



Mission Statement

Learning to Live Out Our Calling with Compassion and Love



English Curriculum Statement

Foreword

How is English a sacred subject?

Through the study of English, we enable our pupils to discover the multi-faceted beauty of communication, understanding, and exploration of relationships with themselves, each other, and the mysterious nature of God's world; to recognise that language plays a fundamental role in the growth of our identity and self-image, leading to human flourishing which transcends limitations and barriers. Exposure to a rich variety of literature and the development of high-level literacy skills gives them the tools to participate as a global citizen.

Intent

At St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, we are dedicated to fostering a love of reading in our pupils. We are committed to ensuring that all pupils become confident, fluent readers who have a good knowledge of a range of authors and who use what they read to make sense of the world around them. It is our intention to immerse pupils in the wonders of quality texts to instil a passion for discovery and confidence to explore their imagination. At St. Mary's we strongly promote the development of vocabulary, which is central to our broader curriculum. We understand the importance of parents and carers in supporting their child to develop their reading fluency and comprehension, so a home-school partnership is paramount. Reading workshops are adopted to enable parents and carers to support their children effectively at home.

During their time at St. Mary's, all children will be exposed to a high quality education in English. We are committed to ensuring that all of our pupils become highly competent writers. The development of key writing skills is central to our English curriculum and these are taught through high quality texts and visual stimulus, which are carefully selected in line with our pupils' interests. Our pupils are given endless opportunities throughout their school journey to write for different audiences and purposes, therefore independently applying and securing the key writing skills, which are progressively built upon.

As a Voice 21 school, we strive to create an oracy-rich community, where we ensure that all children feel that their voices are valued and listened to. Quality first teaching aims to support children in using their voice confidently to reason, negotiate, present and explore ideas, which in turn will support their learning across the curriculum and prepare them for later life.

Implementation

At St. Mary's, the English Curriculum consists of:

Writing

- A sentence stacking approach to writing, which promotes teacher modelling and a shared writing process. This promotes meta-cognition as teachers talk through the writing process aloud with the children.
- Hook lessons to engage the children and give them a strong purpose for writing.
- Specific skills focused on every half term to promote mastery of writing.
- The writing for a particular audience is split over several lessons to promote concision and quality.



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- Use of high quality, language-rich texts and visual stimuli, which enthuse and challenge pupils.
- Opportunities to write for a range of purposes and audiences, which inspire pupils to write.
- Opportunities to apply taught skills in other areas of the curriculum.
- Modelling of a high standard of talk and writing to secure high expectations.
- Each lesson is designed so that learning is chunked to sustain engagement and pupils are given ample opportunities to talk through their ideas with their learning partner.
- Use of Alan Peat sentence types to develop sentence structure and text composition.
- Challenges are provided for all children - at their level – in all writing lessons to ensure accelerated progress.
- Progression of grammar skills across the school to ensure a systematic approach.
- Opportunities for children to write in a genre of their choice to develop autonomy.

Reading

- Daily phonics takes place in EYFS/KS1. We currently use Story time Phonics, which teaches phonics through a systematic approach using real life books to provide a context for learning.
- Identified groups of children are given further support in additional phonic sessions, as necessary, to close gaps in learning and to ensure accelerated progress.
- Whole class reading taught in Y1 four times a week. This will include a focus on vocabulary, it will provide opportunities for all children to read aloud and develop their comprehension skills using the VIPERS skills and incorporate recaps to embed learning into long term memory.
- Whole class reading taught from Y2-Y6. This a structured approach which takes place three times a week. A chosen text is studied over a fortnight and the sequence of lessons include: text immersion, vocabulary focus, activities to support VIPERS skills in areas which are in need of development, planned questions to develop and assess the children's understanding of the text, big questions which require a more in-depth response and modelled answers which give pupils the opportunity to edit and improve their initial responses. Extension activities are provided as necessary to provoke higher level thinking skills.
- Sequenced, progressive teaching of key reading skills across the school with language acquisition at the forefront.
- Celebration of whole school events to promote reading and encourage reading for pleasure.
- Home reading books in EYFS and KS1 are fully decodable and closely matched to each child's phonetic knowledge and ability.
- Home reading books for children who are secure in 'Lime Band' are chosen by children themselves from within their reading level band.
- Accelerated Reader used in KS2 (and where applicable in Year 2) to develop reading fluency, comprehension and enjoyment of reading.
- Daily story time in each classroom. These texts are carefully selected by teachers and encompass a range of authors, genres (fiction, non-fiction and poetry) and carry cultural capital.
- The expectation is that all children read at home every night with someone at home. This is communicated and tracked via the children's reading diaries.
- Reading buddies takes place so that competent Year 5/6 readers (who receive training) read with targeted pupils in Year 3/4 on a daily basis to support their reading development.
- Ready, steady, readers takes place so that competent Year 5 readers (who receive training) support the phonetic development of targeted children in Year 1.

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Spelling

- Daily phonics sessions in EYFS and Year 1, following Story time phonics.
- Spelling taught progressively across the school, as per spelling overview, during discrete spelling lessons, supplemented by sessions focusing on the Statutory Spelling Lists for each year group.
- Spelling, punctuation and grammar starters at the beginning of English lessons focuses on practising taught spelling rules, as well as other grammatical content for that year group. This takes place from Years 1-6.

Handwriting

- Cursive handwriting is to be introduced once the children are able to write fluently after mastering correct letter formation. The Magic Link Handwriting Scheme is used at this point to provide a consistent approach to the teaching of cursive handwriting. Handwriting interventions take place, as necessary.



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Impact

We strive to ensure that our children's attainment is in line with, or exceeds, their potential when we consider the varied starting points of all our children. The age related expectations are paramount when it comes to measuring attainment. We robustly and systematically track the progress and attainment of all children throughout the year, aiming for accelerated progress in all pupils. We aim for the percentage of pupils working at age related expectations and greater depth standard within each year group to be at least in line with national averages.

Children at St. Mary's enjoy reading and this has a positive impact on reading attainment. They can confidently talk about what they like to read and who their favourite authors are. Children have enhanced levels of text comprehension and have a good understanding of the key reading skills, which is developed progressively across the school. Parents and carers have a good understanding of the importance of reading and know how to support their child at home.

As all aspects of English are an integral part of the curriculum, cross curricular writing is of a high standard. Skills taught in English lessons are transferred into other subjects, showing mastery of the key skills.

During their time at St. Mary's, pupils' speaking and listening skills progress rapidly so that by the time they leave St. Mary's, they are able to communicate effectively for a wide range of purposes and to a wide range of audiences.

We hope that as children move on from us to further their education and learning that their creativity, passion for English and high aspirations travel with them and continue to grow and develop as they do. Our intentions are that our English curriculum will ensure all pupils are academically prepared for life beyond primary school and throughout their educational journey, into adulthood.