

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

ENGLISH POLICY

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Person Responsible: Mrs J. Hansen

English is the basic language of communication in our society and is the foundation for learning that takes place in our school. Its mastery empowers the learner and is essential for independent learning, the world of work and to enable individuals to play a full role in society.

At St. Mary's we aim to help children to develop a love for the English language through the spoken and written word.

We recognise that English is a core subject within the National Curriculum and a pre-requisite for educational and social progress.

Mastery over language empowers children to communicate, creatively and imaginatively, as well as allowing them engagement with the world at large.

AIMS

We aim to develop pupil's abilities within an integrated programme of speaking and listening, reading and writing. Pupils will be given opportunities to interrelate the requirements of English within a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of English across the curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and practise taught literacy skills.

At St. Mary's school we strive for the children to be a 'Primary Literate Pupil'. By the age of 11 we aim for a child to be able to:

- Read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding, orchestrating a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct.
- Understand the sound and spelling system and to use this to read and spell correctly.
- Have fluent and legible handwriting.
- Have an interest in books and read for enjoyment and evaluate and justify their preferences.
- Have an interest in words, their meanings, developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms.
- Be developing the powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness. Have a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their responses.
- Know, understand and be able to write a range of genres in fiction and poetry and understand and be familiar with some of the ways in which narratives are structured through basic literary ideas of setting, character and plot.
- Understand, use and be able to write a range of non-fiction texts.
- Plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing.

OBJECTIVES

At St. Mary's these objectives have been identified as good practice and form our main approach to the teaching of English throughout our school.

Spoken Language

The children should:

- Listen and respond to stories, poems and rhymes
- Participate in discussions and debates with and to different audiences
- Respond orally to varied stimuli, (e.g. radio, television, visitors)
- Discuss and evaluate their own work with peers and adults
- Collaboratively plan activities and role-play activities
- Retell stories and poems which are known by heart
- Respond to increasingly complex instructions, ask and answer questions and justify actions and opinions

Reading

The children should:

- Relate reading to their own experiences and environment
- Have the opportunity to read silently or share books with the realisation that reading time is valuable and should occupy everyone's attention, including that of the teacher
- Acquire research skills necessary for the use of dictionaries, atlases and other information books and resources
- Develop the ability to read aloud to others
- Be able to discuss the books they have read, relating to plot, characters and themes
- Acquire an increasingly large sight vocabulary
- Recognise that reading is an essential part of all areas of learning
- Gain confidence and enjoyment to promote lifelong reading

Writing

The children should:

- Experience a wide range of writing activities, to include both chronological and non-chronological writing
- Relate writing to the own experiences and environment
- Be aware of the need to write legibly and to use layout and space effectively to aid the reader.
- Experience grammatical vocabulary such as: sentence, verb, tense, noun, adjective, pronoun etc.
- Read examples of 'good' writing in various forms and begin to recognise the criteria for such writing
- Have experience of and become accustomed to drafting and redrafting their work
- Write in response to a wide range of stimuli
- Become aware of the role of reference books such as dictionaries and thesauruses
- Become aware, through the learning of rules, the correct modes of punctuation and spelling

EARLY YEARS/FOUNDATION

Refer to EYFS policy

The Foundation stage develops into the Programme of study for Key stage 1. In the Foundation Stage, the children's study is related to the Early Learning Goals, which includes:

Speaking and listening

- Using language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences
- Attentive listening and response
- Interacting with others in play and to get things done

Reading

- Knowledge of initial and final sounds and short vowel sounds in words
- Show understanding of elements of stories, poems and other texts
- Recognition of some familiar words

Writing

- Differentiating between print and pictures
- The connection between speech and writing
- The symbolic nature of writing, the sounds and the names of letters and how to write them

DELIVERY

TEACHING AND LEARNING

At St. Mary's we use a variety of teaching and learning styles.

WRITING

Early Years Foundation Stage

Pupils in the early years develop their understanding of print through teacher modelling during shared writing, and write themselves during guided and independent sessions. Pupils will also have daily opportunities to experiment with different types of writing through play activities.

Key Stage 1

At Key Stage 1 pupils become increasingly competent as writers, they write a range of text types and begin to use their emerging knowledge of sentence construction. Shared writing is experienced every day not only during Literacy Lessons but also in many other areas in the curriculum, such as R.E., Humanities, ICT and Science. The pupil's confidence in their writing skills becomes more evident in their independent writing tasks.

Key Stage 2

At Key Stage 2 pupils experience writing in different forms for a variety of audiences. They write for different purposes: to imagine and explore feelings and ideas, to inform and explain, to persuade and to review and comment. They are taught to plan, draft, revise, proof read and present their writing, and to discuss and evaluate their own writing and that of others. As in Key Stage 1, writing is an integral part of many of the other curriculum areas. The pupils visit the

computer suite on a regular basis and watch DVDs to help them with their imaginative and factual writing.

READING

Early Years/Foundation

At the end of the Foundation stage the pupils will have experienced shared, guided and independent reading. They will have developed their early reading skills through shared reading sessions with the class, become aware that text goes from left to right across the page and that print carries meaning. The pupils will have had opportunities to select, read and talk about a range of fiction, poetry and non-fiction. The pupils' phonological awareness and phonic knowledge develops through a variety of teaching methods, including identifying and recognising letter formation and sound, discriminating between sounds through the use of rhyme, rhythm and alliteration. They are then taught to recognise phonemes in "CVC" words.

The reading scheme used in St. Mary's School is The Oxford Reading Tree. The children are expected to practise their reading skills regularly, ideally every evening at home with an adult. A contact book is provided so that the class teacher can liaise with the parents on a regular basis. This ensures that the child is progressing through the reading scheme as their knowledge and confidence in reading develops. It also serves as an ongoing assessment and record of the child's reading progress.

Key Stage 1

At Key Stage 1, the pupils continue to develop their reading skills in various ways. They participate in shared reading sessions not only in literacy lessons but also in other areas of the curriculum. They will read in guided reading sessions and also in independent reading sessions, which usually take place during the lunch hour. Pupils will continue to read at home as often as possible and select and change their own reading books when necessary. Their reading skills are improved and enhanced through use of the computer when working in the computer suite or through using technology in their classroom.

Key Stage 2

At Key Stage 2, pupils meet a wider range of texts in fiction, poetry and non-fiction. Teaching focuses on developing pupils' reading skills. They will generalise and make inferences by drawing on evidence from the text. There is a high level of interaction between the teacher and the pupils with the teacher inviting pupils' individual responses and interpretations. Pupils continue to read aloud in guided reading sessions and where possible will read individually to the class teacher. Reading at home is still expected to take place and comments on the progress of the pupils reading continues to be recorded in the reading record book. Once a pupil has finished the reading scheme they are able to choose books from the class library or the local library. The class teacher monitors this closely.

An online program called Accelerated Reader is being introduced from September 2016 throughout the Key Stage. This allows children to answer questions online so that their understanding of the books they have read can be assessed.

SPOKEN LANGUAGE

The ability to speak and listen is fundamental to pupils' language and social development. It is an essential tool for all areas of the curriculum, as talk underpins learning and thinking. Pupils need to be provided with many and varied contexts for talk. The importance of developing oracy is

essential if pupils are to become literate. Work in speaking and listening is integrated with reading and writing.

Pupils have the opportunity in engaging in speaking and listening in a variety of settings, eg. reading out loud as an individual and in a larger group during shared reading, working collaboratively on an investigation during group work, in paired discussion, group discussion, show and tell and all aspects of drama.

Foundation/Early Years

Pupils have opportunities to develop and practise their talk through play, to listen attentively and with increasing stamina and discrimination, to respond appropriately and confidently, and to interact with others. Opportunities to use language creatively and imaginatively are given through role-play areas, story telling, drama activities and the show and tell sessions. Resources to support speaking and listening include puppets, tape recorders and headphones.

Key Stage 1

At Key Stage 1 pupils have opportunities to speak to a range of audiences, describing incidents from their own experience, retelling and telling real and imagined stories, reading stories and poems aloud and imparting information. They listen to stories and poems, sustaining concentration and participating appropriately, follow teachers' instructions and express their views about versions of stories heard on tape, television and by the teacher. The children are taught how to operate in groups, take turns to speak and to listen to others' suggestions. Pupils are introduced to some of the main features of spoken Standard English and they are taught how speech varies according to circumstance and audience. Children will experience drama activities in various ways such as the annual Nativity play, through Let's Move and Time to Move lessons, visiting theatre companies and class drama sessions.

Key Stage 2

Pupils continue to read stories and poems aloud, both individually and as a larger group, with an increasing emphasis on the use of voice for effect. Pupils talk in a variety of contexts and reflect upon this. When listening to a talk by an adult, an audio/video broadcast or a class discussion, pupils identify main points, ask relevant questions and offer their own opinions. Group interaction is developed. Pupils consider language variation, Standard English and dialect, and identify the features of language used in formal and informal contexts. Drama is studied in class lessons; the pupils have the opportunity to see a production from a visiting theatre company. At the upper end of Key Stage 2 all the pupils participate in the summer production and year 6 visit a theatre in order to study a play by William Shakespeare.

SPELLING

Spelling is an integral part of the writing process. Pupils who spell with ease are able to concentrate on the content of their writing. Confidence in spelling often has a profound effect on the writer's self-image. Pupils are taught the knowledge and skills they need to become independent spellers with resources based on the RML programme.

Early Years/Foundation

The emphasis at this stage is multi-sensory linking the teaching and practising of letter shapes and patterns with the development of pupils' ability to listen to, and discriminate between, sounds which make up a word. Much of this occurs through games and activities, which encourage focused listening. Pupils learn at an early stage how to discriminate and make connections between letter sounds used in reading and letter names used in spelling. Developmental writing is encouraged to

give pupils confidence. They use their emerging knowledge of phonics to write words, support is given to spelling by providing aids such as letter charts and simple word banks.

Key Stage 1

Pupils continue to build upon their phonic knowledge, the emphasis is on the pupils' ability to segment words into phonemes and then match the most likely letter or letters to each sound. The pupils learn how to spell a number of sight words, high frequency words and common irregular words as listed in the Primary National Curriculum Framework. They investigate and learn to use common spelling patterns. Pupils create their own dictionary in which they record simple spellings they are unsure of and use this to aid them in their independent writing. In the summer term of Year 1 learning spellings becomes more formal and a weekly spelling test is carried out. The spelling test is then carried on throughout Year 2.

Key Stage 2

Building on the approaches introduced in Key Stage 1, there is an emphasis on developing confidence and independence. It is expected that pupils assume increased responsibility by identifying their own spelling errors. Pupils begin to recognise letter strings, visual patterns and analogies and the application of spelling conventions. Spelling 'rules' are taught formally and it is expected that these rules are then followed closely in the pupils writing. The weekly spelling test continues to be carried out.

HANDWRITING

Handwriting is concerned with individual expression and the conveying of meaning through fluent composition. It is taught regularly through lessons following the Cripp's handwriting programme, 'A hand for Spelling' in order to ensure that every pupil develops legible, neat and fluent handwriting.

Early Years/Foundation

The emphasis at this stage is with movement, letter formation starting at the right entry point and then moving in the right direction. To aid movement close attention is given to pencil grip, correct posture, the positioning of the paper and the organisation of the writing space.

Key Stage 1

At this stage it is expected that pupils begin to develop a legible style. Correct letter orientation, formation and proportion are taught in line with the Cripp's handwriting programme. A formal handwriting lesson is carried out every week using the worksheets, which accompany this scheme. However neat and legible handwriting is encouraged and expected at all times. In Year 1, the pupils practise joining up their letters on the worksheets but continue to write in print in their workbooks. In Year 2, the pupils are introduced to joined up writing.

Key Stage 2

In Year 3, the pupils consolidate their use of the four basic handwriting joins, ensuring a consistency in size, proportion and spacing of letters. Handwriting speed, fluency and legibility are built up through practise.

Children who consistently show a good style are now able to use handwriting pens, rather than pencils. Neat and tidy handwriting is expected at all times.

Years 4, 5 and 6 continue to practise handwriting and the expectation is for neat and tidy presentation in all books.

INCLUSION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

At St. Mary's we aim to give every pupil the opportunity to experience success and achieve as high a standard as possible irrespective of race, gender and any special they needs they may have.

In order to do this we:

- Teach the knowledge, skills and understanding in ways that suit the pupils' abilities and challenge them.
- Are flexible in choosing lesson content from a suitable level and key stage.
- Set high expectations and provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve, including pupils with SEN or disabilities; pupils from all social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds; more able pupils.
- Set appropriate and challenging targets for all children, including targets set for children with special needs in their termly plan.
- Use a range of organisational approaches, such as individual work to ensure learning needs are properly addressed.
- Use materials that are free from discrimination or stereotyping.

Teachers provide help with communication and literacy through using texts that children can read and understand, using visual and written materials in different formats and using ICT and other technological aids.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

At St. Mary's, we are committed to providing the highest possible help for all our SEN pupils. They are encouraged to take part in literacy lessons where possible with their work differentiated to suit their individual needs. To achieve this we;

- Differentiate activities to give support to the less able and extend more able pupils.
- Children with learning difficulties are diagnosed as soon as possible and have provision made for their particular needs.
- Where necessary, outside agencies are involved
- Parents are kept informed and encouraged to assist in helping with their children
- Adult helpers are used in school to support groups and individual children
- TAs have attended courses and been trained to support children who have been selected for Interventions. The children are given support both in the classroom during literacy lessons working alongside the class teacher or are withdrawn in their groups for more intensive support.

RESOURCES

At St. Mary's, we have adopted the Oxford Reading Tree reading scheme. Each class in EYFS and Key Stage 1 has their own supply of reading books appropriate to the general ability of the children in that class.

When the children have completed the reading scheme they then have access to a diverse variety of reading books from their class library. These books are deemed by the class teacher to be appropriate to the ability and interest of each year group.

The school library contains a huge variety of factual books to aid the pupils in their topic work. The children are able to visit the library on a regular basis and select books they feel would be helpful to them in their research. The class teachers also borrow the library books to resource their classrooms when covering different topics.

Each class has their own set of Guided Reading books that are kept in the classroom.

Both Key Stage 1 and 2 classrooms have their own set of dictionaries and thesauruses appropriate to the ability of the children in their year group.

ICT

Pupils should be given the opportunity to apply and develop their ICT capability through the use of ICT tools to support their learning in English.

Every class has access to the computer suite and the class computer where the children can use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. There are also laptops to be used in class, along with Ipads. They are able to use the Internet for research purposes to aid them in their topic work.

There are many opportunities for the children to enhance their literacy skills through the use of DVDs, CD-ROMs and audiotapes.

RECORD KEEPING AND ASSESSMENT

Record keeping and assessment in English is kept in line with the whole school policy on assessment. (Refer to the Assessment policy).

Formative assessment, carried out by the class teacher, is an integral part of their role and is used on a daily/weekly basis to inform future planning. It involves identifying children's progress against teaching objectives, determining what a child has already achieved and moving them on to the next stage of learning.

Teachers annotate their weekly plans to assess progress within the class, to record achievements and to highlight areas of concern for the future.

Formal, assessments are carried out at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2 when the children complete their SATS testing.

There are also teacher assessment records for reading, writing, speaking and listening, which are completed at the end of each term. These assessments are carried out in order to supply the new class teacher with information concerning the pupils in that class and to give the subject leader/SMT clear data on progress. Targets are set as a result to ensure pupils are on track. Y1 pupils have a phonics test in the Summer term. Parents are informed of the standard achieved in the end of year report.

Parents receive an annual written report in July and there are key targets included for literacy. Two formal Parents' Evenings are arranged in the Autumn and Spring terms with a less formal meeting in July to discuss the end of year report.

PLANNING

The year group teachers work together and undertake all planning in English for their class, ensuring balance and progression from the previous year to the following year

It is carried out in three phases:

Annual plans

Medium term plans

Weekly plans

The annual English plans are detailed in the Primary National Curriculum Framework (2014) and we include overviews on the school website for parents to follow.

Medium term planning gives details of the main teaching objectives for each term. These plans define what we teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each half term. They are displayed in the classroom.

Weekly plans are based on the medium term plans. They identify the appropriate teaching and learning strategies required. They also provide a balance and variety within the classroom of content and organisational learning opportunities for the children. Differentiation and individual plans for pupils with SEN are identified in these plans.

Plans for all year groups are stored on the central server.

MONITORING BY THE SUBJECT LEADER

It is the responsibility of the English leader to monitor plans and track the attainment/progress of all pupils. The English leader will deliver INSET, offer support to colleagues and keep them fully informed of any new developments.