

ST. HELEN'S CATHOLIC INFANT SCHOOL



English Policy

Written by	Date	Ratified by	Date
L.O'Sullivan	2020	Governors	2020

To be reviewed	Annually	Every 3 Years
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Reviewed on	Reviewed by	Next review date
June 2023	L Simmons	June 2026

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as a family.*

Subject Intent

At St. Helen's Catholic Infant School, our intent for English is to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, views and feelings. This equips children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and **lifelong** readers of stories, poetry and drama and non-fiction texts.

- To ensure a **broad and balanced curriculum** we use key texts from 'The Power of Reading' as starting point in each year group and teachers map other topics around it to ensure full coverage of the English Curriculum.
- We celebrate **diversity** by ensuring our chosen texts from 'The Power of Reading' represent different ethnicities, genders and cultures throughout the academic year. For example, in Reception children will study traditional tales from other cultures when reading 'The Old Woman and the Red Pumpkin' and will also celebrate different ethnicities and cultures in 'Handa's Surprise'. In Year 1 children will study 'Grace and Family' and 'Lila and the Secret of Rain' which celebrate different ethnicities and cultures. In Year 2, children discuss gender roles in the 'Princess and the White Bear King' and Black History when studying Martin Luther King. All year groups also make links between the English Curriculum and events in our cultural calendar, such as Black History Month where children study important figures such as Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King.
- **To enrich the curriculum**, we provide extra curricular activities such as the termly school newspaper which encourage children to enquire about the world they live in and apply their taught skills independently.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study, which all maintained schools in England must teach.

This policy acknowledges the requirements for promoting the learning and development of children set out in the Early Years EYFS (EYFS) statutory framework.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010, and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's Governance Handbook.

Roles and Responsibilities

The coordination and planning of the English curriculum are the responsibility of the Reading and Writing Leaders, who also:

- Support colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in English and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
- Give the Head Teacher an annual summary report in which they evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in English and indicates areas for further improvement;

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- Use specially allocated time to review evidence of the children's work, scrutinise planning and to observe English lessons across the school;

All members of staff are responsible for promoting the following key areas:

Speaking and Listening

We believe that Speaking and Listening forms an integral foundation for learning in English. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. We aim for children to be able to speak clearly and fluently and to be able to listen attentively with understanding.

We achieve this by:

- By valuing the conversations and opinions of the children and encourage confidence in themselves as speakers and listeners. We encourage a respect for the views of others.
- Being aware that as adults, we model speaking and listening in our day-to-day interactions with children and with other adults in our school. We strongly encourage all adults to consistently model speaking in **Standard English**, and have the confidence to encourage children to speak in **Standard English** as well.
- Helping children to articulate their ideas and provide purposes and audiences for talk within a range of formal and informal situations and in individual, partner, group and class contexts. We also provide opportunities for performances to a larger audience where children's efforts are acknowledged by staff, parents, carers, visitors and peers..
- By providing a range of experiences where children can work collaboratively and participate in opportunities to reflect on talk and explore real and imagined situations such as role play, hot-seating, drama and discussions.
- By developing the children's ability to listen with attention and understanding in all areas of the curriculum and, where necessary, asking and responding to questions appropriately.

Writing

At St. Helen's Catholic Infant School, we strive to create an environment that encourages a love and a celebration of writing. In order to encourage children to become confident writers, we encourage a variety of experiences that promote writing. We use the Power of Reading as a start point to allow children to become independent and resilient learners. Children have the opportunity to write every day across all subjects, including the use of ICT to support writing skills. All staff also have high expectations and standards of writing.

In EYFS, all classrooms and outside areas are language rich environments with a variety of opportunities for children to write and mark make independently. To ensure children become fluent writers, the children have regular opportunities to work with an adult to support their first steps in more formal writing opportunities. In EYFS children are expected to write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others.

In Key Stage 1, all classrooms build on the language rich environments in EYFS by providing opportunities for children to write in a variety of subjects. When writing, children are encourage to use their developing speaking skills to rehearse sentences before recording. Children are encouraged to read work aloud to talk partners to ensure their writing makes sense, and enhance their writing if appropriate. As children progress through the key stage, more opportunities for independent writing are encouraged as children's stamina for writing develops.

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The handwriting policy includes more information in relation to expectations on how children's work is presented.

Children should be applying taught skills in English lessons to other curriculum areas and staff should be encouraging this at all times. Writing should be of a high standard in all subjects.

Reading/Phonics

It is the responsibility of the Class Teacher to ensure that all children are read with by a member of staff at least once a week. All children are given a Guided Reading book once a week from their Book Band. Children are given a Guided Reading Focus with comprehension questions associated with the book. Staff also encourage a love of reading by regularly sharing books with the children. All classrooms should have an inviting and prominent reading area where children can go and read independently.

It is also the responsibility of the Class Teacher to carry out daily phonics lessons using the Activelearn Phonics Bug Scheme. It is a responsibility of the English Lead to ensure that taught Phonics sounds are being applied and practised both in reading and writing skills.

The English Leader is responsible for ensuring that Guided Reading sessions across the school are supporting the children's reading ability and helping their comprehension skills. It is the responsibility of the English Leader to ensure that Phonics is taught daily in EYFS and Year 1.

Organisation and Planning

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

We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (yearly overview, topic overviews and short-term plans) using the Power of Reading Scheme. The National Curriculum English programmes of study and EYFS Statutory Framework detail what we teach in the long-term. Our yearly teaching programme identifies the key objectives in English that we teach to each year.

Our topic overviews, which we also base on the National Curriculum and EYFS Statutory Framework give details of the main teaching objectives for each term. These plans define what we teach, and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. The English Leader is responsible for reviewing these plans.

Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English following the Power of Reading scheme and supplementing it with appropriate grammar lessons and opportunities to practise writing skills. This lists the Learning Objective (LO) and Success Criteria (SC) for each lesson, and gives details of how the lessons are to be taught including key questions and possible opportunities for mini plenaries. Class Teachers annotate and adapt planning for next lesson as necessary. It also includes details of what each group of children will be learning. The class teacher keeps these individual plans in a central location, and the class teachers and subject leaders often discuss them on an informal basis.

We plan the activities in English so that they 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 plan progression into the scheme of work, so that there is an increasing challenge for the children as they move up through the school.

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Reading

Alongside choosing a Guided book, children also choose three Supplementary Books from their Book Band and one Library Book from a selection of fiction and non-fiction books in their classroom. It is our expectation that parents or guardians read with their child regularly. Regular correspondence between parents or guardians and teachers is expected.

EYFS

In EYFS children are read with 1:1 with the class teacher or LSA at least once a week. Staff are to keep a record in a Guided Reading folder.

Key Stage One

In Year 1 and Year 2, children are grouped by reading ability. Children read the same Guided Reading book in their group. This allows the children to discuss the book they have read. Children are heard read within that group by their class teacher. Staff are to keep a record in a Guided Reading folder.

Phonics

Phonics is taught following Activelearn Bug Club, working towards all children being able to pass the Year 1 Phonics Screening.

EYFS

In EYFS children are taught Phonics in a daily 20 minute session. Teaching should match the ability of the child. It is expected that the majority of children are taught Phase 2, Phase 3 and Phase 4 while in EYFS. Children are taught phonemes and graphemes, diagraphs and trigraphs. Children are taught to sound out and blend sounds. Children are taught to use sound buttons. Children are taught to read both real and alien words. Children are also taught to read High Frequency Words, and encouraged to learn these by sight.

Year 1

In Year 1 children are taught Phonics in a daily 20 minute session. Teaching should match the ability of the child. It is expected that the majority of children are taught Phase 5 while in Year 1. It is our expectation that children should be able to pass the Year 1 Phonics Screening.

Year 2

It is expected that Year 2 children are taught Phase 6 and their Phonics lessons change to Spelling lessons where children are taught common spelling rules, as detailed in the National Curriculum. If a child has not passed the Year 1 Phonics Screening, it is expected that they continue to be taught Phonics to support them passing the Phonics Screening at the end of Year 2.

Spelling

EYFS and Year 1

In EYFS children are taught to spell by applying their Phonics. It is modelled daily by all staff and expected that children should learn to sound out words and write them phonetically. They are taught to use sound mats to find and apply sounds in their spelling. Children are encouraged to use the sounds they hear and know, which means that their spelling may not always be accurate. Children are taught to write some High Frequency Words which are not phonetically plausible. Year 1 are also taught the spelling rules taken from the National Curriculum and taught to spell Year 1 Common Exception Words.

Year 2

Year 2 apply all of the above when spelling and also are taught to spell Year 2 Common Exception Words. Year 2 teach Spelling rules taken from the National Curriculum in regular SPAG lessons.

Resources

Teachers are responsible for ensuring that children have the appropriate scaffolds and tools to assist children in becoming independent learners. These will be stored in clearly labelled trays

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that the children can access.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Finger spacers
- Phonic sound mats- EYFS will have Phase 2 and 3 sound mats, Year 1 will have Phase 3 and 5 sound mats
- Word mats linked to topics being covered
- Common Exception Words (Year 1 and 2)
- High Frequency Words (All year groups)
- Dictionaries/ Thesauruses (Year 2)
- Library book boxes with fiction and non-fiction books
- Supplementary books at appropriate levels
- High quality texts to support English teaching

Inclusion

We endeavour, where possible, to ensure that quality first teaching allows children to have their needs met. Teachers set high expectations for all children. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able children
- Children with low prior attainment
- Children from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Children with SEND
- Children with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that children with SEN and/or disabilities can study every area of the curriculum, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every child achieving. Teachers will also take account of the needs of children whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help children to develop their English, and to support children to take part in all subjects.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Intervention through Additional Support may lead to creation of individual targets which relate to English. Discussion between class teachers and SENCO through the use of one plans is used to create these targets.

Where appropriate, Learning Support Assistants can be used to assist children who may need further support. Learning Support Assistants are given clear guidance by class teachers to provide help.

Monitoring Arrangements

Assessment for Writing

Teachers assess children's work in English in three phases.

- Short-term assessments- that teachers make as part of every lesson help them to adjust their daily plans. They match these short-term assessments closely to the learning objectives. All children are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work through the use of success criteria. These short term assessments are focussed so that children are aware of their immediate next steps to improve their writing. The feedback can be written or verbal. If feedback is written, it must be concise, relevant

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and in line with the Marking Policy.

- Half termly assessments- Teachers use assessments each half term to measure progress against the key objectives of writing, and to help them plan for the next unit of work. All class teachers have a copy of appropriate assessment criteria taken from their programmes of study to assist with this. EYFS use EYFS statutory framework, Year 1 use a curriculum assessment criteria and Year 2 use the end of KS1 Framework to assess progress. Children's independent work should form the basis of half termly assessments.
- Long term assessments- Teachers make long-term assessments based on end of year tests or teacher assessments towards the end of the school year, and they use these to assess progress against school and national targets. With the help of these long-term assessments, they are able to set targets for the next school year, and to summarise the progress of each child before discussing it with the child's parents or carers. The next teacher then uses these long-term assessments as the planning basis for the new school year. Children in EYFS are assessed against the Early Learning Goals in Communication & Language and Literacy from EYFS statutory framework at the end of the year. Children in Year 2 sit national curriculum tests.

Teachers meet regularly (at least once a half term) to review individual examples of work against the national exemplification material in Year 2, curriculum assessment criteria in Year 1 and assessed against the Early Learning Goals in Communication & Language and Literacy from EYFS statutory framework and national exemplification material in EYFS. Teachers complete regular internal and external moderation.

Reading

It is the responsibility of the class teacher to assess children's reading at least once every half term. Assessment can be carried out in a number of ways, teacher judgement, comprehension papers and running records. A child's Book Band should match their Phonics ability. Year 2 children complete a national curriculum comprehension test.

Phonics

It is the responsibility of the class teacher to assess children's Phonics at least once every half term until they have passed the Phonics Screening Check. All Year 1 Children take the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check each year.

Links with Other Policies

The English Policy has links with the marking policy, handwriting policy, and any other policy where reading, speaking and listening and writing is a key skill.

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