

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

English Policy



"The education children receive at St Joseph's has Gospel values at its very core. We strive to create a warm, caring and inviting atmosphere in which children feel secure and experience success. We aim to develop a sense of self-worth and high esteem amongst all of our pupils and treat all equally, in this way all pupils are encouraged to realise their full potential; intellectually, emotionally, physically and spiritually, regardless of race, gender, religion or disability. We encourage the whole school community to take an active role in fulfilling this aim."

"Believing in God, ourselves and others"

Aims and objectives

The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, so using language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. It enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

The aims of English are:

- to enable children to speak clearly, confidently and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners;
- to encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- to develop children's abilities to reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used;
- to enable children to evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama activities and to perform in Albus Cubus, our green screen TV studio;
- to develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge;
- to encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers through contact with challenging and lengthy texts;
- to help children enjoy writing and recognise its value;
- to enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction;
- to increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.

Teaching and learning styles

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in English. We do this through a daily lesson that has a high proportion of whole-class and group teaching. We use a variety of teaching strategies such as teacher modeling, shared reading, shared writing, independent and guided group work - to develop children's confidence, fluency and independence as readers and writers and in speaking and listening. In school, each child is part of a guided reading session every week either as a whole class or in small groups. In the main, guided reading takes place outside the

literacy hour. Children have the opportunity to read for pleasure a wide range of texts and use a range of resources such as dictionaries, thesauruses and phonics resources to support their work. Children use ICT in English lessons and during guided and independent reading sessions. This includes the use of Reading Plus, an AI fully adaptive reading programme as well as access to paper books matched to their current reading abilities. This ensures a fully inclusive approach to reading for all, regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds. Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

There are children of differing ability in all classes at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of adaptive teaching strategies. In some lessons we do it through differentiated group work both within the classroom and during outside interventions, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use teaching assistants to support children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals. Our own TV studio "Albus Cubus" allows us the opportunity to film our TV show "Nuntium Tempore" our weekly storytelling show "Aliquam Tempus" and use green screen technology to further the children's speaking and listening skills.

English curriculum planning

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the National Curriculum as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English.

Our long-term plans give 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 term. The English subject leader is responsible for overseeing and monitoring these plans. Long term plans include a variety of high quality texts and genres that will inspire and support children to achieve. All planning is underpinned by knowledge and key skills that are progressive from Nursery to Year 6. Key skills include transcription, writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling, handwriting, oracy and reading.

Early Years

The prime areas of learning are central to the whole Early Years curriculum. Language and communication skills are important during a child's early years and throughout life. This area of learning includes verbal and non-verbal communication as well as speaking and listening, reading and writing.

Children are encouraged to listen carefully and to express themselves verbally. Speaking and listening activities such as sharing stories, songs, rhymes and role-play are introduced in small and large groups as well as in one to one situations. These opportunities are planned daily through a careful balance of adult led and child led approaches. Children are introduced to a wide variety of books through weekly drawing club sessions that are linked to specifically chosen learning themes and other stories that link to children's current interests. These match the context of our school and teach knowledge and skills we want the children to achieve by the end of the Foundation stage.

Children in Nursery and Reception will be introduced to the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised phonics scheme from the outset. Nursery focusing on early listening and reading skills and then progressing to the full reading programme once entering Reception. Children will bring home a book each week on their book share day. These books are closely matched to assess reading abilities. They

will change their reading book weekly following our 3 read approach to reading. This supports confidence, comprehension skills, vocabulary and reading fluency.

Transcription and spelling are supported from the outset in our Early Years Foundation Stage. We understand the importance of early listening skills, the ability to orally blend phonemes together and the physical skills that underpin the foundations of early writing. Our carefully constructed curriculum allows for these skills to develop holistically. Through children's play, whole class, small groups and 1;1 teaching children are supported and encouraged to develop a love of mark making and give meaning and purpose to the marks that they make. A clear progression of skills are mapped out within our EYFS and English long term plans, using the development matters, as a guide to achieving this. A wide range of play opportunities, mark making tools and materials are available daily to encourage the development of early writing skills, including gross and fine motor skills.

Phonics teaching

At St. Joseph's we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Nursery/Reception and follow the [*Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression*](#), which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school. Our reading policy can be located [here](#).

Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas

The skills that children develop in English are interlinked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work in school, most notably through daily oracy opportunities and using the Albus Cubus film studio. They can use the green screen and create films which can be viewed on the school website.

Mathematics

English contributes significantly to the teaching of mathematics in our school. Children in the Foundation Stage develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these areas with adults and other children. Throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 children have daily opportunities to promote their oracy skills by observing and discussing what they can see through a discovery image with many open ended possibilities of discussion. The use of stem sentences supports children to continually develop and deepen these skills. Children in Key Stage 1 meet stories and rhymes that rely on counting and sequencing. Children in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to read and interpret problems in order to identify the mathematics involved. They explain and present their work to others during plenary sessions and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language.

Information Technology (IT)

The use of IT enables children to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. This is facilitated by the use of Albus Cubus (our green screen TV studio) and Aliquam Tempus (our weekly storytelling extravaganza). Younger children use IT as a source of information and as a way of enabling them to present their completed work effectively. Older children use the Internet when searching for information about a different part of the world, or when using desktop publishing to design a class newspaper. Children use the planning and proofing tools in a word processor when checking their draft work. We encourage all children to use IT as a resource for learning, whenever they feel it is appropriate.

Personal, social and health education (PHSCE) and citizenship

English contributes to the teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship, including British values. We encourage younger children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. In their science work they talk about things that improve their health and about rules for keeping them safe around the school. Older children research and debate topical problems and events. They discuss lifestyle choices and meet and talk with many visitors who work within the school community. Planned activities within the classroom encourage children to work together, stay safe online and respect each other's views.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The teaching of English develops skills through which our children can give critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their work. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts brings them into contact with their own literary heritage and texts from other cultures, including dual language texts. The organisation of lessons allows children to work together and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and results in talk partners and group discussions.

Teaching English to children with special educational needs

At our school we teach English to all children of all abilities. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our English teaching we provide adaptive learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make progress. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child's different needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum or the Early Learning Goals, allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning English. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, for example, a theatre trip, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

Teachers provide help with communication and literacy through:

- using texts that children can read and understand;

- using visual and written materials in different formats;
- using ICT, other technological aids and taped materials;
- using alternative communication, such as signs and symbols;
- using translators and amanuenses.

Teachers identify children for intervention strategies through our half-term assessments. We use a range of strategies including a multi-sensory literacy programme, Premier League Primary Stars intervention programme and the lowest 20% of children reading daily with an adult in order to provide extra literacy support. In year 6, we teach a booster class for literacy. In Year 5 we have a booster class to aid boy's writing.

Gifted & Talented

Teachers are responsible for being aware of children who are on the G&T register. All lesson planning & delivery will include activities and questioning which allows higher order thinking and open ended outcomes. This will help to challenge the more able pupils. Additional workshops and competitions are arranged regularly, both within school and the wider trust, to encourage children to participate in a variety of extracurricular activities.

Assessment and recording

Teachers assess children's work in English in three phases. The short-term assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson and guided reading session help teachers to adjust their daily plans. Teachers match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. They use medium-term assessments to measure progress against the key objectives, and to help them plan for the next unit of work. Teachers make half termly assessments in writing and reading. This is achieved through a variety of methods: Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessment tools in KS1 and 60 second reads in KS2, assessment papers and end of unit tasks. We also assess reading ages twice a year using Reading Plus. Children's progress is tracked by levels and age related expectations and monitored by team and subject leaders. The lowest 20% of readers are tracked and monitored and read daily. Teachers discuss progress in team meetings, SLT pupil progress meetings and with parents at twice yearly parents' evenings.

All children in Reception are assessed upon entry to school. They complete the Reception Baseline assessment and this includes an English and Maths task. This is reported to the DfE as a baseline within the first 6 weeks of starting school. At the end of Year 6, children are assessed in reading using Statutory Assessment Tests as required by the Department of Education. In other years, children are assessed using a variety of testing materials.

The subject leader keeps samples of children's written work in a portfolio. This demonstrates what the expected level of achievement is in English in each year of the school. Teachers meet regularly to moderate individual examples of work against the national exemplification material produced by the Standards and Testing Agency and the DoE.

Resources

There are a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have access to dictionaries which are age appropriate. Additional copies are available in the library. There are also age appropriate small apparatus e.g. recording boards, pencil grips and various sized pencils.

Classes in KS1 are equipped with resources to support the delivery of Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised. St Joseph's school has subscribed to 'Phonics Play' to use as an additional resource to engage in fun reading games.

Children in KS2 are equipped with the Reading Plus Programme.

All children have a reading book to take home matched to their current reading levels.

Children in Reception and KS1 have access to a selection of fully decodable books.

Once children have successfully exited the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised decodable book bands they can choose from carefully coloured banded books that include books from the Oxford Reading Tree, Project Code X and many more. These align with Reading Plus levels.

There are a large number of quality guided reading packs to support all children. These books are also colour banded.

The library is timetabled and all classes have an allotted time. The library has a huge selection of fiction and non-fiction texts to support the needs of all children and to support research work.

All children can borrow books and are encouraged to do so and are taught to use the library in an appropriate manner, taking care of the books and the surroundings.

All children have access to our school reading shack (outside) and a community library to promote a love of reading with parents and the wider community.

All children have access to the Internet through tablets/iPads/laptops which are used in class.

St Joseph's school has subscribed Reading Plus, Phonics Play and Twinkl as additional resources that can be accessed by staff to support children's learning.

Letter join and handwriting books have been purchased for reception to year 4 to support the development of letter formation and cursive script.

There are also a wide range of resources available to develop fine motor skills.

Monitoring and review

Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English subject leader. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The subject leader gives the headteacher an annual summary report in which she evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and indicates areas for further improvement. The leader has specially-allocated regular management time in order to enable her to review samples of the children's work and undertake lesson observations of English teaching across the school.

Signed (Chair of Governors):

Printed (Chair of Governors):

Date:

To be reviewed: