

St Michael's RC Primary School and Nursery



English Policy

School Mission Statement



St Michael's RC Primary School is a Catholic family of faith, following the teaching of Christ. We strive to create an environment where all members of our school community become caring, independent and resilient individuals who fulfil their potential.

"I came so that you may have life, life in all its fullness" John 10:10

Rationale:

The National Curriculum (2014) clearly states that teaching the English language is an essential, if not the most essential role of a primary school.

The Teaching of Literacy

To ensure that there is adequate time for developing Literacy skills, each class has:

- A literacy lesson 5 days a week lasting approximately 60 minutes.
- Daily guided reading sessions of 30 minutes (each group reading with the teacher/teaching assistant once a week)
- Daily grammar sessions of 20 minutes- one is a discrete spelling session
- Daily Phonics sessions taught in FS and KS1 and where necessary in KS2 (Fresh Start Programme)

1. Spoken Language:

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be 'taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently in Standard English' (p10) They should:

- Justify ideas with reasons
- Ask questions to check understanding
- Develop vocabulary and build knowledge
- Negotiate
- Evaluate and build on the ideas of others
- Select the appropriate register for effective communication
- Give well structured descriptions and explanations
- Speculate, hypothesise and explore ideas
- Organise their ideas prior to writing

Our aims and connected provision

We encourage our pupils to speak clearly and confidently and articulate their views and opinions. We teach that children need to express

themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose. Listening and responding to literature, giving and receiving instructions. They develop the skills of participating effectively in group discussions.

Ways in which we support this include:

- Activities which are planned to encourage full and active participation by all children, irrespective of ability
- Children with specific speech and language and auditory problems will be identified and specialist help sought, where appropriate
- Encouraging reading at home through discussing books that they are reading, sharing thoughts and opinions on what they have read
- School Plays
- Debate club (Starting Term 5)
- Class assemblies
- School Council
- Talk partners
- Book Club (Starting Term 5)
- Drama / role play

2. Reading:

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Reading is singled out as of extreme importance since through it 'pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually' (p13) Reading allows pupils to 'acquire knowledge' and to 'build on what they already know' (p13).

Schools are expected to have library facilities and support and encourage reading at home.

The 2014 Curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions:

- Word reading/ decoding
- Comprehension

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, writing, grammar and vocabulary. We also understand that reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning and we encourage and praise children at every stage of it.

Our aims and connected provision

- Pupils learn to read easily and fluently through daily phonics (RWI) in Foundation Stage and Key Stage One, regular reading to adults in school, reciprocal reading classes and an incentives to read at home (Buster's Book Club)

- Pupils develop skills in reading for understanding using the Power of Reading scheme. We have adapted this to meet the needs of our pupils. In essence, pupils study a book, related to their half termly topic, where possible. They often study books which are more challenging than those which they might be able to read independently. They will use this book as the basis for reading, writing, speaking and listening tasks.
- Pupils are encouraged to read widely, through our use of differing class texts, Accelerated Reader Scheme, library visits and high quality attractive books in each classroom's reading and the school's book zone.
- Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure using reciprocal reading classes, quiet reading time, listening to an adult read, Reading Café, Buster's Book Club and the various methods outlined above.
- Pupils also need to read to find information in all lessons and comprehension is assessed in a formal way every other term.
- Pupils are exposed to a large variety and range of texts throughout their school life
- Pupils often look at books in guided reading sessions (POR novel focus)
- Key Stage Two pupils who are struggling with reading or making slow progress are given accelerated reading support (Fresh Start)

3. Writing:

The National Curriculum states that pupils should:

- Develop the stamina and skills to write at length
- Use accurate spelling and punctuation
- Be grammatically correct
- Write in a range of ways and purposes including narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations
- Write to support their understanding and consolidation of what they have heard or read

The 2014 Curriculum divides writing skills into two dimensions:

- Transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- Composition (articulating ideas in speech and writing)

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, reading, grammar and vocabulary.

Our aims and connected provision

- We teach grammar as a separate lessons daily (5 times a week for 20 mins)
- We correct grammatical error orally/ written work (where appropriate)
- We use high quality texts, modelling and shared/ collaborative writing to demonstrate good practice

- We provide writing frames to support the least confident
- We provide time for planning, editing and revising
- We mark extended pieces of work in-depth and set targets with the pupil (Target tracker)
- We use checklists for pupils to self assess or peer assess, when appropriate so they can evaluate effectively
- We encourage joined handwriting to support spelling and speed
- We use Kagan strategies, 'Chief and Indians', 'Diamond Nine' and drama and hot-seating to help pupils to think about another point of view
- Support for pupils with learning difficulties
- Meetings with parents to help them support their child

4. Vocabulary Development:

The National Curriculum makes clear that learning vocabulary is key to 'learning and progress across the whole curriculum' (p11) since it allows pupils to access a wider range of words when writing and for them to understand and comprehend texts efficiently.

Vocabulary teaching needs to be:

- Active
- Progressive/ systematic
- Making links from known words
- Develop understanding of shades of meaning
- Subject specific- accurate mathematical and scientific words

Our aims and connected provision:

We encourage our pupils to have a wide and growing vocabulary in a number of ways, these include:

- Spelling lists/ key words to take home and learn
- Display of key words linked to topics and subjects
- Using the correct vocabulary orally
- In-depth word based lessons looking at patterns (Part of SPaG lessons)
- Using dictionaries, thesaurus and similar programmes
- Using the Power of Reading and other texts to explore vocabulary choices and the effect they have
- Carrying out systematic testing and providing feedback to pupils
- Targeted one to one/ small group support, where appropriate

5. Planning and Assessment:

Planning:

The new National Curriculum 2014 forms the basis of teaching and learning. All children receive at least the minimum entitlement of a daily English lesson. Teachers work towards independent learning and plan for different working groups. Teachers employ a range of generic teaching strategies.

- Teachers use the National Curriculum (2014) as a starting point for creating their medium term literacy plans. These medium term plans follow the five key aspects of Literacy teaching: familiarisation with the genre and text type; capturing ideas; teacher demonstration; teacher scribing through supported and guided writing and finally, independent writing to create a teaching sequence. This is used as a basis for short term planning and adapted according to the needs of the children.
- The length of a unit may vary. Teachers plan closely with year group colleagues to ensure consistency of opportunity for all children.
- Clear objectives are set for each session and are shared with pupils. Teachers differentiate according to the needs of the pupils and use intervention programmes for targeted support.
- Literacy is encouraged and developed across our curriculum and links are made where appropriate.
- Medium term (half –termly) planning is stored centrally.
- Schemes of work for phonics and grammar and spelling are used to ensure developmental learning building on prior knowledge (RWI and No-nonsense spelling)
- Short term planning is flexible allowing for assessment for learning after each session/ group of sessions
- Pupils entitled to Pupil Premium funding will be given additional English support which is tracked and monitored termly (Provision maps)
- Pupils that fall into one or more vulnerable group (EAL/SEN/WB/PP) are entitled to support which is tracked and monitored termly (Provision maps)

Assessment:

- Staff assess pupils learning during and as part of every session, they adapt their practice accordingly
- Final pieces of writing, each term, are assessed using the KPI's for Years 1, 3, 4 & 5 and the ITAF's for Years 2 and 6.
- Formal assessments of Reading Comprehension ability are carried out, tracked and monitored at the end of Term2, 4 and 6 (Rising Stars Assessments)
- Staff attend moderating sessions in school and with other schools to assess writing
- A writing moderation file is held on the school drive for consultation

TEACHING OF HANDWRITING: (See handwriting Policy)

Teachers should be using the school handwriting program of Join-it and Nelson Handwriting Scheme. Handwriting should be taught once a week and then activities should be provided for morning starters throughout the rest of the week. Handwriting should be taught discreetly through all other subject areas, with

pupils being exposed constantly to modelled examples of correct formation and presentation of acceptable handwriting.

AIMS:

As a school, we aim to teach the pupils the following:

- A recognition and appreciation of patterns and lines
- Learn the conventional ways of forming letter shapes, both lower case and upper case letters
- An understanding of the importance of clear presentation, in order to communicate clearly and with meaning
- To take pride in their written presentation, and write with enjoyment
- To be able write quickly across the curriculum
- For pupils to develop a fluent, comfortable, and legible joined up handwriting style