

St Laurence Church Infant School

English Policy



Approved by: Curriculum, Safeguarding and
Pupil Welfare Committee

Last revised in: May 2023

Next review due by: May 2026

Love for learning, life and one another.



As a Rights Respecting School, our English curriculum enables our children as rights holders to learn how to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. Our English curriculum develops every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

Our children told us:

"We love English because we learn lots of new stories and that helps us to make up our own stories too. We also enjoy learning new sounds in the Kit and Sam stories in Twinkl Phonics. It is important to learn English because you will be able to read lots of books and write letters and stories. English lessons are best when we do actions to help us to learn the words in a story."

Intent

Why do we teach English?

At St. Laurence Church Infant School we believe that each child has a voice which is to be highly valued. We work hard to provide an inspiring and relevant English curriculum where children can communicate their voice in a variety of contexts, allowing them to confidently express their thoughts, ideas, emotions and opinions whether in spoken or written form. We encourage children to recognise the importance of listening to, understanding and discussing the ideas of others. We aim for all children to have an appreciation of different forms of literature; and a love and enjoyment of reading. Our English curriculum equips our children with the fundamental skills and behaviours needed to thrive in the modern world.

Our English Curriculum is designed to develop five core characteristics in our pupils, which we believe will lay the foundations for them to be lifelong learners and good global citizens. These drivers are:



Our aims in teaching English at St Laurence Church Infant School help all children to..

Love for learning, life and one another.

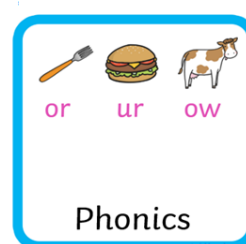
- **Feel part of a Community** by:
 - working as part of a team
 - experiencing success and failure
- **Be Creative** by:
 - creating story maps using craft materials and drawing
 - using interesting and engaging vocabulary
 - using story structures to create fictional stories
- **Develop Curiosity** by:
 - reading and discussing different types of text
 - reading for pleasure
- **Communicate confidently** by:
 - giving and interpreting verbal and non-verbal cues when working with partners and in a group
 - developing effective spoken and written language skills
 - developing our interpersonal skills with others
 - evaluating our own work
- **Care for ourselves, others and our world**
 - developing physically, mentally, socially and spiritually
 - building resilience
 - respecting the views of the others
 - caring for resources

Implementation

How we teach English

We ensure that all staff members have a secure subject knowledge of modern approaches to the teaching and learning of English. Many cross curricular links are made as English is the fundamental skill that underpins learning across other curriculum subjects. English is valued, promoted and enjoyed as a subject throughout the school year by celebrating World Book Day, local library visits, studies of work by the same author, parent reading workshops, bedtime stories at school, as well as the summer holiday reading challenge.

Staff use the English Subject Jingle at the beginning of each session along with the visual timetable icons, to ensure children articulate what English is like at St Laurence Church Infant School.



English Jingle:

*In English we learn to read,
We practise the phonemes and words that we need.
In English we learn to write,
With graphemes, words & letters at the correct height.*

- 1. Spoken Language**
- 2. Reading**
- 3. Synthetic Phonics**
- 4. Writing**
- 5. Handwriting**

1. Spoken Language

How we plan Spoken Language

The ability to speak and listen effectively are fundamental communication skills which are necessary for children to become competent readers and writers. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum is used to plan a wide range of activities to develop each child's 'Communication and Language' skills. These are separated into the subsections of 'Listening, Attention and Understanding', and 'Speaking'. In Key Stage One the National Curriculum is used to plan activities to develop Spoken Language skills.

How we teach Spoken Language

Throughout the EYFS and Key Stage One children are constantly provided with opportunities to understand the importance of being effective listeners and communicators. Activities such as imaginative role play, small world play, oral memory games, sound discrimination, listening to and responding to new or familiar stories, collaborative work which promotes discussion, talking about experiences as well as everyday occasions, such as following instructions, enable children to practise these skills and acquire correct grammatical structures.

2. Reading

How we plan Reading

The ability to read fluently and with good understanding is a necessary skill to access the full school curriculum and become an independent learner. The teaching of reading is planned in order to deliver the requirements outlined in the EYFS Curriculum and the National Curriculum for Key Stage One. As well as teaching reading skills, we strive to instil a love of reading in our children so that they read for pleasure and enjoyment.

How we teach Reading

The Twinkl Phonics programme enables children to acquire phonic knowledge and word reading skills (see below). Our curriculum in the EYFS and Key Stage One is based on half termly or termly themes. High quality model texts from the Talk 4 Writing programme are chosen in relation to these themes based on their richness of vocabulary, text types and features, and the opportunities that these texts offer for children to practise a variety of reading cues. These texts are used to model and practise essential comprehension skills such as understanding, recall, sequencing, inference and prediction.

Reading Books

Each child in school reads a 'Rhino Reader' book once every two weeks with a teacher. Children who are Pupil Premium read once a week with a teacher. The children read books from the Rhino Reader scheme which are directly linked to the Twinkl Phonics scheme. The book level is chosen based on a child's Twinkl Phonics Assessment, so children read books that they can use their phonic knowledge to decode.

Children take a new Oxford Reading Tree reading book home each week. These books are banded to match the Twinkl Phonics scheme. Each child has a Reading Diary which is signed by parents and school staff when a child is heard read.

The children have access to a school library where many books are kept as a central resource. Children can access fiction and non-fiction books as well as a range of curriculum based books to support their learning across all subjects.

3. Synthetic Phonics

How we plan Synthetic Phonics

Twinkl Phonics is a DfE validated synthetic phonics scheme used as the prime approach to teach children to decode print. Children start on entrance to Reception and work through the six levels of the programme with the expectation that they will acquire secure word recognition skills by the end of Key Stage One.

How we teach Synthetic Phonics

Synthetic Phonics is taught as short, discrete daily sessions. Each session follows the Twinkl Phonics sequence of 'revisit, teach, practise and apply'. This ensures consistency and a fast-paced approach to teaching grapheme/phoneme correspondence, blending and segmenting skills and sight recognition of words that do not follow the phonic code (tricky words). Children are given a wealth of opportunities to apply their phonic skills outside of these daily teaching sessions.

4. Writing

How we plan Writing

The teaching of writing is planned in order to deliver the requirements outlined in the EYFS Curriculum and the National Curriculum for Key Stage One. The EYFS Curriculum emphasises the importance of mastering gross and fine motor skills to prepare children for the physical endurance of writing. In Key Stage One, writing opportunities are planned to incorporate the requirements of transcription, composition, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation.

How we teach Writing

The Twinkl Phonics synthetic phonics programme supports children's understanding of the link between reading and writing. The programme sets out how to segment spoken sounds into graphemes (written units of sound). In the EYFS, this understanding enables children to spell using their phonic knowledge. As children move through Key Stage One, they are taught alternative ways to write graphemes and how to spell Common Exception Words. A range of spelling strategies are taught so children can find a strategy which works well for them.

Writing is taught using strategies from the 'Talk 4 Writing' approach. Children are introduced to a high-quality model text at the start of a unit through the use of a story map. The children learn to say this model text using the story map and actions. This enables children to learn and embed story structures and language. During a unit, children have opportunities to explore vocabulary, character and setting through role play, drama and small world experiences. Once children are confident with the features of a model text, they begin to change aspects of a model text to make the text their own. This can include description, characterisation, setting, action and suspense.

The features of non-fiction writing are also taught using a similar approach, including information texts, recounts, instructions and letters. The skills needed to write poetry are taught in Key Stage One.

5. Handwriting

How we plan Handwriting

The teaching of writing is planned in order to deliver the requirements outlined in the EYFS Curriculum and the National Curriculum for Key Stage One. The 'Penpals for Handwriting' scheme is followed from Reception to the end of Year Two. Letters are split into four groups: long-legged giraffe letters, one-armed robot letters, curly caterpillar letters and zig-zag monster letters. The Twinkl Phonics handwriting pattern is used to form each lower-case letter.

How we teach Handwriting

In the EYFS gross motor skills are taught to enable children to gain control and co-ordination over their whole body. Fine motor skills are taught through pre-writing activities where children develop dexterity through manipulating objects such as placing pegs on boards, wrapping elastic bands on poles, building with Lego, using tweezers and threading. Correct posture, pencil grip and letter formation of single lower case letters is taught through daily discrete sessions.

In Year One, handwriting is taught in daily discrete sessions and practised throughout the week in writing activities. Children are taught single lower-case letters, capital letters and letter combinations. If children are ready, they are taught the first four joins (diagonal join to ascender, diagonal join, no ascender, horizontal join to ascender, horizontal join, no ascender).

In Year Two, handwriting is taught in daily discrete sessions and practised throughout the week in writing activities. Children practise lower case and capital letters, and, if ready to, are taught the strokes needed for horizontal, diagonal and mixed joins for two and three letters.

Handwriting guidelines are used from Reception to Year Two. Children write using guidelines on their white boards and in their English books. Teachers model the use of these handwriting lines using large flipchart paper.

Accurate handwriting is practised, discussed and reinforced throughout the week during Twinkl Phonics and English lessons. Correct letter formation is always modelled by teachers when writing in front of the children and in books. Incorrect posture, pencil grip and letter formation are corrected when seen. Children must master the correct techniques needed to form single letters before they are taught to join.

How we assess English

- In the EYFS, children are assessed on entry using the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) in the first six weeks in which a child starts school.
- Throughout the school year, evidence is kept in each child's individual Learning Journey. At the end of Reception children are assessed using the statutory EYFS Profile.
- Children are assessed throughout Key Stage One against the National Curriculum strands.
- Photographs and observations are used to evidence children's progress and these are kept in floor books and gallery boards in the classrooms.
- Towards the end of Year One, children take part in the statutory Phonics Screen in the summer term.
- At the end of Key Stage One, a teacher assessed judgement is made using the Reading statements from the Teacher Assessment Framework.
- Each child is continuously assessed from Reception to Year Two on a Twinkl Phonics Assessment sheet. Reading records are kept for each child and are used to inform reading assessments which are recorded on a tracking system.

- Teachers moderate judgements about children's writing in school and across schools.
- Each term one piece of writing is collected in a child's Writing Profile, to produce a profile of progress.

How we ensure all children access the English curriculum

At St Laurence Church Infant School all children access the English curriculum, regardless of ability. Through carefully planned lessons and a range of different learning opportunities, all children have access to the full English curriculum. The National Curriculum states that children who did not meet an expected standard in Literacy at the end of the EYFS continue to follow the EYFS Curriculum in Key Stage One to develop their word reading, spelling and language skills. Children in need of support to develop their skills in any area of the English curriculum will be quickly identified and suitable interventions will be implemented, and measured for their impact.

How is the teaching and learning of English monitored?

The Subject Lead works in partnership with the EYFS and Key Stage One leaders to plan an engaging and relevant English curriculum each year. Lesson walks are planned to monitor teaching, children are heard read and children take part in 'pupil interviews' where they are given an opportunity to discuss the subject with an adult. Data is analysed in order to monitor the teaching and learning impact and necessary adjustments to improve progress are made. The Subject Lead stays up to date with new developments in the English Curriculum and plans CPD sessions to share these with other staff.

Impact

Our well-planned curriculum allows the children at St. Laurence Church Infant School to become enthusiastic young speakers, readers and writers. They will be able to apply their English skills in a range of contexts and be confident to take creative risks. We have high expectations of each child and we strive to enable all children to achieve these standards. Our children will be ready for junior school as well as life beyond this. The skills, knowledge and vocabulary gained throughout their time at St Laurence Church Infant school, ensures all children

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are able to 'Feel part of a Community, Be Creative, Develop Curiosity, Communicate confidently and Care for ourselves, others and our world'.

Review

This Policy will be reviewed within the next three years, or prior to that if there are changes to the English curriculum.

Date of Policy: May 2023

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English Co-ordinator: Rebecca Lawler