

## St Michael Catholic Primary and Nursery School



### The Intent, Implementation and Impact of our English Curriculum

#### School Mission Statement



**St Michael's RC Primary School is a Catholic family of faith, following the teaching of Christ. We strive to create an environment where all members of our school community become caring, independent and resilient individuals who fulfil their potential.**

**"I came so that you may have life, life in all its fullness" John 10:10**

## Intent

Knowledge of English, and a command of the spoken and written word, is an essential resource for a child's learning in school. It is a tool used across the whole school curriculum, as well as being a subject in its own right.

English at St. Michael School will not only be a daily discrete lesson, but is at the cornerstone of the entire curriculum. It is embedded within all our lessons and we will strive for a high level of English for all. Through using high-quality texts, immersing children in vocabulary rich learning environments, ensuring new curriculum expectations and the progression of skills are met, the children at St. Michael School will be exposed to a language heavy, creative and continuous English curriculum, which will not only enable them to become primary literate but will also develop a love of reading, creative writing and purposeful speaking and listening.

At St. Michael Catholic Primary and Nursery School we recognise that each child has their own starting point upon entry to every year group and progress is measured in line with these starting points to ensure every child can celebrate success.

**Reading:** We intend to encourage all pupils to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop: knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live; to establish an appreciation and love of reading; to gain knowledge across the curriculum; and develop their comprehension skills.

**Writing:** Our intention is for pupils to be able to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. To be able to do this effectively, pupils will focus on developing effective transcription and effective composition. They will also develop an awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. We also intend for pupils to leave school being able to use fluent, legible and speedy handwriting.

## Implementation

### Speaking and listening

Beginning in Nursery and continuing through all Primary years the children develop their capacity to express themselves effectively for a variety of purposes. This is fostered in our teaching and learning environment, as well as through carefully structured lessons. Working with adults and other children, their activities include listening, giving opinions, replying to instructions and questions, describing experiences and feelings.

Junior children extend these skills to recount events, tell stories, take on dramatic roles, report, summarise and predict. Children are also provided with opportunities to compose, recite and perform poetry. The infants perform Christmas nativities, and the juniors end the year with a summer show. Also, all children are given an opportunity to perform in their class assemblies.

### Reading

Children learn not just the mechanics of reading, but to become accomplished, comprehending readers; developing the habit of silent reading and a love of reading for life. Each class has a designated reading area to help promote the love and high importance that reading holds in our school. They can enjoy exploring a wide selection of reading books, which helps them to develop an appreciation of our rich literary heritage.

We continue to utilise the 'Power of Reading' scheme to support reading and writing throughout all areas of English. This has placed high quality literature at the heart of our literacy lessons. We have seen a marked improvement in motivation and attitude towards reading, especially amongst reluctant readers.

From Reception, phonics is taught through the Read, Write Inc. scheme, and this is then continued through Y1, and Y2. Across the school, we use Accelerated Reader, our reading scheme, which incorporates fiction and non-fiction texts. Reading is also an integral part of our English curriculum, where the whole class engage in daily carefully planned sessions working their teacher or independently, exploring the meaning of the books, texts or lyrics being read and studied.

Our daily reading sessions focus on the Literacy Shed 'VIPERS' progression where each skill is taught discretely as well as high-quality texts for comprehension practise to explore a thorough understanding of what's being read.

## Writing

Spelling, Handwriting and Composition – These strands go hand in hand throughout the Curriculum. As they mature, children develop a growing ability to write in different styles, for different audiences and purposes, e.g. stories, diaries, letters, invitations, captions, posters, plans, reporting on projects and poetry. Cohesively planned, modelled and implemented by all staff, writing genres and conventions are creatively developed throughout both key stages. Emphasis is laid upon drafting, as a process to encourage children to improve the construction, spelling and layout of their written work. Much of their writing is developed from the use of high-quality literature, as the children respond to plot, character, illustration and ideas.

They are taught the rudiments of grammar, progressively from Reception through to Year 6, both discretely, as well as in the context of the literature they are studying. Attention to grammatical rules being studied are also noted as they are encountered in all areas of the curriculum. The handwriting schemes, Join-it and the Bubble Writing scaffold for Handwriting, were introduced to complement our teaching of handwriting. We have seen pleasing improvements in the presentation and cursive writing skills across the whole school.

For spelling, we follow the ‘Purple Mash spelling Scheme’ programme, which introduces all the required spelling rules, by way of lively and engaging activities. We constantly strive to create a variety of daily spelling activities, which are visual, auditory and engaging for the children. We also use the Sir Linkalot app to support the learning and retention of ‘trickier’ words from each year group’s National Curriculum Spelling lists. Our aim, over time is to ensure our children become accomplished proficient spellers - much needed in these days of text speak.

## Impact

The impact on our children is clear: progress, sustained learning and transferrable skills. With the implementation of the writing journey being well established and taught thoroughly in both key stages, children are becoming more confident writers and by the time they are in upper Key Stage 2, most genres of writing are familiar to them and the teaching can focus on creativity, writer’s craft, sustained writing and manipulation of grammar and punctuation skills.

As all aspects of English are an integral part of the curriculum, cross curricular writing standards have also improved and skills taught in the English lesson are transferred into other subjects; this shows consolidation of skills and a deeper understanding of how and when to use specific grammar, punctuation and grammar objectives. We hope that as children move on from us to further their education and learning that their creativity, passion for English and high aspirations, which we have nurtured here at St. Michael’s, travels with them and continues to grow and develop as they do.

