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**St. Mary’s R.C Primary School**

Primary Curriculum – **English (Writing)**

**At St. Mary’s, we believe that all pupils should be able to confidently communicate their knowledge, ideas and emotions through their writing. We want children to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in the range of contexts, purposes and audiences.**

**We want pupils to acquire a life-long love of reading and writing as a direct result of the curriculum we provide them with. In line with our ‘growth mindset’ culture, staff encourage the children to practise the learning behaviours we value (independence, co-operation, resilience, self-belief, inventiveness, curiosity, being focussed and being reflective) through their taught English sessions in order to give children the confidence to take risks, embrace challenges and take control of their own progress and learning concerning writing. Ultimately, we want the children, all of the children, to see themselves as *real* authors!**

**Intent: Why we teach English (Writing)**

English, in its spoken and written form has universal reach; It crosses cultures, countries and industries. It is fact, that low literacy levels in children from disadvantaged backgrounds continues the cycle of unemployment and socio-economic struggle. At St. Mary’s, we know that by improving literacy engagement and building strong foundations for our pupils upon which all learning is built, is the key to positive, social, academic and life outcomes. Writing is an integral part of our curriculum both in English and across the wider curriculum.

**Implementation: How we teach English (Writing)**

Our English curriculum is derived around a sequence of high quality, age-appropriate texts. Teachers then use each book to create opportunities to develop reading fluency and comprehension. At St. Mary’s, our writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling curriculum is based upon the National Curriculum programmes of study and lessons take place, daily. Teachers use the National Curriculum and school progression grids to derive long term plans in the subject. Teachers and the English Lead[s] pay careful attention to the cohorts in school and ensure that each year, class teachers tailor their curriculum to meet the needs and interests of our pupils, choosing texts which inspire and motivate pupils to learn.

Across both key stages and EYFS, teachers include the following in each unit they deliver in order to achieve the best outcomes:

1. Book talk and comprehension around the class novel
2. Grammar, spelling and vocabulary focus
3. Sentence level work
4. Collaborative Planning
5. Shared write
6. Independent writing opportunities

**English (writing) in Early Years Foundation Stage**

Teachers in EYFS ensure that daily Read Write Inc (RWI) and reading sessions take place. This is the main priority for all of the children.

**English (writing) in Key Stage 1**

Teachers in Y1 and Y2 follow the Power of Reading for all of their English curriculum. The Power of Reading teaching sequences, guide planning and help teachers to select the best teaching approaches to explore high quality texts in depth, enhancing reading comprehension and providing meaningful contexts and purposes for writing. The sequences include cross-curricular links allowing staff to ensure that quality literature is at the heart of their curriculum. In Key Stage 1, the scheme also embeds the teaching of phonics, grammar, punctuation and spelling into a rich reading curriculum.

**English (writing) in Key Stage 2**

 Teachers in Y3, Y4, Y5 and Y6 do not follow the Power of Reading exclusively although, at least 2 of the [minimum] 6 texts they study are from the scheme. Regardless of whether the text/planning is from the Power of Reading, the class novel will *always* link to either the history, geography or science unit being studied at that time. Texts chosen for each unit are led by class interests and as such, many texts are regularly changed, even when the topic remains the same. Teachers derive the writing outcomes with the support of the English Lead to ensure full coverage across a wide range of text types and outcomes. In Key Stage 2, we teach our writing based around the four writing purposes: writing to entertain, writing to inform, writing to persuade and writing to explain. This allows children to learn the features of just four purposes as opposed to the features of many different text types. The result is that children become increasingly confident in the structure of a piece of writing and can then focus on the *effect* of their writing on the reader by the time they reach UKS2.

**Book-Led Curriculum Approach to Writing**

At St. Mary’s, we believe that writing is strengthened by instilling a love of reading within our pupils. We value the importance of reading to supplement writing and providing a real purpose and context to writing where possible. We believe, that by providing a reason for writing, outcomes are of a higher quality. Every half term, the English curriculum is taught by studying a high quality text where the writing opportunities have been derived from this.

Careful links are made across the curriculum to ensure that children’s English learning is relevant and meaningful: where possible linking our reading, writing and the topic that we are covering in History and Geography. We ensure that children develop an understanding of how widely writing is used in everyday life and, therefore, how important and useful the skills are that they are learning.

Our intentions in writing are for children to:

* Write for a purpose
* See themselves as real writers
* Take ownership of their writing
* See writing as an interesting and enjoyable process
* Acquire the ability to organise and plan their written work

Children receive regular feedback from both teachers and their peers in the writing process; class teachers endeavour to provide guidance and feedback during lesson time in order to ensure this has the maximum impact on pupils’ outcomes. Teachers also work hard to normalise error and pre-empt error as part of their planning to address gaps swiftly so that children see error as a learning opportunity.

**Reading for Pleasure: broadening pupils’ exposure of literature to use as models in their own writing**

* Writing is strengthened by instilling a love of reading within our pupils. Around school, you will find our ‘Reading Ambassadors’ whose role It is to ensure that reading, and particularly reading for pleasure, is a priority across the school.
* Each week, time is spent enjoying reading for pleasure in our classrooms and we are developing this by ensuring there is also a dialogue around reading in each classroom.

**Language Acquisition & Vocabulary Development**

We endeavour to ensure we provide our pupils with a ‘language rich’ environment, which we do by equipping all classrooms with a wide range of texts displayed in inspiring libraries, correlated with our wider curriculum. We engage the Scholastic book fair twice-yearly, in order to share the importance of reading with our parents, carers and wider community. Within our classrooms, we explore ambitious vocabulary across the wider curriculum and encourage teachers to set spelling investigations which often leads to new and exciting words being added to the child’s vocabulary.

**How does St. Mary’s curriculum meet the needs of the children at our school?**

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| **Religious Values****The teachings of Jesus are central to every aspect of our learning, so we:** | * Must nurture their physical, spiritual and mental wellbeing by recognising and developing their God-given talents to their full potential
* Value the unique nature of every child by teaching them to respect and care for the wonder that is their human body
* Develop their character, including resilience, confidence and independence, so that they can contribute positively to the life of the school, their local community and the wider environment
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| **Key life skills for learning** **Provide a curriculum that will equip children with the values, skills and attributes needed to be independent thinkers and courageous learners, so we:** | * Provide children with opportunities to rehearse, apply and master our core learning behaviours of being able to focus, co-operate, reflect, work independently, be inventive, show resilience, self-belief and curiosity.
* Understand that skills and concepts acquired through English are not exclusive to English, but closely linked to those required in all other areas of the curriculum.
* Allow children to further develop a growth mindset and understand improvement is something that can be acquired through hard work and effort.
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| **Pupil Premium Grant:****Provide extended opportunities to experience a wide range of activities which they might not otherwise have chance to access, so we** | * Provide additional staff and booster sessions for our children most ‘at risk’ of not making the necessary progress to pass the KS1 phonics test. Further support is then given to children who need to re-sit this test. This also extends to the emotional support of our most vulnerable pupils.
* Ensure that our struggling or reluctant readers are given 1:1 reading time and interventions on a daily basis through the provision of high-quality reading teachers.
* Invest regularly in new books and encourage the children to have autonomy over the books in their libraries.
* Provide opportunities for pupils to get involved in clubs both in and outside of school linked to English to facilitate a life-long love of reading and writing. For example:
	+ 1. *Reading Ambassadors*
		2. *KS1 and KS2 Book Club*
		3. *Cookery Club (Reading for purpose)*
		4. *Writing Club*
* Create awe and wonder around the subject of English by hosting authors, illustrators, poets, artists and playwrights in school to provide master classes around their field of expertise.
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| **Opportunities to embrace cultural capital is part of our school ethos, so we**  | * **Become involved in community projects with other schools.** For example:
	+ 1. *Y5 undertake an annual Shakespeare unit which culminates in a performance at the Royal Exchange, Manchester with schools around Greater Manchester having written their own version of an allocated Shakespeare play.*
		2. *Y6 engage in an annual performance with the Hallé Orchestra*
		3. *Andy Burnham, mayor of Greater Manchester, attended our school, along with members of the press and local council, for a debate with the KS2 pupils following letters the children had written concerning climate change.*
* **Seek to be inspired by literary heroes, local authors/illustrators and use this as a stimulus for writing.** For example:
	+ 1. *UKS2 pupils are invited to Bury Museum to find out about local soldiers from WWII and use this to create poetry as a response to what they discover.*
* **Use school grounds, particularly forest school to provide outdoor activities as a stimulus for writing.**
* **Celebrate, embrace and actively learn about different backgrounds, heritage, language and traditions in response to current topical and political issues.** For example:
	+ 1. Following the spotlight placed on BAME issues, a survey was carried out on class libraries to see how many ethnicities were represented. Each library was then populated with books which better represented the diverse, British society, and staff encourage the children to engage with these texts.
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**Impact: What English gives to our children**

We measure the effectiveness and impact of our English Writing, Reading, Grammar and Spelling curriculum in a variety of different ways. We use National and summative testing to assess pupils outcomes at the end of KS2 (SATs for Year 6 pupils), and through termly summative assessments across school which enables pupils’ progress and attainment in the subjects to be evaluated. Additionally, children’s writing is regularly moderated by class teachers and across key stages to inform them of pupils’ next steps and successes.

By the time children leave our school, our aim is that they will:

* Make good progress from their KS1 results
* Have a love for writing and write for enjoyment
* Be able to produce written work in all areas of the curriculum to a high standard
* Be confident to write for a range of different purposes

**Future Plans: What Comes Next?**

* Move towards a more consistent approach to spelling across the whole school
* Provide more autonomy for pupils around writing choices to allow them to find their authorial voice
* Target handwriting [including how it is taught] throughout school
* Embed a writing structure which provides staff with the confidence to strive for excellence in the delivery of English.