



St. Mary's
Catholic Federation

St Mary's Catholic Federation, Carshalton

Learning, playing and growing together in the love of Jesus

**English Policy
(Curriculum)
(Bi-Annually)**

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following policies: School Curriculum Statement, Inclusion, Assessment, Teaching and Learning, Equal Opportunities, E-Safety, Safeguarding & Child Protection and Homework

Author: English Subjects Leads (Mrs F Black and Mr S Pratsis)

Date Prepared: June 2023

Date Approved: September 2023

Date of Review: June 2025

Approved by Full Governing Body Date: September 2023

Chair of Governors.....

Safeguarding Statement

This school takes notice of and adheres to all the national and local policies and guidance in regard to Safeguarding Children and Young People.

Lead Safeguarding Person Junior School: Mrs M Kenny

Lead Safeguarding Person Nursery & Infant School: Mrs M Quinn

Safeguarding Deputies: (Infants) Mrs S Hulme & Mrs E Heath and (Juniors) Mrs S Hulme, Mrs F Black & Mr S Pratsis

Governor designated safeguarding officer: Mr T Richmond

This policy covers the learning experiences offered to the children in our school in their daily English learning and in additional lessons where English is also taught.

Intent (aims)

Pupils grow in their love for reading and writing, surrounded by a rich language environment.

Developing the confidence and skills to express themselves, both as authors of many purposes and to explore inspiring texts from all over the world.

"English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. 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, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised." (DFE, September 2013)

At St Mary's we see language as the most powerful tool for learning and development, and are committed to implementing and developing pupil's competence in spoken and written language in line with the requirements of the National Curriculum for Years 1 - 6. Within the EYFS, communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

High expectations: all children are expected to succeed and make progress from their starting point within reading and writing.

Modelling: Teachers teach the skills needed to succeed in reading and writing by providing examples of good practice and having high expectations.

Fluency: children apply reading and writing skills with ease throughout all of the curriculum.

Vocabulary: ambitious vocabulary is taught explicitly and is expected to be applied in everyday learning

The intent of our English curriculum is to enable all pupils to develop to the full of their ability to use and understand English through the fundamental language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing enabling them to:

Intent for Reading

EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) literacy development within the Early Learning Goals 'involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.' (DFE, 2017). The programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of two dimensions: word reading and comprehension (both listening and reading). Within the EYFS framework, communication and language is the foundation of how learning is built upon.

Within reading throughout St. Mary's Federation we aim to:

- Ensure our children have access to a high quality English curriculum that is both challenging and enjoyable

- Provide the opportunity for all pupils to listen to stories being read aloud
- Provide our children with a variety of high quality reading materials & opportunities, which will enable them to develop as lifelong readers with a love of reading
- Enhance all children's vocabulary and use of standard English both written and verbally
- Ensure all children are confident and independent readers
- Read for pleasure with confidence and understanding
- Develop a love of and a respect for books, by providing them with a wide variety of reading materials and offering guidance in their selection
- Read for information; developing study skills through the use of non-fiction texts including the use of a dictionary, thesaurus, encyclopaedia, atlas and through technology
- Inquisitive readers who ask questions about the text
- Equip all children with the reading skills needed to successfully research areas of personal interest
- Enable children to have a good breadth of genre and purpose exposure, including stories and texts from other cultures

To meet these aims, each class has timetabled English lessons, spelling/phonics lessons and guided reading or comprehension focus during the week. Writing opportunities are sought within other cross curricular areas as well as the core English lessons. In each lesson, pupils are informed of their learning objective, either verbally or in writing, and the children are encouraged to be self - evaluative about their learning.

By following the National Curriculum, we ensure that our children have a breadth of experience in reading in each year and across the federation. It is our aim that children encounter real books as often as possible. We provide screen based texts where appropriate and teach the children to interrogate these as fully as paper-based texts.

Children's first approach to language is through speaking and listening. It is our prime means of communication, and it is upon oral and listening skills that all other reading and written work is built. Oral work is therefore an essential element in classroom activity.

Intent for Writing

Pupils at St. Mary's are given opportunities to write with confidence and accuracy for a variety of purposes and audiences whilst developing their own individual flair. We want our children to become increasingly confident to write with grammatical accuracy and be able to apply spelling patterns correctly using a cursive handwriting style. We aim to expose our children to a wide range of vocabulary so that they are able to decipher new words and then use them when writing and verbalising. **The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading: transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).**

Within writing, our intent is for pupils to:

- write independently
- write confidently
- write for a variety of purposes
- have an increasing understanding of punctuation and the grammatical structure of sentences
- spell with confidence and have the necessary skills for editing and improving their writing

- develop a cursive handwriting style, which is legible
- have an awareness of the variety of written communication
- employ a wide, exciting and precise vocabulary
- use their reading to inform their writing

Implementation Within the English Curriculum

Planning, Assessment, Recording and Reporting

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. LTP and MTP have been created and adapted to suit the school and each cohort. English planning on a common weekly short term planning format, which identifies reading, writing and speaking, and listening objectives. Teachers plan together in year groups to ensure consistency. We use computing skills to enhance the teaching and learning of English in English lessons, [ensuring children's E-safety at all times](#).

- In EYFS children are taught in a whole class setting for a main input followed up with a guided group and independent activities throughout the week.
- In Key Stage 1 and 2, English is taught daily.
- Teaching is by class in mixed ability, unless a need is identified where more able/less able streaming is appropriate. This is a decision made in discussion with the SLT during progress meetings.

Implementation of Writing

Teaching and Learning Experiences

Multiple purposes for writing are identified within each year group, each term linking to the children's reading of the year group's driver text. We use mind maps and story maps in addition to other thinking skill's tools to encourage children to become more familiar with the organisation of written texts.

Shared writing and the modelling of writing by the class teacher takes place within English lessons. A variety of resources have been provided including large and small whiteboards and interactive boards to aid the teaching and learning experiences. Guided writing sessions allow a closer examination of how to structure and write a variety of texts. These often make frequent reference to the use of De Bono's Thinking Hats and encourage the children to become more independent in their use of the hats to structure their writing.

Learning Journey Within English

English books showcase evidence of the learning journey of skills and show the small steps of progression. Within books there should be evidence of grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction as well as paragraph and extended writing also. There will also be evidence of drama/ speech and language activities documented with photos or reflection on the learning.

Writing Progress Folders

There is evidence of the progress over time, a piece of writing from each child per term is documented in their folder. This folder builds a picture over time to show the progression of the pupil's writing from year to year. Children are often asked to reflect on the progress they have made and to celebrate their achievements.

Dictionaries

Children in year 3 learn about dictionary usage. These skills are extended throughout the Key Stage. Each child has access to a dictionary and there are a variety of supplementary dictionaries and thesauruses in each classroom. There are also electronic spell checkers to support the checking of spelling independently.

Handwriting

As a whole school we use the Letter-Join cursive handwriting programme to teach and support handwriting practices in every year group in the school. Children develop clear legible handwriting by having regular teaching and practice sessions, developing a cursive style that is a continuous cursive font with lead-in and lead-out lines. These fonts are named; Letter-join Plus and Letter-join Air Plus (Pre-cursive). Clear and appropriate presentation is encouraged.

Spelling/Phonics

Each year group has a list of words/rules that pupils are expected to spell accurately, this follows National Curriculum guidance. (100 High Frequency Words, 200 High Frequency Words, Common Exception Word lists, Spelling Word Lists for KS2). Three spellings lessons are taught across the Junior School to introduce, practise and test weekly spellings. Phonics is taught throughout the Infant school on a daily basis with targeted sounds taught in accordance with the phonic phases.

Spellings which are corrected in written work depends on the task and the ability of the child. The words chosen for correction may be common usage words, topic words, words/rules with which a child should be familiar, or an unknown word at which they have made a good attempt. The child or teacher underlines the word and the correct model may be discussed with the child or written in the margin on the same line. Opportunities are given for the child to locate the word in the dictionary, find some correct letter sounds in the word or use look, cover, write, and check with the correct spelling.

At St. Mary's, our home learning supports pupils learning through their weekly spelling journal where they explore their spellings and write their spelling words in sentences. At school this is tested with a spelling dictation weekly.

Phonics and Reading

Our phonics teaching is centred around the principles of systematic synthetic phonics and follows, 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised'. This phonics scheme meets the expectations of the National Curriculum and prepares the children to go beyond the expectations of the Phonics Screening Check. It draws on the latest research into how children learn best, how to ensure learning stays in children's long term memory and how best to enable children to apply their learning to become highly competent readers.

We use a variety of texts for reading from 'Little Wandle' and 'Big Cat Letters and Sounds.' These texts are arranged according to the groups of sounds and common exception words that match the children's learning through our systematic synthetic phonics teaching.

Implementation of Speaking and Listening Opportunities

Pupils ability to speak and listen is developed through the range and complexity of their experiences in school and elsewhere. Staff refer to the English national curriculum and topic

plans when planning, delivering and assessing every week. Other subject areas provide rich source material for developing speaking and listening skills also.

Teachers plan for pupils to implement their speaking and listening skills by:

- understanding, recalling and responding to speakers' implicit and explicit meanings
- explaining and commenting on speakers' use of language, including vocabulary, grammar and non-verbal features
- speaking competently and creatively for different purposes and audiences
- exploring, developing and sustaining ideas through talk
- taking on different roles in groups to developing thinking and complete tasks
- participating in conversations, making appropriate contributions building on others' suggestions and responses
- using dramatic techniques including work in role to explore ideas and texts
- creating, sharing and evaluating ideas and understanding through drama

Other experiences, which stimulate language and encourage the child to express ideas, thoughts and information, are developed across the curriculum and in:

- Assemblies and liturgies
- PSHE activities
- Visits
- Visitors, who include theatre groups, Story Tellers, Police Officers, Parish Priests, parents, the school nurse and others
- Drama, as a process and as a performance product

Implementation of Reading

Shared and Guided Reading

The texts are sometimes shared on the interactive whiteboard and sometimes individual copies of texts are provided or the children have real book texts. Most texts used by staff during guided reading are selected from the same genre or purpose as the text used during the English lesson. This means that children at St. Mary's are frequently reading whole texts by authors. The texts have been selected to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. Some are from published reading schemes, (Ginn, Longman), and others have been chosen by the English leader or year group staff as appropriate texts, frequently linking to other curriculum areas. For most genres, differentiated texts have been provided for use in guided groups. Visual texts are also increasingly employed.

Reading Help

Teachers offer guidance to adults helping in school and many parents offer invaluable support to children by sharing books with them at school. Parent readers are timetabled to read on a weekly basis with year groups. A record of interest is taken in the autumn term of parents who have a valid DBS who can then start reading with specified year groups.

Home/School Reading

We encourage parents and children to read together at home and fill out their reading diary. In Years 3 and 4, a colour-coded range of books are provided for the children to choose from based on the child's reading age. This provides the teacher and the child with some guidance of reading level. Children are able to select from a range of books that are within his/her phonics and comprehension capability. We provide a range of material at each level. The books are held

in central areas in coloured and labelled boxes on the lower corridor and the children are given daily opportunities to choose from them.

Reading Diaries

Children are expected to record books that they read in their reading diaries (with parents' support for younger children). The pages give the children the opportunity to identify the title and author and give guidance to enable them to make a brief, interesting comment about it. Helpful words and phrases are suggested. Children should bring their diary to school every day. Staff make notes in the diaries of children's contributions to Guided Reading group sessions or if read on a 1:1 basis.

The School Library

All classes visit the school library frequently to change their book and select a new one. A library timetable allows each class across the federation to visit the school library and is timetabled for every class.

Book Fairs

A book fair is held annually at both schools within the federation, often at the time during the school parent's evenings in the autumn term. This also provides an opportunity for the subject leader to order additional 'free' reading resources for the school with the rewards that are accumulated through the purchasing of books.

Feedback in English

Feedback is given written and verbally in English lessons in order to identify misconceptions and allow children to improve their work during the same lesson. Teachers do this through discussion sessions and mini-plenaries when working with individuals or with a group. Teachers may also make written comments in books for pupils in accordance with planning. When work is being discussed as a class, acknowledgement marking or self/peer marking/feedback may be appropriate as following school policy.

Impact

Monitoring and evaluation will be led by the English Subject Leaders, Senior Management Team and the Head Teacher in line with the assessment policy.

The English Subject Leader will monitor English in school using:

- Weekly, medium and long term plans
- Samples of pupil's work
- Viewing writing progress folders (3 pieces of writing a year are added to collection)
- English working walls
- Lesson observations/ lesson studies
- Termly data and evaluation documents
- Writing subject monitoring reports

Results of reading and writing monitoring and evaluation are reported termly to the Governing Body. Reading and writing end of Key stage results are analysed and used for action planning that feeds into the school improvement plan.

End of Policy