

# ENGLISH POLICY



## St. Mary's RC Primary School

We live learn and grow together with Jesus through:

- Showing love to all
- Encouraging friendship to include everybody
- Acting with honesty through prayer
- Being thankful for all God's gifts
- Remaining respectful through our actions
- Forgiving someone when they are sorry
- Displaying patience by being calm and caring
- Demonstrating compassion to everyone in God's family
- Leading in service by supporting our school community

Written by: Lois Quinn

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Approved by governors on:

Policy will be reviewed: September 2026 or sooner if changes are made to legal requirements.

### **Aims**

At St Mary's, we believe that the study of English is essential in helping children develop their ability to listen carefully, speak clearly, read with understanding and write for a wide range of purposes. Through English, pupils learn to communicate ideas, opinions and emotions effectively.

We aim to foster creativity and imagination, enabling children to express themselves confidently through stories, poetry, drama, non-fiction and media texts. We encourage pupils to become enthusiastic, thoughtful and critical readers and writers. Children are taught to understand how language works by exploring its patterns, structures and origins. They apply their growing knowledge and skills across a variety of contexts, both within English lessons and throughout the wider curriculum.

Our approach provides meaningful opportunities to develop and reinforce key literacy skills across all subjects. We are committed to ensuring that all children become confident, capable and articulate learners – striving towards our shared goal of every child becoming a Primary Literate Pupil.

### **The aims of the teaching of English:**

At St Mary's, our English curriculum is designed to ensure that all pupils become confident and effective communicators. Through a broad and engaging approach to reading, writing, speaking and listening, we aim to:

- Enable children to read, write and speak with confidence, fluency and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to monitor and improve their own work.
- Foster a love of books and reading for enjoyment, curiosity and lifelong learning.
- Equip pupils with the ability to understand and respond to a wide range of text types and genres, and to write appropriately in a variety of styles and formats.
- Nurture children's imagination and creativity, encouraging originality in their spoken and written language.
- Develop a rich vocabulary and secure understanding of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and the conventions of spoken and written English.
- Create a safe, inclusive and stimulating environment where all aspects of English can be explored and developed with confidence.
- Ensure equal access and opportunity for all pupils, regardless of background or ability, to thrive in English.
- Support every child to reach their full potential in reading, writing and communication by the time they transition to secondary school.

## **Statutory requirements**

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum Document (September 2014) and in the Literacy section of the EYFS Framework (2024).

## **In EYFS children should be given the opportunities to:**

Teaching in Reception is delivered in accordance with the government's statutory document 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (2024). There are 7 Areas of Learning and Development which address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development. No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others as all Areas of Learning and Development are all closely interlinked. The English curriculum links to the Prime Area of Communication and Language and the Specific Area of Literacy. In Reception children are given opportunities to:

- Speak, listen and represent their ideas in their activities;
- Use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum;
- Become immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

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## **At key stage 1**

In Key Stage 1, children are supported to develop confidence in speaking and listening, learning to express themselves clearly while also valuing and responding to the contributions of others. Pupils begin to read and write with increasing independence, enthusiasm and purpose, drawing on a growing range of strategies to support their learning.

Language is used as a tool to explore both real-life experiences and imaginative ideas, helping children to articulate thoughts and develop creativity. As their reading and writing skills progress, children continue to secure their understanding of the relationship between sounds and letters. A strong foundation in phonics underpins their ability to decode words, spell accurately and construct meaning across a range of texts.

## **At key stage 2**

In Key Stage 2, children learn to adapt their spoken and written language to suit a range of purposes, audiences and contexts, developing an understanding of formality, tone and style. They read widely across fiction, non-fiction and poetry, deepening their ability to interpret meaning, infer intention and engage with layers of language.

Pupils explore how language is used for effect in both literary and non-literary texts, gaining insight into structure, grammar and stylistic features. A secure grasp of spelling, grammar and punctuation is reinforced across all subjects, enabling children to write with accuracy, clarity and impact.

Children are encouraged to expand their vocabulary, experiment with ambitious word choices and use language creatively and precisely to enhance their communication.

### **Subject organisation**

At St Mary's we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons, such as:

- Demonstration and modelling
- Modelled and shared writing
- Explanation
- Questioning
- Discussion

Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding in English through high-quality, engaging teaching. This is achieved through daily English lessons that include a strong focus on whole-class and group teaching, allowing all pupils to access shared learning while also receiving targeted support and challenge.

Children are given regular opportunities to engage with a wide variety of high-quality texts, developing their reading fluency, comprehension and enjoyment. They make use of supportive resources such as dictionaries, thesauruses and word mats to enhance their independent learning. Where appropriate, ICT is used to enrich English teaching – for example, through drafting and editing work, or exploring how words, images and multimedia combine to convey meaning.

A key focus is on developing pupils' vocabulary, both for creative expression and for discussing their reading, writing and spoken language with increasing confidence and precision. The correct use of grammatical terminology is taught explicitly and embedded meaningfully within lessons on grammar and punctuation. Wherever possible, we encourage pupils to apply their English skills across the wider curriculum, supporting meaningful, cross-curricular learning and communication.

### **Handwriting**

At St Mary's, we provide a structured and progressive English curriculum across all key stages. Daily handwriting sessions are delivered in EYFS and Key Stage 1, ensuring children develop correct letter formation, pencil grip, and fluent, legible writing from the earliest stages.

## **Reading**

From Spring Term in EYFS and Autumn Term in KS1 and Year 3, we implement daily guided reading carousel sessions, allowing children to engage in focused reading activities, develop fluency, and build comprehension skills in small groups. In Key Stage 2, reading is delivered through daily Whole Class Reading lessons, providing exposure to a wide range of high-quality texts and enabling deeper discussion, analysis, and vocabulary development.

## **Phonics and Spellings**

We follow the Red Rose Phonics programme, taught daily across EYFS and Key Stage 1, to ensure a consistent and systematic approach to phonics. To support pupils in Key Stage 2 who require additional help, we provide targeted phonics intervention through the Bounce Back Phonics programme.

At St Mary's, we follow the No Nonsense Spelling programme from Year 2 to Year 6, providing a structured and progressive approach to spelling. This is supplemented by Spelling Shed, an engaging digital resource that helps reinforce spelling patterns and rules through interactive practice.

To support children with dyslexia and those who require additional help with reading and spelling, we use IDL across the school. This ensures targeted, accessible support for pupils with specific learning needs.

We recognise that there are children of varying abilities in every class. As such, we are committed to providing inclusive and appropriately challenging learning opportunities for all. We tailor tasks to match pupils' individual needs through a range of strategies:

- Differentiated group work, where tasks are adapted to support or stretch learners as needed
- Open-ended tasks with a common starting point, allowing pupils to develop and extend their ideas independently
- Skilled teaching assistants, who provide targeted support and facilitate personalised learning
- Intervention programmes delivered across the school, designed to close gaps or provide additional challenge for individuals and small groups

This responsive approach ensures that every child is supported in making progress and achieving their potential in English.

## **Planning and approaches**

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

We carry out the curriculum planning in English in 3 phases (long term, medium term and short term). The National Curriculum details what we teach in the long term. Our yearly teaching programme identifies the key objectives in English that we teach to each year. The Key Skills in Reading and Key Skills in Writing documents outline the progression throughout the school and the objectives for each Year group (KLIPs).

Across each year group (year 1-6) Children will cover fiction, non-fiction and poetry across each term. We ensure a good variety of text types across all classes within our whole school English overview, which also displays clear progression. Individual class English overviews give details of the focus text, writing skills, GPS skills as well as the overall writing outcome. Children will produce a scaffolded piece of writing, followed by

an independent piece for each English topic. Children will also be given the opportunity to perform/share this piece.

Our medium term plans give details of the main teaching objectives for the term. These plans define what we teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term.

Class teachers complete a weekly plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives for each lesson and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of what each group of children will be learning. The class teacher keeps these individual plans.

## **EYFS**

We teach literacy in the Foundation Stage as an integral part of the school's work. We relate the literacy aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Development Matters, Early learning goals and Characteristics of Effective Learning, which underpin the curriculum for children aged three to five. Children are assessed regularly against these standards. We give all children the opportunity to:

- Talk and communicate in a widening range of situations
- Respond to adults and to each other
- To listen carefully
- To practise and extend their vocabulary and communication skills
- To explore words and texts

## **Cross Curricular Literacy opportunities**

The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every subject of our curriculum. Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. 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. This is shown through Word in RE where their skills help them to develop their RE learning.

English contributes significantly to the teaching of mathematics in 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. 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 sessions and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language. It also helps them to develop their religious language so that pieces of work in RE show their progression.

## **Use of ICT**

Opportunities to use ICT to support teaching and learning in English will be planned for and used as appropriate. ICT programmes are used throughout the school to support pupils with SEND.

## **Assessment, evaluation, record keeping and reporting**

- Work will be assessed in line with our assessment policy.
- All staff members have a copy of our school Non-negotiables for English
- Each year group has 'non-negotiables' for reading and writing.
- Each class from Year 1-6 has a 'help sheet' in the front of their English book which covers GPS rules/support to aid their writing

- Some children may have a spelling grid at the back of their book for common misspelt words identified by the teacher in marking.
- Final written pieces in Year 2-Year 6 will be written in independent writing books. These books are passed up with them as they move through school.
- Whole School internal and external writing moderations will take place twice a year in order for professional discussion around the assessment of writing in our school.

Teachers assess children's work in English in three phases. The short term assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson help teachers adjust their daily plans. Teachers match these short term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. Teachers use the Lancashire KLIP strands to assess children regularly to help them to plan for progression.

Teachers assess in a variety of ways including discussion, questioning, observation and marking written work in line with the marking and feedback policy. Teachers also use 'itrack' for reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation and speaking and listening to monitor progress. All this information is used to assess children, which then informs the assessment tracker and identification of children requiring intervention is determined. Progress and attainment against national targets is measured regularly. Letters and Sounds, Red Rose assessment is recorded termly on the Lancashire Phonics Tracker.

- Pupils are tested weekly on spellings, including Common Exception Words.
- NFER tests are completed for reading and GPS each term for Years 3-5, and in the summer term for Year 1 (reading only)
- Common exception words reading and spelling tests are completed at the start of the year, Spring 2 and Summer 2
- Year 2/6 pupils completed past papers for SATs to monitor children in GPS and Reading
- IDL is used at the start of the year to monitor reading and spelling ages and is continued for pupils who require this additional support
- Data sheets are given to parents every term in KS2 with how their child has performed in NFER tests for GPS and Reading
- The class teacher comments about the child's progress in their report.
- Annual written reports are given during the summer term. A copy of this report is stored on 'itrack'.
- Two verbal reports are given at parent's evenings.

## **Resources**

There are a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. Each classroom has a selection of fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts in their reading corner. Children have access to the internet through their classroom computer, laptops and ipads. Each class has a supply of home school reading books to ensure that children have the opportunity to read further at home.

Working walls are used in classrooms to support the English units. Grammar and Punctuation that has been taught is displayed and the children are encouraged, and expected, to use it across all curriculum areas - Literacy Shed+/Grammarsaurus are also resources used to aid with this.

Phonics displays are within EYFS/KS1 classrooms. Guided reading books are available for all children and phonics resources have been purchased to support the teaching of phonics especially in EYFS/KS1.

Phonics is taught using Red Rose Letters and Sounds.

KS1 reading schemes are Oxford Reading Tree, including Floppy's Phonics and Project X.

KS2 reading schemes are Project X and Collins Big Cat, progressing to novels covering a range of genres.

## **Inclusion**

We aim to provide for all children so that they can progress as much as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are underachieving and take steps to improve their attainment.

This can be done through the intervention programmes available or through support in class with teaching assistants.

Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

## **Equal Opportunities**

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

## **Role of the subject leader**

The subject leader should be responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

- Pupil progress
- Monitoring English and Reading data
- Monitoring phonics screening data and NFER results
- Provision of English (including intervention and support programmes)
- The quality of the learning environment
- The deployment and provision of support staff
- Moderation of writing
- Observations/Learning Walks
- Book and planning scrutiny
- Taking the lead in policy development
- Auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- Purchasing and organising resources
- Keeping up to date with recent literacy developments
- Working alongside English ambassadors to promote pupil voice
- Raising the profile by organising visits, world book day etc.

## **Parental involvement**

St Mary's believes that the active support and involvement of parents is crucial to children achieving their potential in English and in all aspects of the curriculum. Parents will be actively encouraged to read with their children, discuss their books with them and help them choose books to read at home as well as the home school reading book.

Spellings are sent home weekly to be learnt and then sentences constructed to include the target words. Parents are encouraged to help their children to learn the words, think about their meanings and to write correctly punctuated, grammatically accurate sentences.

Homework throughout the year for Year 6 pupils will include literacy and English focuses and opportunities to apply the literacy skills in cross-curricular projects.

Parents will be invited to English workshops to inform them and aid them in ways to support their children with reading, phonics and spelling.

## **The Governing Body**

Regular reports are made to the governors on the progress of English provision and to our English Governor. This policy will be reviewed every three years or in the light of changes to legal requirements.

## **Conclusion**

This policy also needs to be read in line with other school policies and therefore should be read in conjunction with:

- Handwriting Policy
- Reading Policy
- Intent, Implementation and Impact in English,
- Teaching and Learning Policy,
- Assessment and Record Keeping,
- Feedback and Marking Policy,
- Special Educational Needs Policy,
- ICT Policy,
- Equal Opportunities Policy,
- Health and Safety Policy.

**Written by:** Lois Quinn (English Subject Lead)

**Date Policy written:** September 2025

**Date approved by the full Governing body:**

**Date to be reviewed;** September 2026, or sooner if changes are made to legal requirements.