Holy Family Catholic Primary School

The Rosary Trust

English Policy
(Also see Phonics Policy)

Approved by:	**Governing Body**	**Date: Oct *2026***
Last reviewed on:	**Sept 2025**	
Next review by:	**September 2028**	

ENGLISH POLICY

This Policy has been written in line with the School Mission Statement.

'In our Catholic School, with God at the centre of our lives, we offer every child a high standard of education. We meet individual needs, in a caring and loving community, which celebrates our faith.'

The Policy summarises the key principles informing the drive to raise standards in Literacy so that all pupils in Holy Family Catholic Primary School achieve success in speaking, listening, reading, writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar.

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such developments. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised (DFEE 2015).

<u>Our aim</u>

At Holy Family School, we believe that a quality English curriculum should develop children's love of reading, writing and discussion. We help our children develop a secure knowledge-base which follows a clear pathway of progression as they advance through primary school. We believe that teaching children to read and write as early as possible is fundamental as this is the key to learning and will also have a huge impact on their self-esteem and future life chances.

We value the importance of building a nurturing culture where children have a positive attitude towards communication and are proud to express their independent ideas. We encourage an appreciation of our rich and varied literary heritage and a habit of reading widely for enjoyment. Through our English Curriculum, we strive to teach the children how important their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills will be in the real world. By giving this context to their learning, the children understand the value of English to them now, and in their futures. By the time children leave Holy Family School, we expect them to communicate through speaking and listening, reading and writing, with confidence, fluency and understanding and in a range of situations.

<u>How we do this</u>

Provide an English curriculum that allows children to:

- Be effective, competent communicators and good listeners.
- Express opinions, articulate feelings and formulate responses to a range of texts both.
- fiction and non-fiction using appropriate technical vocabulary.
- Foster an interest in words and their meanings, and to develop a growing vocabulary in
- both spoken and written form
- Enjoy and engage with and understand a range of text types and genres.
- Be able to write in a variety of styles and forms showing awareness of audience and
- purpose

- Develop powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness in all areas of
- literacy
- Use grammar and punctuation accurately.
- Understand spelling conventions.
- Produce effective, well-presented written work.

Reading (also see Phonics Policy)

Each child is given a reading record book for staff and parents to record their reading. In KS1 and KS2, children take home a book which is appropriate to their level of ability. Parents are encouraged to read with their child daily. Information is given on how to support their child in reading on the school website, curriculum letters, parent information evenings and parents' evenings.
As well as our well-stocked library, in each classroom there are dedicated reading areas with a range of non-fiction, fiction books and poetry books.
We use the Essential Letters and Sounds programme to deliver daily discrete phonics lessons in Foundation Stage and KS1, enabling children to decode effectively. This is continued into KS2 where necessary (see Phonics Policy).

Writing

Writing is taught using the Road to Writing approach and through using high quality texts. We teach the children to infer, understand and use high-level vocabulary and a range of punctuation. Each text is purposefully selected in order to promote a love of reading, engagement and high-quality writing from each child. We ensure that each year group is taught the explicit grammar, punctuation and spelling objectives required for that age group. Writing is celebrated across the school with high quality displays along with sharing successes for the children in our celebration assemblies. As well as teaching the national curriculum objectives, teachers are able to embed the skills throughout the year in cross curricular writing opportunities.
In Foundation, emergent writing is encouraged through the use of different writing materials, including felt tipped pens, crayons, chalk, sand, magnetic letters, big brushes, water, paint and computers, as well as writing in all areas of learning, such as postcards, menus, invitations and labels. Alongside this, children take part in a range of activities to encourage and develop gross and fine motor skills necessary to write in a legible script. Daily phonics lessons build their phonic and spelling knowledge to enable them to sound out words and spell high frequency words correctly. Teachers model writing skills and the use of phonics and spelling strategies in modelled and shared writing sessions, delivered as part of the daily English lesson.
Children have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions at the end of a unit, applying their taught skills to an unsupported piece of writing. Throughout the year there are several themed weeks e.g. World Book Day and author visits which allow the children to write for purpose.

Spelling

At Holy Family School, we recognise the importance of spelling. We use the Spelling Shed resource as a framework for teaching spelling from Year 1 to 6. The foundation class uses ELS for spelling (see Phonics policy).
All children practise spellings as part of their weekly homework tasks.
Spellings are taught discreetly and also as part of the English lesson. Spellings may also be taken from the key technical vocabulary for Mathematics, Science and other curriculum subjects. Learning these keywords (and their meaning) supports learning across the curriculum.

Progression in handwriting:
In EYFS and Y1, children practice formation of letters in the letter groups.
From Year 2 handwriting is practised as part of their spelling practise words.

Foundation: Focus on pencil grip and initial letter formation including the lead in and out.
Year 1: Practice letter formation including lead-ins and outs.
Year 2: Learning to join letters.
Year 3 and 4: Continue to be taught the correct joins.
Year 5 and 6: Refine handwriting, by developing legibility, speed and stamina.

Public Speaking

At HFS, we implement the Mighty Oak public speaking program.
The aim of The Mighty Oak Public Speaking Programme is that every child leaving primary school will know how to address an audience in an articulate, engaging manner, using all their public speaking tools.

The benefits include:

- Clear Communication.
- Many children in the world still struggle to communicate and share their thoughts. Public speaking requires children to articulate their thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively, which can help them improve public speaking and communicate more confidently in everyday situations.
- Self-Confidence: Speaking with confidence in front of a group can help children build self-confidence and develop stronger self-esteem.
- Enhanced Critical Thinking: In today's rapidly evolving era, where everyone has their viewpoint, the art of Public Speaking not only encourages children to think critically about their ideas and arguments and consider alternative perspectives and counterarguments.
- Expanded knowledge and learning: Learning and Researching are the two main pillars of a student's life. Preparing for a speech requires research and practice, which helps children expand their knowledge and understanding of a particular topic.
- Increased social awareness: Public speaking can help children better understand different cultures, beliefs, and viewpoints and become more empathetic and compassionate towards others.

- Improved Body Language: Public speaking can have significant benefits on body language. When speaking effectively in front of an audience, your body language can convey confidence, enthusiasm, and sincerity. Public speaking can help children become more aware of their body language and how they can use it to communicate more effectively.

In the Foundation Stage the skills of listening, attention, understanding and speaking are encompassed in the prime area of Communication and Language and are fundamental to allow children to be successful in all other learning. Staff provide activities which are interesting and motivating and provide the best context for increasing children's knowledge about the English language. It is also necessary to focus on aspects of knowledge about the language such as phonics, spelling and grammar so that children learn what they need to know in a systematic way.

Planning

The Foundation Stage follows the Early Learning Goals and English is planned according to the Curriculum for Foundation (communication, language and literacy).
In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, English is planned following the National Curriculum guidance and uses the Jonathan Bond curriculum planning and assessment kit.
It involves:

- Speaking and Listening
- Handwriting
- Teachers making use of published schemes if appropriate.
- Cross Curricular links are developed wherever possible and text is used to springboard other subject areas.
- Reading – including comprehension skills.
- Daily phonics and/or spelling lessons in all years
- Grammar and punctuation skills.

All year groups implement planning using our 'Road to Writing' approach. Each writing unit is broken into steps.

Continuity and Progression

The National Curriculum for Y1 to Y6 and the Foundation Stage curriculum will be used as a basis for long term, medium term, weekly and daily planning by all class teachers to ensure that all children are working towards the same set of objectives at an appropriate pace for their abilities. Lessons are observed and pupils' learning sampled by the subject leader to ensure that there is continuity of objectives, expectation and achievement throughout the school.

Assessment

Class teachers continuously assess all pupils in order to plan future work. All lessons are evaluated for content and progress made by pupils. Assessment is used in order to inform the Teachers, Parents and Governors of the pupils' achievements.
Teacher assessment will include observations and discussions with the pupils during reading, writing, spelling, grammar, punctuation and speaking and listening activities.
Independent writing tasks are assessed at least once every half term to monitor progress and next steps.

Children are continually assessed throughout the Foundation Stage, and these inform the Foundation Stage Profile. In addition to this, all KS1 pupils are tracked on our ELS Phonics Tracker. At the end of Year 1 all children take the Phonics Screening Check as part of the government statutory requirements to track phonological development. At the end of KS2, Teacher assessment and formal summative assessments, SATS, are carried out.

At Holy Family, teacher assessment and Accelerated Reading (AR) are used to assess the children's reading. KS2 children take quizzes after each book they have read using AR. This informs their AR progress chart. These charts are regularly monitored by teaching staff and discussions are held as appropriate with any individual pupil about their reading progress. A Star Reading assessment (within AR) is carried out four times over the year.

Marking is carried out according to the marking policy.

PPA sessions, internal moderation and external moderation sessions with local schools occur half-termly/termly to ensure that there is consistency in writing standards across the school and that assessments are rigorous and consistent.

Reporting

During the Autumn and Spring Terms parents are invited with their child to discuss their child's progress with their teacher.

During the Summer Term, parents receive a written report detailing their child's achievements throughout the year and are offered an opportunity to ask questions or discuss this with the teacher.

The English subject leader will ensure they are well-informed of current ideas and developments in Literacy by attending appropriate courses and keeping up to date with new initiatives. They will disseminate gathered information to colleagues.

Presentation

A high standard of presentation will be expected in all books as they underpin the quality of pupil outcomes. Therefore, we must ensure that pupils have a sense of pride over their work that is upheld by all teachers across the school.

- All Maths work should be completed in pencil.
- Number formation should also be clear and correct (avoid reversals)
- Neat straight lines must be drawn through any mistakes with a strictly no scribbling out rule.
- Any grid or table should be drawn neatly using a ruler and pencil.
- Any worksheets should be stuck in neatly and carefully, lined up with the margin.

In the first instance it may be necessary to ask pupils to repeat work until they are clear about standards of presentation. These could be used as a personal target for a child.
Additionally, teachers will address issues with presentation whilst live marking and remind children of the expectations. Time must be spent on ensuring pupils understand how their books should look. They should be encouraged to take care of books and take pride in them.

Date for Review

Policy Date: Autumn 2025
Review Date: Autumn 2028

This Policy is linked with the following Policies:
Marking and Feedback Policies
English Handbook
Phonics Policy

Jackie Rackliff
English Subject Leader
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