

St Anne's Catholic Primary School

English Policy November 2019





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Loving & learning together in harmony with Christ

'Love one another, just as I have loved you.'

(John 13:34-35)



The above mission statement is built upon our core values that are embodied by all at St. Anne's. We refer to them as the 5Rs and our principles by which we live out our values in all aspects of our school life are shared below:

Responsible: We take care with everything and we take control of our behaviour; accepting the consequences of our good or bad choices. We show initiative and we develop our understanding of how we can contribute positively to those living and working close to our school and to those who live in other parts of the world.

Reflective (KS1)/Respect (KS2): We learn how to treat others positively and think about our own actions; being mindful of justice and peace. We distinguish right from wrong and we learn to respect rules, locally and worldwide. We learn about different cultural traditions and we appreciate and celebrate the uniqueness of us all, everywhere.

Resilient: We learn to persevere even if our work is difficult; we do not give up. We adapt to different situations, make positive responses and always bounce back for more. We accept that aspects of life are not easy, but we learn to continue to participate fully in and contribute positively to our lives today. We want to challenge our thinking and change outcomes for the better.

Ready: We are prepared mentally and physically for learning. We are eager to learn new things and are ready to help others. We develop our self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence over time. We want to be the very best that we can be, whilst maintaining mutual respect for all.

Resourceful: We can use lots of different things to help us learn. We also have the ability to find quick and clever ways to overcome difficulties. We learn how to find a better way to solve problems and address issues. We use the gifts that God gave us to challenge and improve ourselves day by day.



1. Aims and objectives:

1.1 The English curriculum at St Anne's aims to develop each pupil's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, opinions and feelings. Our pupils are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of non-fiction and media texts. We aim to provide our pupils with a deeper understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Resulting in the children of St Anne's using their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations. This upholds our dedication to our children's rights through our Rights Respecting School status. Here we actively encourage our children to engage with their right to learn (Article 28) and their right to find out about things in their world (Article 13).

1.2 Teachers and pupils in our school usually use the term 'English' to describe the English curriculum which stretches across the National curriculum topics. Therefore, English skills will be taught and practised in many areas across the curriculum, and not just in 'English' lessons.

1.3 Our objectives in the teaching of English skills are:

- To enable children to speak clearly and audibly, to communicate effectively through speech and to take account of the perspective of those to whom they are speaking;
- To encourage children to listen with concentration, in order to identify the main points, and sometimes the detail, of what they have heard;
- To show children how to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- To enable children to become effective communicators, both verbal and non-verbal, through a variety of drama activities;
- To help children become confident, independent readers, developing their understanding of meaning conveyed at word, sentence and whole text level;
- To enable children to develop as enthusiastic and reflective readers, through contact with a wide range of different types of material, including challenging and substantial texts;
- To foster the enjoyment of writing for a wide range of purposes, and a recognition of its value;



- To encourage accurate and meaningful writing, be it narrative or non-fiction;
- To develop skills in planning, drafting, evaluating and editing their writing;
- To engender in children a love of literature and an appreciation of our English heritage;
- To enable and encourage pupils to apply their English skills across the whole curriculum.

Teaching and learning:

2.1 At St Anne's, we use a variety of teaching and learning approaches in our English lessons, as recommended in the 2014 National Curriculum in English and mathematics. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in relation to English. Our timetables ensure that pupils have a substantial daily lesson which focuses specifically on the development of English skills, for example, engaging in a whole-class reading or writing activity, a whole-class focused word or sentence analysis activity, a guided group or independent reading or writing activity, or a whole-class session to review progress and learning. We incorporate objectives from the Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling documents provided by our Grammar Hammer and vocabulary schemes which provides short daily lessons and weekly challenges which make sure that the children are prepared for the Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling test taken at the end of each key stage.

There is a high proportion of whole-class and group teaching, the independent activity gives an opportunity to talk and collaborate, and so embed and enhance pupils' learning. They will have experiences with a wide range of texts, and to support their work with a variety of resources, such as word banks, working walls, phonic resources, dictionaries and thesauruses.

2.2 At St Anne's, we encourage joined cursive handwriting to support spelling and speed. From the earliest starting point in EYFS, our pupils are provided with daily opportunities to write using teacher models which guide the children on how to shape and scribe each letter in a range of contexts and with a range of different equipment to encourage their fine motor skills. As they progress through their learning journey at St Anne's, the children are taught how to write using cursive joined handwriting which is modelled both in stand-alone lessons as well as embedded through the curriculum.

2.4 Children use ICT in English lessons where it enhances their learning, such as in drafting their work and in using multimedia resources to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning as well as to perform and record pieces of work such as podcasts and news-reports. Wherever possible, we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum and will often use incidental opportunities to teach and reinforce English skills in other subject areas. Topics are carefully selected in both key stages to help provide further opportunities to engage and motivate pupils to read and write, particularly focused to help improve boys' writing.



2.5 At St Anne's, our pupils have a wide range of abilities, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons, we do it through differentiated group work, while in others, we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use classroom assistants to support some children, and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

3 English curriculum planning

3.1 English is a core subject in the National Curriculum and at St Anne's we use the guidance from the 2014 National Curriculum for English and mathematics as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements. In addition to this, we have access to the Power of Reading scheme which provides a range of English planning and activities based on age appropriate texts from a range of genres. This scheme provides flexibility so that class teachers can choose when and how they teach a certain text or adapt the activities around a specific genre or theme.

3.2 We carry out curriculum planning in English, in three phases (long-term, medium term and short-term). The National Curriculum for English and Mathematics provides detailed long-term teaching objectives.

3.3 Our medium-term plans, which we also base on the New National Curriculum and, when appropriate The Power of Reading scheme, give details of the main teaching skills for each term. These plans define what we teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. The subject leader is responsible for overseeing and reviewing these plans.

3.4 Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning skills and expected outcomes 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 and doing. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, and the class teacher and subject leader often discuss them on an informal basis. Skills identified from the Grammar Hammer scheme are listed on weekly plans, identifying skills covered through grammar / spelling starters and the main teaching objectives.

3.5 Activities are planned to build on the children's prior learning. While we give children of all abilities the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding, we also ensure progression, so that there is an increasing challenge for the children as they move up through the school. This provides an opportunity for children to deepen their understanding in a different context.

4 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)



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4.1 In Foundation Stage, we teach English skills as an integral part of the EYFS curriculum. The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is followed to ensure continuity & progression from entering Nursery, moving onto Reception Class & then through to the English National Curriculum in KS1 & KS2.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum is divided into prime & specific areas of learning & development. 'Communication & Language' is one of 3 prime areas that are fundamental to, & support the development, in all other areas. 'Communication & Language' is made up of the following 3 aspects: listening & attention, understanding & speaking. 'Literacy' is one of 4 specific areas which include essential skills & knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas & provide important contexts for learning. 'Literacy' is made up of the following 2 aspects: reading & writing.

Children learn through play, speaking and listening activities, teacher modelling, group work and self-direction. The children will aim to achieve the skills identified in the 2014 English Curriculum following the EYFS Outcomes. Children have a daily phonics lesson as a crucial element in developing their early reading and writing skills.

4.2 We plan the teaching and development of English skills to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals, which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their vocabulary and communication skills. Pupils have the opportunity to explore words and texts, to enjoy them, to learn about them, and to use them in various situations.

5 Reading Policy

5.1 The teaching of reading and children's acquisition of reading skills is the bedrock of our English curriculum at St Anne's. Becoming an effective and proficient reader is the gateway to learning for our children, and success in most other subjects of the curriculum is dependent upon learning to read well. Children begin to develop pre-reading skills involving, for example, the ability to visually focus, to concentrate for increasingly sustained periods, to distinguish between visual shapes and to notice similarities, and to begin to understand that pictures, symbols and print can convey meaning, from the very youngest age.

5.2 In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we aim to give children continuous experience of a wide range of print and text through all their learning experiences and in all the areas of learning in the EYFS curriculum. The environment is rich with appropriate text: labels, captions, simple instructions, names, alphabet prompts and children's own mark-making. Adults continuously model reading in the learning environment, embedding in pupils' understanding the idea that print conveys meaning and is invaluable to us in our lives.



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Our pupils are taught from the youngest age to value and care for books, to understand their structure, to handle them appropriately and to enjoy sharing them with each other.

5.3 We believe that an understanding and knowledge of phonics, the relationship between graphemes (letters or groups of letters) and phonemes (the 44 constituent sounds of spoken English) is essential to support children's reading skills. Children's ability to phonetically 'decode' words into oral sounds is continuously assessed throughout the EYFS and Key Stage 1, in order that the next steps in our pupil's knowledge of phonics can be effectively planned and taught. All children in these key stages have a daily phonics session to support their development of both reading and writing skills, following national guidance on teaching a programme of progressive, structured phonics through the Letters and Sounds documentation. In order to reinforce phonics teaching and develop reading skills, we teach children to use a wide range of strategies so that our pupils can decode unfamiliar words and phrases in their reading: whole word recognition, picture clues, contextual clues based on the meaning of the text and grammatical correctness. We also subscribe to Phonics Bug which aids the teaching of phonics across the school. (Please see our separate phonics policy for further information.)

5.4 At St Anne's, we follow the Bug Club reading scheme, as well as separate guided reading materials available in each key stage library. Many of our books, fiction and non-fiction are colour-coded to indicate their level of difficulty across the school. We build on this scheme through English sessions and shared and guided sessions in order to provide a robust curriculum build around a love of reading for our pupils.

Alongside ensuring that children read books of progressive difficulty, we do not deny children access to books which interest them, but which may be too difficult for them to read independently. We encourage our pupils to seek to support from other children or adults when accessing such books.

5.5 Our pupils will become avid readers through developing a love of books and through the promotion of exciting and imaginative texts read by teachers or other adults. Also, we encourage parents and carers have a key role to play in helping to promote a love of books and reading at home. We regard sharing books and support for reading to be one of the most important aspects of 'help with homework' which parents can provide.

5.6 Teachers ensure that there is a range of stimulating and attractive books and other reading material in classrooms and plan lessons around texts that will engage and inspire our children to read for pleasure. We display and promote books throughout our school, including our well stocked library and home readers area to which all children have frequent and regular access, both for free choice of reading material and to do book-based research in order to support their learning across the curriculum. Each classroom has its own reading area which the children can access, recommend & choose texts and take ownership of, especially



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in Key Stage 2. We also value and promote computer-based reading resources and the internet to support children's reading.

5.7 Reading permeates the curriculum and children have continuous opportunities to develop their reading skills, whatever the area of learning. However, throughout the school, classes have daily sessions of group and guided reading, during which they engage collaboratively in purposeful reading activities or exercises or are taught directly by the teacher or a teaching assistant. During guided reading sessions, the teacher can read texts at an appropriate level with a group of children, or sometimes with the whole class, teaching next step reading skills, including higher level skills such as using inference and deduction to understand meaning. Guided reading sessions are teachers' key opportunity to assess each pupil's reading ability and to plan which skills they need to develop next.

5.8 Here at St Anne's, we believe that well-planned shared and guided reading activities are more effective in developing each pupil's reading skills than simply ensuring that every child reads aloud from a 'reading book' every day. We do, however, give all children the opportunity to read aloud regularly, to an adult, and encourage parents and carers to support this activity at home.

5.9 Through the Power of Reading scheme, each class reads a termly class text on a regular basis or provides a 15-minute slot for children to read their own books which engage and inspire them. We have found that the more engaged the children are with a text, the more creative their writing becomes which is an important link to continue promoting. In Key Stage One, staff link texts to the themes taught throughout the year.

6 Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas:

6.1 The English skills which our pupils develop are linked to, and applied in, every area of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work at St Anne's.

6.2 Mathematics, Science and Design Technology

The teaching of English skills contributes significantly to a child's mathematical understanding, in a variety of ways. Children in the EYFS develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these matters with adults and other children. Children in Key Stage 1 meet stories and rhymes which involve 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 plenary sessions, and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language.



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Our pupils will be expected to engage in research as part of their learning in science and design technology, to write a range of types of report on their work and to explain and communicate verbally about their learning, to the teacher and each other.

6.3 History, Geography and Religious Education (RE)

Whilst the humanities subjects involve significant subject specific knowledge, skills and conceptual understanding, the medium for researching, learning about and communicating is, of course, the English language. Pupils will constantly call upon and develop their English skills in finding information, ordering and making sense of what they have learned and communicating it in writing and orally.

6.4 Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship

The teaching of English skills contributes to the teaching of PSHE and citizenship by encouraging children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. Older children also research, debate and write about topical social problems and events. They discuss lifestyle choices, and meet and talk with visitors who work within our school community.

6.5 Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC)

The teaching of English skills enables our children to offer critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their life, both within and outside school. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts bring them into contact with their own literary heritage and with texts from a diverse range of cultures. The organisation of our lessons and break times allows children to work and play together, giving them the chance to use their speaking and listening skills in developing social collaboration and understanding.

7 English and ICT:

7.1 The selective use of computer software, with clear learning objectives, will promote, enhance and support the teaching of English at word, sentence and text levels. It also offers ways of developing learning which are not always possible with conventional methods, for example, through individualised interactive learning. Software is used to support independent reading (text to speech) and writing (predictive word processors, word banks and spell checkers). A range of software is used to develop specific grammatical and spelling skills.

7.2 Pupils have many opportunities to use word processing facilities to record and edit their writing, and have regular access to the netbooks and Ipads in the classroom.

7.3 ICT is used at whole-class, group and independent levels. Screen projection of text, and the use of visualisers enables published texts and pupils' own writing to be read, shared and



discussed. Through these means, classes engage in writing and reading, guided or modelled effectively by the teacher. A wide variety of text types and resources are available through the internet and other electronic resources to support specific learning, focused on particular textual analysis.

8. Assessment:

- 8.1. Staff assess pupils learning during and as part of every session, they adapt their practice accordingly. They also provide both written and verbal feedback during the lesson and as part of our D.I.R.T time.
- 8.2. Every piece of English work is marked in pink and green for the children to reflect on. Any work highlighted in pink is a celebration of what the child has included in that piece; if it is in green highlighter then a child is to go back and reflect on this during D.I.R.T time. (See our separate marking policy)
- 8.3. Each class teacher marks every fourth piece of English work with a star and a way forward comment. (For further information, please see our marking policy.)
- 8.4. Formal assessments of reading comprehension ability are carried out, tracked and monitored at least termly using our Target Tracker data system.
- 8.5. Writing levels are assessed using Target Tracker and, where appropriate, the Interim Framework to create a secure fit. These are tracked termly through writing pieces from across the curriculum.
- 8.6. Staff regularly attend moderating sessions both within our staff but also as part of our Catholic cluster
- 8.7. End of Key Stage Assessments are analysed by the Co-ordinator and Head teacher which feed into the school SEF, development plan and performance management.

9. English and Inclusion:

9.1 All children, whatever their ability and individual needs, have a basic entitlement to be taught essential English skills, and to have the opportunity to develop those skills to the best of their ability. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our teaching of English skills, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this.

9.2 When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the pupil may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively, including 1:1 tuition. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's



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attainment and progress against expected levels. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

9.3 Intervention will be based on a pupil's Outcome Support Plan (OSP), where appropriate, for children with special educational needs. Depending on the pupil's needs, the OSP or provision map may include specific targets relating to English.

9.4 Teaching assistants provide support for English by using:

- Individualised guided writing and reading;
- Differentiated texts that children can more easily read and understand;
- Visual and written materials in different formats;
- ICT and other technological aids;
- Alternative communication such as signs and symbols;
- Translation and scribes.
- Intervention - helping to address the area of need

10. Professional development:

10.1 The English Co-ordinator attends any relevant training and reports back to all staff during PDMs.

10.2 Our Catholic cluster has an English moderation group which meets at regular points through the academic year.

10.3 Staff are expected to attend relevant courses during the school year

10.4 Moderation takes place in house, within the cluster and when appropriate with support from outside agencies such as the LA.