



St Mary's CE Primary School
N8 7QN

English Policy

Jesus said, "Love one another as I have loved you." (John 15:12)

Our Vision

As we love, we flourish
As we flourish, we aspire
As we aspire, we achieve
Together, we are a family.

Friendship, Compassion, Hope, Wisdom,
Community, Endurance.

St Mary's CE Primary School

POLICY FOR ENGLISH

Introduction:

Through our daily school life at St Mary's Church of England Primary School, we encourage our children to build respectful friendships and demonstrate compassion towards others. Through this we build a strong community spirit, as together we are a family.

Our teaching and learning provides the children with the wisdom and endurance they need to expand their minds socially, morally and academically allowing them to achieve and flourish and fulfil 'Life in all its Fullness.' (John 10:10). We encourage our children to demonstrate and develop a dignity in their work and themselves which enables them to hope to aspire to be the best they can possibly be.

Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum and in the Communication, Language and Literacy section of the EYFS document.

English at St Mary's is taught with rigour and at least matches the breadth of the National Curriculum. The reading and writing curriculum is sufficiently challenging to allow for the vast majority of children to meet National Curriculum end points.

Intent

At St Mary's, our English curriculum intent is to develop high standards of literacy and language by providing all children with a strong command of the spoken and written language and to foster their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. Our structured and carefully planned approach to reading and writing equips our children to become confident and expressive readers and writers.

We believe in providing a rich and diverse curriculum. Our lessons, the books we read and the images we present reflects our diverse school community. We are aspirational for our children and support them so that they become successful, proud and ambitious learners who go on to experience a wide range of opportunities in their futures.

Our aims are for children to:

- gain strong phonics knowledge and good communication skills giving children the foundations for future learning
- read fluently and with good comprehension by the time they leave primary school
- enjoy reading and writing and do so with confidence, fluency and understanding
- have access to a range of cultural and inclusive texts that they can relate to and enjoy
- understand a range of text types and genres and be able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- develop a love of writing which allows them to write fluently on a range of topics throughout the curriculum
- know and develop a wide range of writing techniques, so they are able to extend and enrich their writing
- be adventurous with their word choices and have the confidence to experiment with new language, developing their imagination and creativity

- have a strong awareness of the importance of their presentation, punctuation and spelling
- develop a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- are competent in speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage

Implementation:

The components of the reading and writing curriculum are well structured, managed and sequenced by lesson for individual year groups to enable our children to become highly successful readers and writers.

Reading

Our children benefit hugely from exposure to books from an early age. Right from the start of school at St Mary's, opportunities are provided for children to engage with books that fire their imagination and interest. Our nursery is stocked with attractive and engaging books and the nursery staff create an environment that is rich in language. Children are also encouraged to choose and peruse books freely as well as sharing them when reading with others.

Approaches to reading:

- Phonics
- Shared reading
- Guided reading
- Independent reading
- Listening to & appreciation of reading

Phonics

At St Mary's we send home a combination of decodable (words that can be sounded out) and non decodable (words that often cannot be sounded out) books. We take these books from a range of reading schemes in our Lower Phase (Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2). Reading books connect closely to the phonics knowledge children are taught when they are learning to read. Our phonics framework allows for this.

At St Mary's we follow the Floppy's Phonics programme for the teaching of phonics. Key features of Floppy's Phonics are that it:

- has six well sequenced, overlapping phases (see Appendix 1)
- sets out a detailed and systematic programme for teaching phonic skills to children with the aim of them becoming fluent readers by the age of seven
- aims to build on children's speaking and listening skills

Shared Reading

Daily Supported Reading (DSR)

This programme is a systematic and well structured approach to reading where children enjoy daily reading in small groups (no more than six) led by a trained adult. It is implemented in addition to our school's phonics programme. Our children are grouped within their class according to their reading level. Adults use differentiated lesson plans to support children to make maximum progress.

Daily Supported Reading is finely attuned to ensure children become fluent readers who are independently motivated. Children:

- read stories on their own right from the start

- learn to respond to and engage with new ideas and information
- are taught how to access information with increasing autonomy
- learn to problem solve independently while keeping a story or message in mind

Destination Reader (DR)

At St Mary's, we provide a structured reading programme from Years 3 to 6, using principles from '**Destination Reader**'. These are structured daily reading sessions which incorporate whole class modelling of reading skills. Children then apply these skills in partner work sessions and when independently reading.

Children deepen their understanding of the texts they read through the systematic use of a series of Destination Reader strategies and language stems. This is well sequenced and developed year on year in line with age-related objectives.

Each year group has a list of core books that are shared with the children during the year. The children are encouraged to use different reading strategies to unlock their understanding of the texts and are given the sentence stems to support with their explanations. Within Destination Reader sessions, time is also spent ensuring that children are developing good reading and learning behaviours. These behaviours support children in knowing how to communicate effectively, being supportive and actively listening to others, discussing and explaining their ideas and taking responsibility for their own and their group's learning

We do shared reading using the principles of DR. In doing so, the key reading elements are taught and further develop children's:

- oracy
- experiences with print
- vocabulary
- fluency and comprehension.

Destination Reader also involves children following the words as the teacher reads. When doing so, the teacher models using the DR sentence stems and gives opportunities for children to be actively involved in paired-work in order to check their understanding of what is being read and the reading skills being taught.

Children then continue to read the same text in pairs using the strategies modelled by the class teacher. The teacher engages with all children by listening to them read in pairs and provides additional teaching support as required.

A 'selfie' (short comprehension question), is often completed to demonstrate the application of the skills and knowledge taught and hopefully gained. At the end of the week/sequence of lessons, a 'big picture' (summary of skills activity) or an unseen text comprehension (Years 5 & 6 only) is completed to further evidence children's understanding of the skills taught.

Guided Reading

Guided reading involves teachers selecting texts to match the reading ability of the children. With specific guidance, children are then supported to read texts independently. Children are organised into groups that have a similar reading ability and/or similar learning needs. Every child has a copy of the same text which they read individually.

The teacher guides or 'scaffolds' children as they read, talk and think their way through a text. Emphasis is given to the use of expression, punctuation, pace and reading fluency.

We use the 'Big Cats' reading scheme for our middle (Years 3 & 4) and upper (Years 5 & 6) phases. For more able readers, a selection of more challenging texts is provided.

Independent reading

Independent reading enables all children to choose their own books (from the class libraries) for pleasure and interest. This fosters a love of reading where children experience a wide range of books and authors.

Listening to & appreciation of reading

There are opportunities for listening to and appreciating reading throughout the curriculum. For example: poetry recitals and teachers reading to children during story time.

Writing

We create, plan and deliver writing activities that are meaningful and enjoyable across a range of subjects and in a wide range of genres.

Approaches to writing:

- 'Mark making'
- 'Talk for Writing'
- Phonics and spelling
- Emergent writing
- Shared Writing
- Guided Writing/Independent Writing
- Extended writing
- Handwriting
- Creative writing activities

'Mark making'

In the Early Years, children are encouraged to make marks with a wide range of tools and in a variety of ways both inside and outside of the classroom. Teachers plan and organise writing areas that inspire children to write and gain confidence in their ability to do so. Opportunities to mark make are offered in sand, paint, glitter, foam etc using thick and thin pens /pencils/paintbrushes/sticks etc.

Talk for Writing

The teaching of writing is based on the Pie Corbett 'Talk for Writing' approach throughout the school. We believe strongly that this approach gives children the opportunity to imitate and internalise the language of stories, before moving on to being supported in crafting their writing.

Within writing lessons, our children have many opportunities to imitate and internalise the language of stories, before moving on to crafting their writing. We use age-appropriate texts, story maps and actions to help children recall stories or non-fiction texts. Each unit opens in a creative and engaging way, focusing strongly on developing vocabulary, before bringing the learning together to produce a final 'innovated' written outcome.

Through the 'Talk for Writing' approach, we provide engaging and inclusive texts that inspire children to expand and develop their imaginations. Children also acquire an understanding of grammar and knowledge of the conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.

Teachers seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They plan for children to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through writing lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

Phonics and Spelling

Teachers use the Floppy's Phonics scheme and structure to deliver lessons. Strategies learned in these lessons are then used in follow up activities and referred to and used as scaffolds in future pieces of written work across all subjects.

Emergent Writing

Environmental print plays an important role in stimulating children's emergent writing skills. It provides real opportunities to develop children's understanding of symbols. Teachers therefore plan activities and develop writing areas in the classroom where children can experiment with writing for a purpose.

Environmental print (e.g: labels on coat hooks) is also used as a tool to scaffold children's emergent skills by and using it for functional purposes.

Shared Writing

This is a crucial part of helping children develop the ability and confidence to write and express themselves in a given genre. This forms an essential part of each lesson and involves the teacher scribing ideas using creative input from children.

Guided Writing/Independent Writing

This follows the whole class teaching part of each lesson, enabling children to work independently or in a supported group with an adult and practice the focus skills/objectives.

Extended Writing

Using the Talk for Writing approach, children focus on a particular aspect of writing on most days. They edit and improve these pieces. This then culminates in an extended piece such as a newspaper report, a poem or a story.

Handwriting

Children practice handwriting using the Nelson handwriting scheme sheets and which are recorded in English books.

Oracy – Talk for Learning

Oracy is essential to children's thinking and learning. High-quality classroom talk helps children become confident when expressing themselves. It also supports children to make progress in reading, writing and in all other areas of the curriculum.

Children are taught to speak clearly and explain their ideas. They learn how to justify their ideas with reasons and ask questions to check their understanding, while developing their vocabulary and listening to others. Classroom talk also helps build children's knowledge and their vocabulary as well as helping them to clarify their thinking and share, develop and organise their ideas for writing.

Our aim is for all children to:

- gain confidence in speaking with clarity and develop storytelling skills
- listen attentively for understanding
- develop their vocabulary
- develop the ability to use tenses and the grammatical structure of sentences
- develop an enthusiasm for participating in conversations and building on the ideas of others whilst respecting others' views when communicating

Interventions

Our school implements language interventions to address a range of children's needs, including for children with SEND and those who are disadvantaged (see school provision map). These are mapped out yearly and includes provision for the development of comprehension and verbal reasoning skills, the addressing of gaps in phonological awareness and precision teaching of non-phonological, high frequency words.

Impact

Assessment

Our children consistently make good progress in lessons. They are continuously and formatively assessed during lessons through the use of questioning and discussion and in their writing, by reviewing written work against set learning objectives.

We also use summative assessments to assess children's writing. Teachers work together within phases and across schools to moderate children's work and ensure that there is consistency across classes and between schools.

Reading and handwriting is also assessed regularly. We are committed to identifying and closing gaps in children's knowledge and skills as and when they emerge through formative processes such as marking and questioning. Summative assessments for reading from Years 1 - 6 are carried out termly using standardised tests.

Any gaps in children's knowledge and understanding are addressed quickly and effectively for all children including those who are disadvantaged and have SEND. This may include teachers re-teaching missing components if required.

Training

We provide our staff with high quality and regular training to improve their reading and writing pedagogy. We also provide training and resources to improve their speaking, listening, writing and reading of English. This includes using the 'Walkthru' teaching and learning framework, which helps develop staff expertise in the key elements that make for effective teaching and learning. Teachers apply the most appropriate pedagogies learned to match the activities and lessons being taught.

Cultural Enrichment

Our reading culture is championed, valued, respected and encouraged. Reading lies at the heart of the curriculum, and it is crucial in supporting children's future social, academic and personal success. We know that reading fluency is a strong indicator for achievement in further education, higher education, and future employment.

Children require high levels of literacy in many aspects of their lives. There is much information for them to digest in all areas of their life experiences e.g. school, home, public transport, digital technology. At St Mary's, we prioritise the creation and development of well-resourced, inviting, and interesting book areas in each class as well as having separate reading break-out areas in communal spaces. Also, we are resourced with books that are diverse, engaging and relevant to our children. and we plan activities that foster the enjoyment of reading and reinforce the importance of children becoming fluent and independent readers.

Monitoring and Reporting

The English Policy and our school's English provision is monitored each term by the respective English phase leaders, from which feedback and guidance is provided to individual class teachers. Reports are

made to the school's leadership and management teams and the governing body on the progress of our school's English curriculum provision and the extent to which the quality of education in English is ambitious and sufficiently strong for all of our children.

Appendix 1.

Phase	Phonic knowledge and skills
Phase One (Nursery/Reception)	Activities are divided into seven aspects, including environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and finally oral blending and segmenting
Phase Two (Reception) up to six weeks	Learning 19 letters of the alphabet and one sound for each. Blending sounds together to make words. Segmenting words into their separate sounds. Beginning to read simple captions.
Phase Three (Reception) up to 12 weeks	The remaining letters of the alphabet, one sound for each. Graphemes such as ch,oo, th represent the remaining phonemes covered by single letters. reading captions, sentences, questions. On completion of this phase, children will have learnt the 'simple code', ie, one grapheme for each phoneme in the English language.
Phase Four (Reception) 4 to 6 weeks	No new grapheme - phoneme correspondences are taught in this phase. Children learn to blend and segment longer words with adjacent consonants, e.g swim, clap, jump.
Phase Five (Throughout Year One)	Now we move on to the 'complex code'. Children learn more graphemes for the phonemes they already know, plus different ways of pronouncing the graphemes they already know.
Phase Six (Throughout Year Two and beyond)	Working on spelling, including suffixes and prefixes, doubling and dropping letters etc.