a reading book based on their reading level. Books are changed as necessary and TAs keep a reading log for every child, which is then passed on at the end of every school year.

We expect children to read each evening at home, the minimum expectation is 3 times per week and for parents/carers to make comments/sign in the reading

records. For children in KS1, comments in reading record books will be made by parents/carers, however, as children moves into KS2 the children are able to begin recording their feedback as they read at home, although parents must still sign the record.

Home reading is monitored closely in every class and parents are contacted if their child is not reading regularly at home so that additional support can be given if needed.

Reading for Pleasure

Each class has a designated reading corner, which is an engaging and comfortable environment to stimulate and engage children during quiet reading and guided reading time. Class reading areas offer children a range of text types to choose from and also display a range of interactive questions and resources to help children consider what they have read.

As a school, we aim to provide many exciting and rewarding activities to promote the pleasure and knowledge that can be gained from books. Some of these events include visits by published authors, skilled story tellers from many cultures, in-school performances by professional theatre groups, reading competitions, book fairs, using drama, dance and music to illustrate texts.

We also celebrate children's reading achievements by nominating 'Star Readers'. These children are invited to an 'Afternoon Tea' with the Assistant Head and they have an opportunity to share their favourite books and authors.

Writing

At St Michael's Catholic Primary School we believe that the mastery of written language is one of the most powerful gifts that we can provide to our children. We believe that writing should be purposeful, rich and enjoyable for all.

Shared Writing

Shared writing takes place within the English lesson; the teacher models the writing process to the whole class or group as an expert writer, articulating the process. Learning objectives, are pre-planned and sessions are characterised by explicit teaching of specific writing strategies, oral response and high levels of collaboration. The children join in individually or through partner work, with the writing where appropriate. Each writing unit is based around a chosen text. As our approach to writing, we use **Pathways to Write**: a *'proven methodology which develops vocabulary, reading and writing skills through the mastery*

approach' (The Literacy Company). Using a 'mastery approach' to writing within our teaching, allows for a greater development of vocabulary and spelling.

Guided Writing

Guided writing takes place as part of a guided reading session within a unit of work. Guided writing takes place with a group of children with similar writing targets/needs. During the guided writing session the children will write with a teacher leading. It is intended that guided writing provides a forum for children to demonstrate what they have learned about writing and to further develop and extend their writing skills.

Grammar, Spelling and Handwriting

Grammar and Punctuation are taught, where possible within English lessons; allowing the children to learn skills in a meaningful manner. However, new concepts in grammar and punctuation might be taught as discrete sessions in preparation for a new unit of work or if additional support is needed. We also use Rising Stars Vocabulary units from Reception to Year 6 that support children in developing their vocabulary in fun and engaging ways and then using this knowledge in their writing.

As a school, we follow the **Read Write Inc Spelling** programme. Although the teaching of phoneme-grapheme correspondence underpins this programme, it also develops children's knowledge of word families, how suffixes impact upon root words, and provides mnemonics to remember the trickiest spellings. The teaching revolves around instruction (with the help of online alien characters), partner and group practice, and competitive group challenges that help children commit new words to memory. These sessions are taught to Years 2- 6, three times each week. Children also have spellings to learn at home each week and they are tested on these the following week. Children have access to spelling mats and word banks during writing tasks and rich vocabulary and words often misspelt are also on display in classrooms.

Children are taught how to form letters correctly through the Read Write Inc Phonic scheme that is introduced in Reception. Children remember rhymes or phrases for each letter to support them in writing each letter correctly. From Year 1, we introduce a pre cursive style and we encourage all our pupils to start every letter 'from the line'. By Year 2, we want our pupils to start joining their writing using the schools agreed handwriting style (Joinit C15) so that by the end of Year 3, most pupils are writing in a clear, joined handwriting style. Any children who have difficulty with their handwriting, will be given additional support on a regular basis.

Assessment

In phonics, children are assessed termly using the RWI assessment sheets and tracker. Attainment in phonics is measured by the Phonics Screening Test at the end of Year 1.

We use Benchmarking to assess a child's reading fluency and comprehension skills. This is completed on a termly basis or when a teacher feels that a child is ready to progress to the next book band. Attainment is also measured by termly internal standardised tests for each year group (PiRA) and attainment in reading is also measured using the statutory assessments at the end of Key Stage One and Two. These results are measured against the reading attainment of children nationally.

Writing

Writing is assessed throughout a unit, by the use of St Michael's marking policy so that children can clearly see what they have been successful with and what targets they need to work on in their next piece of writing. An 'end of unit write' or 'Big Write' is completed each half term which is assessed by teachers in order to monitor progress. Children also complete a termly standardised test (GAPS Rising Stars) in order to benchmark performance & track progress against national averages in grammar, punctuation & spelling.

Teachers moderate their writing internally with colleagues to reach appropriate judgements but also attend moderation meetings with local schools, schools outside of our authority and other Pathways to Write schools through the Literacy Company consultants. Year 2 and Year 6 teachers attend Local Authority moderation meetings to make accurate judgements with other teaching professionals, if children are working at the expected or above expected levels.

The teaching of writing is monitored by leaders through learning walks, book scrutinies and pupil and teacher interviews.

Equal Opportunities

All pupils are entitled to English regardless of race, creed, gender, physical abilities, special needs or where English is a second language. Where a child requires help in accessing the subject, assistance will be given via adult intervention, scribes or ICT. More able children will be challenged and motivated by opportunities to deepen their understanding in a range of contexts.

Inclusion and Intervention

We aim for all children to participate in mainstream lessons. Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) are included within the English lesson in shared and independent sessions using the support of teaching practitioners where possible. Tasks are carefully differentiated and provision maps are used to inform planning. See SEND and Inclusion policy. Children can be withdrawn from whole class sessions (for a short time) to focus on ensuring learning objectives and targets have been achieved through the use of intervention programmes or 1:1 support. Within the daily English lesson teachers provide activities to support children who find English difficult.

Leadership and Management

It is the role of the Headteacher to:

- Oversee the monitoring and evaluation procedures
- Provide support for the subject leader
- Be accountable to governors so that they can fulfil their monitoring role

It is the role of the Subject Leader to ensure that:

- Teachers have secure subject knowledge of English
- English resources are adequate and accessible
- There is equality of opportunity with regards to race, culture, gender, physical abilities and learning needs.
- Initiatives and information are disseminated to staff
- Methods of assessment, recording and reporting are effective and in line with school practice
- The English policy, long term plan and guidance material are updated
- They are the lead professionals in monitoring and exemplifying standards and practices
- They evaluate the teaching of English in the school and use this analysis to identify effective practice and areas for improvement

It is the role of teachers to ensure that;

- Medium and short term plans are readily available and set out in accordance with an agreed format
- Where applicable, learning support assistants are involved in English planning and training sessions and are fully briefed prior to the lessons

- Issues pertaining to low/exceptional achievement in English are communicated to the subject leader and special needs/high achievers leader where appropriate
- English is taught according to the learning styles of the children in the class
- Regular and appropriate assessment and recording is undertaken
- The marking policy is followed and used to help every child make effective progress
- They keep up to date with current thinking and informing subject leader of training requirements

Parental Involvement

Parents are encouraged to take an active interest in their child's learning and to support this as much as possible at home. This includes daily reading, completion of homework and any other learning activities, which are mutually agreed. Parents are regularly invited to attend meetings/courses on ways that they can support their child in reading and writing.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years and signed by The Chair of Governors on behalf of the Governing body.

Signed by Mike Volynchook, Chair of Governors on behalf of the Governing body.
Signed Copy available from school office.