



Work, play, pray - together

St Mary's RC Primary School

English Policy

Approved:

Review date:

Writing

The curriculum planning in English is carried out in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The long-term plans are the National Curriculum Objectives to be covered in each year group. Our medium-term English plans have been planned and designed to ensure that a breadth of writing genres are covered across KS1 and KS2. This enables us to see that teaching and learning is progressive and eliminates any repetition of topics/texts used across year groups (See 'English Provision' on the school website). They give details of the main teaching genres for writing, indicating which genres are to be taught in block sessions for each half term. Although English genres in writing are taught in weekly blocks, these genres are revisited in other subjects.

The short-term plans contain the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson, and give details of how the lessons are to be taught. The class teacher keeps these individual plans in a planning file which is kept in the classroom for annotation. The subject leader and class teacher will discuss them on an informal basis as part of the subject leader's monitoring, as well as when more formal monitoring takes place.

This policy will outline a brief sequential synopsis of the Writing that takes place in KS1 and KS2. It covers planning sequences of different genres, writing skills, assessment and target settings.

Writing within KS1

Within Key Stage One, staff will plan from the renewed long term overview for set genres. Children will be expected to engage with new texts each week and quality opportunities to improve key skills of reading and writing will be planned for.

Writing within KS2

Each year group in Key Stage Two is following the renewed long term overview for set genres. Each genre will be taught sequentially following our planned guidelines (See our 'Writing across the Key Stages' guidance document) in order to ensure high quality writing as a result of detailed text analysis, clarity of genre features and key vocabulary.

Cold and Hot Writing

At the very beginning of every new topic/genre, before pupils do any analysis or work, every pupil produces a 'cold' independent piece of writing relating to the outcome of the topic e.g. *Genre: Journalistic Writing* – pupils would independently write a newspaper article. Once the whole topic has been taught they are asked to independently write a 'hot' piece of writing, e.g. another newspaper article. This will show progress and allow one to clearly see what pupils knew and what they have learnt and this will be used during moderation as independent work.

Free Writing Portfolio

Every week 30 minutes is dedicated to this area of writing to develop pupil ability to write quality work at speed. It enables teachers to assess each child's independent understanding of a range of genres previously taught. The teacher must provide the class with an image, animation or object accompanied with three choices of writing genres. Pupils individually choose one of the genres listed and use this creative stimulus to delve into their imagination and write a quality piece of work whilst developing skills that also improve pace.

Writing through other Curriculum Areas

We ensure that writing across other subject areas is high quality and reflects the standards in English books. Pupils are reminded of their English targets in marking and feedback. Minimum expectations in R.E. requires at least 4 high quality pieces of writing per theme and the Topic books must provide one piece of writing per week (or equivalent over the topic).

Reading Skills

Throughout our school, we hear reading on a regular basis - every pupil reads to an adult at least once per week. In the Early Years and KS1 children are taught how to read by blending the sounds they see. This involves looking at a written word, looking at each grapheme (the sound that a letter or a group of letters makes) to then merge these sounds together to make a word. This is the basis of reading.

At St Mary's we are aware that we must pronounce each sound correctly and model this correctly in order to help children blend and read words. In KS1 pupils will often get 'stuck' with a word. We are patient with them and do not simply tell them the word (as tempting as this may be). We encourage them to sound out each sound and blend them together until the word is formed

In KS2 we encourage our pupils to re-read the sentence once they have blended an unknown word as they tend to lose track and will not comprehend what they have read after spending so much time sounding out and decoding words. Fluency is also a key skill which enables pupils to understand what they have read. If they are fluent their words flow and they can read the punctuation correctly for effect. Often pupils who need extra reading support are a little stilted in their reading and this hinders their comprehension.

Guided Reading

At least two Guided Reading and Comprehension lessons are timetabled each week. In KS2 each year group has been allocated at least 4 comprehension papers to enable the pupils to be taught the skills they need to read, understand and infer the text and answer questions appropriately. It is important to provide readers with texts that are at their appropriate reading level but we feel the texts should be challenging for pupils in order to aid their transition from emerging to developing and onto secure in all areas of their year group objectives for reading.

Working without levels, we have cross referenced the Assessment Focus areas (AF) and matched them to new Reading criteria and objectives. Working systematically ensures coverage of all reading objectives and allows us to identify gaps in pupils learning and enables us to target specific areas for individual pupils and also challenge the more able in certain comprehension areas.

In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 the Guided Reading and Comprehension structure varies slightly. During each week, differentiated texts are used and pupils are given specific targeted questions to provide a clear insight and allow the teachers to have a clear view of each pupils understanding of the text. Once sufficient evidence of attainment at each reading objective has been clarified, teachers know what specific areas readers need to work on in order to make good to outstanding progress. During Spring and Summer Term, Year Two must use a range of texts, extracts and past SAT questions to teach children the skills and techniques required to answer comprehension questions aptly and precisely.

Home/school reading

We place an emphasis on reading for pleasure and reading at home. We provide the pupils with a plethora of reading material to capture every pupil's imagination and engage all. In Key Stage One children choose reading books to take home weekly. In Key Stage Two the children take one reading book home but they can change this book independently at any time as soon as they have read the book and made a comment in their Reading Record Book. Their home/school book must be matched to their current reading level.

At least once per week the Teacher and/or the Teaching Assistant listens to every pupil read their home/school reading book. Some time is spent asking the pupils what they think of the book and to question their understanding. Reading records are kept in the form of a reading comment sheet and in their reading record book. These comment sheets are used for assessment and moderation purposes.

Additional Reading Support.

Some children do not get enough opportunities at home to read to an adult so additional reading support is offered at our school to enable them to read to someone who will model, encourage, excite and praise their reading.

We are very fortunate to have extra adult support in our school to provide children who are struggling, coasting or disengaged from reading. In both key stages additional adults listen to targeted children read their home/school book across the year groups.

Early Years Foundation Stage

We teach English in our Foundation Stage where we relate the relevant aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals, which underpin the curriculum planning for children during the Early Years Foundation Stage. We give every pupil ample opportunity to develop their interest and understanding of reading and writing linking to sounds and letters. This is achieved through varied activities that allow them to enjoy, explore, practise and talk confidently whilst using a range of books, poems, animation and other materials.

GPS

One English lesson every week should be designated to teach GPS. We must remember that this should not act as a stand-alone lesson, but should be embedded into all areas of the curriculum. This learning is essential to improve children's writing and their understanding of the English language. All GPS writing must be evident in the GPS book and/or Spelling book.

Handwriting

It is paramount that pupils are taught correct pencil hold and letter formation from the outset of their time at school. We have very high standards of handwriting and presentation of books and pupils are proud of the work they present. When pupils are communicating their ideas in writing it is very important that they use a neat, legible style. Our school follows the Penpals Handwriting Scheme and we have introduced a 'Handwriting Hero' class display and incentive system across KS1 and KS2. It is expected that staff model the school handwriting style at all times.

Assessment and Target Setting

The marking of the pupil's work must be kept in line with the school's 'Feedback and Marking' Policy. The principal purpose of marking writing is to provide pupils with feedback to move their learning forward. It communicates to a pupil whether they have applied the correct genre features and skills and gives them alternative ways to approach the writing form. It also serves to inform teacher's planning in terms of any misconceptions or gaps in learning.

Written comments must be purposeful and focused on moving learning forwards and model rich vocabulary, a breadth of punctuation and encourage the imagination to come alive.

Responding to marking and corrections should be carried out at the start of the next lesson (or within the lesson). The process of correcting work is encouraged to establish the importance of self-checking work by pupils and to avoid making similar errors in the future. It may be appropriate to tackle misconceptions and challenge progress during lessons, and promote children's independence and use of support strategies.

Free Writing, 'Hot' pieces of writing and independent writing from topics and R.E. are used to assess each pupil. Each individual pupil's Writing Assessment Criteria is kept in their individual Assessment File and a copy is presented in the Free Writing portfolio. This will be highlighted and added to throughout the year to build a picture of where each pupil is currently at. This is a working document and enables both pupil and teacher to identify next steps in writing. This next step will form the target set in the front of the English book.

Assessment for learning

Assessment for learning is embedded into each lesson and teachers use assessment for learning techniques and strategies on a daily basis in order to identify pupils' strengths and difficulties, inform the next steps for each pupil's learning and improve the learning outcomes. Short-term planning is constantly reviewed and modified on the basis of these assessments.

Summative assessment

Some of the evidence base for these assessments will come from day-to-day class work, but there is an emphasis on evidence that comes from specific tasks and tests used to assess the degree of retention, independence and breadth of application shown. We use these judgements to assess progress and achievement against individual, school and national targets. We identify and target those pupils not making expected progress and intervene accordingly.

Assessment is tracked half termly using the school's tracking system and pupils' progress is discussed in Pupil Progress Meetings. Pupils who haven't made progress become a focus in teacher's planning. We pass all assessment and tracking information on to the next teacher at the end of the year, so that they can plan for the new school year.

We give parents the opportunity to discuss their child's progress and attainment each term in a teacher/parent meeting. We also write a summary of each child's progress and achievement in the Annual Report for parents.

English Learning Environment

We aim to create a rich and stimulating environment that promotes learning and independence through Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling displays, Phonics displays and English Working Walls in each classroom. English Working Walls and resource areas in the classroom will:

- support the children with their reading and writing
- contain information relevant to current teaching e.g. key vocabulary, definitions etc
- provide resources clearly accessible e.g. dictionary, thesaurus
- be clear/large enough for pupils to read
- be updated and changed regularly

English Timetable

The new National Curriculum places a great emphasis on Reading, Writing, Grammar, Spelling, Phonics and Speaking and Listening skills. At St Mary's, we have adapted the daily timetable to incorporate all areas of the English Curriculum sessions:

- **EYFS – Nursery** have an English focus during each two and a half day session, daily phonics sessions and story time. Wordless reading books are introduced during Autumn Term.
- **EYFS – Reception** have one English session each morning based on the 'book of the week', daily 20 minute phonics input and weekly individual readers.
- **KS1** – 5 x 60 minute English lessons and 5 x 20 minute Phonics sessions per week.
- **KS2** – 4 x hourly English lessons, 1 x hourly Grammar lesson, Guided Reading and Comprehension lessons and 5 x 15 minute daily

Home/school links

We aim to raise the profile and understanding of our approach to English with parents, and they are encouraged to be actively involved in supporting their child's learning in school. The school website includes a breakdown of the English curriculum for each year group. Additionally, pupils and parents can access English links to help their child via our school website.

Homework is sent home on a weekly basis in order to reinforce concepts and skills being learned in school, along with weekly spellings taken from the National Curriculum.

The role of the Subject Leader

The Head teacher will:

- Provide support by encouraging staff and praising good practice.
- Monitor learning and teaching through lesson observations.
- Monitor planning and reviews.
- Give feedback to teachers following lesson observations.
- Support staff development through in service training and provision of resources.

The English Leader will:

- Provide a strategic lead and direction for English in the school;
- Provide support and advice to staff in the delivery of the English programme of study;
- Remain informed about current developments in the subject by attending INSET sessions and being involved in independent research and reading;
- Disseminate relevant information to staff;
- Deliver INSET sessions to staff, to support staff development;
- Monitor and evaluate teaching and learning of all areas of English;
- Monitor standards in the subject, through planning and work scrutiny, statistics, quality of teaching and pupil assessments;
- Order and maintain resources to enhance effectiveness of English teaching within the school;
- Consider with staff and work with SMT members in the evaluation and planning of actions included within the School Development Plan.

The Class teacher will:

- Be responsible for the teaching of English as set out in the policy.
- Provide planning and reviews for the Head Teacher and English leader to have access to.
- Provide samples of English work to the English leader when required.
- Assess children's work in order to detail future planning.

Special needs provision, including gifted and talented

At our school we teach all areas of the English curriculum to every pupil, whatever their ability and individual needs. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all. Through our teaching we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those who are disadvantaged and vulnerable, including those pupils who generate Pupil Premium, those with special educational needs, those with disabilities, and those learning English as an additional language. We take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the pupil may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors such as classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the pupil to learn more effectively. Ongoing assessment for learning and summative assessment allows us to consider each pupil's attainment and progress against expectations. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the pupil's needs.

Intervention will take place through SEN support for pupils with special educational needs. Action plans identify barriers to learning and may include, as appropriate, specific targets, strategies and intervention programmes relating to all areas of English.

We also ensure that we meet the needs of those pupils with special gifts and talents. This may be achieved in a variety of ways, such as individual learning programmes and collaboration with other year groups and schools (including feeder Secondary Schools).