



English Policy

'Learning and growing together: inspired by the love of Jesus'

Our Mission Statement lies at the heart of all that we do and helps us to define our sense of direction and purpose.

Our curriculum is designed around what makes a Catholic school distinctive and reflects the key areas identified by The Bishop's Conference of England and Wales 2014. These include:

- The Search for Excellence
- The Uniqueness of the Individual
- The Education of the Whole Person
- The Education of All
- Moral Principles

Intent – How is the school's curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment?(Ofsted Handbook 2019)

The curriculum for English has been set in light of the requirements of the National Curriculum:

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others, and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.

At St Aidan's Catholic Primary School, we believe that English is a **fundamental** life skill, enabling children to develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing for a wide range of purposes. The knowledge and skills involved in speaking and listening, reading and writing are **vital** to success within all areas of education.

We believe that sound English skills are a **necessary** preparation to allow our pupils to effectively engage in further education and training, employment and ultimately **achieve economic wellbeing**. English also fosters the ability to use language purposefully and creatively, to encourage powers of imagination and to promote spiritual, moral and cultural understanding.

The curriculum has been **planned** as a clear framework that guides teachers and children through weekly objectives that have been **sequenced** to ensure knowledge, skills and understanding are retained and remembered.

The school currently delivers the English curriculum through Read to Write and Steps to Read units of work from Literacy Counts.

Early Years

The children in Nursery and Reception work to the guidance set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

At St Aidan's we know that the acquisition of language skills at an early age is **critical** to success at school and look to **overcome** any barriers that children may face in acquiring these skills. We are aware that as a **prime area**, communication and language development can inhibit other areas of learning if not addressed directly and quickly.

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations (Statutory Framework)

At St Aidan's we also appreciate that **early development** of phonics leads quickly to **confident** readers and this remains a priority for our children in their early years here at school.

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest (Statutory Framework)

Year 1 – Year 6

We look to build on the good start that children get here at school and look to the National Curriculum Guidance for English.

Spoken language

The national curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing.

We aim that children will:

- Think critically and logically.
- Order their thoughts and express them clearly.
- Develop skills of oracy giving the children **confidence** and understanding, equipping them for work and leisure.
- Express and justify their feelings and opinions with increasing **clarity** and **effectiveness** and respect the opinions of others.
- **Communicate** with ease in many varied circumstances for different audiences and purposes.
- Have suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their responses and have this vocabulary taught to them in an **ordered** and proactive way – Early Talk Boost, WellComm, Talkabout.

Reading

The programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of 2 dimensions:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading)

It is essential that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

We aim that children will:

- Read with **confidence**, fluency and understanding.
- Be able to use a full range of reading strategies, e.g. phonics, word recognition, graphic knowledge, picture or context clues.
- Have an interest in books and read for **enjoyment**, which provides them with a wealth of texts and story patterns for their own writing.
- Develop the skill of sustained reading.
- Develop **imagination** and critical awareness through reading experiences of the best examples of traditional and modern literature.
- Have knowledge of a range of authors, poets and playwrights.
- Have experience of group, shared and individual reading. Become **life-long** readers.

Writing

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading:

- *transcription (spelling and handwriting)*
- *composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing)*

It is essential that teaching develops pupils' competence in these 2 dimensions. In addition, pupils should be taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing have been incorporated into the programmes of study for composition.

We aim that children will:

- Have an interest in words, their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms.
- Understand a range of genres – be able to write in a variety of styles and structures appropriate to the audience and purpose.
- Develop the powers of **imagination**, inventiveness and critical awareness.
- Have suitable technical vocabulary to organise their responses.
- Produce **independent** pieces of writing using correct punctuation and sentence construction.
- Write extended pieces of text, in a range of contexts
- Have knowledge of a range of authors, poets and playwrights.
- Develop fluid and well-formed handwriting (see Handwriting Policy).

Spelling, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and glossary

Pupils should be taught to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English. They should be taught to use the elements of spelling, grammar, punctuation and 'language about language' listed.

Phonics and Spelling are developed through:

- Sound-symbol relationships through the **planned** and **sequenced** daily phonics lessons.
- The teaching of regular **spelling patterns** and non-standard forms.
- The structure of words; compound/complex words, prefixes, suffixes, roots and origins.
- Vocabulary associated with topics and specific curricular areas as well as **correct** use of language to describe language features.
- A variety of strategies to enable independence in spelling, such as word walls, dictionaries and iPad apps.
- Learning of spelling lists according to Statutory Requirements.
- The marking of work and feedback to pupils.

Implementation - Teachers have good knowledge of the subject(s) and courses they teach. Leaders provide effective support for those teaching outside their main areas of expertise; Teachers present subject matter clearly, promoting appropriate discussion about the subject matter being taught. They check pupils' understanding systematically, identify misconceptions accurately and provide clear, direct feedback. In so doing, they respond and adapt their teaching as necessary without unnecessarily elaborate or individualised approaches.(Ofsted handbook 2019)

At St Aidan's, we know that effective teaching of this subject requires **expertise** and **knowledge** on the part of the teachers. We commit to engaging with training where available for all staff and for the subject leader to remain a point of help and advice. This is especially the case with the teaching and learning of phonics.

We look to be persistent in asking children to **remember** what they have learned and check on this understanding at the end of each term.

Feedback in the English book will be positive and formative in developing key skills, knowledge and understanding.

At St Aidan's, we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our English lessons in order to meet the needs of all our pupils. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding. In Key Stage 1 and 2 we do this through a **daily** English lesson in which children are taught the features and structures of writing. In **addition** to the daily English lesson, our children also experience a daily reading lesson using steps to read units of work and a discrete guided reading carousel lesson, in which children engage in a variety of guided and independent activities including: grammar, spelling and punctuation. In all classes, children 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.

Phonics

EYFS, Key Stage One and lower Key Stage 2 follow the validated phonic scheme 'Bug Club' for phonics. This involves teaching a daily four-part lesson with the children learning their phonics in 'phases' outside of the English lesson. The scheme adopts the **synthetic** approach to teaching phonics.

Pupils in the EYFS work in a reading rich environment with a variety of print on display. High quality books ensure that children engage with each area of learning. These books reflect a variety of cultures and customs and reflect our diverse society. The love of books and reading is also fostered through **teachers regularly reading** to the children and invigorating their interests through songs, rhymes and puppet play.

Spelling

Spelling is supported through Purple Mash. Spelling is taught through all areas of the curriculum, as well as being a discrete daily 15 minute lesson. We ensure there is an **independent** spelling activity for children to consolidate the taught spelling patterns and rules throughout the weekly carousel.

Impact - Pupils develop detailed knowledge and skills across the curriculum and, as a result, achieve well.

Assessment and recording

The impact and measure of this, is to ensure that children at St. Aidan's Catholic Primary are equipped with English skills and knowledge that will enable them to be **ready** for the curriculum at Key Stage 3 and for life as an **adult** in the wider world.

We measure the impact of our curriculum through the following methods:

Formative

Formative assessment, carried out by the class teacher, is an integral part of their role and is used on a regular basis to inform future planning. It involves identifying children's **progress** against teaching objectives, determining what a child has already achieved and moving them on to the next stage of learning.

It includes:

- Focused marking.
- **Interviewing** the pupils about their learning (pupil's voice).
- Short assessment tasks.
- Keeping notes on those achieving below or above expected outcomes.
- Individual reading records.

Summative

This provides end of year information on pupils' progress.

- Teacher Assessment in English are undertaken in Year 2.
- Assessing children's understanding at the end of each term using **standardised** tests.
- In Year 6 SATs tests are set in accordance with legal requirements at the end of KS2.
- At the end of Foundation Stage children are assessed in line with EYFS criteria under statutory regulations.
- Writing moderation is undertaken to quality assure teacher judgements.

We are working alongside many other schools within the local authority. Together, we are able to form termly judgements on our pupils' progress and identify targets based on these assessments.

Resources

There is a wide range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school.

- Each classroom has a store of books for a **class library** or reading corner.
- All classrooms have dictionaries and thesauruses.
- Each classroom displays subject specific **vocabulary** which pupils are encouraged to use regularly.
- Children have access to **library loans** containing high quality reading material, which is linked to their current curriculum topic.
- Book banded guided reading schemes are stored in a central classroom.

Monitoring and review

Our English leaders monitor this subject through **scrutiny of books** or examples of work for each year group, observing lessons/**learning walks** and through **pupil voice** feedback. This monitoring will reflect the '**deep dive**' methodology applied to other subjects by senior leaders. It is also the responsibility of our English leaders to support colleagues in teaching where and when applicable.