



St Mary's RC Primary School

English Policy

MISSION STATEMENT

All are welcome here to walk with Jesus as we love, learn and flourish.

1. English Policy Introduction

At St Mary's we strive to deliver a high-quality English education which will help pupils gain high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others, and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. 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; pupils who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.

2. Aims

We aim for all pupils to:

- 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 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.

School Staff

- To promote a confident, positive attitude towards the learning and use of English.
- To promote a love of reading and writing in a range of text types.
- To teach and develop secure spelling strategies and skills.
- To teach and develop the use of Grammar skills.

Children

- To develop a love of reading and writing in a range of text types.
- To develop and secure the use of spelling strategies and skills.
- To develop the use of grammar, spellings and punctuation in their writing.

Parents and Carers

- To support their children with English homework activities (please refer to Homework Policy).
- To praise their children for the good things that they do in English
- To make English part of children's everyday lives.
- School aims to involve parents/carers in their children's learning as much as possible and to inform them regularly of their child's progress in English
- Parents/carers have the opportunity to meet with child's class teacher at least twice a year at Parents' Evening and receive written reports during the year.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to speak to their child's teacher at any point during the year, either informally or by making a specific appointment to discuss anything to further support them at home.
- Information about their child's progress, achievements and future targets in English is shared with parents/carers at these times and also ways that parents/carers may be able to assist with their child's learning.

Governors

A designated link governor will meet with the English Subject Leader at least once a year to find out about:

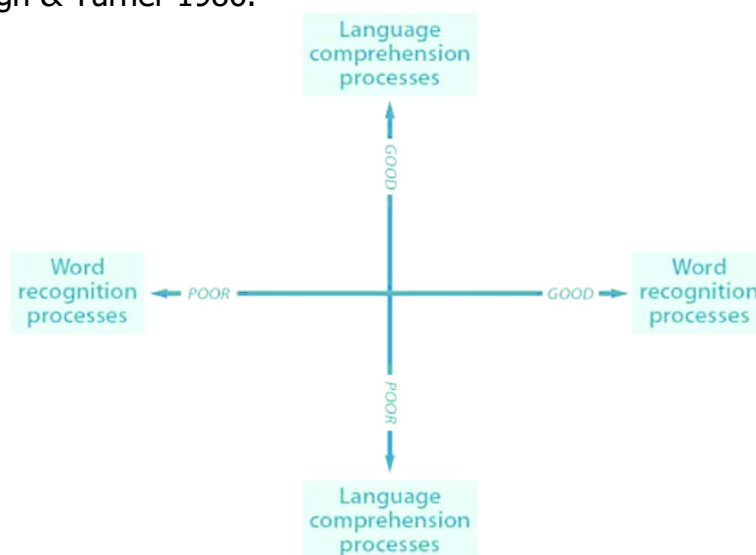
- The school's systems for planning work, supporting staff and monitoring progress;
- The allocation, use and adequacy of resources;
- How the standards of achievement are changing over time.
- Visit School and talk to pupils about their experiences of English;
- Take part in lesson observations or planned English activities in school;
- Promote and support the positive involvement of parents in English;
- Attend training and other events relating to the English curriculum;
- To be understanding and supportive of our aims in the learning and teaching of English and to review this policy annually.

3. Implementation and organisation of English

3.1 Reading

Implementation

We teach the skills of reading as word reading and comprehension as per the National Curriculum. Our pedagogy is based on the Simple View of Reading model, Gough & Turner 1986.



1. Word Reading

Word reading skills are taught progressively, beginning with the Early Years Curriculum and in Years 1-6, following the Lancashire Key Learning in Reading (KLIPS). These skills are broken down further on the Learning and Progression Steps (LAPS). The teaching of word reading is focussed around the teaching of

phonics in EYFS and KS1 (see phonics section). Phonics teaching sees children progress through the Monster Phonics Scheme.

In KS2, children are expected to be able to read books written at an age-appropriate level accurately and at a reasonable pace. Children are encouraged to use self-help reading strategies to work out unfamiliar words. In lower KS2, the teaching of word reading focuses on widening children's vocabulary and the breadth and depth of their reading. By upper KS2, children should be able to read silently and aloud a wider range of poetry and books written at an age-appropriate interest level with accuracy and at a reasonable pace. They should be able to read most words effortlessly and to work out how to pronounce unfamiliar written words with increasing automaticity. If the pronunciation sounds unfamiliar, they should ask for help in determining both the meaning of the word and how to pronounce it correctly.

By having a rigorous and sequential approach to teaching word reading, this will develop children's fluency, confidence and enjoyment of reading. We develop fluency using different strategies, which could include:

- Reading aloud
- Echo reading (teacher reads, children read)
- Choral reading (read sentences together)
- Paired reading (one child reads a sentence/ paragraph then the other)
- Build up from shorter texts
- Poetry recital
- Performance of texts
- Text marking for phrasing

2. Comprehension

Comprehension is developed from the start of a child's journey at St Mary's. We use picture books/ pictures and effective questioning to develop book talk in the Early Years, using learning objectives from the EYFS curriculum (and LAPS). Books with words are introduced, linked to phonics and children's understanding is developed further through various speaking and listening activities, including questioning, role play and drama.

In KS1 and KS2, the development of comprehension skills focuses on:

- Activating of prior knowledge
- Prediction
- Questioning
- Clarifying
- Summarising
- Retrieving
- Inference

Organisation

In KS1, children are taught to read through daily phonics teaching, guided reading, individual reading, independent reading and English lessons. In KS2, children are taught to read through guided reading sessions, individual reading, independent reading and English lessons. We also promote reading across the curriculum.

3.2 Writing

Implementation

Learning to write follows the structure of the National Curriculum with a focus on transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing). Children are also taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing.

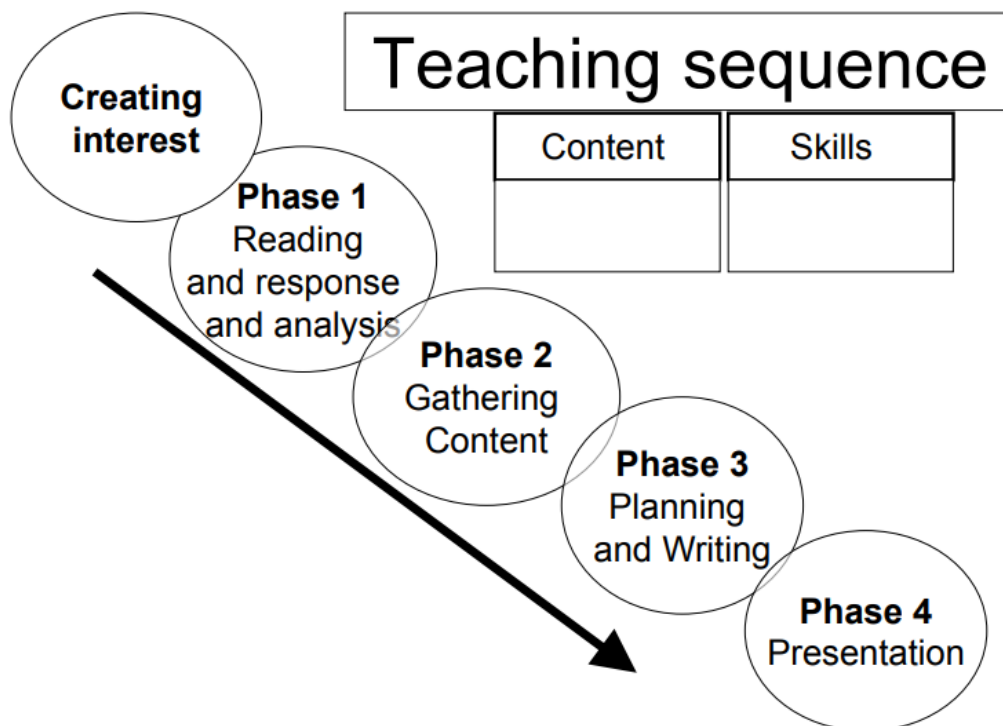
Writing covers two main areas as described above, transcription and composition:

1. Composition

Composition of writing takes into account many different elements.

Reading into writing model

At St Mary's, we follow the reading into writing model. How long is spent on each phase in the diagram below will depend upon the length of the whole unit and the needs of the children in the class.



Composition is taught through shared writing, guided writing, scaffolded writing and independent writing.

Organisation

Writing is taught through English lessons, spelling sessions and grammar sessions. We also use writing across the curriculum to embed skills taught in English sessions.

2. Transcription

Transcription is made up of handwriting and spelling.

Handwriting

There should be weekly teaching of handwriting. We follow the Nelson Scheme to develop handwriting into a joined fluent style. We encourage children to take pride in their work and recognise that handwriting is a form of communication and as such should be considered important in order for it to be effective.

Spelling

There are three main strands to spelling teaching:

- Learning and applying the spelling of the most common English words.
- Learning sounds and spelling patterns of collections of words.
- Learning how to be accurate with 'unknown' words.

Spelling needs to be taught regularly and words taught need to follow a spelling rule. Children will group and learn words according to spelling strings and rules. Alongside this, the key words for each year group need to be taught (found in Key Learning in Writing document). All spellings should be applied.

In Early Years and Year 1 our spellings will link with our phonics work which follows letter patterns and also learning the spelling of high frequency words. In Year 2, we continue to link our spellings with our phonics work, following the Monster Phonics Program. In Year 3 – Year 6, we follow a spelling scheme of work. Generally, teachers use the lessons and spelling lists in this scheme, alongside other resources, which ensures curriculum coverage and progression. This scheme works on a spelling rule/ string of letters that the children can apply. The key words are split up into year groups on the Key Learning in Writing documents and the children are taught how to spell these words too.

In the Infants, the focus of learning to spell is based on phonics and with the high frequency words, identifying the 'tricky' part of the word. Using this strategy and also considering that our children learn in different ways, we use various strategies to help our children with spelling, including:

- box up the word (shape of the word)
- pyramid
- vowels/ consonants/ letter pattern in a different colour
- look, say, cover, write and check
- syllables

4. **Phonics**

The National Curriculum states:

- Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why phonics should be emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners (ie unskilled readers) when they start school.

Implementation

Phonics is taught in Key Stage One. We use The Monster Phonics Scheme. In phonic lessons children are taught three main things:

- GPCs

They are taught the GPCs. This stands for grapheme phoneme correspondences. This simply means that they are taught all the phonemes in the English language and the ways of writing them down. These sounds are taught in a particular order using a systematic approach.

- Blending

Children are taught to be able to blend. This is when children say the sounds that make up a word and are able to merge the sounds together until they can hear what the word is. This skill is vital in learning to read.

- Segmenting

Children are also taught to segment. This is the opposite of blending. Children are able to say a word and then break it up into the phonemes that make it up. This skill is vital in being able to spell words.

Children in Class 1 have daily phonics lessons and are grouped appropriately according to the phonic phase they are working at.

Assessment

- Regular phonics assessment takes place during set assessment weeks to ensure that all children are progressing through the phonics phases adequately.
- Pupils who are not making adequate progress take part in a Phonics Catch-Up Programme – Fast Forward Phonics and Bounce Back Phonics.
- Phonic assessment sheets are also monitored by the English Subject Leader at the end of every term.

5. Grammar and Punctuation

Grammar and punctuation are taught either as part of the English lesson or stand alone sessions, with a particular focus on a specific skill.

5.1 Punctuation

It is important that children know:

- the name of different punctuation.
- the purpose(s) of each piece of punctuation.
- how to write the piece of punctuation correctly.

Implementation

These skills need to be taught and learnt in accordance with the children's needs, the National Curriculum. We follow the Lancashire KLIPs and the key pieces of punctuation are introduced progressively.

Skills should build through the week to ensure deep learning takes place. Skills should be revisited throughout the year. Punctuation objectives should link to the English lesson and genre being taught where possible, for example inverted commas when teaching narrative.

With regards to the formation of punctuation, children will:

- Sit full stops on the line.
- Use a , for a comma
- Use " ... " for inverted commas (66 and 99)
- Use ? and !

5.2 Grammar

Grammar requirements are clearly stated in the National Curriculum. In addition to the National Curriculum, teachers will use the Lancashire KLIPs documents, which introduces grammatical features progressively.

Implementation

Grammar learning objectives should be clear and concise and use the key language that the children need to know, use and understand (see National Curriculum and also Grammar Glossary to support this). Skills should build through the week to ensure deep learning takes place. Skills should be revisited throughout the year. Grammar objectives should link to the English lesson and genre being taught where possible, for example adjectives when exploring characters. Grammar, where this is the focus should be taught daily, for example in an English warm-up.

6. Planning Formats

- All teachers use the planning proforma created by the English Subject Leader that includes space for Learning Intentions for each year group, whole class input, individual group activities and plenaries.
- Pupils are taught in mixed Key Stage Classes and planning shows differentiation by age and ability.
- We follow the Lancashire KLIPs and use the Learning and Progression Steps to break the key learning down into small steps.
- We mainly use the Lancashire Scheme of Learning for English, but adapt this to suit the needs of our learners where appropriate. By using this scheme, we ensure that we have a clear progression of skills and also cover a range of genres.
- Grammar and punctuation planning is included on the English plan.
- We use the Monster Phonics plans in Key Stage One.
- Short term planning is flexible allowing for assessment for learning after each session/ group of sessions.
- Pupils may be streamed by ability for some sessions/ types of homework/ support
- Pupils entitled to Pupil Premium funding may be given additional English support which is tracked and monitored termly.

7. Assessment

- Staff assess pupils' learning during and as part of every session and they adapt their practice accordingly.
- Reading and Writing levels are assessed using KLIPS. These are tracked termly in Year 1 to Year 6.
- NFER reading, grammar and spelling tests are used termly in Years 3-5.

- Phonics is assessed regularly to ensure children are accessing the correct phonics phase. Phonics data is handed into the Headteacher and English Subject Leader termly. Children sit the phonics screening test in Year 1.
- End of KS1 and KS2 SATs tests take place in the summer term.
- EYFS are assessed according to Early Learning Goals.
- Staff attend moderating sessions, including with our local cluster schools and Learning Excellence Team.
- End of Key Stage Assessments are analysed by the Subject leader and Head teacher and feed into the school SEF, Improvement Plan and Staff Appraisal.

8. Specific groups

- Analysis of English achievement is carried out termly. Pupils who are under attaining or making little or no progress are discussed and plans made.
- Pupils with SEN may have English based targets on their POP. These are reviewed termly (please see SEN Policy).

9. Resources

We have a variety of good quality equipment and resources, both tangible and ICT based, to support our learning and teaching.

- We follow the Lancashire scheme for English for our units of work, which include fiction, non-fiction and poetry and link the grammar and punctuation skills to the unit being taught.
- 'Fast forward Grammar' scheme is used in the Yr5/6 class to boost Grammar skills.
- We also use various websites to support our teaching, including Classroom Secrets.
- We use the Monster Phonics Scheme.
- We use Monster Phonics reading books.
- We use Badger Learning guided reading books in the Juniors.
- We use Bug Club across school.

10. Cross Curricular

- Opportunities are used to draw English experiences out of a range of activities in other subjects such as Science, PE, History and Geography, to enable children to apply and use English in both real life and in academic contexts and make links.

11. Homework

Homework provides opportunities for children to practise and consolidate their skills and knowledge and prepare for their future learning through out of class activities and tasks (please refer to the School's Homework Policy).

English homework is set for all children. This will include a reading book and may also include:

- Grammar work
- Comprehension activities
- Online activities such as Education City or Purple Mash.

12. Subject Leader

- The role of the Subject Leader is to provide professional leadership and management in English in order to secure high quality teaching, effective use of resources and high standards of learning and achievement for all pupils.
- They will achieve this by affecting the following key areas: strategic direction and development; learning and teaching (including planning and marking and presentation); leading and managing staff; and efficient and effective use of resources.
- The Subject Leader will train and coach staff on English pedagogy within the school and keep up to date with developments from a county and national level.
- The Subject Leader has regular discussions with the Head Teacher and other members of staff about learning and teaching in English and provides data and a subject overview of the strengths and weaknesses of English within St Mary's Primary School on a termly basis.
- During the academic year the Subject Leader has specific allocated time for subject evaluation and monitoring tasks.
- The English Subject Leader attends training within county and reports back to all staff.
- The local cluster has an English group which meets termly.
- Staff are expected to attend relevant courses during the school year.
- Moderation takes place in house, within the cluster and with support from county.

Policy written by Jennifer Robinson & Jennifer Wade
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