

English Policy



Intent

Knowledge Rich and Academic

Our progressive curriculum builds upon prior knowledge and skills taught throughout the year groups. Our rigorous and well-sequenced English curriculum provides many purposeful opportunities for speaking, reading and writing, and ensures that all children can enjoy and access the learning, while also seeking to challenge children to achieve their full potential. Knowledge about the wider world is learned within the context of challenging texts. We also expect pupils to develop a good knowledge of key authors and poets, texts and our literary heritage.

Reading and Vocabulary

Our aim is for children to form excellent habits of reading widely, both for pleasure and information, and have reading securely at the heart of our curriculum. As well as in English lessons, children will explore books during whole class guided reading and reading spine time, allowing children to become captivated in a range of poetry and novels. We want our children to have a good understanding of our literary heritage and to be exposed to a wide range of authors and books, therefore texts have been carefully chosen to reflect this. Vocabulary is explored frequently within the context of different texts and is prominent within the classroom environment.

Christian Values

English facilitates developing our school's Christian values such as compassion, friendship, peace and respect, through discussion around issues raised within class texts. This provides a valuable opportunity to explore and develop these values in relation to characters within the stories we read.

Celebrate Diversity

Within our English curriculum, texts are purposefully chosen in order to expose the children to a wide range of cultures and backgrounds through settings and characters. This allows children to develop an understanding and appreciation of people who are different to themselves and offers a platform for valuable discussion within lessons.

Experiences and Life Skills

Oracy skills are seen as vital life skills that the children will develop while at St Thomas', with the aim of supporting children to be able to communicate to an excellent standard, giving them secure foundations for the future.



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Children will also take part in a range of trips and experiences to foster their love of English, such as watching Shakespeare plays and going to the theatre.

Excellence

At St Thomas' CE Primary School our aim is for our English curriculum to inspire, engage and motivate children to enjoy reading and writing. By the time children leave St Thomas', our pupils will acquire a wide vocabulary and an understanding of grammar in order for them to have the literacy skills and tools needed in order to communicate to an excellent standard, through spoken and written English, and to be prepared for the next steps in their education and life beyond primary school. Our children are able to write clearly, accurately and coherently, and are able to adapt their language and style for a range of purposes and audiences. They are skilled in using discussion to explore ideas and can explain their understanding clearly, as well as participate in debate and make formal presentations.

Implementation

Expectations

- The Read to Write scheme is to be used as a starting point for teachers. It is adapted accordingly for the needs of the class and in order to provide a suitable level of challenge and progression in learning
- English lessons will focus around a carefully selected text from the Read to Write scheme. We believe reading is the key to all learning, so have therefore made reading a priority in every lesson.
- Children will take a pride in their work which will be evident in their handwriting and presentation
- All classrooms must have English working walls, which will be used within lessons as a resource and for demonstrating the stages of writing. Working walls should be referred to in lessons and pupils should use them to aid learning

Grammar

- Grammar Knowledge Organisers are stuck in the front of pupils' books for pupils and teaching staff to refer to
- Grammar is taught explicitly in lessons with links made to the class novel wherever possible
- 'Do Now' tasks are used to practise these skills as well as ones previously taught
- During modelled and shared writing, teachers model the application of grammar skills that have been taught, with the expectation that the pupils will then apply the same grammar skills in their independent writing. This is also encouraged in other curriculum areas such as in history lessons, which mostly have a written outcome

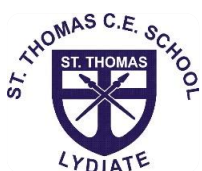
Spelling

- Have-a-go sheets (at the back of English books) are used as a strategy for children to attempt unknown spellings of words and to practise correct spelling
- No-nonsense spelling scheme is used to plan lessons and tests for Years 2 to 6.

Writing

- Self-assessment and peer-assessment is carried out regularly – suggested formats are available for teachers to choose from
- Success Criteria or Writers' Knowledge can be used to unpick a model text and then to help judge effectiveness of pupils' writing
- Pupils have the opportunity for extended writing in English lessons at least once a week, which can be over a number of lessons or continue into the next week's lessons. They write in a range of different genres, linked to the class novel or text
- Teachers use modelled and shared writing as a regular approach in the teaching and application of writing skills. This involves vocalising the 'writer's voice' and thought processes involved in writing a text
- 'Incidental' writing pieces do not necessarily need extensive planning; gathering of ideas and class discussion could be sufficient before the children begin writing

- At the end of each unit, a further extended piece of writing should be produced by the pupils, which could take number of lessons to complete. This
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should provide the pupils with the opportunity for the whole reading to writing process to include exploration and analysing of texts (WAGOLL), planning, drafting, editing and publishing for a real purpose

- Pupils are exposed to a number of planning formats so they are able to choose suitable forms to plan independently
- It could also require activities prior to the writing process, depending on the pupils' prior knowledge and experience of the text type, such as analysing examples of the text type or investigating a WAGOLL (What A Good One Looks Like)

Whole Class Guided Reading

- Guided Reading takes place twice weekly at Key Stage 1 and four times a week at Key Stage 2
- A range of poems and texts from different genres are used and questions relating to a number of focuses are asked about the text. Pupils carry out a short (usually written) task each lesson

Assessment

- Writing is marked using a range of methods of feedback (see Assessment Policy)
- They are also marked using the marking code (displayed in classrooms)
- Basic skills are picked up on and addressed such as homophones and other basic errors
- Pupils respond to feedback using purple pen where appropriate

Impact

By the end of KS1, our pupils will:

Reading:

- read accurately most words of two or more syllables, those containing common suffixes and most common exception words
- read most words accurately without overt sounding and blending, and sufficiently fluently to allow them to focus on their understanding rather than on decoding individual words²
- sound out most unfamiliar words accurately, without undue hesitation
- check their reading makes sense to them, correcting any inaccurate reading
- answer questions and make some inferences about what they have read
- explain what has happened so far in what they have read

Writing:

- write simple, coherent narratives about personal experiences and those of others
- write about real events, recording these simply and clearly
- use capital letters, full stops and question marks correctly
- use present and past tense mostly correctly and consistently
- use co-ordination (e.g. or / and / but) and some subordination (e.g. when / if / that / because) to join clauses
- segment spoken words into phonemes and represent these by graphemes, spelling many of these words correctly and making phonically-plausible attempts at others
- spell many common exception words
- form capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters
- use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

By the end of KS2, our pupils will:

Reading:

- read age-appropriate books with confidence and fluency (including whole novels)
- read aloud with intonation that shows understanding
- work out the meaning of words from the context
- explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read, drawing inferences and justifying these with evidence



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- predict what might happen from details stated and implied
- retrieve information from non-fiction
- summarise main ideas, identifying key details and using quotations for illustration
- evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader
- make comparisons within and across books

Writing:

- write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting language that shows good awareness of the reader (e.g. the use of the first person in a diary; direct address in instructions and persuasive writing)
 - in narratives, describe settings, characters and atmosphere
 - integrate dialogue in narratives to convey character and advance the action
 - select vocabulary and grammatical structures that reflect what the writing requires, doing this mostly appropriately (e.g. using contracted forms in dialogues in narrative; using passive verbs to affect how information is presented; using modal verbs to suggest degrees of possibility)
 - use a range of devices to build cohesion (e.g. conjunctions, adverbials of time and place, pronouns, synonyms) within and across paragraphs
 - use verb tenses consistently and correctly throughout their writing
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- use the range of punctuation taught at key stage 2 mostly correctly (e.g. inverted commas and other punctuation to indicate direct speech)
 - spell correctly most words from the year 5 / year 6 spelling list, and use a dictionary to check the spelling of uncommon or more ambitious vocabulary
 - maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed.