

HOLY SOULS RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Pride in our achievements



English Policy

Vision Statement

Holy Souls School is a Catholic School where we share our life in Christ in the growing knowledge that Jesus loves us. Our school is a place where everyone is able to feel welcomed, valued, secure, loved and happy. Everyone who comes into our school will be treated with respect. We remember that Jesus said, 'Treat others as you would like them to treat you'

Date Agreed by Governors: 10th July 2025

Governor Review Date: Summer 2028



Holy Souls RC Primary School

Policy Statement for English



Introduction

This document is a statement of the intent, implementation and impact of the teaching and learning of a range of skills including Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing which together make up the English curriculum. It was developed during the autumn term of 2021 through a process of consultation with teaching staff and Governors.

Mission Statement

"To love one another as I have loved you" is at the heart of our Mission Statement. Holy Souls is a place where we share our life in Christ, in the growing knowledge that Jesus loves us. Our school is a place where everyone is able to feel welcomed, valued, secure, loved and happy. Everyone who comes into our school will be treated with respect and valued as a unique member of our school family.

Through our Mission Statement we encourage all pupils to take pride in their achievements. Our English policy is used to help pupils develop their God given talents and with support from staff, to achieve their full potential.

Intent

At Holy Souls, we strive to ensure that all of our learners develop a love of literature, resulting in a growth of confidence and independence in communicating within the world through all realms of reading, writing and speaking and listening. We intend to nurture and encourage this development through a wide range of experiences for our children to achieve their full potential and aspirations for the future. We are committed to provide a knowledge-based curriculum which follows a clear pathway for progression as they advance through each stage of their education with English skills driving this forward. Our Holy Souls family believe this is crucial in giving our children the tools they need to participate fully as a member of society.

Implementation

Speaking and Listening

- Pupils will learn to speak clearly and fluently and listen to others with understanding and empathy. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing.
- Pupils will use discussion in order to learn and to be able to clearly explain their understanding and ideas across the curriculum.
- Pupils will also communicate through other means of expression, such as drama, music or art.
- Pupils will, through the skill of speaking and listening as they progress through school, learn to make more formal presentations and to participate in debates.

Reading

- Essential components of reading are: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and spelling.
- Children will learn to read fluently, with intonation and expression, to demonstrate a good understanding of a range of literature.
- Children will learn to use a full range of phonic, graphic, syntactic and contextual cues to develop their reading skills and be able to correct their own mistakes. A great emphasis is placed on systematic phonics in the early teaching of reading to enhance children's success in learning to read. This takes place in our EYFS and KS1 classes.
- We use Read, Write, Inc as a highly structured phonics scheme, which has lively and vigorous teaching. This begins with the common 44 sounds in the English language and how to sound blend words for reading at the same time as developing spelling skills. The more sounds they know the greater the range of texts they can read. Pupils work in mixed year groups with their Read Write Inc. teacher at the correct level for their phonic and reading ability. Children are taught phonics in small-differentiated groups following the Read Write Inc. scheme. Read Write Inc. is used to support children in KS2 who are experiencing difficulties with spelling and reading strategies. All Foundation stage, KS1 teachers and some teaching assistants have received Read Write Inc. training.
- In Key Stage 1, children remain in the Read, Write, Inc. groups until they have completed the full programme. After this, the children move into Guided Reading lessons where an understanding of all phonics knowledge is secure and therefore, are able to read most words fluently. This allows them to concentrate on comprehension skills that are taught and they use the Oxford Reading Tree

scheme, which is a banded reading scheme, as their home reading books. Once children have completed all the bands of the Oxford Reading Tree scheme, they move onto the Accelerated Reader scheme which is used for KS2 classes. For most children, this transition from banded reading scheme books to Accelerated Reader takes place as they move from Year 3, though more able readers in Key Stage 1 may make this transition in Year 2.

- Once children enter KS2, the use of the Renaissance software is fully used. This is the Star Reader and Accelerated Reader programmes that allow children in KS2 to have their reading assessed regularly. Star Reader provides teachers with children's reading ages and levels linked to the Accelerated Reader. The reading levels provided by this programme guides the children to a range of books from the school library that are suitable for their reading ability. The books in our library are connected to this software, providing quizzes for the children to complete on each book they read. This allows staff to monitor children's understanding of their reading book and provide the opportunity to read the book a second time in attempt to improve their quiz score.
- Good comprehension draws on the understanding of vocabulary and grammar but also on making connections to the world around them. We encourage pupils to read widely across both fiction (including stories and poetry) and non-fiction texts. Comprehension skills are developed through regular reading of their school reading book, Guided Reading sessions and quality reading texts/assessments that use a range of question types that link to the reading domains from the English curriculum.
- We place great importance on reading and want pupils to develop a lifelong love of reading widely and for their own personal pleasure, enjoyment and to gain information. We aim to use designated, national dates throughout the year to help promote this such as World Book Day, Black History Month, World Mental Health Week, National Poetry Day, International Women's Day etc.
- We encourage children to select texts as they develop their personal preferences and to justify the choices they make.
- Children are encouraged to read books from a range of authors appropriate for their age group.
- Children should learn to decide which aspects of the text are relevant to their reading purpose, as well as sharing their opinions with others as they learn to evaluate and review a range of both fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts.
- They will also develop vocabulary through reading for pleasure, class novels, Guided Reading lessons and also through cross-curricular links.
- We positively seek to choose books that appeal to both girls and boys and choose as many diverse topics as possible when selecting texts.

- Our intention is to develop enthusiastic, independent readers who are nurtured and supported at every step of their reading development. We aim for our children to be able to have a strong reading fluency which aids in their understanding of a range of texts as they progress through school and beyond.

Writing

- Writing consists of two aspects: transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and the way a writer structures a piece of writing).
- Children will learn to write clearly and accurately, adapting language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.
- In the Foundation Stage, the Read, Write, Inc programme is followed. First of all, the children learn how to form letters correctly, often using rhyme and visual aids. This also allows the children to develop their fine motor skills and handwriting ability which are essential for fluency in writing. Secondly, the children write words from blending the sounds they have learnt which strengthens the connection between letters and sounds. Next, the children are introduced to writing simple sentences. As part of the children's 'Book of the Week' learning, the sentence writing is linked to this after vocabulary sessions and modelled writing from the teacher.
- In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils will follow the Literacy Counts scheme: Read to Write. This scheme follows the learning sequence of: immerse, analyse, plan, write and evaluate. This units in this scheme are based around a 'vehicle' text. The children become immersed in the text with mini writing tasks and opportunities to predict story lines and explore advanced vocabulary that become a focus for that writing outcome. Children then move to the analyse stage where key features and skills are taught and practised. The children are then modelled how to plan for the writing outcome and guided through each paragraph or section when it comes to the writing phase.
- Pupils will develop their skills in order to write interesting and engaging pieces of text using spelling, punctuation and grammar confidently. In addition, the children will be exposed to rich and varied vocabulary.
- As children develop their sense of organisation and style to fit the purpose, they will become increasingly competent in a wide range of different genres.
- Pupils follow the school handwriting scheme (Letter-join) for the introduction and development of a neatly joined, cursive handwriting style throughout both key stages (please refer to the updated Handwriting Policy).
- From Year 2 to Year 6, pupils continue to develop their spelling skills through the Read to Write scheme that reinforces year group spelling patterns, rules and their exceptions. Children are provided these spelling patterns to learn at home each week for regular spelling tests and practice.
- Once the writing and evaluating phase has been completed, the children are given opportunities to present their writing in different formats according to the genre style.

Principles and Strategies for Teaching and Learning in English

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. The scheme of work for English is based on the National Curriculum in England: English programmes of Study for Key Stage 1 & Key Stage 2, which was last updated in July 2014. In Reception children follow the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework (EYFS). This framework is mandatory for all early years providers in England and was updated in November 2024.

The curriculum is organised so that approximately 6 hours per week are spent on direct English teaching throughout the year, though these skills are transferred to all other curriculum areas. In their daily English lesson, children will be presented with three kinds of reading and writing:

- Shared reading and writing, where children see these skills modelled by the teacher.
- Guided reading and writing, where children are taught relevant strategies to enable them to become independent readers and writers.
- Independent work, where children are presented with a range of interesting tasks to consolidate their skills and understanding.

Cross Curricular Links

English underpins the entire curriculum and teachers consciously maximise the opportunities for developing literacy skills in other subjects. We intend to link the Steps to Read and Read to Write English Curriculum to other subject areas.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

At Holy Souls School, we offer an inclusive English curriculum where teachers provide opportunities to all children. High expectations are evident for all abilities and their varying learning needs, through adapted lessons where support and challenge is provided.

All children are provided with the same learning opportunities but, recognising that children have individual styles of learning, teachers aim to provide a varied range of teaching styles and tasks for children to complete. Children can be asked to record their responses in a variety of ways - written, oral, pictorial or dramatic.

Racial Equality

Through our choice of literature, we seek to positively promote respect for each other, as described in the School Mission statement. We aim to fulfil our commitment to

racial equality by ensuring that the texts we use incorporate the principles of racial equality and promote knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity. At Holy Souls School, we are committed to dealing sensitively with pupils' needs, whether these are social, emotional or learning needs.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

All children are included in lessons through Shared or Whole Class Guided Reading, and in this way are able to access texts beyond their own reading level. Group work, which may be led by the class teacher or a TLA, is aimed at directly addressing the needs of the children at their own level. We aim to cater for all abilities and needs through a variety of methods.

Recording and Reporting

Records of progress kept for each child include:

Assessment information about Children's progression take the following forms:

- The acquisition of phonic knowledge through regular assessments in the Read, Write, Inc programme in EYFS, Year1 and Year 2.
- Half termly RWI assessments uploaded onto the RWI Portal.
- Data from the results of the Phonics Screening Check at the end of Year 1.
- In KS2, the Star Reader assessment tool provides reading ages and levels for the Accelerated Reader programme.
- Information about which books have been read from the reading schemes in EYFS and KS1. In KS2, information about which guided reading and Accelerated Reader books have been read.
- Assessment Grids created from the Read to Write schemes which identify the skills and features learnt in each unit and therefore, the expectations within the final writing outcome.
- Data from reading papers and other relevant assessments on the itrack Primary portal.

Reporting to Parents is done three times a year, through two Parents' Evenings and annually through a written report. Records are transferred to the new class teacher at the end of each academic year within transition meetings.

Jane McCormack and Lucy Holt

English Leaders
May 2025