
English Policy 2024

'With Jesus we can achieve what we dream and believe'

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of English at St Michael's Catholic Primary School. It contributes to the school's philosophy of teaching and learning as expressed through the Mission Statement.

English National Curriculum

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. 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 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.*

Full implementation of the National Curriculum

In the National Curriculum for 5 - 11 year olds, English is developed through four key areas:

- ✓ *Spoken Language*
- ✓ *Reading – Word Reading & Comprehension*
- ✓ *Writing – Transcription & Composition*
- ✓ *Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar & Punctuation*

It is important to note that each is closely interrelated with the next, so it becomes increasingly difficult to consider one without the other(s).

The Early Years Foundation Stage

English in Early Years is based upon the Foundation Stage Profile strand of Communication, Language & Literacy. Communication, language and literacy depend on learning and being competent in a number of key skills, together with having the confidence, opportunity, encouragement, support and disposition to use them. This area of learning includes communication, speaking and listening in different situations and for different purposes, being read a wide range of books and reading simple texts and writing for a variety of purposes.

To give all children the best opportunities for effective development and learning in communication, language and literacy, practitioners should give particular attention to:

- ✓ *Providing opportunities for children to communicate thoughts, ideas and feelings and build up relationships with adults and each other*
- ✓ *Incorporating communication, language and literacy development in planned activities in each area of learning;*
- ✓ *Giving opportunities to share and enjoy a wide range of rhymes, music, songs, poetry, stories and non-fiction books*
- ✓ *Giving opportunities for linking language with physical movement in action songs and rhymes, role play and practical experiences*
- ✓ *Planning an environment that reflects the importance of language through signs, notices and books*
- ✓ *Providing opportunities for children to see adults writing and for children to experiment with writing for themselves through making marks, personal writing symbols and conventional script*
- ✓ *Providing time and opportunities to develop spoken language through conversations between children and adults, both one-to-one and in small groups, with particular awareness of, and sensitivity to, the needs of children for whom English is an additional language, using their home language when appropriate*

At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2)

Children should learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They should begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They should use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

At Key Stage Two (Years 3-6)

Children should learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They should read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They should explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

Spoken Language

The National Curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers should therefore ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills.

Pupils should develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They must be assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others and teachers should ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils should also be taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate. All pupils should be enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils should be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They should have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances. Statutory requirements which underpin all aspects of spoken language across the six years of primary education form part of the national curriculum.

As a school, we place a huge focus on vocabulary development, ensuring that children are steeped in high-quality vocabulary from the beginning of their educational journey, learning from quality language role models and broadening their vocabulary bank progressively, year-on-year. Core vocabulary is identified and mapped out sequentially in every curriculum area, and staff use a range of strategies to explicitly teach this to pupils.

Reading

Reading is at the heart of our Explore curriculum. At St Michael's, we want every child to leave school as a passionate and confident reader with a passion for literature. Reading is a habit and that habit needs to be grounded in what we do at school, therefore reading

underpins every subject area that we teach. Children in our school are surrounded by positive reading role models, and staff continually share their love of reading with the children.

The programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of two dimensions:

- *word reading*
- *comprehension (both listening and reading)*

Whole-class shared reading (comprehension and fluency)

As a school, we follow Literacy Counts' Ready Steady Comprehension programme from EYFS to Year 6. Ready Steady Comprehension (formally known as Steps to Read) is a Shared Reading programme comprised of carefully crafted units of work. They empower our staff to teach all aspects of word reading and comprehension through high-quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts. Within a Ready Steady Comprehension lesson, teachers will model many skills to pupils, such as the act of being a fluent reader. Teachers demonstrate to the class by 'thinking aloud' the skills required to be a reader, then the children are given time to practice their own reading fluency. The texts used within the sessions are of the highest quality, encouraging the children to enjoy, understand, discuss the written word in a supported yet challenging environment. Through quality-first adaptive teaching, staff ensure that shared reading lessons are accessible for all pupils.

As a school, we dedicate time for daily comprehension teaching outside of English lessons. Through the programme, teachers use a variety of medium to teach reading, including: newspaper articles, music, extracts from novels etc., covering a breadth of topics.

Class novel

Every class across the school is read to by an adult on a daily, fostering a love for reading through exposing the children to high quality literature. These texts are mapped out in our whole-school reading spine, specifically designed by the English need to ensure exposure to a range of high-quality, diverse texts each year. Texts within each year group's book spoke are chosen with the intention of opening up discussions around the language of books, whilst also reflecting the diversity of our school community and ensuring a mix of modern and tradition literature, alongside quality poetry and non-fiction texts.

Reading programmes

Children in year 4, 5 and 6 are enrolled in Reading Plus, an online programme designed to improve a child's reading efficiency. It allows the children to build their reading fluency whilst still ensuring full comprehension of the text. As the children work through a series of texts and progress through the levels, the data is collected for the teacher to view and assess progress. Data from the programme is compiled into reports for teachers to analyse regularly.

Reading Eggs is an online programme targeted at our KS2 and lower key stage 2 pupils, along with some SEND pupils, to improve their comprehension, fluency and vocabulary. We

have invested in suitable technology in the relevant classes to ensure that they are able to access this on a regular basis to maximise progress, and we also work with families to ensure children have devices to access these programmes at home.

Children are encouraged to use the above programmes regularly, both in school and at home.

Phonics and Early Reading

At St Michael's we firmly believe that every child should be given the opportunity to be taught the skills to first 'learn to read' and then 'read to learn.' Here at St Michael's we are enthusiastic, passionate and dedicated in ensuring that all children become confident, motivated and enthusiastic readers by the end of Year 6 so they are able to manage the general demands of the Year 7 curriculum, across all subjects.

We aim to develop and enhance children's confidence in their reading, so they can acquire the skills to decode words to be able to read fluently with understanding of what they have read. We believe that phonics provides the foundations of learning to make the development into fluent reading and writing easier. In our Explore Curriculum at St Michael', we follow the Ruth Miskin Read Write Inc Programme to teaching phonics across the Early Years Foundation Stage, (EYFS,) Key Stage One (KS1) and in Key Stage Two (KS2) for those children who still need support so that they catch up rapidly with their peers in terms of their decoding and spelling. We believe this is achievable through a combination of strong, high quality, discrete phonics teaching taught through Read Write Inc, combined with a whole language approach through exploring different books which will promote a 'Reading for Pleasure' culture

Independent Reading

Children engage in independent, sustained reading. It provides an opportunity for pupils to read and enjoy a range of texts and to apply reading strategies. Each class has a dedicated, well-resourced reading area containing a range of books and text types for children to access independently.

Every class library contains a range of books including:

- ✓ *Poetry / plays*
- ✓ *Fiction – the choice of books reflects the spread of interest and reading abilities across the class, for example picture books, graphic novels, etc*
- ✓ *Non-fiction – as wide a range as possible, including plenty linked to the subject areas being studied*
- ✓ *Books from a range of cultures and covering a range of themes are interwoven through all collections*

Books Going Home (RWI decodable phonics books, 'Book Bag' home reading scheme books, and high-quality texts)

EYFS, KS1 and KS2: Children are heard reading independently by an adult or their peers on a regular basis, changing their books when required. Children work their way through the stages according to their ability, progressing to reading literature of their choice (checked for suitability by an adult where necessary). Pupils accessing phonics will also have a decodable phonics book, in-line with their current phonics group.

Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar & Punctuation

Opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing. As vocabulary increases, teachers should show pupils how to understand the relationships between words, how to understand nuances in meaning, and how to develop their understanding of, and ability to use, figurative language.

They should also teach pupils how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than one meaning. References to developing pupils' vocabulary are also included within the appendices.

Pupils should be taught to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English. They should be taught to use the elements of spelling, grammar, punctuation and 'language about language' listed in the curriculum. This is not intended to constrain or restrict teachers' creativity, but simply to provide the structure on which they can construct exciting lessons. A non-statutory Glossary is provided for teachers.

Throughout the programmes of study, teachers should teach pupils the vocabulary they need to discuss their reading, writing and spoken language. It is important that pupils learn the correct grammatical terms in English and that these terms are integrated within teaching.

Spelling at St Michael's is developed through:

- The systematic teaching of phonics in KS1 using the RWI scheme and the recurrent teaching of spelling strategies and conventions at KS2 using 'Spelling Frame'.
- Developing an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar which are taught implicitly and explicitly from Year 1 through to Year 6 using the appendices in the National Curriculum, Spelling Frame **Ready Steady Write** resources.
- Regular dictionary and thesaurus work
- Use of word banks
- Regular opportunities to identify and use spellings within a context

Writing

Implementation:

The writing curriculum is designed to provide a broad and balanced education that meets the needs of all children. It provides opportunities for children to develop as independent, confident and successful writers, with high aspirations, who know how to make a positive contribution to their community and the wider society.

Our intent is for all pupils – irrespective of their needs, abilities or background – to learn to write fluently, developing their own writer's voice. We aim to meet, and where possible exceed, the expectations laid out in the Early Learning Goals and National Curriculum, with pupils progressing appropriately across school. We recognise that spoken language underpins the development of Writing. The quality of language that pupils hear and speak is vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding Writing. We believe that children need to develop a secure knowledge-base in Literacy, which follows a clear pathway of progression as they advance through the primary curriculum. We believe that a secure basis in literacy skills is crucial to a high-quality education and will give our children the tools they need to participate fully as a member of society.

We cultivate a love of Writing and communicating through vocabulary rich and high-quality literature, using **Ready Steady Write** by Literacy Counts. By inspiring and developing an appreciation of our rich and varied literary heritage and providing meaningful and exciting provocations to write, we develop a habit of writing widely and often. We recognise the importance of nurturing a culture where children take pride in their Writing; can write clearly and accurately and adapt their language and style for a range of contexts.

Organisation and Curriculum Coverage:

Ready Steady Write empowers teachers to provide high-quality teaching of writing through high-quality literature. These detailed units of work centre on engaging, vocabulary-rich texts, with a wealth of writing opportunities within and across the curriculum. They provide:

- Clear sequential Episodes of Learning
- Vocabulary learning and contextualised spelling, grammar and punctuation
- Wider reading for the wider curriculum
- Example Texts linked to writing outcomes
- A wealth of supporting resource

Our English curriculum is developed around a sequence of high-quality age-appropriate texts, using Literacy Count's **Ready Steady Write** units of learning. We use each book to create opportunities to:

- develop grammar and punctuation knowledge and understanding to use and apply across the wider curriculum, through sentence accuracy sessions;
- explore the Writing structure and features of different genres, identifying the purpose and audience;
- plan and write an initial piece of Writing with a clear context and purpose before evaluating the effectiveness of Writing by editing and redrafting.

Building on this foundation, we teach literacy using a range of strategies which include:

- Group Discussion – Children discuss and interrogate new ideas in a small group or whole class setting. They listen to and value each other's ideas whilst taking on board feedback so as to improve their own explanations.
- Partner Talk – Children work in partners to discuss their ideas. They are able to explain their ideas about texts they have read and prepare their ideas before they write.
- Questioning – Teachers use a range of questioning strategies to establish children's current understanding and develop their learning.
- Modelled Writing – Teachers model Writing and editing to demonstrate the high expectations they have. They verbally 'think aloud' in order to make the Writing process explicit and provide a rich and varied vocabulary for the children to utilise in their own work. This happens daily, through sentence accuracy
- Shared Writing – Teachers use the ideas from the children to create shared pieces of Writing. This enables the children to see the Writing process in action as well as having pride and ownership over the finished piece.
- Editing – All children are signposted to regular opportunities for reviewing and editing their own and the work of others.
- Working walls – Teachers and children regularly update working walls to ensure learning is documented within a unit of work.

Class teachers ensure that the Writing process is clearly evident on working walls, with modelled examples being available to all pupils as the sequence of lessons develops.

Handwriting and Presentation

At St Michael's, children are taught to write legibly, fluently and at a reasonable speed. In line with the National Curriculum guidance, we teach cursive writing from year 2 upwards, using the programme 'Letter Join'.

Inclusion and SEND Provision

In planning work, the teachers will aim:

- to provide breadth and balance of language activities for all children
- to provide an ambitious, engaging and challenging English curriculum to meet the needs of all children through adaptive teaching
- to set suitable learning challenges for individuals or small groups of children, ensuring there is no glass ceiling placed on a child's learning
- to respond to pupils' diverse learning needs
- to liaise with the SENCO to ensure that effective provision is in-place for all children with SEN.
- to relate activities for SEN children following a bespoke curriculum to their individual targets and learning plans
- to overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils
- to identify vulnerable groups who are not making expected progress through effective ongoing assessment practices, and provide appropriate support

Some children experience learning difficulties, which affect their progress in English. Class teachers inform the SENDCO if they are concerned that a child may have underlying learning difficulties. Some children then receive SEN support. This may include:

- scaffolds and supports to develop writing ideas and language acquisition
- technology to support the generation of ideas, develop words banks and plan and write
- explicit instruction, including the modelling of sentences, paragraphs, planning and editing – with opportunities for the children to practice modelled techniques
- a focus on cognitive and metacognitive strategies to help children articulate their learning
- flexible groupings to ensure peer support and appropriate level of challenge

EAL Provision

At St. Michael's we are a very diverse community and have a high intake of pupils who do not hold English as a first language. Providing for pupils with English as an Additional Language should take account of each pupil's ability and grasp of the English language. It is vital that children who have English as an additional language have English modelled accurately by all staff at school. Collaborative work with peers (where English is their first language) is essential and EAL children should be provided with consistent opportunities for this verbal interaction. All teachers include a range of strategies to support children with EAL which includes:

- Teacher and peer modelling and consistent use of visual support
- Repetition and recasting of language features
- Word banks and scaffolded speaking and listening activities

- Resources that include images to secure language understanding
- Use of technology to support interpretation of Example Texts

Teachers work with the SENDCO/EAL lead to best meet the needs of individuals within their classes. Children who are new to English are assessed and support is put in place by the SENDCO/EAL lead to help them make rapid progress.

Assessment

Teachers draw upon observations and continuous assessment to ensure children are stretched and challenged and to identify those children who may need additional support. Formative assessment of Writing is completed through teachers' daily feedback to inform future planning. Teachers use the children's everyday writing and adapt models and input to meet their current needs. Teachers also complete a Reflecting on Unit outcomes document after each half termly unit, to identify next steps and the subsequent units are amended to include these focuses. Daily sentence accuracy work is carefully monitored to ensure children are constructing sentences both coherently and accurately, and any observations are captured in teachers' Marking and Feedback books. Regular staff meetings allow for whole school moderation of writing to deepen understanding of standards.

The assessment lead and English lead will analyse termly data and address areas for curriculum development. Children's attainment, progress and barriers to learning will be discussed in termly Pupil Progress Meetings with senior leaders and clear actions to work on will be planned together, to support pupils and staff in closing gaps.

Roles (Governing Body, Head teacher, Teachers, Staff, Parents, Pupils)

Head Teacher and Governing Body

- *Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively.*
- *Ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning.*
- *Monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations.*
- *Monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil Attainment.*
- *Ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching.*

Subject Leader

- *To have an impact on raising standards of attainment for English across the whole school.*
- *Adapt and use the Programme of Study for English across the whole school that meets the needs of our children.*
- *To monitor the whole school and individual needs to be able to assess individual professional development opportunities and needs.*
- *To maintain the availability of high-quality resources.*
- *To maintain an overview of current trends and developments within the subject.*
- *To ensure, together with the Head Teacher and Assessment Lead, a rigorous and effective programme of moderation of assessments.*
- *To ensure a regular and effective programme of analysis of children's work sample monitoring is in place.*
- *To ensure a regular and effective programme of analysis of short-term planning is in place.*
- *To effectively manage any funding designated to English.*

Class Teachers

- *Ensure the effective implementation of the New National Curriculum for English.*
- *Adapt and use the Programme of study for English across the whole school that meets the needs of our children.*
- *Make effective use of Assessment for learning within English.*
- *To ensure work is planned to enable all children to reach their full potential.*

Support Staff

- *To support the class teacher in the effective implementation of English.*

Parents/Carers

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- *holding parents' evenings to discuss children's progress*
- *sending an annual report to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can develop their learning*

- *explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework and English learning.*

Outcomes and Impact of our English Curriculum

We strive to produce children who are fully literate and articulate, and are prepared for their secondary education and later life. Through engaging lessons, we aim to foster a love of English and language and an enjoyment of learning. We challenge children of all abilities and in order to make good progress in all areas of the English National Curriculum. They are encouraged to have a growth mind-set and to develop the skills of perseverance and resilience. Through reading in particular, pupils are given a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually.

The innovative practice across the school provides a strong foundation and opportunities for children to collaborate and develop social skills both indoors and out. This curriculum design ensures that the needs of individual and small groups of children can be met within the environment of quality first teaching, supported by targeted, proven interventions where appropriate. In this way it can be seen to impact in a very positive way on children's outcomes. High quality visits and visitors to the school enhance the curriculum and provide opportunities for both Reading and Writing for a purpose. Children have opportunities to share their learning with each other, their parents and carers and other learners through school-based and external exhibitions, performances, competitions and events involving other schools. Developing their independence and motivation as learners and their sense of responsibility as future citizens is at the heart of all our teaching and learning. As a result, we have a community of enthusiastic readers and writers who enjoy showcasing their developing literacy knowledge and skills. They are confident to take risks in their reading and writing, and love to discuss and share their ideas and opinions.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed annually by the English lead, in consultation with the staff, and as and when elements of English are identified or prioritised within the School Development Plan.

Jade Gordon

English Lead

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