



English Martyrs'

CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

English Martyrs' Catholic Voluntary Academy

English Policy



“At English Martyrs’ Catholic Voluntary Academy, we offer a broad-based curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural and physical development of our pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.”

Our statement of Intent for English

English Martyrs’ aims for every child to experience an individual learning journey in English, reading and writing, in order that they make excellent progress from whatever their starting point may be. Our English Curriculum is guided by the National Curriculum 2014.

In studying English pupils develop skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing. It enables them to express themselves creatively and imaginatively and to communicate with others effectively. Pupils learn to become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama as well as non-fiction and media texts. The study of English helps pupils understand how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Using this knowledge pupils can choose and adapt what they say and write to different situations.

In line with this statement, we believe that the teaching of English has a crucial role to play in equipping pupils with the language skills they need to become effective communicators and language users as members of the school community and the wider world.

English in the EYFS

The early years curriculum is founded on the principles and practice laid out in the Early Learning Goals document. Speaking and listening skills are vitally important as they underpin all learning at this stage. The English programme builds on the language skills that children bring from home. Development of these skills is encouraged through activities such as listening to stories and poems, joining in with rhymes and songs, participating in drama and imaginative play, responding to simple instructions, talking to accompany play etc.

Knowledge about books is developed through activities such as, retelling a story in their own words, reading a big book with the teacher, re-reading favourite stories as a group/class, listening to taped stories etc.

When a child is ready to begin more formal reading activities he/she will embark on the school's reading programme or scheme. Phonics are introduced through games and practical activities during a 20 minute daily phonics lesson.

Emergent writing is encouraged through role-play e.g. in the shop, office, cafe etc. where children are provided with a range of writing materials. Children are encouraged to write in role, such as lists, forms, menus, prices. When children become more aware of phonics and letter formation, they are encouraged to attempt a more focused form of writing segmenting words and they are introduced to the Reception writing ladders.



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Our Implementation: Teaching and Learning in English

English is both spoken and written, so our aims relate to all modes of language speaking and listening, reading and writing. By our own attitudes towards our pupils as language users we endeavour to foster within them the respect for each other's language by:

- providing a rich and stimulating cross curricular language environment, where speaking and listening, reading and writing are integrated.
- opportunities for pupils to become confident, competent and expressive users of the language with a developing knowledge of how it works.
- opportunities for pupils to be reflective users of language, able to analyse and evaluate features of language.
- an awareness of purpose and audience for both written and oral language.
- an environment where pupils are encouraged to construct and convey.
- meaning, both in speech and writing, of factual, imaginary and personal experiences.

Speaking and Listening

We believe it is important to provide planned opportunities for a range of speaking and listening tasks. This encourages children to develop as fluent, confident and competent speakers who are also able to listen with interest and understanding for sustained periods. It also encourages pupils to work co-operatively with others and to listen to the views of others. Working collaboratively and sharing ideas is a valuable and supportive exercise that is planned and developed within each classroom.

We aim for pupils to be able to:

- use speech appropriately for different purposes.
- adopt appropriate vocabulary, tone, pace and style for a variety of audiences and in a variety of situations.
- understand the effect of speech on the listener.
- use talk to develop and express ideas.
- communicate meaning effectively.
- listen attentively and derive meaning from what others say.
- follow verbal instructions accurately.
- understand the importance of good listening and how to respond during discussions, conversations and when information is given or asked for.
- develop the skills of turn-taking, negotiation and reaching consensus.
- appreciate the role of a "response partner" and the way in which others can help in the learning process by sharing ideas and being supportive.

Reading

Pupils are encouraged to become confident, enthusiastic, critical and independent readers. They are given opportunities to experience print produced in a variety of forms and for a variety of purposes and to read for information, interest and enjoyment.

We aim for pupils to be able to:

- develop reading skills through direct teaching during guided reading sessions and zoom in and zoom out reading activities
- follow the book banding scheme and move through it as their phonic knowledge and application improves.
- understand the features of a book and how it works.
- have an interest in words and their meanings.
- use a range of strategies which will help them to read with meaning, fluency, accuracy and expression.
- use appropriate reading strategies to find and interpret information.
- reflect on their reading and offer a personal response to a wide range of texts.
- to understand how the format and language changes with different genre.
- to use inferential skills to find meaning beyond the literal.



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- to appreciate the tools of the writer and the techniques used to involve the reader in the text.
- to build these strategies into their own writing.
- to appreciate the work of individual authors, illustrators and publishers.
- to read for and with other children and adults in a variety of situations.
- to read silently with a specific focus for the reading.
- to use a range of resources, including classroom materials, the school and public libraries for a range of reading materials.
- to take opportunities to read for pleasure in classrooms and in the school library.
- to use ICT based reference materials for information.
- to become readers who read for enjoyment
- to extend and challenge able readers through book groups and discussion sessions.

Writing

We believe it is important for pupils to develop as independent, enthusiastic and expressive writers, who are able to write in a meaningful way. They should be able to use a range of forms for a variety of purposes and audiences. They should be confident in their choice of genre and language style for a specific purpose. Pupils are encouraged to regard themselves as writers and value their own work and that of others.

We aim for pupils to be able to:

- use writing as a means to communicate ideas and information to a reader.
- use the ARE in the writing ladders to apply their SPaG understanding in their extended writing
- write in a grammatically accurate way.
- develop an increasingly wide vocabulary suited to the purpose and genre.
- write in a particular genre with a good understanding of the features of that genre.
- understand the conventions of written language.
- use teacher modeling as a means to understand the writing process.
- understand how writers can have an effect on the reader.
- incorporate ideas and skills of other authors into their own writing.
- collaborate with others during the writing process.
- draft and re-draft, making significant revisions where appropriate through pre-writes, mid writes and post writes
- work collaboratively with other children to discuss the editing of written work.
- use ICT as a tool for writing.
- use spelling, punctuation and syntax accurately and with confidence.
- promote writing for enjoyment through the use of competitions and workshops.

Spelling

Pupils are encouraged to develop as independent and accurate spellers who are confident to use an evolving and adventurous vocabulary in their own writing. They should have a range of spelling strategies that they can use to attempt unknown words and a sound knowledge of irregular high frequency words for use in their daily work. They are made aware of the differences between spoken dialect and written English in terms of spelling. In each year group we use the Phase 1-5 Tricky words, National Curriculum Common Exception words and the approach of tiered vocabulary to support children with their learning in spelling.

We aim for pupils to be able to:

- attempt words for themselves using a range of strategies.
- write an increasingly wide range of words from memory.
- use a variety of resources to help with spelling e.g. dictionaries, word banks, classroom environment, computer spell-checks etc.



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- develop an understanding of spelling patterns and rules through daily phonic sessions in Key Stage One, investigations and identifying the exceptions to those rules as "interesting" or "exciting" and understand that some prefixes and suffixes can change the meaning of the words.
- use a range of strategies to learn spellings, especially those mis-spelt in their own work. To use look, cover, write, check, for corrections of spelling in their work, the use of mnemonics and word pictures.
- Promote the importance of spelling through the use of challenges, such as spelling bees.

Handwriting

It is important for pupils to be able to write clearly and develop a fluent and legible handwriting style. Please refer to the Handwriting policy for guidance.

Drama

Pupils are given planned opportunities to use a range of dramatic forms to express feelings and ideas both verbally and non-verbally. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate drama, both as participants and observers, through theatre visits or visiting drama groups and annual plays performed to parents.

We aim for:

- opportunities to be given for the development of drama in a variety of contexts.
- pupils to be encouraged to use drama to link ideas in literacy through drama clubs, role-play, hot seating, tableaux, mime and freeze-frame techniques.
- pupils to explore a range of endings to stories through role-play and use these as a pre-writing stimulus.

Organisation of teaching and learning

The teaching of English at English Martyrs' is set out in the Teaching and Learning Handbook available to all staff.

English is planned out in Long term plans (LTPs), Medium term plans (MTPs) and fortnightly skills sheets from EYFS to Y6 from a combination of the National Curriculum 2014 guidance, Focus Education, reading and writing progression sheets with ARE for each year group and the appropriate pathways, delivered through explicit Literacy lessons and other discrete lessons. However, English is cross-curricular in nature.

Speaking and listening, reading and writing are an integral part of all other areas of the curriculum. Pupils are therefore given opportunities to communicate and discuss ideas and apply their reading and writing skills in a variety of contexts and subjects.

At KS2 it is expected that children will complete four literacy lessons and produce 2 pieces of extended writing per week. Children at Key Stage One will participate in a daily literacy lesson and an additional 20 minute Phonics session. Opportunities for cross curricular writing are promoted where possible.

As part of the daily English Applied lessons teaching focuses on a driver text through shared reading and shared writing. The teacher modelling and demonstrating strategies for learning are an important and integral part of the teaching process. To support teaching and learning within the classroom we use of a wide variety of texts and teaching resources, including ICT. During the week, teachers work with small group to support guided activities. Independent learning is encouraged through differentiated tasks including independent writing and reading tasks and collaborative talk to support the development of ideas for writing. There are also planned opportunities for pupils to use a problem solving approach, which allows them to discover for themselves and learn from one another

Differentiation

We plan for differentiation, using Emerging, Met and Greater Depth (GDS) skills and knowledge so that pupil's interest is maintained, their individual needs are met and to ensure that all pupils are challenged and achieve success. This adaptation may be to record their work in a simpler form or to work on a selected aspect of a task. Children may require extra support, time or resources to enable them to access the English curriculum fully. Children who require extension will be asked to develop and transfer their skills through more open-ended tasks and cross-curricular activities.



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SEND

Differentiated learning strategies based on individual needs supports pupils with special needs. This applies to children who need additional support and also those who are high achievers. Support is given in class but sometimes groups and/or individuals are withdrawn for a particular focus. The level of support given to SEN pupils and their targets are detailed in Personal Support Plans (PSPs). These are used to inform differentiated planning.

Please refer to School SEND policy for further detail.

Supporting pupils' learning English as an Additional Language (EAL)

We believe that our English curriculum reflects the benefits of our cultural and linguistic diversity. Pupils who speak a language other than English at home are valued highly. We also recognise the need to provide extra support for pupils, where necessary, to maximise their access to the English curriculum and to develop their skills.

We aim to maximise access to the English curriculum by:

- ensuring pupils learning English as an additional language spend most of their time in their mainstream class.
- employing learning activities which involve practical activity and discussion.
- supporting understanding with concrete items, pictures, etc. so that understanding does not depend on oral language alone.
- ensuring the English curriculum and resources are not Euro-centric and are relevant and interesting to every child in the class.

Our Impact in English

We have self-evaluated our outcomes as Outstanding in Reading and Writing for the following reasons: The vast majority of pupils are working at ARE or GDS in Reading and Writing, with all year groups making expected or accelerated steps of progress throughout the academic year. Pupils can articulate their knowledge and understanding of reading and writing at English Martyrs' in a clear and consistent manner, appropriate for their age. This is evident consistently in their work produced.

Half termly monitoring by the subject leader ensures that teachers have correctly identified vulnerable groups or focus children in each year group to allow for interventions to take place in order for these pupils to make rapid progress. Interventions for vulnerable groups such as SEN, EAL and Pupil Premium are a strength of the school.

Assessment

Reading and writing is assessed using teacher judgements through observation of children's involvement and their produced outcome in lessons. Teachers make an assessment of the children's progression in alignment with the outcomes of the National Curriculum for their specific Key Stage and Year Group/s and highlight the child's skills sheet accordingly. This skills sheet then becomes a working record of the child's achievements and progress to date.

This is then recorded on School Insight half termly where objectives are clearly judged as being not met, secured or exceeded and a judgement on ARE is made in the Main Judgement.

Monitoring and Review

With SLT, the Subject Leader will regularly monitor children's work and of the quality of teaching and learning in English. The role of the subject leader involves supporting colleagues, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. Monitoring will be carried out through:

- Learning walks
- Book scrutiny
- Environment checks (displays, skills boards etc)
- Pupil voice meetings
- Staff interviews/questionnaires
- Delivering CPD

Policy written by: Gemma Ellis December 2019

Reviewed by:



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