

St Margaret's Vision For English

Our Intent

At St Margaret's CE VA Primary School we recognise that the personal development of pupils, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally, plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve. We therefore aim, through our core values, to provide an education that provides pupils with opportunities to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, spiritual awareness, high standards of personal behaviour, a positive, caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of the cultures.

Knowledge of English, and a command of the spoken and written word, is an essential resource for a child's learning in school. It is a tool used across the whole school curriculum, as well as being a subject in its own right.

English at St Margaret's will not only be a daily discrete lesson, but is at the cornerstone of the entire curriculum. It is embedded within all our lessons and we will strive for a high level of English for all. Through using high-quality texts, immersing children in vocabulary rich learning environments and ensuring new curriculum expectations and the progression of skills are met, the children at St Margaret's will be exposed to a language heavy, creative and continuous English curriculum which will not only enable them to become primary literate but will also develop a love of reading, creative writing and purposeful speaking and listening.

At St Margaret's we recognise that each child has their own starting point upon entry to every year group and progress is measured in line with these starting points to ensure every child can celebrate success.

The National Curriculum divides English into five strands: Speaking and Listening, Reading, Writing, Spelling and Handwriting.

How we implement English

Speaking and listening

Beginning in Nursery and continuing through all Primary years the children develop their capacity to express themselves effectively for a variety of purposes. Working with adults and other children, their activities include listening, giving opinions, replying to instructions and questions, describing experiences and feelings.

KS1 and KS2 children extend these skills to recount events, tell stories, take on dramatic roles, report, summarise and predict. Children are also provided with opportunities to compose, recite and perform poetry.

Reading

Each class has a designated reading area to help promote the love and high importance that reading holds in our school. They can enjoy exploring a wide selection of reading books, which helps them to develop an appreciation of our rich literary heritage.

From Reception phonics is taught daily through the use of Letters and Sounds, and this is then continued through Y1, and Y2. Across school we use book bands to grade the texts according to the book-banding scheme from Oxford University Press. Guided reading in KS1 and Reciprocal Reading in KS2 is also an integral part of our English curriculum, where groups of children engage with a number of carefully planned sessions working with a teacher or independently, exploring the meaning of the books being read.

As well as weekly Guided & Reciprocal Reading sessions, reading comprehension skills are taught discretely once a week to enable children to be able to explore a thorough understanding of what they are reading and to become familiar with the domains of reading.

Writing

Spelling, Handwriting and Composition

These strands go hand in hand throughout the Curriculum. As they mature, children develop a growing ability to write in different styles, for different audiences and purposes, e.g. stories, diaries, letters, invitations, captions, posters, plans, reporting on projects and poetry. Cohesively planned, modelled and implemented by all staff, writing genres and conventions are creatively developed throughout both key stages. Much of their writing is developed from the use of high quality literature, as the children respond to plot, character, illustration and ideas.

They are taught the rudiments of grammar, progressively from Reception through to Year 6, both discretely, as well as in the context of the literature they are studying. Attention to grammatical rules being studied are also noted as they are

I like the Harry Potter books. There is more detail in the books than in the films so the books are much better.
Holly Y3

Events and Learning Opportunities

Our school library is available for children to borrow books to take home as part of their love of reading.

We have regular visits from theatre groups funded by the school PTA.

Classes have organised theatre visit trips and workshops.

We have an annual book fair in school that also raises funds for us to purchase books for the classrooms.

The school takes part in the World Book Day celebrations each year.

I really like reading. It calms me down. When I read I feel like I'm in the story.

Annabel Y6

You get to know lots of words and what they mean.

Jack Y4

Impact

Pupils record their learning outcomes in books for each subject; reading skills books, English books and POP - "Power of the Pen" books for assessed pieces of writing.

The impact on our children is clear: progress, sustained learning and transferrable skills. With the implementation of the writing journey being well established and taught thoroughly in both key stages, children are becoming more confident writers and by the time they are in upper Key Stage 2, most genres of writing are familiar to them and the teaching can focus on creativity, writer's craft, sustained writing and manipulation of grammar and punctuation skills.

As all aspects of English are an integral part of the curriculum, cross curricular writing standards have also improved and skills taught in the English lesson are transferred into other subjects; this shows consolidation of skills and a deeper understanding of how and when to use specific grammar, punctuation and grammar objectives. We hope that as children move on from us to further their education and learning that their creativity, passion for English and high aspirations, which we have nurtured here at St Margaret's, travels with them and continues to grow and develop as they do.

Monitoring of the subject happens through learning walks, book scrutinies, pupil discussions and moderation with the Local Authority.

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