

# St Mary's Church of England Primary School



Learn. Achieve. Grow. Flourish.

## English Policy

POLICY: English Policy  
APPROVED BY: Headteacher  
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This policy is non-statutory and recommended to be reviewed every 3 years.

### School Vision

As a Church of England school, we value and are ambitious for all children and are committed to providing a positive, safe and stimulating environment for them to enjoy and excel in their learning; grow in confidence, resilience and independence; achieve their full potential and flourish as individuals.

*'I instruct you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths' (Proverbs 4:11)*

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## **ENGLISH AT ST MARY'S C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **INTENT**

We want all children to develop a love of language for language sake. We aim to develop our children's ability to use spoken and written language to communicate effectively – to listen, speak, read and write both in and for a wide range of contexts, purpose and audiences.

We want our children to read fluently and with confidence in any subject by the time they are ready to move to secondary school. We want our children to love reading and to want to read for themselves.

We want our children to acquire a wide vocabulary, a good understanding of grammar in context and to be able to spell new words by applying the spelling patterns and rules they learn throughout their time in our school.

We want our children to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style as necessary.

We want all children to take pride in the presentation of their writing and aim to develop a legible, joined handwriting style by the time they move to secondary school.

We want our children to understand that all good writers refine and edit their writing before producing a final published copy therefore we want our children to develop independence in being able to identify their own areas for improvement in a piece of writing and edit their work during and after the writing process.

We recognise that each child has their own starting point upon entry to every year group and progress is measured in line with these starting points to ensure that every child can celebrate success.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

We follow the National Curriculum 2014 to deliver lessons rich in reading, writing, phonics, spelling, grammar and punctuation through our whole school English Spine where high-quality texts are used to deliver all aspects of the English Curriculum. Each book on the English Spine has been carefully chosen to match the National Curriculum reading and writing requirements for each year group as well as linking in to our wider curriculum, with history, geography, science and social themes specifically covered. This structure provides the children with a deeper understanding of texts. We think it is important for our children to value the importance of reading to develop and enhance writing and to see a clear purpose and context for writing. At St Mary's, the English Handbook provides all guidance for the teaching and assessment of the English curriculum: reading, writing and speaking and listening.

#### **Speaking & Listening**

As soon as children enter St Mary's C.E. Primary School, we place a great emphasis on developing their oracy skills. We have a firm belief that if children "can't speak it, they can't write it" therefore children are constantly encouraged to articulate their sentences before beginning to write them down. The focus on oracy continues as children progress through the school.

#### **Reading**

We work on promoting a love of reading in all children and fostering a text rich environment where children understand how language works as well as develop the skills they need to be proficient readers and to interpret texts accurately. Around school, you will see displays which celebrate reading, inspiring reading corners and spaces and a well-stocked and vibrant Library area. In addition to this, throughout the year the importance of reading is enhanced through activities such as termly newsletters, reading cafes, reading week, author visits, book fairs.

We follow the Read, Write, Inc (RWI) approach to teaching Reading and Phonics, supplemented with additional reading materials. Our approach is systematic, consistent and rigorous for all children to become readers as quickly as possible. We use the same phonics programme across the school providing continuity and a tool for guaranteed progression.

We teach phonics in Reception from their first day in school. Children learn how to 'read' the sounds in words and how these sounds can be written down. This is essential for reading but it also helps children learn to spell well. The children also practise reading (and spelling) 'tricky words', such as 'once', 'have', 'said' and 'where'. Once children can blend sounds together to read words, they practise reading books that match the phonics and the 'tricky words' they know. They start to believe they can read and this increases their confidence.

Up until the end of Year 2, children work in groups with children who are at the same reading level in RWI groups. This is so that the teaching can be focussed on their needs. Some children in KS2 will continue to access RWI groups if they need further consolidation and development of reading skills. We check children's reading skills half termly so we that we can ensure they are in the right group. Children will move to a different group if they are making faster progress or may have one-to-one support if we think they need some extra help. RWI takes place in YR, and Y1 daily for 45 minutes. Children in Nursey, YR, Y1 and Y2 autumn term use the RWINc Talk Through Stories scheme to develop vocabulary knowledge and comprehension of texts.

In Key Stage 2, and the KS1 'off' RWI Group, the children undertake whole class reading sessions with the staff in their class. We use the acronym **VIPERS** (Vocabulary/Infer/Predict/Explain/Retrieve/Sequence or Summarise) within these lessons to explore all elements of the reading curriculum content domains. At least once per week, children undertake a timed 'QFQ' (Quick-Fire Questions) task where they must answer retrieve, interpret and word meaning/choice questions about a short text.

We believe that reading fluency holds the key to successful reading and the children are assessed each term on how many Words Per Minute (WPM) they can read. Children should be able to read approximately 90 WPM of an age-appropriate text to be considered fluent readers.

## **Writing**

Early writing is taught through early mark making, then when the children begin RWI phonics, they are taught the correct letter formations. This begins with writing CVC words, moving onto short sentences using the sounds they have been taught. EYFS children are encouraged to write independently during continuous provision.

From Y1-Y6, the English curriculum is taught by studying the high-quality text from the English Spine every half term, from which various writing opportunities are then derived. Each week, the children are taught to develop an understanding of how the text flows through reading comprehension, exploring key themes, events and plot of the texts being studied. From the text, children are taught the grammar elements of the NC, corresponding to the genres being written as part of the writing process. Children are then supported in how to apply the grammatical content taught in identifying features of a high-quality modelled text (WAGOLL) before progressing to plan, write and edit a written piece which matches the purpose and audience. Children receive regular feedback from both teachers and their peers in the writing process.

We aim to provide our pupils with a 'language rich' environment and within our classrooms, we explore ambitious vocabulary in all lessons and use our working walls to acquire an understanding of new and unknown words as well as words in our Tier 2 and Tier 3 lists. We use the RWInc Get Spelling scheme for children in Y2-6 who no longer need RWI phonics. Children are given weekly words to learn at school and at home in preparation for a spelling test at the end of the week.

We expect the skills that are learnt through the English curriculum to be applied in all other subject areas.

## **IMPACT**

We measure the effectiveness and impact of our English curriculum in a variety of ways.

We use RWInc level assessment, RWInc WPM assessment, NFER summative testing, Alpha Assess, PM Benchmarking and Salford Reading Test each term to assess pupils' outcomes for reading which enables progress and attainment in reading and to be analysed and evaluated to identify the next steps of learning.

We formally assess an extended piece of writing each term, using a consistent format for assessment, which enables progress and attainment to be analysed and evaluated in order to identify the next steps of learning. Moderation of writing takes place in school and in a cluster meeting with other schools to ensure accurate judgements are being made.

The quality of reading and writing in English is evaluated by learning walks, drop-ins, 'pupil voice' discussions and work scrutiny. This informs subject leaders of the impact of new initiatives as well as future areas for improvement. After monitoring, the subject leader provides feedback to SLT and address areas for development which is then shared with all staff.

Children at St Mary's C.E. Primary School enjoy reading regularly both for information and for enjoyment. They can discuss the books they have read with enthusiasm and recall of detail. They can apply the features of different writing genres and styles to their own work and are able to write for different audiences and purposes.

The impact of the English curriculum is clearly developing with our revised way of teaching. There is evidence of progress, sustained learning and transferable skills and children are becoming more confident writers. By the time they are in Upper Key Stage 2, most genres of writing are familiar to them, and they are able to apply the skills independently.

The English Teaching Handbook must be read in consultation with the following policies and guidance:

- Phonics Policy
- Spelling Policy
- Handwriting Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Feedback and Marking Guidance
- Supportive Strategies for Common Writing Difficulties: KS1 & KS2 Guide