



At St. Teresa's Catholic Primary School, we believe that being able to read and write are the vital skills that enable us to understand and express ourselves more effectively. 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 development. 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. These skills set a clear path for future learning. We passionately believe in helping children to develop not only the technical skills of reading and writing, but also in engendering a love for literature and the different genres of writing.

The study of English develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, views and feelings. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories and poetry as well as of non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children develop procedural and semantic knowledge, providing a deeper, more sustainable understanding of the English curriculum content where they are able to make connections to other subjects and develop a wider perspective of their own world around them and the wider world.

Intent

At St. Teresa's, we believe that English is the cornerstone to the entire curriculum, and it is therefore embedded throughout our whole curriculum offer and weaves intrinsically through all subjects we teach.

We know that children learn best by gaining opportunities to revisit previous learning and making strong links to their own lives and that of the wider world. Our intention is to provide a high quality and rich curriculum that exposes pupils to a wide range of experiences in life through literature and their learning and, in turn, builds on their on their skills and knowledge to ensure they can explore experiences which will be embedded in their long-term memory and called upon to aide their understanding of the world and society in the future.

It is our intention when teaching the English curriculum, that our pupils acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding to become lifelong learners and linguists. We strive to ensure that all our pupils receive a well-rounded learning experience when reading, writing, speaking and listening, which will equip them with the fundamental tools to achieve throughout their learning journey at St. Teresa's Primary School. We aim to immerse pupils in the wonders of high-quality texts to instil a love for reading, a passion for discovery and a confidence to explore their imagination and make links across their learning.

We teach English including phonics, reading, writing and grammar every day so that the children can fully immerse themselves and have opportunities to reflect and build on prior learning.

Our aim is to ensure that every child becomes a fluent reader, writer and confident speaker by the time they leave our school so that they take a rich body of meaningful knowledge with them towards the next stage in their educational journey, and they can draw upon a wide range of experiences that will help them in their future learning.

How this is implemented at St Teresa's

Phonics

At St Teresa's, we follow the 'Essential Letters and Sounds' (ELS) phonics scheme. In Reception, the children are taught Phases 2,3,4 and some of Phase 5 with the expectation that most children will be secure in these phases so that they are Year 1 ready.

The children are sent home with the 'harder to read and spell' words and phonic sounds, broken up into small sets, to read. They are checked weekly and words which the children can read are highlighted and new sets given out.

Reading books are matched carefully to the phonics phase that the children are working using the Oxford Reading Tree scheme. The children receive 2 books per week (core text and wider reading text) and they keep these books for a full week with the expectation being that they re-read the books multiple times to increase fluency and understanding.

All children are heard to read twice a week on a 1:1 basis with the class teacher or teaching assistant.

The teaching of phonics through 'Essential Letters and Sounds' (ELS) continues into Key Stage 1. In Year 1 the children continue to learn phase 5 sounds which are mapped out in the weekly plans outlined by the scheme. Teaching is whole class based with teachers regularly assessing their children's phonics ability. We follow the ELS guidance and aim for children to 'keep up not catch up' therefore intervene with children who need extra support during the phonics lesson.

Phonics is formally assessed every half term using ELS tracker to ensure that pupils engaged in the phonics programme are working within the correct stage for their development. These assessments enable teachers to quickly identify any pupils who may benefit from further specific ELS interventions or keep up sessions and swiftly ensure that they are given the opportunities for extra consolidation and support, as well continuing to be challenged within the current phase their class is working at.

Home reading books are carefully matched to each individual child's phonic ability using the Oxford Reading Tree. Like Reception, each child takes two books home for a week, rereading them to encourage familiarity, fluency and understanding.

All children will read twice a week in class reading sessions and on a 1:1 basis with the class teacher or teaching assistant.

Reading

Reading is an integral part of the curriculum at St Teresa's, and it is our vision to ensure that all children receive the opportunity to read and engage in high quality, inspiring and relevant literature. Once phonics strategies are well embedded, the children learn to develop their accuracy, automaticity and prosody to ensure they are fluent and confident readers. They also continuously develop their vocabulary and comprehension skills in order to become reflective readers, enabling them to foster a long term love of reading and access a wide range of texts and learning experiences across the whole curriculum. We aim for children to be able to read widely, confidently and to a high standard in a range of subjects. We want children to foster a love of reading and acquire a wide vocabulary of written and spoken language. The school is actively engaged in The Power of Reading Programme through the CLPE which aims to support the teaching of English through a wide range of high-quality texts. Through CLPE research-based evidence, we have carefully selected texts, including picture books, non-fiction and poetry, to study across each year group and immerse pupils in experiences during their lessons that they will remember and enjoy. The books that we choose to study are often linked to other subjects across the curriculum. By selecting books that pose these important cross curricular links, we are carefully designing a curriculum which enables children to learn more, remember more and make links to experiences from the wider world and across subjects. These texts, which form part of our school reading spine, are studied in class, as part of reading lessons or shared in daily story times.

The school uses The Oxford Reading Tree scheme, and in recent years we have invested heavily on extending and updating the reading books available to support pupil learning. This allows children right from Reception age, to engage in reading using their phonics knowledge. This then continues progressively through KS1 where the scheme grows to include a wider range of sounds and vocabulary as well as new themes. The scheme also runs into upper KS2 where the children are exposed to longer and more challenging texts which enables them to exercise fluency, understanding and comprehension skills at a deeper level. Once children are deemed to be 'fluent readers,' and have completed the scheme with good confidence, they are able to progress onto free choice reading. Each classroom, and our school library, offer a wide selection of varied books and older children are encouraged to choose a variety of genres and show their understanding through reading journal activities. Teachers use a variety of methods when reading with children in class including individual reading, guided group work or whole class reading. These all allow teachers to assess, plan and deliver a high-quality but targeted reading curriculum throughout the school linked specifically to meet the children's needs and experiences.

As well as ongoing informal assessments in class reading sessions, reading is also assessed termly using NFER assessment and The Salford Reading Test twice per year. This ensures that the school has a secure knowledge of the stage pupils are at in their reading journey and can identify any areas that may need to be addressed through the school curriculum. These assessments also inform teachers of individual or groups of pupils who may benefit from targeted intervention programmes to ensure they continue to develop at a challenging and ambitious rate.

Such interventions include:

- Targeted phonics interventions using Essential Letters and Sounds DFE approved programme
- Talk Boost
- BoostReading@Primary (BR@P)
- Project X
- Learning by Questions
- Daily targeted readers
- Oxford Reading Buddy

Enjoyment of Reading

We are proud and passionate about fostering a love of reading at St Teresa's and we strive to ensure that children enjoy their books and experiences of reading. As well as carefully selecting age-appropriate texts for teaching using widely researched programmes such as CLPE, we also encourage pupils to select books which may interest them through a range of exciting strategies. Our school library offers a wide range of classic and more modern books, as well as a range of diverse books. We are continuously evaluating the books that are available and we are investing in poetry and non-fiction books to supplement the range that is already there. We have a dedicated wellbeing area to promote other important themes around PSHE and emotional wellbeing, as well as access to a virtual library via our website which was set up during lockdown and continues to be popular.

All classes have their own stimulating book areas which are stocked with books from our recommended reading spine and other age-appropriate books for pupils to enjoy. We emphasise that it is the quality of the books available that is important.

Teachers ensure that they keep up to date with relevant children's literature for their age group. They have access to websites such as CLPE, Books for Topics, Jane Considine and Literacy Shed Plus which are all excellent sources for researching exciting and current topics and themes in literature. Teachers also encourage children to choose books by recommending them in class before placing them in the book corner, and each member of staff celebrates children's books they have read by displaying them on the classroom doors. We feel that these strategies emphasise the high importance that reading has at our school. All pupils are also read to daily by an adult in class story time, which include books often chosen through class votes.

At St Teresa's we also celebrate reading through other initiatives such as book votes, books swaps, reading challenges, links with our local library, our virtual library, celebration of World Book Day and inspiring author visits.

Speaking and Listening

Throughout the school, opportunities to develop pupils' spoken language in a range of contexts underpins the development of reading and writing. Pupils are encouraged to speak clearly, confidently and with expression to communicate their ideas and feelings. They are taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate as well as drama and role play. Pupils develop their ability to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They are encouraged to discuss their ideas so they can make sense of their learning. Pupils are given many opportunities through drama, role play, performances, reading out loud, presentations and debate in many areas of the curriculum on a regular basis.

Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation

Spelling, grammar and punctuation is taught both discretely and as part of English lessons. We use progressive spelling lists across the whole of school which are matched to the expectations for each key stage in the National Curriculum. These are adapted to meet the needs of individual pupils when appropriate. Grammar and punctuation are taught daily in class as part of a unit of work that is being studied or sometimes as discrete lessons. Spelling grammar and punctuation is assessed termly through NFER tests and results are analysed to address any gaps or whole school areas for development.

Writing

At St Teresa's our vision is that every child will become a creative and imaginative writer and hold the skills to be able to write effectively across a range of genres. We aim to use all areas of the curriculum to be able to develop writing skills and generate purposeful writing experiences for our learners which will give everyone the opportunity to engage in writing that they are interested in and inspired by. We use a cross curricular approach to our writing opportunities which enables children to make links with other areas of the curriculum and apply their skills across a range of subjects. This ensures that writing opportunities are relevant and real to our children and they can see a clear purpose to their work. We often seize opportunities to write for real life purposes including competitions, letters to local councillors, local library displays and as part of projects. We have recently adopted Jane Considine's 'The Write Stuff' approach to teaching writing which means we use a modelled and scaffolded approach, linked to high quality texts, to enable pupils to learn specific writing techniques, modelled through high quality teaching, before they are then given opportunities to write with independence. To ensure pupils are also accessing a range of opportunities for writing methods, we also teach units of work which incorporate multiple opportunities for writing a range of fiction and non-fiction texts and extracts throughout the year. Our plans are carefully devised to ensure relevant links to other curriculum areas as well as transferrable knowledge with our reading curriculum.

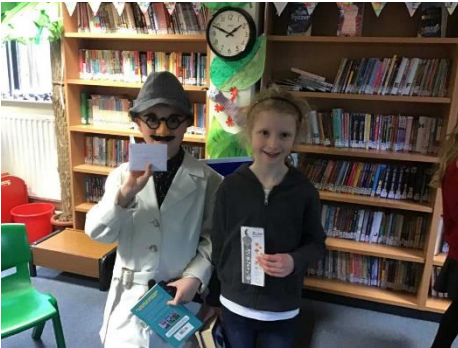
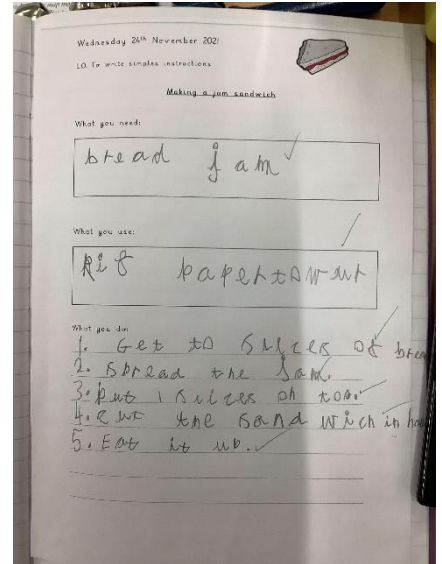
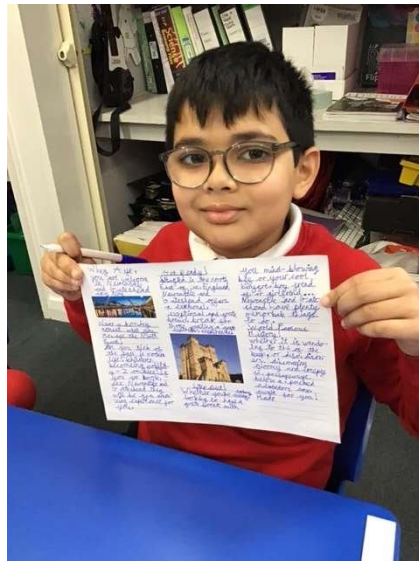
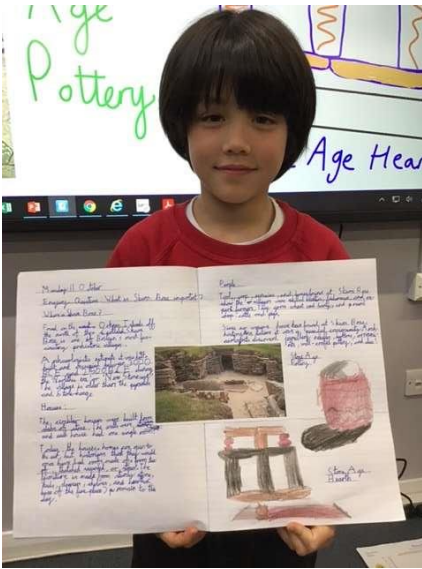
Writing is assessed at least termly against our age related expectations, and teachers work together to regularly moderate writing across the school for quality assurance.

Impact of English at St. Teresa's

We have a rigorous approach to assessing and monitoring English at St Teresa's. We regularly assess pupils informally to address any gaps and then we work swiftly to secure progress for pupils are supported through a range of strategies including high quality-first teaching or keep up interventions. Impact is measured in a variety of ways and teachers use the information to plan future learning and target any specific needs. We also use information to address whole school needs and adapt our curriculum accordingly.

We also ensure that English is embedded through every subject in our broad and balanced curriculum and children are constantly using transferrable skills to develop detailed knowledge and skills in all other areas. Our high standards of reading and writing are evident in all subjects as well as performances and opportunities for speaking, listening and drama. Our commitment to high standards in English for all pupils allows our children to access the whole curriculum in an engaging and inspiring way. Please see the following page which shows a variety of ways in which English plays a core role in our school.

English in action at St Teresa's



The photographs above show a variety of English work from different year groups with cross-curricular links at St Teresa's. Children's work in drama, writing and reading can be seen through history, PSHE, E-Safety and through a variety of high-quality text work.

Class and school visits such as the whole school visit to the pantomime, history visits and local library visits also help to enhance pupils' literacy skills and inspire them to grow alongside local providers and the wider community. These trips and visits provide real life, relevant experiences for English skills throughout our creative curriculum, and provide the children with the knowledge, skills and understanding that they will use on their journey to KS3 and beyond.