

# St Margaret's CE Primary School



## English Policy 2021

<b>Written by:</b>	Ms Dark		
<b>Review cycle:</b>	Every 3 years		
<b>Date of this policy</b>	July 2021	<b>Review date</b>	July 2024

**Revised: May 2022**

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## 1. INTENT

**Aims** The aim of the English learning experience at St Margaret's is to equip pupils with the belief in themselves and the skills to become the very best they can be as readers, writers, speakers and listeners, through a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of English across the curriculum.

### Our goals for our children

- have the confidence and desire to read challenging texts, or at times to read old favourites, for the pure love of reading
- write with self-assurance and fluency, using a range of independent strategies to edit and improve
- read for enjoyment and information
- have an interest in words and their meanings; develop a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms
- appreciate a range of text types and genres, including our literary heritage
- write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation
- develop the powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness
- use suitable vocabulary to talk about their work

### Statutory Requirements and Principles

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum in England (2014): English Programmes of Study – Key Stages 1 and 2 and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017). Our curriculum is drawn from these documents.

**In the Foundation Stage** children should be given opportunities to:

- speak and 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 possibilities for communication through child-initiated learning

**At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2)** children should learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say, beginning to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They should use language and develop vocabulary to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

**At Key Stage Two (Years 3-6)** children should learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They should read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They should explore the use of language in texts and learn the correct use of grammar.

## **2. IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Roles, Responsibilities and Resources**

The Subject Leader, Mary Dark, oversees and manages English at St Margaret's School, working alongside Tracey Keates as Phonics Lead

- Keep up to date with developments in the English curriculum
- Monitor standards and progression in English through observations, book looks, analysis of data and moderation meetings
- Review and implementing the English policy
- Support colleagues in their delivery of the English Curriculum
- Purchase and organise resources

### **Organisation**

In the Early Years, English is taught through a cross curricular approach and discreet sessions. Children are given opportunities to develop their skills in a range of contexts through structured and 'self-initiated' activities. There are also daily phonics sessions where children are grouped according to the phase they are working at.

In KS1 phonics is taught as discrete daily sessions. Opportunities to reinforce their learning are provided through self-initiated activities in the learning environment and home learning activities.

In Early Years and KS1 children are taught phonics via 'Monster Phonics', a progressive, synthetic, phonics approach which provides a fully comprehensive programme, including resources and assessment, to ensure consistency in teaching and learning.

In KS1 and KS2 English is taught through discrete lessons. In addition to this, there are many other opportunities for children to develop their skills through guided reading, phonics/spelling and handwriting sessions, and across other curriculum areas.

In all year groups, plans are completed and stored on the school server. English is planned in unit blocks, which may cover one or more weeks of work and is usually based around key texts.

### **Planning and Content**

#### **Approaches to Speaking and Listening**

Speaking and listening skills are developed through a range of activities both within the English lesson and across the curriculum:

- Drama and role play
- Discussion and debate
- Providing opportunities for pupils to speak in large groups e.g. show and tell time/ performances / presentations / assemblies
- Presenting work in a variety of ways

#### **Approaches to Reading**

Pupils at St Margaret's school have access to a wide range of texts. The school library has an extensive collection of books and children are able to take books out to share at home and for independent reading in school. Each class has a 'reading corner' and their own set of materials, including sets of books for guided reading, which are shared across the year

group. In the **Early Years and KS1**, children read books in school and take home books matched to the phonic phase that they are working on. This will also include other 'tricky' or on sight words that need to be practised and learnt. Books have been grouped according to phonic phases, and in some cases sub-phases, and are progressive. Children choose from a box of books within the phase they're working on in order to maintain an element of choice about what they would like to read.

Children then move onto library books where they can take out two books which can include non-fiction. (Fiction is organised into colour bands, becoming increasingly challenging.) Children in Years 3 and 4 ready to access more challenging books with suitable content, select from the orange section. Similarly, there is a selection of easier readers for older children to cater for the many needs of our pupils. Bands are a guide with allowance made for children to follow interests and favourite authors across the bands. Our dedicated librarian ensures the smooth running of the library, listens to children read, guides children in their choice of books and purchases new stock.

Reading is taught through the daily English lesson, guided reading sessions, individual reading, daily phonic sessions (infants and currently Year 3) and in other areas across the curriculum where appropriate. The Lexia reading programme provides targeted support in KS2 and is currently being trialled in Years 1 and 2. With the introduction of Monster Phonics, guided reading takes place across the school (June 2022 onwards). There is a minimum of three reading sessions per week. Children have a shared text; an adult will read with the children, listen to individuals read and question pupils to encourage them to respond to what they have read. During these sessions, activities are given to allow some children to respond independently whilst others have further adult support. Daily reading opportunities are provided for those who find reading a challenge.

Pupils are encouraged to read regularly at home from the Early Years through to Year 6. This is recorded in a home-school reading diary or online using Google classroom/ Seesaw or Tapestry platforms. To raise the positive profile of reading, in Years 4 to 6 a reading challenge is in place to encourage reading at home. Once children have read 20 books, annotating their reading diary as they read, they are rewarded with a badge to wear on their uniform and a £5 book voucher. This is followed by the milestones of 50 books, 75 books and the Hundred Hall of Fame. To recognise those who make a huge effort in their reading, a monthly star reader is chosen by the class teacher; these children are also awarded with a certificate and a badge. Alongside regular opportunities for independent reading, children in Years 4 to 6 are given a weekly 'reading for pleasure' session, where they can read what they like, where they like in the classroom, such as a comic, curled up on a cushion in the reading corner... Please see the reading corner on our school website for staff recommendations, etc.

In the infants, children take home a book matched to the phonic phase they're working on so they can practise their blending skills and grapheme-phoneme correspondence. They also take home a 'choosing book'. This is to be read by adults at home to reinforce a love of reading through the enjoyment of sharing a good book with a significant adult in their life and is not part of the reading scheme linked to phonics.

Teachers read regularly to children towards the end of most days, giving children the opportunity to experience a wide variety of texts and access those which they may not be able to read independently.

*For further information, please ask to see our 'Reading at St Margaret' document.*

## **Approaches to Writing**

Writing is taught through the main English lesson and separate spelling and handwriting sessions. Each year group plans in line with the National Curriculum 2014 or the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2017), to provide pupils with the experience of writing in different contexts. There is a focus on discussing ideas, drafting, editing and improving their writing.

Grammar, punctuation and spelling are taught as part of the English lesson and reinforced in other curriculum areas. In KS1, spellings and key words are sent home as part of homework activities to encourage children to learn specific words and spelling patterns. In KS2, there is a weekly dedicated spelling lesson where the statutory spelling patterns and rules are taught and then reinforced throughout the week in English lessons, guided reading sessions, words on display in classrooms and other curricular opportunities as appropriate. These spellings and key words are sent home as part of their weekly homework. At the weekly spelling review, the patterns and rules are further reinforced and common errors addressed.

Handwriting is taught throughout the school with cursive handwriting beginning in the summer term of year 1. In Early Years, letter formation is taught throughout the week as a part of our phonics and literacy lessons as well as self initiated activities accessible through our continuous provision. In Year 1 and 2 there are dedicated handwriting sessions where children are taught letter formation and/or joins. This is followed up with an independent session where children have the opportunity to practice their handwriting. Staff use a set printed style in EYFS and Year 1 and a set cursive style in Year 1 and 2 with joins taught in a specific order (see appendix). In Year 3, the teaching of joined handwriting previously taught in Year 2 is reinforced, with specific support given to those who have not yet mastered it. Handwriting is frequently modelled using a visualiser.

Children use a pencil until Year 4. During the year, as children are demonstrating consistently neat, joined up handwriting, they move on to write in pen.

*(Please ask to see our Handwriting Policy for further information.)*

## **Cross-Curricular Opportunities**

Teachers seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They plan for pupils to practise, apply and further their skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

Opportunities to use technology to support teaching and learning in English are planned for and used as appropriate; this may include the use of iPads, websites, online and interactive resources.

## **Wider opportunities**

We do not feel English should be contained to the classrooms. In Early Years and Year One continuous provision includes opportunities for developing literacy skills. Volunteers support our children's reading.

Additional opportunities include theatre groups; World Book Day; National Poetry Day; school production; class assemblies to an audience; visitors (including four-legged!)...

## **Inclusion and Extension**

Following observations and formative assessment tasks, teachers are able to plan work to challenge the children with their learning. Depending on the nature of the task, children will work in a variety of groups, with a partner or independently.

We are able to use teacher and support staff expertise to provide classes and groups for extending more able children (such as in year six where the children are divided into three classes) and for supporting those who need targeted intervention.

### **Homework**

Pupils are encouraged to read regularly at home from the Early Years through to Year 6. This is recorded in a home-school reading diary or online using Google classroom/ Seesaw or Tapestry platforms. In KS1 and 2, Spellings and key words are sent home as part of homework activities to encourage children to learn specific words and spelling patterns.

### **3. IMPACT**

**Our ultimate goal is for children to leave our school as confident, literate young people who can communicate effectively and enjoy reading for pleasure, alongside the acquisition of knowledge.**

### **Marking and assessment**

The programmes of study are used to inform teacher assessment. Moderation meetings leading on from whole school writing activities, with a strong focus on analysing children's work, take place regularly. In KS1 and KS2, Children are assessed termly as Working towards (WTS), Expected (EXS) or Greater Depth (GD) against the end of year or Key Stage expectations. 'Tapestry' online learning journal is used to track children's progress in the Early Years. Teachers attend locality meetings to discuss children's work and moderate assessment.

Formative assessment, with a whole school focus on Assessment for Learning, is integral to this process. Work is marked regularly according to the marking policy, providing pupils with valuable feedback. Pupils are often involved in this process through self-assessment and peer marking.

Opportunities for independence and choice are provided at least half termly allowing pupils to show embedded skills.

In the Infants, children are assessed half-termly on the phonic phase they are working on to track their progress and acquisition of grapheme-phoneme correspondences.

In the Early Years, pupils are assessed termly against the Early Learning Goals.

In Year 1, pupils undertake the statutory phonics check in the summer term. Year 2 pupils who did not pass the check in Year 1 will repeat the check in the summer term of Year 2.

In years 2 and 6 Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs) are administered in line with government guidelines.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

The subject leaders, along with the SLT, are responsible for monitoring the standards of English across the school by looking at planning, children's books, learning walks and observations of classroom practice. Results of the national Curriculum SATs are monitored and reviewed by the subject leaders and SLT.

### **Reporting to parents and governors**

Parents are encouraged to support pupils with regular reading at home, practising spelling and other appropriate homework tasks. Parents are also encouraged to come into school to support guided reading and individual reading.

All teachers are required to discuss the children's progress in English with parents as part of the consultation evenings (twice a year) and through an annual report which outlines the children's effort and attainment in reading, writing and spoken English  
Subject leaders are required to feedback to the curriculum governors every year.

[Addendum](#)

[Handwriting formation](#)