

Our Lady's RC Primary School



English Policy

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Signed: *G Cunningham J Wallace* (Person Responsible) **Date:** 18.12.2025

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"Learning and loving together; we grow with Jesus"

Our Core Values

During our September 2015 INSET day we renewed both our Mission Statement and Core Values.

During the day the feedback from parents, and the views expressed by the children during sessions in the previous summer term played a prominent role in the decisions we made.



Our new Mission Statement is:

"Learning and loving together; we grow with Jesus"

The Core Values that provide the foundation for that Mission are:

Faithful	Positive	Safe
Nurturing	Forgiving	Fair

NURTURE

The School's six nurturing principles sum up our practice and theory. They underpin the context, organisation and curriculum.

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally
2. The classroom offers a safe base
3. the importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
4. Language as a vital means of communication
5. All behaviour is communication
6. The importance of transition in children's lives



Respectful Honest

Our Mission is represented by this design. As with the statement itself, the logo was developed by all stakeholders, with the children in particular providing the symbolic ideas of **growth – the tree, love – the hearts and Christ – the Cross**

At Our Lady's, our English policy aims to reflect our Mission Statement by encouraging staff and pupils to work with each other and in partnership with home. This policy describes our practice in the teaching of English: reading, writing, phonics, spelling, grammar, punctuation and oracy.

The study of English develops children's abilities to speak, read and write a wide range of purposes, using language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. Our approach to teaching of English is multi-faceted, incorporating oracy, drama, real contexts and high-quality literature. It enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poems and drama, as well as non-fiction and media texts. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

English has a crucial role to play in equipping learners with the language skills they need to become effective members of their own communities, the world of work and society in general. Our priority is to create fluent readers and writers with all the skills and knowledge they need to be confidently literate in life. We want all children to leave Our Lady's with a life-long reading habit and a love of books because reading will improve their vocabulary, inspire them creatively and improve their ability to write well.

Aims

At Our Lady's we aim to ensure that all children will:

- Read easily, fluently and with good understanding using a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct.
- Write confidently, fluently and with good understanding using a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct.
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often for both pleasure and information.
- Acquire an interest in words and their meanings, developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms.
- Appreciate our rich and varied literacy heritage, understanding a range of text types, media types and genres.
- Write clearly and accurately in a variety of styles and forms, adapting their language and style for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.
- Use their developing imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas.
- Acquire competence in speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participation in debate.
- Use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas.

At Our Lady's RC Primary School, we encourage all children to become independent learners and be confident in all strands of learning. The children will be given opportunities to speak in a variety of contexts and learn to listen to and value the views of others.

Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum and in Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

In Reception through to Year 6, children are taught English within their classes. Through differentiation and the support of Teaching Assistants, all children will receive high quality teaching and appropriate support in order for every child to reach their full potential. Children may receive additional support if necessary outside of the English lessons.

Foundation Stage

Children in Reception will be given the opportunities to:

- Speak, listen and represent ideas in their activities.
- Use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum.
- Become immersed in an environment rich in print and opportunities to communicate.
- Develop their communication, language and literacy skills on a daily basis in both adult led and child initiated activities.
- Be within an environment which has a range of high quality texts.
- Children have daily discrete Phonics lessons.
- Individuals have a reading book which matches their phonetic ability.
- Read with an adult regularly.
- Regular story times develop a love for books and storytelling.
- Write from a range of stimulus and experiences.

Key Stage One

Children in KS1 will be given the opportunities to:

- Take an active part in discrete phonics lessons and are taught in ability groups.
- Have English lessons with an emphasis on real texts and skills.
- Regular story times and library visits to develop a love for reading.
- Develop English skills across the wider curriculum and given opportunities to speak and listen throughout all subjects.
- Speak confidently while listening to what others say.
- Read and write independently and with enthusiasm.
- Learn to use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

- Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes, differentiated class teaching and targeted teaching groups.

Key Stage Two

Children in KS2 will be given the opportunities to:

- Change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences.
- Read a range of texts and respond to different layers for meaning in them.
- Explore the use of language in literacy and non-literacy texts and learn how the structure of language works.
- Take an active part in daily English lessons where spelling and grammar skills are taught both discretely and embedded within lessons (Additional sessions include guided reading, spelling practice, grammar, handwriting and daily reading aloud of class novel).
- Provision is made for children who require extra support through targeted teaching; intervention programmes, TA aids and differentiated class teaching.

Phonics

Phonics is a method of teaching reading where children are systematically taught the relationships between the sounds in our language and the letters used to represent those sounds. Once children have been taught which sounds are linked to which letters, they are able 'crack the code' and can confidently have a go at reading and writing anything. The teaching of phonic skills is embedded within English teaching in each class. Additional provision is made each day in discrete phonic sessions. At Our Lady's RC Primary School, we believe that the teaching of phonics plays a key role in helping children learn to read, write and spell. We follow the Sounds~Write Phonics Scheme which is a high-quality program endorsed by the DfE. Our aim is for the vast majority of children to be confident readers by the end of KS1. High quality phonics teaching enables children to decode new words confidently and independently and leads to improved understanding. This will result in children being able to read for pleasure, undertake research and develop their comprehension skills. Sounds~Write phonics also teaches children how to spell words and this helps them to become confident writers.

Reading

EYFS

We have a structured early learning reading programme. The teaching of early reading skills begins in Reception through daily story, rhyme and song time. A wide selection of early reading books are available from Reception and these are grouped into phonic ability. Children are taught during shared and guided group reading using structured and repetitive books, guided texts and short stories. Teachers and teaching assistants also read on an individual basis with children as necessary: how often and who is based on assessment of progress.

KS1

Teachers and teaching assistants assess children's progression in early reading regularly using Phonics assessments. Children read books based on their phonics ability and progress through these books and are hopefully 'off the scheme' by the end of Year 1. Once they have moved beyond this scheme, our Accelerated Reader scheme is used, and pupils are supported carefully to make good

book choices and maintain their motivation. Teachers and teaching assistants continue to read on an individual basis with children as necessary: how often and who is based on assessment of progress. As we know, the importance of all children reading well as soon as possible, we put a great emphasis on reading with an adult in Year 1, as often as possible, with the aim on securing this skill in the earliest school years.

KS2

Teachers and teaching assistants continue to monitor children's reading progress through a combination of individual, group and shared reading as well as the Accelerated Reader scheme. To ensure shared access to high level texts and discussion, whole-class reading takes place daily with comprehension tests happening bi-weekly to assess children's development. Opportunities for independent reading are provided to encourage children to develop reading stamina and reading for pleasure. Children and adults share their text choices and recommend books to others. 'Buddy reading' takes place in pairs of KS1 and KS2 children to develop reading role models.

All children in Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to change their reading book on completion of an AR quiz. Independent reading occurs daily and may be supported by a member of staff where children require additional help or support. When children have read their book, they will take a small, fun and interactive quiz to assess their understanding. A score will be logged and used as part of our continual assessment of your child's progress in reading.

Writing

At Our Lady's, we strive to create an environment that will promote all aspects of English, from Speaking to Listening to Writing. In order to ensure that all pupils learn to be confident writers we encourage children to write creatively whilst teaching key writing skills explicitly and systematically. Teachers plan sequences of lessons to build towards a longer writing outcome that is linked to reading, drama and other shorter writing tasks. Wherever possible, writing is linked to the termly class topic and, therefore, the wider curriculum. There is a balance between fiction, non-fiction and poetry with an emphasis on whole texts rather than extracts and worksheets. Staff analyse texts and look at WAGOLLS before attempting first drafts and edits. At the end of the process when all learning is complete, children are given the opportunity to publish a final draft.

Handwriting

Handwriting begins in Reception with mark-making and patterns. All pupils are given access to a wide range of writing tools and mediums to practise the early fine motor skills. The needs of left handed children, or those with physical difficulties are also taken into consideration and where necessary accommodated with resources or specific intervention. From Year 1 – Year 6, teachers follow the Martin Harvey Handwriting Scheme. Letter formation and handwriting is taught and modelled using a range of resources through discrete lessons following a clear scheme of progression. The national expectation at the end of Year 6 is that children will join their handwriting. As the children move up through the school, they are encouraged to think carefully about the presentation of their work and to develop clear, legible and fluent hand-writing.

Spelling

Understanding how to spell correctly is important in supporting children to organise their thinking around language. Recognising patterns and understanding how words are built is empowering for children. Spelling also plays a significant part in standardised assessment and is taught progressively

throughout the school. From Year 2 to Year 6, spelling is taught explicitly through a morphological approach, helping children understand how words are constructed from roots, prefixes and suffixes. This includes the exploration of the etymology of words, giving pupils clear reasoning behind spelling choices and helping them make connections between meaning and structure. This deepens their understanding and supports long-term retention of spelling patterns. From Reception, children are introduced to the concept that words are broken down into sounds. This is embedded and reinforced through the Sounds-Write programme, which we follow to ensure a strong foundation in phonics before moving into morphological and etymological understanding in later years.

Grammar

Across the school, an understanding of how to use grammar correctly, apply relevant meta-language, and identify word classes and sentence types is taught both in the context of a piece of writing and explicitly in whole-class work. Linked to the National Curriculum guidelines for year groups, grammar is taught and planned to fit with relevant genres of writing. We begin with the basics of sentence construction, including full stops and capital letters, before moving into more complex aspects of syntax (how words and phrases are arranged to form sentences), semantics (how meaning is conveyed through vocabulary and sentence choices), and pragmatics (how language is used effectively in different contexts and for different audiences). Children begin to identify word classes early on (noun, verb, adjective and adverb) and use this understanding in their writing, gradually developing the ability to manipulate language for clarity, precision and effect. We follow the 2014 National Curriculum as guidance for what is taught in each year group and from this, have devised our own progression grid detailing expectations year by year. This progression is aligned with our new writing framework, ensuring consistency and depth across all stages of learning.

Developing our Learners

To develop our pupils as Speakers and Listeners we:

- Give them opportunities to express their ideas to a range of audiences.
- Give them opportunities to take part in group discussion and drama activities.
- Encourage them to listen and respond appropriately to others.
- Help them to understand the need to adapt their speech to different situations.
- Give them opportunities to evaluate and reflect on their own speech.
- Encourage them to use the vocabulary and grammar of Standard English whenever appropriate.

To develop our pupils as Readers we:

- Teach them to read accurately and fluently using a range of strategies.
- Help them to understand and respond to what they read using inference and deduction where appropriate.
- Allow the opportunity for children to reflect on and discuss what they have read, including the language and punctuation choices made by the author.
- Enhance their understanding of a variety of text types including non-fiction, fiction and poetry.
- Share a wide variety of high quality texts.
- Encourage them to develop a love of reading and become confident, fluent and independent.

- Teach them how to seek information and learn from the written word.
- Use drama and role-play, where appropriate, to engage children in the text.

To develop our pupils as Writers we:

- Teach them to write effectively for a range of purposes and a range of reasons, adapting their vocabulary and style as appropriate.
- Encourage them to write with interest, commitment and enjoyment.
- Show them how to write in a variety of forms such as stories, poems, reports and letters.
- Show them how to evaluate and edit in order to improve their own writing.
- Show them how to use punctuation to make meaning clear to their reader.
- Give them the knowledge and the strategies to become confident and accurate spellers.
- Teach them a fluent and legible style of handwriting, promoting an understanding of how to present work appropriately.
- Display and celebrate writing all over the school.
- Provide stimulating first hand experiences, e.g. trips, storytellers and drama.
- We teach writing as a carefully sequenced activity.
- Provide regular helpful feedback through marking.
- Plan time into lessons for children to respond to marking and feedback.
- We build stamina for writing by providing opportunities to write independently and for extended periods.
- Ensure editing and reviewing form a large part of lesson time – with age appropriate strategies.
- Encourage peer marking as an additional way for children to respond to writing.

Inclusion

There are children of differing ability in all classes at Our Lady's and we aim to provide for all these children so that they achieve their potential in English according to their individual abilities. We recognise this fact and 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. We identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. In some lessons, we do it through differentiated group work, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use scaffolds and adaptations to support children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of the individual. More able learners are identified and suitable learning challenges are provided.

Cross-Curricular Opportunities

Teachers at Our Lady's take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They plan for pupils to practice and apply skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to

other areas of the curriculum. Extended writing is expected to be produced in all subjects to showcase the children's transferrable skills.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

English is a perfect vehicle for SMSC development within the Primary classroom. We encourage children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. Additionally, we encourage children to be open about their feelings and voice their worries; to solve their conflicts with friends. The teaching of English develops skills through which our children can give critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their work. Our carefully crafted curriculum enables children to appreciate a range of texts which brings them into contact with their own literary heritage and texts from other cultures.

Marking and Assessment

- Formative and summative assessment are an integral part of the English curriculum.
- Summative assessment will be met using a range of assessments including baseline tests, NFER tests and SATs tests.
- In Reception, children are also assessed in their early literacy development against the 'Development Matters' goals.
- Year 1 take the end of year Phonics test in June.
- In addition, NFER and statutory SATS tests will be undertaken formally at the end of the year from Year 2 – 6.
- Children in KS2 use Accelerated Reader to assess their comprehension on a book.
- Ongoing formative assessment will also be integrated fully into each topic to support children's English skills in all areas and enable them to develop the skills they need to access statutory end of year tests.
- Writing at the end of KS1 and KS2 is teacher assessed. There is no external assessment of composition, however we routinely take part in moderations across our authority and the BOSCEP group to moderate our levels. As we do extended independent writes, these, along with the children's English books, help to form a profile for final teacher assessments at the end of the year.
- All types of formative and summative assessment will be fully inputted into Our Lady's tracking system to enable teachers to update and keep track of children's achievements of the yearly objectives.
- Teachers use developmental feedback in order to identify where children have included elements of the success, set next steps targets to give children the opportunity to revisit their work in order to make improvements.
- Marking is undertaken both by pupils and teachers and is an integral part of the assessment process to aid pupil progress. Marking will be relevant and focussed and will allow the children time to review their own work and make relevant corrections. This includes peer and self-assessment.

Subject Leader The subject leader is responsible for:

- Improving the standards of Teaching and Learning in English through monitoring and evaluating:
 - Pupil progress

- Provision of English
- The quality of the learning environment
- Moderation of children's work
- Taking the lead in policy development.
- Auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD.
- Purchasing and organising resources.
- Keeping up to date with recent developments in English.

Homework and the Role of Parents

Parents are such important partners in the process of developing children's literacy skills. They have an important influence on children's language before they come to school. They provide valuable support at home in helping children to become readers and writers and offer a useful audience for children in their development as speakers and listeners, readers and writers as the children move through the school (e.g. phonics, reading, SAT's revision). We therefore encourage parents to play their full part in their children's education by:

- Involving parents in the school's reading programme from the moment their child starts school.
- Updating the guidance for parents as their children move through school so that they can continue to offer appropriate support.
- Give parents termly outlines of the curriculum areas in English that each year group will be studying.
- Sending homework home in accordance with the needs of the child and encouraging parental support.

Excellence in English

Excellence is celebrated with praise, stickers and displays of work, read or spoken presentations to the class or school and certificates of achievement presented during Celebration Assemblies. Special guests to the school, such as visiting authors and performing arts groups are also actively sought, providing children with stimulating and enjoyable experiences associated with Literacy. Special events such as World Book Day and visiting book fairs are also used to promote excellence in English. Children are also encouraged to take an interest in their own reading development and the reading development of others using partner reading. Older pupils support younger children in the development of their reading and gain self-esteem and a sense of achievement from doing so. The school website promotes and celebrates excellence in English.