

OUR LADY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



We ASPIRE that through the love of Jesus everyone
should
"have life and have it to the full".

John 10:10

Writing at Our Lady's

Writing at Our Lady's RC Primary School

Intent

Our aim at Our Lady's is for all our children to become confident, adventurous and fluent writers, who are able to use the wide range of writing tools they have accessed and developed whilst on their writing journey with us. We want to develop their creativity, vocabulary and writing style. Through a well-balanced curriculum, all pupils become confident speakers, listeners, readers and writers and use these language skills for a wide range of purposes.

We aim to create an environment for writing that is both stimulating and supportive so that children feel inspired to write for a range of purposes and are equipped with the skills they need to do so. Children will be encouraged to develop their vocabulary in all areas of the curriculum and will be given opportunities to express themselves through both speaking and writing. Creating a love of reading and books will inspire children to become writers themselves, and the teaching of reading and writing will be linked wherever possible, with quality texts being used to enhance vocabulary and to model and stimulate writing.

We believe that children need to develop a secure knowledgebase in English, which follows a clear pathway of progression as they advance through the primary curriculum. We believe that a secure basis in skills is crucial to a high-quality education and will give our children the tools they need to participate fully as a member of society.

Implementation

Statutory Requirements:

Teaching in the Foundation Stage follows the Communication and Language strand and Literacy strand of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework. Writing in EYFS involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing). We place clear emphasis on spoken language and foundations being secure in the early phases of writing.

Teaching from Year 1-6 follows the New National Curriculum for English (2014) This is divided into three key stages: Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4) and Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6) and follows four areas: Spoken language; Reading (word reading and Comprehension); Writing (transcription, spelling, composition, handwriting and presentation; Grammar and punctuation. A key knowledge of grammar helps pupils to control sentences and convey meaning, and is taught alongside writing to support their writing fluency. By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

Planning

We carry out the curriculum planning in two phases - long and short-term.

Long Term Planning: The National Curriculum for English (2014) details what we teach in the long term.

Medium Term Planning: Teachers create termly overviews outlining the text based units they will follow as well as any cross curricular links, additional texts, independent pieces and grammar/ spelling links.

Short Term Planning: Where teachers are adapting Write Stuff units to meet the needs of all learners in classes. Planning clearly shows alterations to lessons, including differentiation and adult support. Where teachers use genres or texts to lead learning, planning is prepared by teachers and identifies very specifically the national curriculum learning objectives - alongside details of the teacher's and teaching assistant's roles, children's differentiated activities and learning outcomes.

To then ensure that there is a range of genres and a good pace of learning the English subject coordinator has created a writing curriculum map, to establish an overview of the units, ensure curriculum coverage and allow for progression over a child's school life.

Writing

At Our Lady's Primary School, we absolutely love the teaching of writing and believe it is vital that children are fully engaged and invested by the writing opportunities that are presented to them. We follow 'The Write Stuff' for narrative units from Year 1 through to Year 6. The Write Stuff is the work of the teacher, author and education consultant Jane Considine.

- The Write Stuff <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXo8-cS5WMg>

The Write Stuff brings clarity to the mechanics of writing and provides clear systems through which to focus the writer's attention. The combination of fiction units have been carefully selected to follow provide children throughout their journey with the experience of a wide range of high quality texts and authors. In our lessons, teachers follow a repeated pattern of 'Initiate', 'Model' and 'Enable' whereby they use the three zones of writing to provide a consistent whole school systematic approach to writing carefully constructed sentences. We currently weave a non-fiction unit into the fiction work, ensuring a writing and thematic link. Poetry is taught separately throughout the year, to immerse the children in different styles of poetry. They will analyse, write and perform their own compositions.

The Write Stuff:

The **Fantastics** offer 9 lenses with which to structure ideas and target children's thinking. This supports children in developing variety in their writing by focussing on the vocabulary used, initiating ideas, provoking thoughts and igniting imaginations.

The **Grammaristics** focus on the importance of accurate grammar where tools are taught and used immediately to help children develop fascination around language so that they can manipulate and carefully structure words into sentences.

The **Boomtastics** focus on the art of writing, using a range of literary devices and techniques to make careful choices, playing with language to add flair to our writing and achieve various intentional impacts on our reader, painting vivid pictures through our word choices.

High expectations are coupled with careful monitoring and scaffolding, 'holding the hands' of our children and looking at the mathematics of a sentence so that they feel ready to write independently using the wide range of writing tools they have been trained to use. Foundations in writing are fundamental. These are introduced and taught when children learn to write, and consistently reinforced in every year group.

Additional Writing Opportunities:

Within a sequence of learning, teachers include mini-writes to give further writing opportunities, which revise previous learning and extend and challenge. A range of writing opportunities allow children to learn, revise and embed narrative writing and non-fiction texts.

Our aim is to equip all children, regardless of background or ability, with the skills and fluency necessary to become confident and adept readers and writers. We engage every pupil through extensive planning and appropriate challenges, whilst providing opportunities for every child to strive and reach their full potential. This is achieved through building on their knowledge, understanding and skills and then applying these skills across the curriculum.

At Our Lady's we strive towards an engaging and real-life curriculum which enables us to link subjects through topics and themes. This supports our aim of encouraging our children to apply their English skills across the curriculum. We continue to work hard to plan suggested writing opportunities across the curriculum that relate specifically to the topics being taught.

We strive to enhance vocabulary across the curriculum. Within English, this is achieved through an integrated approach to reading and writing within all units of work. Vocabulary acquisition and understanding holds a very high profile in all our classrooms, and staff model and present new vocabulary to children in all subjects and ensure new vocabulary is on display for each of the topics taught. A new word a day is introduced in all year groups – which is shared, discussed, put into context and integrated into the classroom dialogue.

Handwriting

Following the updated Writing Framework (2025), handwriting and presentation remain vital in the foundations of writing. From EYFS we introduce correct letter formation, position of letters and correct pencil hold, alongside the teaching of phonics. At Our Lady's we ensure progression is mapped out across year groups and through each term, building on correct letter formation, joins and fluency. Handwriting is taught in discrete lessons, where pupils are taught formation and joins, as well as writing at speed through dictated words and sentences. We believe that developing the necessary fine and gross motor skills in readiness for handwriting is vital to setting children on the right path, and that warming up for handwriting is equally important for older children. Ongoing assessment ensures interventions are planned as support is given.

Spelling

Children in EYFS and Key Stage 1, follow a spelling approach that links to Little Wandle Phonics. This continues from their phonic teaching, knowledge and builds upon their phonic work within their teaching sessions.

Children in Key Stage 2, beginning in Year 3, access the national curriculum objectives relevant to their year group and ability. We use the Spelling Shed programme, which works through spelling patterns across the year groups in a fun and practical way. Children learn specific spelling rules in line with national curriculum objectives and progress through these according to their ability. Ongoing assessment allows for adaptive teaching to meet all pupils' needs, where gaps may arise.

Cross Curricular links

As well as teaching English as a discrete subject, teachers seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. We plan for pupils to practice and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum. In this way, expectations of the standard of speaking, listening, reading and writing remain consistently applied.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Formative assessment in reading and writing is completed on a regular basis by teachers, which allows them to assess children against each National Curriculum objective. Writing assessment is ongoing and marked against the National Curriculum objectives. All this information is then used to give oral feedback and written feedback, (in line with the school's marking policy) and allows children to act upon advice. Children also use self and peer assessment including regular use of success criteria

to become involved in their own understanding of the success. Parents are kept in form of attainment and progress at Parents' Evening and on yearly reports.

Impact

Our English curriculum facilitates sequential learning and long-term progression of knowledge and skills. Teaching and learning methods provide regular opportunities to recap acquired knowledge through high quality questioning, discussion, modelling and explaining to aid retrieval at the beginning and end of a lesson or unit. Regular practise of skills will provide children with the confidence to apply these in a range of independent situations whereby they have the chance to show what they have internalised. The range of reading and writing situations we provide will enable all children to alter their long term memory and knowledge more, remember more and be able to do more as readers and writers.

By the time children leave Our Lady's RC Primary School we aim for them to be competent and confident writers, who can write over a range of genres - using ambitious language and grammar techniques to have an impact on the reader and meaning.