

St Mary Magdalene C of E Primary School
Headteacher: Miss S Robinson
Deputy Headteacher: Mrs S Pearson



English Policy

January 2026

Statement of intent

St Mary Magdalene C of E Primary School believes that developing strong English skills is essential for progressing across the curriculum and preparing for adult life. All teachers have a responsibility to develop pupils' competence in reading, writing, speaking and listening and to ensure that pupils build the language skills necessary to fully access the curriculum.

This policy will ensure the school complies with the national curriculum and help pupils have a solid grounding in English, a positive attitude towards literature, and a strong understanding of language.

English Policy

Aims

Our Vision and Values

In our family, we have the courage to embody Jesus' love for us. We put others' needs above our own. We act with integrity and respect. And when others fall short of our expectations, we support them to atone and extend our forgiveness. In doing this, we prepare children to live life in all its fullness: its joys and celebrations, its sorrows and struggles. The values which are most pertinent to this policy, alongside their links, are detailed below:

Love

Jesus embodies the love and compassion of God for each person, and Christians are called to follow him in this. In RE, love impels us to consider Christian perspectives on life, such as:

- putting others' needs above our own;
- acting with humility and without entitlement;
- Supporting those experiencing suffering and sadness – in our community and beyond.

At St Mary Magdalene, we empower love for learning by supporting children's interests and embedding this within all areas of the curriculum.

"Let all that you do be done in love." (1 Corinthians 16:14)

Courage

We are called to create an environment where both children and staff aspire to be, and give, their best. Everyone is emboldened to take risks, overcome challenges and be courageous in their efforts to achieve their potential. Leaders make bold curriculum choices that enable children to:

- gain knowledge, skills and experiences to navigate life in an evolving world; and
- develop characteristics such as self-belief, ambition, and resilience to overcome life's challenges.

At St Mary Magdalene, children encounter many new experiences and opportunities; at St Mary's, we encourage and promote taking risks and celebrate alongside our children when they reach their goals.

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God is with you."
(Joshua 1:9)

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Respect

We seek to model to children an ethos of living well together. The flourishing of pupils goes hand in hand with the flourishing of the wider school community: staff, families, governors and friends of the school. Just as Jesus respected people by taking the time to care for them, we endeavor to:

- celebrate the Christian faith;
- foster deep respect for other cultures, faiths and traditions;
- provide an inclusive environment where special provision is afforded to those with disabilities or special educational needs; and
- challenge inequality.

“Whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them.” (Matthew 7:12)

Forgiveness

Faults, flaws, and mistakes are an unavoidable part of human life. Though Jesus preached the importance of repentance, even in moments of great personal torture, he prayed for forgiveness for his tormentors. Therefore, in our family, we seek to:

- hold ourselves and others accountable for our/their actions;
- have a robust approach to dealing with situations when things go wrong;
- repent when we fall short of our own and others’ expectations; and
- forgive others for their indiscretions.

“If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him.” (Luke 17:3)

Honesty

An honest person makes a habit of making accurate, trustworthy statements about life, self, others, and God; they represent themselves just as they are and tell others the truth about themselves. That said, the Bible tells us that honesty should always be accompanied by gentleness (Colossians 4:6). With this in mind, we strive to build kind and trusting relationships by:

- speaking and acting with integrity;
- ensuring that children have a strong voice in every aspect of school life, and acting on this; and
- working openly and compassionately with others, even when messages might be difficult to give or receive.

“And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8:32)

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2013) ‘English programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2’
- DfE (2017) ‘Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage’
- DfE (2025) ‘Writing Framework’
- DfE (2020) ‘Headteachers’ standards 2020’

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This policy has due regard to the most recent version of the following school policies:

- Assessment Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Marking and feedback Policy
- St Mary's (2023) 'Writing Assessment Framework' and 'Reading Assessment Framework'
- Homework Policy

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Ensuring a broad and balanced English curriculum is implemented in the school.
- Ensuring the school's English curriculum is accessible to all pupils.

The head teacher is responsible for:

- Appointing an appropriate subject leader.
- Establishing and sustain high-quality, expert English teaching across all phases, built on an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how pupils learn.
- Ensuring English teaching is underpinned by high levels of expertise in English and approaches which respect the distinct nature of English as a discipline
- Ensuring effective use is made of formative assessment.
- Ensuring a broad, structured and coherent English curriculum entitlement which sets out the knowledge, skills and values that will be taught.
- Establishing effective curricular leadership, developing subject leaders with high levels of relevant expertise with access to professional networks and communities.
- Ensuring that all pupils are taught to read through the provision of evidence-informed approaches to reading, particularly the use of systematic synthetic phonics in schools that teach early reading.
- Ensuring valid, reliable and proportionate approaches are used when assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the English curriculum.
- Establishing and sustain culture and practices that enable all pupils, including pupils with SEND, to access the curriculum and learn effectively.

The subject leader is responsible for:

- Preparing policy documents, curriculum plans and schemes of work for the subject.
- Reviewing changes to the national curriculum and advising on their implementation.
- Monitoring the learning and teaching of English, providing support for staff where necessary.
- Ensuring the continuity and progression from year group to year group.
- Encouraging staff to provide effective learning opportunities for pupils.
- Helping to develop colleagues' expertise in the subject.
- Organising the deployment of resources and carrying out an annual audit of all English-related resources.
- Liaising with teachers across all phases.
- Communicating developments in the subject to all teaching staff.
- Leading staff meetings and providing staff members with the appropriate training.
- Organising, providing and monitoring CPD opportunities in the subject.
- Ensuring common standards are met for recording and assessing pupil performance.
- Advising on the contribution of English to other curriculum areas, including cross-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

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- Collating assessment data and setting new priorities for the development of English in subsequent years.

The classroom teacher is responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this policy.
- Ensuring progression of pupils' reading and writing skills, with due regard to the national curriculum.
- Planning lessons effectively, ensuring a range of teaching methods are used to cover the content of the national curriculum.
- Liaising with the subject leader about key topics, resources and support for individual pupils.
- Monitoring the progress of pupils in their class and reporting this on an annual basis to parents.
- Reporting any concerns regarding the teaching of the subject to the subject leader or a member of the senior leadership team (SLT).
- Undertaking any training that is necessary in order to effectively teach the subject.

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) is responsible for:

- Liaising with the subject leader in order to implement and develop reading and writing throughout the school.
- Organising and providing training for staff regarding the English curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- Advising staff how best to support pupils' needs.
- Advising staff on the inclusion of English objectives in pupils' individual education plans.
- Advising staff on the use of teaching assistants in order to meet pupils' needs

Curriculum Progression and Sequencing

- Novel study is used as a basis for the teaching of English. Books are carefully chosen to match the needs of our children and to show progression across and within year groups.
- The school carefully sequences knowledge, concepts and procedures to build knowledge and skills systematically over time. This is illustrated by way of a Curriculum Progression Map which sets out the objectives taught in each year group across the school alongside the order of the novels taught; this can be found in the appendix of this policy.
- The school also sets out Long Term Overviews which mirror and add detail to the Progression Map by setting out the length of time to be spent on each novel. These can also be found in the appendix to this policy. Opportunities for independent writes, published outcomes (including an oral recording/performance), use of Imaginary Community techniques are identified within the LTP for each year group.
- The school use a bespoke teaching sequence to support teachers to break down teaching into sequential lessons, and to provide teaching resources and activities. These can be found in the appendix of this policy. A planning format has been designed to support the teaching sequence.
- The school provides a progression map for each genre, which sets out the progressive technical aspects that teachers should teach pupils to use in each year group. This ensures that pupils are ready for the next stage in learning by the end of the academic year.

Assessment, Marking and Feedback

Pupils will be assessed and their progression recorded in line with the school's Primary Assessment Policy. Assessment in English will be based upon knowledge and understanding of reading, writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar.

- Assessment should be carried out in line with the school's Assessment Policy and Effective Marking and Feedback Policy.
- At St Mary's, staff ensure that pupils have sufficient understanding of, and unconscious competence in, prerequisite knowledge, concepts and procedures that are necessary to succeed in each lesson through effective marking and feedback procedures as detailed below:

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- KS2 and KS1 code their Learning Intentions from the assessment tracker in the front of English books.
- All written marking is to be carried out in blue pen and must be clear and legible. Written feedback is usually given by the teacher (or HLTA when responsible for the class), but should be given by support staff if they have worked closely with the pupil within a session. Supply teachers who carry out work in the school are expected to mark all work in accordance with this policy. The person who marks the work should write their initials in the top right hand box on the learning intention grids.
- Solid pink highlighter will be used to show learning intentions and success criteria are achieved, along with successes throughout the piece of work, e.g. well-chosen words. The learning intention should be boxed in pink highlighter if the children are achieving it with some support.
- Blue highlighter will be used to signal that learning intention have not yet been met, and will be accompanied by blue highlighting around aspects of pupils' work e.g. to signal a better choice of word is required.
- If blue highlighter is present when a formative comment is used, it must demonstrate how the pupil can meet the objective and pupils must respond appropriately in green pen.
- Whole class feedback sheets will be used in key stage 2 for English, alongside daily indicative marking highlighting to show success (pink highlighter) and areas for improvement/errors in non-negotiables in blue highlighter. The expectation for marking is identified clearly on the planning format which sets out the level of marking expected for that stage in the teaching sequence.
- Verbal feedback should be noted with a "VF" with key words recorded to show what the Verbal feedback was.
- In English, written comments should link to the learning intentions and not non-negotiables. Non negotiables to be marked and self-corrected every lesson in all subjects.
- In Key Stage 1 symbols will be used to denote the areas of non-negotiables to be corrected eg CEW-known common exception words incorrectly spelt, SR-taught spelling rules not applied.
- Adaptations should be noted on pieces of work using symbols ss (sentence stems), wb (word banks) etc.
- Non-negotiables should be clearly displayed on working walls.
- Marking of books should be carried out before the next English session so that this can inform planning/teaching/focus groups. This will also inform ongoing tracking/target setting in the front of the books. Deep marking should be carried out at least twice a week for each child.
- Children should respond to feedback as soon as possible after marking has been completed.

With specific reference to summative assessment in English, the following will apply:

- Ongoing achievement in learning objectives should be tracked in the tracking sheets in the front of each pupil's English and applied write book.
- Targets should be set by placing a star next to the objective pupils need to work on from the tracking sheet in the front of their English books.
- Pupils will complete an applied write after each genre has been taught, this will inform teachers' termly summative assessments.
- Teachers input their summative assessments on Insight according to guidance given in the Assessment Policy. Reports are then downloaded and inform Pupil Progress Meetings and intervention planning.

Planning English Sessions

- All relevant staff members are briefed on the school's planning procedures as part of their staff training.
- English is taught as a discrete lesson four times per week and as part of cross-curricular themes when appropriate.

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- Language acquisition is taught 4 times per week before the English lesson. Words to be chosen from the Coxhoe word list for KS2, alongside curriculum/novel study vocabulary. In KS1 words to be chosen from the common exception list and vocabulary linked to theme/novel vocabulary. KS2 have their own language acquisition books that they record in daily. In KS1 the teacher will record in a large language acquisition book with photographs to support understanding. Foundation Stage and Year 1 use 'Word Aware' for their vocabulary development.
- Teachers will use the key learning content in the DfE (2013) 'English programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2', this is reflected in all the school's planning support resources.
- Lesson plans will demonstrate a balance of interactive and independent elements used in teaching, ensuring that all pupils engage with their learning.
- There will be a clear focus on direct, instructional teaching and interactive oral work with the whole class and targeted groups.
- Long-term planning, set out by the English Subject Lead, will be followed in each year group.
- Short-term planning is the responsibility of the class teacher. This is achieved by building on long-term planning and progression maps, taking into account pupils' needs and identifying the method in which topics could be taught.
- KS2 will use the appropriate weekly cycle (two-week or three-week) English Planning format will be used by all teachers to demonstrate their short term planning. Planning will be clearly annotated during or after each session to identify AfL and next steps/adaptations to subsequent lessons.
- FS and KS1 to use Weekly Planning Format to plan their teacher inputs and focus groups which support continuous provision within those year groups. The English section will follow the teaching sequence and weekly planning cycle (two-week or three-week)
- All lessons will have clear learning objectives, which are shared and reviewed with pupils.
- Lessons will be adapted to meet the needs of all pupils. This will be flexible and informed by assessment, marking and feedback.
- Adaptive strategies will usually be by task, resources, writing frames or support and led by the teacher.
- As a dyslexia friendly school, teachers will use a selection of the following strategies to support children when reading texts: mixed ability pairs, displaying key words with pictures, pre-teaching topic vocabulary. They will also support children to record their ideas through use of writing frames, word banks and WAGOLs, if applicable.
- Homework will be set on a weekly basis and will build on that week's lesson objectives. Reading and spelling will always form part of the homework offer each week.

Appendices

Please follow the hyperlinks to the following documents:

- **Appendix 1:** [English Curriculum Progression Map](#)
- **Appendix 2:** [Teaching Sequence](#)
- **Appendix 4:** [Assessment Framework](#)
- **Appendix 5:** [Novel Study Planning Format Three Week Cycle](#)
- **Appendix 6:** [Novel Study Planning Format Two Week Cycle](#)
- **Appendix 7:** [Progression Maps for Genres - Narrative](#)
- **Appendix 8:** [Progression Maps for Genres – Non-Chronological Report](#)
- **Appendix 9:** [Progression Maps for Genres - Recount](#)