

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

LITERACY POLICY

November 2025

MISSION STATEMENT

St Mary's school community follows the teachings of Jesus Christ, working together to develop the whole child, in a spiritual, moral, academic, physical, social and emotional way, within a caring and supportive environment.

Introduction

At St Mary's we believe that the development of language and literacy skills are of the highest priority. The purpose of this language policy is

- a. ensure the effective delivery of the National Curriculum for English;
- b. enable progression and continuity throughout the school;
- c. ensure progression and continuity throughout the school;
- d. aid the monitoring of the teaching and learning of language.

We address language special needs throughout the school with the help and input of the SENCO, using school based resources and those of the outside agencies.

We are aware of issues of gender and race equality and are prepared to bring about any necessary changes in the teaching of language to give equality of opportunity.

We plan termly with colleagues within Early Years, Key Stage 1, Y3 and Y4, and Y5 and Y6 to ensure continuity and progression.

As well as termly plans each teacher keeps weekly plans. Within this planning, provision is made for different teaching and learning styles and children are encouraged to work both independently and collaboratively, at their own level in order to achieve their full potential.

Aims

- To provide opportunities which will enable our children to become competent and confident listeners, speakers, readers and writers.
- Develop the language skills of each child to the highest level in the following areas:

Speaking and Listening

From the Nursery, children are actively encouraged to speak and listen.

Opportunities are given for school, class, small group and individual discussion, expression of ideas and presentations. Children are actively encouraged to:

- Listen and respond with constructive comments, questions or answers in a variety of speaking and listening activities, developing wide ranging and suitable vocabulary;
- Listen and follow instructions and to relay messages accurately;
- Plan and discuss work co-operatively where appropriate;
- Develop social skills and good manners, showing courtesy to each other and visitors.

By the time they leave us, our children have fluency and confidence to use language to convey information, ideas, comments and personal views in a socially acceptable manner appropriate to the purpose and audience.

Reading

Children are encouraged from entry in Nursery to develop an interest in all kinds of books and the print around them. Children will have the opportunity to:

- Play prereading games and exercises to develop the variety of skills needed to learn the complex task of reading.
- Learn a variety of approaches to reading, including phonics (using the Monster Phonics scheme), whole word recognition, picture and context clues to make sense of text;
- From Reception to Year 2 read from a core reading scheme - Monster Phonics linked to their phonics teaching and have this supplemented with a wide range of books offering a choice of genre and vocabulary at the appropriate level;
- Browse, share and enjoy books with family and friends as well as sessions with the teacher. Short daily spells of enjoying and reading books with an adult are essential for successful, confident reading.
- Join the Home Reading Scheme and have the opportunity to visit the library weekly and choose fiction or non-fiction books.

Writing

We want our children to become competent and confident writers in a variety of styles for different audiences. It is important that they see themselves as valued authors whose work can be displayed for others to read. So they are encouraged to:

- Use writing as a tool to aid learning and record their experiences in a wide range of activities across the curriculum;
- To employ a variety of forms suitable to context, purpose and audience;
- Be aware of the difference between the spoken word and written word;
- Become independent and accurate spellers who are confident in attempting a variety of unknown words in their writing;
- Through the use of various handwriting schemes, encourage children to develop clear, legible and fluent handwriting style while the use of computers and word processors is encouraged.

In order to continue to raise standards and to raise the level of achievement for children in writing we aim to develop their skills through a variety of teaching methods. The framework outlined below is applicable across all the writing genres and all the age groups in our school. We aim to include some of the features below in a single lesson (big writing) but not **all** the features in every lesson.

The Writing Process:

Familiarisation and Talk for Writing (Exposure to many samples of a writing genre)

Modelled Writing (Writing **for** the children)

Shared Writing (Writing **with** the children)

Guided Writing (Writing **with/by** the children)

Independent Writing (Writing **by** the children)

By class teachers using one or some of the processes above children will then participate in completing a writing task using the 7 steps of writing: **Planning, Drafting, Sharing, Evaluating, Revising, Editing and Publishing.**

Familiarisation

The use of Drama to begin the writing process and use of Talk Partner work in school will give the children opportunities to talk and think about their ideas before putting pen to paper along with well planned and structured Role Play Centres in classrooms will give the children opportunities to explore and play with language prior to actual writing tasks.

Modelled Writing

This is usually a whole class session (often the major carpet input time) where the teacher is demonstrating **how** to write by “thinking aloud” as he/she composes and interacts with a text in front of the students. This allows the children to hear the thinking process that is going on during the writing process. Modelled writing is **not** an interactive writing time between teacher and students. The teacher does **all** of the writing. The teacher voices their thoughts (planning what she intends to write), talks about directionality, letter formations, how to spell words, choice of words etc. The children participate by listening and observing the expert at work. The teacher talks through the process step-by-step to show the learner how things are done. The end result is a readable error free text that allows the children to have a correct model to refer to and follow when engaged in further writing.

Language Guidelines for Individual Year Groups

The following guidelines have been laid down in conjunction with the National Curriculum Document and Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. We are fully aware that these are merely guidelines for teachers to refer to. We appreciate that all children are individual and we hope that these guidelines will enable us to help each child reach his/her full potential.

C BRENNAN

Date to be reviewed November 2026