

Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School



English Policy

2023-2024

Overview

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of English at Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School. It contributes to the school's philosophy of teaching and learning as expressed through the Mission Statement 'Christ at the Centre, children at the heart'.

It has been revised in the Autumn term of 2022 in light of our school priority of improving the quality of teaching and learning in reading and writing across the school.

Aims/Objectives

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.

Strategies

Implementation of National Curriculum 2014

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 widerange 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.

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.

Reading

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

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading)

At Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School, reading is a top priority and is a key driver within our curriculum. It is our intention to ensure that by the end of their primary education, all pupils can read fluently and with confidence in any subject. We intend all children to leave Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School with a rich vocabulary that provides them with the ability to play and manipulate language, recognising the nuance of meaning and how language can be used for a range of purposes. We want children to have the confidence to be able to communicate effectively in a variety of situations' both now and in the future.

We therefore intend to encourage all pupils to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop:

- knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live;
- to establish an appreciation and love of reading;
- to gain knowledge across the curriculum;
- and develop their comprehension skills.

We are committed to providing quality, vocabulary-rich reading material, which immerses and enhances all pupils' wider knowledge of the spoken and written word, through modern and classic children's literature and non-fiction texts.

Whole-Class Reading Comprehension

For whole-class reading, the core text chosen is at a level slightly higher than the majority of the class and the teacher plans questions activities, differentiated as appropriate, around the text that encourage the children to enjoy, understand, discuss and analyse the written word in a supported environment.

All children from Year 2-Year 6 take part in three whole class reading comprehension lessons per week and use a variety of mediums to do so, including their class core text, newspaper articles, video clips, extracts from novels etc., which cover a breadth of topics. Within these lessons, staff use Reading VIPERS (taken from the Literacy Shed) as a way of exploring the different content domains in the National Curriculum, allowing children to break down questions into key skills and understand how they are required to approach a text. Teachers use these to teach a range of techniques which enable children to comprehend the meaning of what they read.

This is an opportunity for teachers to model the act of being a fluent reader and demonstrate to the class by 'thinking aloud' the skills required to be a reader. More complex questions are evaluated between wider groups and teachers model how to refine answers to a high standard. Fortnightly, all pupils will complete a mixed VIPERS session, which enables teachers to elicit the needs of children individually and identify areas for future development.

Core Texts and Class Reads

Every class across the school is read to by an adult on a regular basis, fostering a love for reading through exposing the children to high quality literature. Teachers are encouraged to choose challenging texts that will uncover new vocabulary and themes, opening up discussions around the language of books.

Reading Programmes

Lexia is an online programme targeted at SEN and lower key stage 2 pupils to improve their comprehension, fluency and vocabulary. We have allocated laptops to the relevant classes to ensure that they are able to access this on a regular basis to maximise progress. Children are encouraged to use the above programmes regularly, both in school and at home.

Phonics

The effective systematic teaching of phonics has a high priority throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Phonics is taught daily through the Sounds Write programme to all pupils in Foundation Stage, Year 1 and those in Year 2 who have not passed the Phonics Screen Check in Year 1. Sounds Write is also used as an intervention tool if needed in KS2.

The Sounds Write approach is also used in the teaching of spelling in Year 2 to effectively embed strategies for the learning of new sounds and ease the transition into Key Stage 2 approaches.

The Sounds-Write programme teaches pupils to understand the way the alphabetic code works. Staff systematically teach learners the relationship between sounds and the written spelling patterns, or graphemes, which represent them through a very highly structured, multi-sensory, incremental and code-oriented, instructional approach to reading and spelling.

Phonics is delivered in a mixed ability whole-class format, which supports the application across subjects, embedding the process in a rich literacy environment for early readers.

Timely intervention is planned for those children who are working below expected levels as soon as needs are identified.

Children apply their knowledge of spelling patterns to their reading of Dandelion Readers. These books are for beginner readers aimed at children aged 4-7 in which parallel sets of books are used to introduce the sounds of the alphabet, adjacent consonants and consonant digraphs, and vowel digraphs.

Reading after phonics

Children engage in independent, sustained reading every day. It provides an opportunity for pupils to read and enjoy a range of texts and to apply reading strategies.

Once children are confidently reading, typically during mid-Year 2, they access texts which can be independently read. We ensure these are accurately matched to pupil ability to ensure progression and challenge for all children.

Each class has a dedicated reading area containing a range of books and text types for children to access and read independently at an age appropriate level. Books include:

- 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

Home Reading

Reception -Year 1

Each week pupils will go home with two reading books.

1) Phonics Decodable Reader

- These books are called 'Dandelion Readers'; this book will focus on one particular sound to practise. For example, the 'ee' sound. This will be clearly labelled on the front of the book. Children should read this independently to parents and use their segmenting (splitting up sounds in a word) and blending (saying the sounds together) skills to read the words.

2) Shared Story Book

- This book will be read between both parent and child. It will feature words which pupils may not be able to read independently and therefore parental support will be required.
- The purpose of this book is to *improve their understanding* when reading. Parents will use this text to ask them questions about what the characters are doing and

why; why the setting is where it is; and to make predictions about what they think may happen next.

Reading Records

- This must be brought into school each day with the child's home reader. The staff will record in this book when they have read 1-1 (twice a week).

Year 2

If the class teacher believed a pupil requires additional support to embed their phonic knowledge, as in year 1, pupils will take home a phonics decodable reader. This will be matched to sounds the pupils require additional support and time on to secure.

- Once secure in their phonic knowledge, pupils will receive a reading book related to their reading ability.
- These books are at a level which is best for him/her to read and understand – something challenging but not too difficult, and not too easy either.
- This book will feature words which the child may not have read before, but will be able to apply their segmenting and blending skills to, and therefore parental support may be required.
- The purpose of this book is to *improve fluency and particularly their understanding* when reading. Parents will use this text to ask them questions about what the characters are doing and why; why the setting is where it is; and to make predictions about what they think may happen next.

Reading Records

- This must be brought into school each day with the child's home reader. The staff will record in this book when they have read 1-1 (once a week).

Year 3-6

In School

Children will receive a reading book related to their reading ability to read independently for 10 minutes a day. This they can take home but must bring back to school every day.

Important

These books are at a level which is best for him/her to read and understand – something challenging but not too difficult, and not too easy either. They will feature words which pupils may not have read before but will be able to apply their segmenting and blending skills to.

Interventions will take place for pupils who are unable to access and read independently age- appropriate texts.

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.

Please refer to the Writing Intent, Implementation, and Impact statement for more information.

Spelling

- The systematic teaching of phonics in KS1 using the scheme and the recurrent teaching of spelling strategies and conventions at KS2 using the 'Assertive Mentoring' spelling materials.
- 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 new National Curriculum and the Assertive Mentoring spelling resources.
- Regular dictionary and thesaurus work.
- Use of word banks and spell checks.
- Regular opportunities to identify and use spellings within a context.

Writing

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

Shared Writing

This provides an opportunity for teachers to demonstrate writing, including the thought processes that are required. Teachers should make explicit references to genre features, as well as word and sentence level work within the context of writing. Pupils contribute to the class composition by sharing their ideas with partners, in small groups or using individual white boards or their strategy page. This valuable time enables and affords the children with opportunity to discuss, verbalise, and refine ideas before committing to print. With knowledge of text type from shared reading of the WAGOLL (what a good one looks like), children should be able to generate a writer's toolkit of features that they would expect to use in any writing genre about which they have learned.

Independent Writing

Children are given the opportunity for a range of independent writing activities which link to whole class writing objectives and the genre in focus of their study. These tasks require pupils to have a clear understanding of the identified audience, purpose and should cover all aspects of the writing process. Children should be given the opportunity to self-assess and peer-assess writing, based on a rubric linked to the learning objective/year group objectives and developed by the class as part of the teaching sequence leading up to creating an extended piece of writing. Ideally, time to mark pupil's writing should be built into the lesson, as 'live marking' allows children to go through their work with an adult, learning from their misconceptions and understanding their targets for future pieces of writing. As a school, we build in regular cross-curricular writing opportunities, using our rich and varied curriculum as an engaging stimulus for the children.

Please refer to the Writing Intent, Implementation, and Impact statement for more information about the writing cycle.

Handwriting and Presentation

At Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School, 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. We use the 'Letter-Join' programme to do this.

Inclusion

In planning work the teachers will aim:

- to provide breadth and balance of language activities for all children
- to set suitable learning challenges for individuals or small groups of children
- to respond to pupils diverse learning needs and provide materials to support them to access the curriculum in their classroom.
- to liaise with the SENCO to ensure that provision is made for all children with SEN.
- to relate activities for SEN children to their individual targets and personal 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, and provide appropriate support.

SEN Provision

Pupils identified as needing extra support in English will be given the appropriate help in the classroom, whether this be differentiated models, word banks or teacher/TA support to support during independent work. Providing for pupils with special educational needs should take account of each pupil's particular learning and assessment requirements and incorporate specific approaches which will allow individuals to succeed, such as using texts at an appropriate level of difficulty and planning for additional support.

Outcomes

We strive to for our pupils leaving Our Lady of the Rosary Primary School to be fully literate and articulate in preparation 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 to make good progress in all areas of the English National Curriculum. All pupils are encouraged to have a growth mind-set and to develop the skills of perseverance and resilience; the use of teacher modelling, shared writing experiences and warm task writing all support the pupils with this. Through reading in particular, pupils are given the opportunity to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially, and spiritually.

Monitoring and Evaluation

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

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

Head Teacher and Governing Body/IAB

- 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 know the way and show the way!
- To have an impact on raising standards of attainment for English across the wholeschool.
- 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 National Curriculum for English.
- Adapt and use the programme of study for English across the whole school, to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Make effective use of Assessment for learning within English.
- To ensure work is planned sequentially and with high expectations of all pupils, to enable them all to reach their full potential.

Teaching Assistants

- To support and meet the needs of pupils in their class and to support with the effective implementation of the English curriculum.

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 through parental advice guides, videos and parent information evenings.