

English Policy

Mission Statement

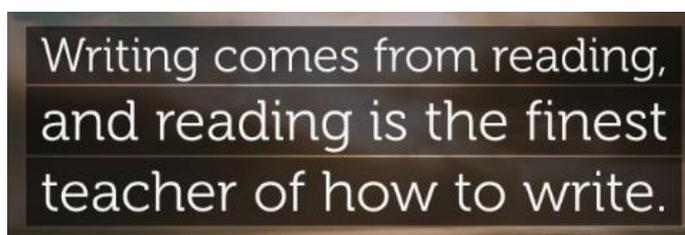
We follow in Jesus' footsteps, as we care for each other when we work, play and pray.



At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we recognise that all children have rights as outlined in the UN Convention. As duty bearers, we have the responsibility to respect these rights and are committed to supporting our children through their education and to ensure that they are rights-holders. We are committed to promoting resilience amongst our pupils and developing their independent learning skills.

The school's Catholic ethos strives to create a learning environment where every child is encouraged and enabled to develop to their full and unique potential as human beings, made in the image and likeness of God. We believe that our children have the right to a good quality education (Article 28), the opportunity to use education to develop talents and abilities (Article 29) and the right to special education (Article 23).

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES



Here at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we have made significant investments in providing each year group with a wide range of high quality texts. Reading underpins the English Curriculum and we encourage children to 'write as readers and read as writers'. We believe that English is a fundamental life skill. English develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. We aim for children to be able to apply the skills learnt effectively in all areas of the curriculum.

Spoken Voice

The National Curriculum for English reflects on the importance of spoken language in pupil's development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Children have a myriad of opportunities to develop their spoken voice across the Curriculum through the use of Speaking, listening, group discussion and drama activities. We also provide a vocabulary rich learning environment here at St Joseph's and have high expectations of spoken grammar, insisting that children use correct standard English.

Aims

We aim to enable our children:

- To communicate effectively and articulate and express their ideas, feelings and points of view coherently
- To speak confidently and to express themselves clearly in a variety of situations
- To listen attentively and respond to others, having respect for the different opinions of others
- To develop the skills needed for group discussion and to promote class, partner and group discussions and debates
- To explain their understanding of reading
- To allow time to discuss and explain ideas in preparation for writing
- To participate in and respond to drama
- To use correct Standard English when speaking

READING

Aims

Reading is a skill essential for life and at St Joseph's we want our children to leave school with a love of reading. In order for children to be able to comprehend and understand what they have read, we teach the VIPERS reading skills.

We aim to enable our children:

- To read independently, fluently and expressively, with understanding and enjoyment
- To have a secure knowledge of phonics to assist with early reading
- To be skilled at word reading and comprehension
- To provide high quality discussion to develop comprehension skills
- To read a wide range of texts, including text on screen both for pleasure and for information
- To engage with and respond to what they read
- To appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- To become confident readers, allowing their skills to be transferred across any subject

Approaches

We encourage a love of books and of reading by providing a rich reading environment in our classrooms and in our school libraries.

Throughout the school, teachers read aloud to children on a regular basis. We read a wide range of good quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Children are also given opportunities to engage in independent reading, one to one reading, small group and whole class reading. All classes enjoy story time at the end of the day. This provides opportunities for children to read and enjoy a range of texts and to apply reading strategies.

We teach the word recognition skills needed to decode text and the language comprehension skills needed to understand what they read.

Word recognition skills are developed systematically in the early years through the teaching of synthetic phonics. We teach phonics daily in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1, using the Read, Write Inc material. Books from the scheme are available for children to access at school and at home.

Language comprehension skills are developed and deepened through regular shared and guided reading in discrete English lessons and across the curriculum. Reading VIPERS are used to develop a range of comprehension skills including inference, prediction and retrieval.

Teachers have access to a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry sets of books to use during whole class activities in class. (These include Read Write Inc – Infants and Oxford Reading Tree, Navigator Max and Rigby Navigator – Juniors, as well as sets of novels.) The children work through the Oxford Reading Tree series of books at their own pace (from Year Two-Six) and they also change their free choice library books regularly to foster reading enjoyment.

We assess children's reading regularly. Teachers keep on-going reading records of children's progress in reading and also use this information to update objectives achieved on our tracking system. We also use end of term reading comprehension tests to inform assessments.

WRITING

Aims

We aim to enable our children:

- To write clearly, accurately and confidently for a variety of purposes and audiences, including word processing
- To develop a consistent, clear, fluent and joined handwriting style and to be aware of the importance of the presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively
- To understand the conventions of writing, including grammar, punctuation and spelling
- To plan, draft and edit their writing
- To feel valued as writers and to appreciate the writing of others

Approaches

We provide a wide variety of reasons and purposes for writing and in the early years provide many opportunities for child initiated and role-play writing.

As soon as children are able to form letters correctly and have a good pencil grip, we introduce them to a cursive handwriting style at the end of Year One. We use the online 'Letter-join' handwriting scheme. We also teach children the keyboard skills necessary for word processing.

We encourage children to 'have a go' at writing as soon as possible and to use their phonic skills and knowledge to spell.

We teach the features of different genres through purposes for writing, as well as writing skills, including sentence structures, word classes and the use of a range of punctuation. Teachers regularly model writing in shared writing sessions and we provide regular opportunities for children's writing to be shared, displayed, published and celebrated.

We encourage independent writing through regular unscaffolded writing sessions where children are expected to apply the new learning freely to their work.

We assess children's writing regularly using our on-going tracker system and use this assessment to inform further teaching. We moderate children's writing both in school and with other schools (including secondary schools).

HANDWRITING

It is important for pupils to be able to write clearly and develop a fluent and legible handwriting style. Presentation should be neat in published work. We use an on-line resource called Letter-join as the basis of our handwriting policy that covers all of the requirements of the 2014 National Curriculum.

Handwriting is a basic skill that influences the quality of work throughout the curriculum. At the end of Key Stage 2 all pupils should have the ability to produce fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy joined-up handwriting, and to understand the different forms of handwriting used for different purposes.

We aim to make handwriting an automatic process that does not interfere with creative and mental thinking. Pupils experience coherence and continuity in the learning and teaching of handwriting across all school years and are encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work. Our aim is to help pupils enjoy learning and developing their handwriting with a sense of achievement and pride.

Pre-Cursive print is taught from Reception with the introduction of joins at the end of Year One and start of Year Two. In the Foundation Stage opportunities to 'mark make' will lead to the eventual formation of recognisable letters. This is taught through the role-modelling of letter formation.

The Letter-join handwriting font has been installed on all classroom computers to allow staff to produce work sheets and guidance in the correct joined font, thus providing children with a constant model. Consistent size and style is taught and role-modelled throughout the school.

PHONICS AND SPELLING

Aims

We aim for pupils to be able to:

- Have a secure phonics knowledge through quality phonics teaching
- Attempt to spell words for themselves using a range of strategies
- To continue to use phonics knowledge to underpin spelling after KS1
- Write an increasingly wide range of words from memory. Focus is on those words identified in the NC
- Use a variety of resources to help with spelling e.g. dictionaries, word banks, classroom environment ETC
- Develop an understanding of spelling patterns and rules through investigations and identifying the exceptions
- Use a range of strategies to learn spellings, especially those misspelt in their own work.

The school has a subscription to Literacy Shedc. The EdShed Spelling programme is used to aid the teaching of phonics and spelling throughout the school. Children have access to the online learning platform to help them, learn their spellings each week. Differentiated spelling rules are taught during allocated spelling time slots and follow up activities are planned for, such as spelling dictation and spelling tests.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All children have an entitlement to participate fully in English, regardless of gender, race, age or ability, in accordance with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Children whose second language is English receive appropriate support as necessary.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AND INTERVENTION

The needs of children requiring additional support for their English will be discussed by the English Subject Leader, Special Educational Needs Coordinator and the class teacher.

Children with outstanding abilities are encouraged by:

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- providing opportunities for them to develop their ideas, skills and knowledge further
- introducing new skills and concepts
- setting tasks for them that offer greater challenge, scope, investigation and independence

PLANNING

Long and medium term planning is used in school, with objectives taken from the National Curriculum. Long term planning is divided into the following sections: spoken language, word reading and comprehension, phonics and spelling, handwriting, writing composition and vocabulary, grammar and punctuation.

Teachers complete short-term plans and are encouraged to plan their units of work in a way that supports good cross-curricular links. Short term planning is produced on weekly plans that show the objectives for the week. These plans are expected to show differentiation where appropriate and progression over the week in specific areas, e.g. in phonic or sentence skills. Teachers plan to include a range of teaching strategies ensuring a balance between audio, visual, and kinaesthetic techniques. Plans are shared with teaching assistants and are annotated and adapted in the course of a unit in response to on-going assessments.

ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING

Assessment is at the heart of the teaching and learning process. In the EYFS, teachers assess children's learning using the Foundation Stage Profile. Most of the observations for assessment are based on those activities that children initiate and engage with independently across the range of provision.

In addition, EYFS and Key Stage One teachers track children's phonic progress using analysis of Read Write Inc and then plan future phonics lessons accordingly.

Teachers assess children's work in English in three phases. The short-term assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson help them to adjust their daily plans. They match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. Written or verbal feedback is given to help guide children's progress. Older children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work using a range of self and peer-assessment.

Teachers regularly update our tracking system to measure progress and to help them plan for the next unit of work. These findings are also used at the end of every term to assess children against age related expectations and to analyse children's next steps.

Teachers make long-term assessments towards the end of the school year, and they use these to assess progress against school and national targets.

These long-term assessments are based on teacher assessments, moderation of work and end of year tests. Children undertake the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and optional tests in other year groups to support our teacher assessments.

The subject leader keeps samples of children's moderated work in a portfolio. Teachers meet regularly to review individual examples of work against national exemplification materials.

FEEDBACK

Written feedback is essential to help children move forward as writers. With younger children, feedback on writing will usually be verbal and immediate. Adults will then note on work the amount of guidance or independence to complete the work to inform the teacher's assessments. With older children, feedback may be verbal or written and often takes place within the lesson so that children can act on it immediately.

All extended writing tasks should have a differentiated success criteria sheet based on National Curriculum objectives to be used as a focus for marking, along with children's individual targets.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

Parents receive regular informal or verbal feedback as to their children's progress in English. In addition, parents also have a termly opportunity, to meet with the staff to discuss progress and to see work.

Parents receive an annual written report at the end of the school year. This includes details of their children's progress and areas for development. Where appropriate the SATs results are reported.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In order to monitor standards and progress the following systems are in place:

- At Pupil Progress meetings two-three times a year, the class teacher and English Subject Leader/Principal monitor and evaluate the progress of children in English

- The English Subject Leader and Phase Leaders are given time to observe lessons, take part in learning walks and give oral and written feedback, and also to meet with children and speak to them about their work
- Staff meet regularly to engage in whole school moderation
- The progress of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEND) is reviewed with the class teacher / SENDCO at Pupil Profile review meetings
- The school's English Action Plan is part of the School Development Plan – this is reviewed and updated annually by the English Subject Leader and Senior Leadership Team

RESOURCING

The English Subject Leader, with the Principal, is responsible for the ordering, costing and allocation of resources to support the teaching of English. A review of resources is carried out periodically which leads to a prioritised list of requirements. This is funded within the school's budget plan for the financial year.

SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The teaching of English develops skills through which our children can offer critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their work. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts bring them into contact with their own literary heritage and with texts from a diverse range of cultures. The organisation of our lessons allows children to work together, and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and results.

CPD

Staff are keen to improve their subject knowledge and the subject leader takes an active role in disseminating best practice and making recommendations for staff development. All staff have further CPD opportunities which are offered throughout the Multi-Academy trust.

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the Academy Committee and will be reviewed every two years, or before if necessary.