



Mission Statement

At St. Joseph's
we aim to promote a learning community
based on the Gospel values of
Love, Trust and Respect
where the achievements of everyone are recognised and celebrated
Living, Learning and Loving together with Christ

English Curriculum

Intent

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, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently, are greatly disadvantaged.

At St. Joseph's our English curriculum follows the guidelines laid down in the 2014 National curriculum. We aim to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word and to develop a love of literature through reading for enjoyment. We believe that English is the cornerstone to the entire curriculum and it is therefore embedded within all of our lessons and teaching.

How this is implemented at St. Joseph's

Phonics

At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we follow the [Letters and Sounds](#) phonic programme. In Early Years, our phonic skills begin with speaking and listening. We practise listening for sounds at the beginning, in the middle, and at the ends of words. We also practise blending sounds together verbally to make words. In the Autumn term, we begin teaching children single letter sounds. By the end of the term they have started to learn digraphs and trigraphs. Children learn the sound, the action and the formation of each letter. As the children become more confident, we teach them how to put these single sounds, digraphs and trigraphs together to read and write words. Throughout the year, we constantly reinforce the importance of correct formation of these letters, practising in different ways, such as using glitter, sand and playdough. We focus on high frequency words, such as home, we, look, I, and the children learn these by sight. The children also learn 'tricky' words (common exception words) alongside each phase of

phonics. We begin using our handwriting scheme PenPals showing the children how to clearly form their letters using rhymes and pictures.

In Key Stage 1 the children continue to follow the 'Letters and Sounds' scheme. We enhance and support this with a wide range of resources such as whiteboard writing activities, card games, flash cards, interactive online and published games, as well as the many interactive activities suggested in the scheme itself. We have found that following the structure and guidance of the 'Letters and Sounds' scheme ensures a full coverage of phonic sounds and skills and that the enhancement activities allow the children to apply and consolidate their knowledge in a variety of contexts. This then allows them to link phonic rules and strategies to their writing and reading tasks more effectively.

Children at Key Stage 2 who have not yet acquired the expected phonics standard receive additional support.

In addition to these schemes, we also use progressive spelling lists linked directly to the National Curriculum expectations for each year group.

Speaking and Listening

Throughout the school, opportunities to develop pupils spoken language in a range of contexts underpin the development of reading and writing. Pupils are encouraged to speak clearly, confidently and with expression in order to communicate their ideas and feelings. They are taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

Pupils develop their ability to explain their understanding of books and other reading and to prepare their ideas before they write. They are encouraged to discuss their ideas in order to make sense of their learning.

Pupils are given many opportunities through drama, role play, performances, reading out loud, presentations and debate in many areas of the curriculum.

Reading

Reading is an integral part of the curriculum at St. Joseph's and it is our vision to ensure that all children receive the opportunity to read and engage in high quality and relevant literature. At St. Joseph's children learn to develop their word reading and comprehension skills in order to become fluent and reflective readers, enabling them to foster a long term love of reading.

We aim for children to be able to read widely, confidently and to a high standard in a range of subjects. We want children to develop a love of reading and acquire a wide vocabulary of written and spoken language. The school is currently engaged in The Power of Reading Programme through the [CLPE](#) which aims to support the teaching of English through the use of a wide range of high-quality texts.

In Early Years, children start their reading journey by telling stories using picture books. This helps children to understand the structure of stories. The [Oxford Reading Tree](#) scheme is used throughout our school. This allows children to engage in reading using their phonic and word knowledge. This continues progressively through KS1 where the scheme grows to include a wider range of sounds and vocabulary as well as new themes. The scheme continues into Upper Key Stage 2 where the children are exposed to longer and more challenging texts which enable them to exercise fluency, understanding and comprehension skills at a deeper level.

Children at Upper KS2 also access Reading Plus, an online programme for children in Year 5 and 6. Reading Plus builds the physical skills for fluency and stamina, provides texts to build vocabulary and comprehension and has been shown to be effective in narrowing the achievement gap between boys and girls.

Each classroom (and our school library) offers a wide variety of books; children are encouraged to choose a variety of genres and show their understanding through reading journal activities.

Teachers use a variety of methods when reading with children in class including individual reading, guided group work and whole class reading. These allow teachers to assess, plan and deliver a high quality reading curriculum throughout the school linked specifically to meet the children's needs and experiences.

Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation

Spelling, grammar and punctuation are taught both discretely and as part of English lessons. We use progressive spelling lists across the school which are matched to the expectations for each Key Stage in the National Curriculum. These are adapted to meet the needs of individual pupils when appropriate.

Grammar and punctuation are taught on a daily basis in class as part of a unit of work that is being studied as well as in discrete lessons.

Spelling, grammar and punctuation are assessed termly.

Writing

At St. Joseph's our vision is that every child will become a creative and imaginative writer and will have the skills to be able to write effectively across a range of genres.

We aim to use all areas of the curriculum to develop writing skills and generate purposeful writing experiences for our children. These will give them the opportunities to engage in writing that they find interesting and inspiring.

We use a cross curricular approach to our writing opportunities which enables children to make links with other areas of the curriculum and apply their skills across a range of subjects for different purposes and audiences. This ensures that writing opportunities are relevant and real to our children and they can see a clear purpose to their work.

Writing is assessed at least termly. Teachers work together regularly to moderate writing across the school.

Impact of English at St. Joseph's

Our EYFS, KS1 and KS2 results show that pupils' attainment in Reading is below the national average in 2019 (although the previous year outcomes were in line with national average). However, pupils make more than average progress in Reading compared to the national average from their starting points.

Our EYFS, KS1 and KS2 results show that pupils' attainment in Writing is in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who achieve greater depth standard at KS2 is also in line with the national average. Pupils make more than average progress in Writing compared to the national average.

English is also embedded through every subject in our broad and balanced curriculum and pupils are constantly using transferable skills to develop detailed knowledge and skills in all other

areas. Our high standards of reading and writing are evident in all subjects as well as performances and opportunities for speaking, listening and drama. Our commitment to high standards in English for all pupils allows them to access the whole curriculum in an engaging and inspiring way.