



Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School

English Policy 2023 – 2024

Coordinator: Mrs C Taylor

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At Star of the Sea, our English curriculum is designed to enable our pupils to develop their communicative competence so they can use language effectively and appropriately in a wide range of contexts and situations. This is achieved through the practice of listening, speaking, reading, writing and linguistic knowledge. By nurturing these skills, we open up a world of infinite possibilities and creativity. It is our aim to enrich and empower our children's vocabulary so they are able to articulate themselves clearly and confidently.

'When I read great literature, great drama, speeches, or sermons, I feel that the human mind has not achieved anything greater than the ability to share feelings and thoughts through language.'

James Earl Jones

At Star of the Sea School, we have agreed Drivers for our curriculum, which impact all our subjects:

Spiritual – living out the Gospel Values

Togetherness – as a Rights Respecting School

Ambitious and Aspirational – to reach our full potential

Resilient – we never give up

Self-belief – striving to succeed with a Growth Mindset

Our English Intent is:

At Star of the Sea our aim is to inspire children to become confident and independent readers, writers and speakers with a love and understanding of words and the possibilities that they open up for us. This underpins learning in all curriculum subjects. Through a quality curriculum and stimulating lessons and texts, we will promote an engagement with texts to foster a lifelong love of books and a culture of reading widely and often. Children will have many, varied opportunities to read for pleasure and for information, to write for different audiences and to speak for different purposes. We intend that children will be confident in transferring these skills across every aspect of life and will become excellent communicators. We want children's experience of the English curriculum to be an exciting, meaningful and creative experience with personal highlights that they will remember throughout their lives.

Our Implementation:

Planning and Organisation of Curriculum content

The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences

- use discussion in order to learn; to be able to elaborate and clearly explain their understanding and ideas, be competent in the arts of speaking and listening, make formal presentations, and participate in debate.

Our Whole School English Curriculum Coverage and Progression Map ensures coverage from EYFS through to Year 6.

Our Approach

As with all our subjects, our subject design interrelates different strands of knowledge:

Substantive knowledge represents the English content that is taught in each year group. In planning, this knowledge is the content we want pupils to know and remember including genre specific vocabulary.

In reading, substantive knowledge is the ability to decode and sight-read words. This allows children opportunities to read for pleasure, including reading and reciting poetry, and develop their vocabulary. Children are then able to apply their knowledge of reading strategies to comprehend a range of texts.

In writing, substantive knowledge is the ability to plan, draft and construct writing for different purposes. When constructing writing, this involves knowledge of structural, grammatical and linguistic features as well as knowledge of handwriting and spelling.

Themes are explored in each year group through the different genres. By highlighting these themes, we are able to ensure that connections are made so that children can easily activate prior knowledge, which then supports their future learning in the subject. In English, our themes include:

- **Fiction**
- **Non-fiction**
- **Poetry**

Disciplinary Knowledge represents the understanding of a person with effective communication competencies. This knowledge is drawn from the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and is mapped progressively to ensure there are opportunities for pupils to build, revisit and deepen their knowledge and understanding.

Our teachers plan together in year groups and in phase teams to create a comprehensive and progressive curriculum covering a wide range of genres and writing styles and based on quality texts. Texts and poems reflect our literary heritage, texts from other cultures and modern texts.

Children in the Foundation Stage follow the Early Years Curriculum which includes a wide range of daily opportunities to practise their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills including mark making and phonics skills.

Early reading is taught through the use of RWI (Read Write Inc.) Phonics. Phonics is taught from EYFS to KS1 with additional intervention for KS2 children as necessary. Phonics lessons are taught daily and are lively and engaging. Children are exposed to an increasingly complex vocabulary as they progress through the scheme. Children are assessed for phonics knowledge each half term to identify any gaps

and grouped accordingly. When the scheme is complete, children then progress to the RWI Spelling Programme from Y2 to Y6 to teach spelling rules from Y2 to Y6.

Many opportunities for reading are embedded into the school day, including poetry, shared reading, whole class reading, independent reading, reading for pleasure, reading with buddies and class novel read aloud by the teacher. In addition, we have class library areas and regular library book loans. A whole school Reading and Poetry Spine is in place so that children have exposure to a planned progression of texts during their time with us.

Mastery of letter formation is prioritised in Foundation stage. Children will go on to develop a cursive handwriting style (Nelson Handwriting), which is taught and introduced once children in Key Stage 1 are confident with basic letter formation.

Daily English lessons, designed to enthuse, support and challenge all, are taught across school. Based upon a variety of quality texts and resources, children develop skills including speaking and performing for different audiences and listening for a purpose. Regular half termly debates are held in each class based on topics of interest, cross curricular topics or a class text. In reading activities, children learn how to decode words, increase their vocabulary and develop fluency. They become familiar with, understand and respond to a range of texts (including play scripts, stories, poetry and nonfiction). In writing activities, children focus on knowing, imitating, adapting and creating texts of different genres (including stories, nonfiction writing and poems) and effectively presenting their work. The Talk for Writing approach is used in EYFS and KS1 with key skills carried forward to KS2.

Profile of English

Teachers engage in regular CPD and professional discussions to ensure they are delivering the highest quality English curriculum possible through engaging and inspiring lessons. Teachers share and model their own reading with children.

Strong links between school and home ensure parents and carers have an understanding of their child's progress in English and how they can help their child improve.

Children get the opportunity to use and practise their skills across the curriculum. English skills are taught and consolidated in all subjects.

Creative and inspiring English events are provided and promoted enthusiastically. For example, author visits, theatre visits, productions companies in school, creative writing competitions, Shakespeare week, public speaking competition. The children also have an opportunity to participate in a Shakespeare production as part of a Royal Shakespeare Company Associate School.

The Impact is:

The English curriculum at Star of the Sea allows the children to develop:

- Confidence in reading, writing and oracy skills
- Fluency in reading and understanding texts
- Fluency in speaking and performing
- A broad range of skills in writing and speaking in different styles and for different audiences
- A love of books and being able to express their personal preferences
- The ability to recognise their own mistakes, the value of learning from mistakes and to edit their own work
- The ability to reason, generalise and to see different sides of an argument
- A love of words and a wide and rich vocabulary

- An excellent foundation and familiarity with a good range of quality texts (picture books, novels, poetry, nonfiction books)
- A commitment to and passion for the subject and a desire for further learning

Impact is measured in a variety of ways. These include:

- EYFS through the use of the Early Learning Goals specific to the area of English
- RWI phonics assessments
- Year 1 phonics screening check
- Key Stage 1 English SAT (optional)
- Key Stage 2 English SAT
- Summative assessments, e.g. PM Benchmarking, Progress in Reading Assessment (PIRA)
- Formative teacher assessment through effective questioning and feedback
- Staff meetings
- Learning walks
- Peer to Peer coaching
- Book monitoring
- Governor meetings
- Pupil voice