

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

English Subject Policy



Introduction

Jesus Christ said 'Let the children come to me, do not hinder them' (Matthew 19:14). As a Catholic school it is our mission to educate pupils in such a way that no matter what their abilities or background they may reach their full potential as human beings. We thus seek to overcome any hindrance that might prevent any pupil accessing the fullness of the curriculum, opportunities and activities we offer.

Intent

Through the teaching of English the children will:

- Develop communication skills.
- Develop the necessary skills to use the English language confidently, appropriately, and accurately to the best of their ability.
- Be provided with interactive opportunities for pupils to practise using language in relevant, 'real life' contexts.
- Develop as enthusiastic and reflective readers, through contact with challenging and substantial texts.
- Become confident, independent writers, through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text level knowledge.
- Foster the enjoyment of writing, where children feel confident to experiment with their ideas.
- Learn to write accurately and imaginatively using different genres.
- Be able to speak clearly, audibly and with confidence.

Structure

The curriculum has been designed based on the 2014 National Curriculum. From the Foundation Stage onwards every child within school takes part in daily English lessons which develop the key skills of reading and the technical aspects of writing. In Key Stage One and the Foundation stage, this is based around the Read Write Inc programme which is the teaching of reading and writing through phonics. A love of reading is fostered by the sharing of a wide range of stories, rhymes and non-fiction texts and children are encouraged to use and apply new vocabulary learnt. As children in year 2 reach a satisfactory standard in phonics, they then progress towards a literacy based pedagogy, with English writing units based upon a wide range of different high quality texts, including poetry.

In Key Stage 2 children take part in daily English lessons. Our English curriculum develops children's comprehension, vocabulary, writing, grammar, critical-thinking and discussion skills. The children write for different purposes: to imagine and explore feelings and ideas, to inform and explain, to persuade and to review and comment. Pupils are provided with opportunities to communicate independent views and opinions, respond imaginatively and express feelings through spoken and written language. They also see how writing is concerned with process as well as product and are taught to plan, draft, revise, proof-read and present their own writing and that of others. The link between reading and writing is explicit and planning follows the reading to writing process, giving pupils plenty of opportunities to become immersed in rich, quality texts.

Expectations

Reading

- All classes have daily story time to allow children to foster a love of reading and encourage all children to develop a life-long love of books.
- Pupils read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction, including media and ICT texts from a variety of cultures and traditions.
- In the Foundation Stage and through Key Stage One, children are taught to read through the Read Write Inc Programme and phonics is taught daily. Children who reach key stage two who have not passed the phonic screening continue to participate in regular phonics interventions.
- In year two and through Key Stage Two, planning follows the reading through to writing process allowing plenty of opportunities to encounter rich, high quality, challenging texts.
- Additionally, reading is taught discreetly in four thirty-minute sessions per week. (three in year 6) Within these lessons extracts from both fiction and non-fiction are used. An extract is shared with the class as a whole and opportunities are provided for teachers to model reading aloud. Teachers should also use strategies to enable

pupils to read accurately for meaning and pleasure including strategies such as, shared, guided, paired and echo reading. At the start of each reading lesson there is also a focus on the vocabulary contained within each extract. In each session there is a focus on a specific reading content domain. Teachers ensure that coverage of all content domains is achieved over the academic year. Teachers model answering a range of different question styles and children are provided with independent comprehension tasks.

- Guided reading planning is recorded on the weekly planning record.
- Reading for information and other purposes should be reinforced in all wider curriculum subjects.

Reading at Home

- All children are expected to read at home and have their reading diary signed by an adult five times per week. As children become more competent readers, they will be expected to read for longer periods of time independently, with parents and carers still listening to and discussing their reading, but less often.
- Teachers check the children's reading records each week and monitor how frequently a child has read at home.
- Teachers keep accurate records of progress made through the reading scheme.

Writing

- There is a requirement for KS2 teachers to follow set long-term plans to ensure full coverage of the curriculum.
- There is a requirement to produce medium term plans setting out the learning intentions for the unit.
- All planning including flip charts and resources should be saved on the SDrive in the year group folder.
- Marking of all English work should comply with the school's marking policy and provide informative feedback to progress learning.
- After each independent extended piece of writing TAF sheets should be updated as to evidence found and used to inform future planning.

Handwriting

- All classes should include regular handwriting sessions on their timetable.
- Teachers model the cursive style when writing in class.
- The Nelson handwriting scheme should be used to enable children to develop fluent, cursive, clear and legible joined up writing.
- Weekly handwriting homework (letter joins taught that week) to be sent home.
- Class teachers are to award pen licenses when a pupil's writing is consistently cursive.
- All children will receive a pen to write with in year 5 and 6.

Progression in handwriting.

EYFS

- Children are taught correct letter formation in a cursive style using the correct sequence of movements using the Read, Write, Inc rhymes.
- Children are free to select a writing implement of their choice in child initiated learning.
- Correct sitting and pencil grip is taught.
- They are encouraged to write in a straight line from left to right.

Years 1 and 2

- Pupils are taught to form lower case letters of correct size to one another.
- They develop the fluency of their joined handwriting at word and sentence level.
- Children are taught to write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters.
- Children are taught to practise writing on lines with ascenders and descenders correctly placed.
- They are taught how to underline and label neatly with a ruler.
- They are expected to use a ruler to draw lines, including underlining, diagrams, labelling and crossing out.

Year 3 and 4

- Pupils are taught to use joined handwriting for all writing except where other special forms are required.
- Increase the legibility consistency and quality of their handwriting, for example by ensuring that down strokes of the letters are parallel and equidistant.

Year 5 and 6

- Teaching of handwriting continues to develop an efficient writing speed and aids spelling.
- Children learn to select the most appropriate presentation style for different writing genres.

Presentation

In all English books it is expected that a date and LI is clearly written and underlined with a ruler. Children who are given a pen should draw one neat line, using a ruler, through any incorrect words/ideas.

Grammar

- Grammar sessions in year one are taught through RWInc.
- Years 2-6 teach grammar skills within their English writing units.
- The grammar progression document should be used by class teachers to plan.

- In addition, grammar skills are taught discreetly during English lesson starters. These should be planned in accordance with PiXL assessment data to target specific knowledge gaps.
- Correct grammatical terms are used throughout year groups so that there is consistency between key phases.
- National assessments are carried out at the end of year 2 and year 6 to determine what stage the children are working at in regards to National Standard.
- PiXL assessments will be used to assess grammar in years 3, 4 5 and 6.

Spelling

To be able to spell correctly is an essential life skill. When spelling become automatic, pupils are able to concentrate on the content of their writing and the making of meaning. Whilst we note that spelling is not the most important aspect of writing, confidence in spelling can have a profound effect on the writer's self-image. We aim to use explicit, interactive teaching which draws children's attention to the origins, structure and meaning of words and their parts, the shape and sound of words, the letter patterns within them and the various ways they can learn these patterns.

From Year two and into KS2 the children move towards using their phonic knowledge to help them to understand spelling rules and patterns. Class teachers teach children to use their growing understanding of the morphology and etymology of words to support their spelling. Helping the children to understand how to use and apply known spelling patterns (and to develop strategies to tackle tricky words) is the key to helping them to become successful spellers. Spelling skills are taught each week and are also embedded in English lessons so as strategies and rules can be taught in the context of writing.

- All year groups follow the RWI Spelling scheme. A scheme underpinned by phonics which focuses on a spelling rule per week.
- RWI online software can be used by teachers to deliver the weekly spelling rule.
- Practice activities to be planned by the class teacher to enable children to regularly practice their spellings within the school day to enable them to become confident and proficient spellers.
- New spellings shall be sent home and tested weekly.
- Spellings to learn/spelling test book to be used to set and assess spellings. Book to be sent home to allow parents to see the children's spelling score each week.
- Spelling errors are to be identified in the children's books across the curriculum. For all pieces of work that contain a written element (Y1-6), 3 spellings should be identified to be corrected by the pupil. The spelling mistake will be indicated to the pupil through the use of the 'sp' notation (and potentially orange highlight as necessary)
- Spelling corrections should be copied into each child's personal spelling dictionary during response time.

- National assessments are carried out at the end of year 2 and year 6 to determine what stage the children are working at in regards to National Standard.
- PiXL assessments will be used to assess spelling in years 3, 4 5 and 6.

Differentiation and Adaptation

Pupils with special needs in English are identified as early as possible to ensure extra support can be given. This may be done through interventions, or small group work. Some children may need additional support in the classroom from both teachers/learning assistants or specially designed scaffolds. The class teacher, SENCO and the English Coordinator liaise to ensure that individual needs of pupils are met and that appropriate targets are set and regularly reviewed. Where appropriate, these targets may be set using BSquared. Teachers differentiate questions and activities to allow all children access to learning.

Children have access to Clicker 8 and may use the word prediction feature, voice notes, picture supports, word banks or connect and sentence sets to support their writing.

Children in key stage two who are still learning to read have access to a range of books, which are at an appropriate interest age, but are at an accessible reading age. These help lower attaining and SEND children to continue to grow in confidence as readers with a text that appears appropriate for their age group.

Handwriting expectations apply to the vast majority of children in our school. However, occasionally a decision will be made to personalise expectations for a child who has such specific needs that these expectations could be a barrier to their progress (e.g. a child with physical difficulties writing). Difficulties are addressed through appropriate interventions or specific equipment.

Meeting the Needs of All Learners

English as an Additional Language

The school is fully committed to raising the achievement of all EAL learners and children from ethnic minority backgrounds through:

- Setting appropriate language targets for EAL learners and planning for the needs of EAL learners.
- Modelling uses of language appropriate to context, genre and audience.
- Identifying the language function and its structure.
- Grouping EAL learners appropriately so that they benefit from a strong language peer group and have additional adult support.

- All classes will support their EAL children by using the Mantra Lingua Pen Pal as a teaching tool to develop spoken English.

More able pupils

More able pupils should be identified, and class teachers must ensure that these pupils with particular ability and flair for English are extended through the use of additional, more demanding, open ended tasks and planned mastery challenges within lessons.

Opportunities must be planned to enable children to demonstrate that they are working at the greater depth standard. In writing this may mean that they complete a variation of the task set for the rest of the class and may include tasks such as writing from a different perspective or for a different audience.

Rich and engaging high quality texts are used within English lessons and class story time to expose children to new vocabulary.

Assessment

This is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Learners should be actively involved, through an explicit understanding of their Learning Intention and Success Criteria.

- Marking should be formative and extended pieces of writing should be marked against the writing assessment criteria in years 1,3 ,4 and 5 and against the TAF statements in years 2 and 6.
- Writing is formally assessed each term using the writing assessment criteria/TAF statements to inform future planning.
- Writing moderations are to be planned throughout the year to allow teacher moderation and professional discussions.
- Children are formally assessed throughout the reception year to build the foundation stage profile and in Years 2 and 6 using End of Key Stage National Tests. Throughout the year Year 2 and Year 6 will use a range of assessments to measure progress each half term including previous SATs papers.
- Reading, spelling and grammar PiXL papers to be completed inline with PiXL assessment schedule. Assessment data to be inputted on data trackers so that teachers and SLT can monitor progress.
- QLAs to be completed for all assessment papers. QLAs to be used by class teachers to set half termly focus areas for reading, grammar and spelling. Areas of focus to be shared with the English Subject leader.

- QL's to be uploaded to the PIXL website termly to allow for termly comparisons to national PIXL data.
- All Children in Reception and Year 1, and those still working on the RWInc programme in year 2, will have regular phonic assessments throughout the year.
- Spelling tests to be completed weekly for each class.
- BSquared may be used to assess the progress of specific children.