

# OUR LADY IMMACULATE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Our Lady Immaculate  
Catholic Primary School  
An Academy

*"With God all things are possible"*  
(Matthew 19:26)

At Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School, we will inspire our children to achieve personal excellence for themselves and for the glory of God.

## English Policy

Date	Review Date	Nominated Lead Member of Staff	Nominated Committee	Nominated Governor
Autumn 2022	Autumn 2023	English Subject Leader	Curriculum, Pupil & Personnel	Chair of Curriculum, Pupil & Personnel

<b>Headteacher:</b>	Lesley Roche
<b>Chair of Governing Body:</b>	Linda McSweeney

Literacy Policy

Status OLI: draft /under consultation /to be ratified /agreed by Policy committee /ratified by FGB



## **OUR LADY IMMACULATE SCHOOL ENGLISH POLICY**

### **Introduction**

**‘You should write because you love the shape of stories and sentences and the creation of different words on a page. Writing comes from reading, and reading is the finest teacher of how to write.’**

**Annie Proulx**

At Our Lady Immaculate 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 the 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.

### **Intent**

Through the teaching of English, Our Lady Immaculate aims to ensure all children:

- read easily and fluently, with good understanding;
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, both for pleasure and information;
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic convention for reading, writing and spoken language;
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage;
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audience;
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas;
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

### **Implementation**

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## **English Curriculum Planning**

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the National Curriculum in England as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programmes of study for English.

### **Oracy Framework**

At Our Lady Immaculate, we follow the Oracy Framework. Research evidence has demonstrated that through a high quality oracy education, academic outcomes are improved as it narrows gaps, enabling students to fulfil their potential. Evidence from EEF has shown it is also effective in shrinking the language gap between disadvantaged pupils and their more advantaged peers.

Through the deliberate, explicit and systematic teaching of oracy across phases and throughout the curriculum, our children learn through talk and to talk. This is when they develop and deepen their subject knowledge and understanding: through talk in the classroom, which has been planned, designed, modelled, scaffolded and structured, it enables them to learn the skills needed to talk effectively. It develops learners who can think critically, reason together and have the vocabulary to express their knowledge and understanding. It empowers our children with the belief that their voice has value, developing the ability to articulate thoughts so others will listen. It equips our children with the necessary skills to thrive in life beyond school.

### **Reading**

At Our Lady Immaculate, we believe that of the subjects taught in school, reading is first among equals – the most singular in importance because all others rely on it. Excellence in almost any academic subject requires strong reading. It is our responsibility therefore to prepare children to read with rigour, independence, precision, and insight, ensuring that each and every child moves steadily and reliably towards the mastery of advanced and complex skills.

The journey to mastery begins in Foundation where we teach Phonics following the Read Write Inc. programme developed by Ruth Miskin. Read Write Inc. Phonics is a programme for children learning to read and write. Although reading is taught using synthetic phonics, the programme covers all of the new National Curriculum requirements for language and literacy.

All children on the programme will:

- read storybooks and non-fiction books closely matched to their developing phonic knowledge;
- take home Phonics storybooks to share;
- read with fluency and expression;
- learn to spell using known sounds;
- write confidently by rehearsing what they want to write by saying it aloud first;
- work well with a partner.

Teaching the programme includes rigorous assessment, tracking and tutoring to ensure that we can guarantee progress for every child. One-to-one tutoring ensures

that no children are left behind. Children have positive early experiences of learning to read – they are successful and progress quickly.

All children at the Foundation Stage at Our Lady Immaculate are assessed within the first half term of the school year. This baseline assessment process is used to establish their experience and knowledge of sounds and letters.

### **Guided reading**

At Our Lady Immaculate we also use ‘Whole Class Guided Reading’.

Whole class reading is the method used to teach children to become equipped and ready to successfully navigate reading with confidence. In order to ensure that children have access to a rich variety of texts, whole class reading books and extracts are carefully chosen so that by the time they reach year 6 and beyond, children will have a good understanding of the 5 plagues of reading (archaic, non-linear time sequences, complexity of narrator, complexity of plot, and figurative/symbolic texts), and are able to access the more complex books expected of them in secondary schools. Children’s experience of books is further developed by focusing on four common core ideas:

- Read harder texts
- ‘Close read’ texts rigorously and intentionally
- Read more non-fiction more effectively
- Write more effectively in direct response to texts.

At Our Lady Immaculate, we use reading VIPERS to focus on the 6 domains of comprehension. VIPERS provides a method of ensuring that teachers ask, and students are familiar with, a range of questions. They allow the teacher to track the type of questions asked and the children’s responses to these which allows for targeted questioning afterwards. Through the use of sentence stems, teachers model and scaffold how to articulate effective responses to questions about a text.

All teachers are required to ensure that they provide a rich reading environment, enabling the children access to a variety of texts. This includes the teacher using high quality texts within their teaching across the curriculum. All teachers read to the class, sharing whole texts together within an atmosphere which enables children to listen and respond to the text together. All teachers build in ‘quiet reading time’ into the school day, providing a time when children can read to themselves, with a peer or with a child from another class.

Teachers are positive role models for reading and as such are required to promote reading for pleasure and to share their reading experiences with the children. This includes regularly visiting the school central library.

Assessment of reading happens continuously throughout the school year and is informed through all the approaches to reading that happen daily in school. Class teachers will use this information to support children with their reading and to decide when they are ready to move onto the next stage. This could happen at any time in the school year. Children will not be expected to read a set number of books or spend a set amount of time within a band before they progress.

## Writing

To support the planning and delivery of English teaching and learning, the school follows a mastery approach to English through the 'Pathways to Write' programme. Units of work are delivered using high quality texts and children in all year groups are given varied opportunities for writing, including cross curricular links. Skills are built-up through repetition within the units, and children apply these skills in the writing activities provided. Many opportunities for widening children's vocabulary are given through the Pathways to Write approach, and this builds on the extensive work we do in school to provide our children with a rich and varied vocabulary. This enables them to read, write and discuss with passion and confidence.

### **Foundation Stage**

In the Foundation Stage, language and literacy development are incorporated in all areas of learning. Opportunities are provided for children to communicate thoughts, ideas and feelings. Purposeful role-play is used to develop language and imagination. Children are given opportunities to share and enjoy a wide range of rhymes, songs, poetry and books.

At Our Lady Immaculate, we provide an environment that reflects the importance of language through signs, notices and books. Children are provided with opportunities to see adults writing and they can experiment with writing themselves, both indoors and outdoors, especially in the role-play area. Children receive daily phonic sessions.

Our ultimate goal for literacy in the Foundation stage is to develop children's ability to:

- talk and communicate in a widening range of situations;
- respond to adults and to each other;
- listen carefully;
- practise and extend their vocabulary and communication skills;
- learn about and use words and texts in a broad range of contexts;
- experience a rich variety of books;
- develop their writing skills; and
- explore and enjoy.

## Teaching Methods and Approaches in Key Stage 1 & 2

### **Familiarisation with a text type**

This is done within whole-class guided reading sessions or English lessons. It allows the children to gain experience of a specific text type and builds an understanding of and familiarity with the features of a text type. Storytelling and reading to children is built in daily as part of regular classroom practice so children experience a wide range of texts and are able to write from concrete experience. In Key Stage One, children learn several familiar children's stories and use the familiar structure of these, once learnt, to scaffold their own independent writing.

### **Modelled writing**

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Modelling the structure and tone of a piece of writing enables children to write from experience and a position of knowledge. The teacher writes a passage of text in front of the class, thinking aloud to demonstrate the writing and editing process. This can be used to teach a range of skills: grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, drawing the reader in, authorial voice, how to edit.

### **Shared writing**

This is a collaborative approach where the children contribute ideas for the teacher to use to create a piece of writing. A short text is created together and there is an opportunity for discussion as the class work together to choose and agree the most suitable and effective ideas for the text, which is edited and improved as it is written.

### **Guided writing**

The teacher or teaching assistant works together with a group, focussing on a specific learning and teaching point. Children may have the same starting point that they go on to develop individually with guidance from the adult.

### **Independent writing**

Using the text structures they have been taught and a familiar context, previously planned through the 'Pathways to Write' approach, children create their own written texts, demonstrating their learning and achievements. Children apply their grammatical knowledge and extended writing is used to assess achievement and progress and plan children's individual next steps for development of their written work

### **Editing and Improving**

Children use all feedback, written or verbal, to edit and develop their work further, to ensure progress is made.

### **Cross-Curricular Writing**

The same approach to writing is used across the curriculum. Children write extended pieces of text in all curriculum subjects, including RE and these are planned and taught in the same way, attention being paid to the vocabulary, spelling, grammar and punctuation that should be being used by a child of that age. Writing in the foundation subjects is moderated to ensure that standards in writing are as high in other subjects as they are in writing in English lessons.

### **Spelling, Grammar, Punctuation**

Spelling, grammar and punctuation (SPaG) are taught discretely in additional short sessions within the week; however the bulk of children's SPaG learning occurs within the context of teaching in English lessons. SPaG objectives are carefully matched to units of work enabling them to be taught and learnt within a meaningful context. English starters are often linked to spelling and grammar to reinforce learning. Examples of SpaG will often be drawn out of whole-class guided reading sessions so that children can see how features of grammar can be applied to good effect in writing (ie how the experts do it!). Spelling tests are completed each week.

### **Handwriting**

We use the 'Join-it' handwriting programme through Key Stages 1 and 2, which develops each child's personal handwriting style to ensure they meet the 'expected standard' at the end of each key stage.

## **Speaking and Listening**

In addition to the Oracy Framework, children have the opportunity to develop their competence and confidence in the spoken language through our 'Mighty Oaks' public speaking programme. The use of Standard English is modelled and encouraged in the classroom environment. Opportunities are created for talk in a range of contexts and forms: whole class discussion, small group discussion, paired discussion, individual contribution, role play etc.

## **The Our Lady Immaculate Literary festival**

The inaugural festival was held in 2022. It was designed to promote the love of the written word in its various forms. Visits by authors and poets to share their experiences inspired and sparked the imagination of all. An inter-class poetry recital competition gave the children the opportunity to celebrate the spoken word and engage with some more challenging texts. It's success meant that it will become a regular feature of the school calendar.

## **Impact**

### **Assessment of writing**

Assessment is ongoing and can take several forms. Peer assessment involves children sharing their work and receiving feedback from their peers on how to improve it further. Self-assessment (and peer assessment) may involve children evaluating their writing against an agreed list of success criteria for a specific task. Teacher feedback can also be verbal and instant improvement is often seen as a result (See Marking and Feedback Policy for more detail). Writing is formally assessed every half term to show progress and to identify any gaps. End of term assessments are recorded on Insight to further track progress and to monitor the effectiveness of any intervention programmes.

Moderation is carried out both internally and externally over the course of the year.

## **Resources**

There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries, thesauruses and a range of age-appropriate literacy resources. They also have a selection of whole class guided reading texts, and fiction and non-fiction texts in their class library. Children have access to the Internet through their classroom laptops and other technological equipment. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research, as well as fiction and poetry.

## **Equal opportunities**

As a school we endeavour to maintain an awareness of, and to provide for equal opportunities for all our pupils in English. Through Quality First teaching, we aim to take into account cultural background, gender and Special Needs, both in our teaching attitudes and in the published materials we use with our pupils.

## **Information and Technology**

The use of computing enables children to use and apply their developing skills in

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English in a variety of ways, as well as being an effective method of scaffolding learning. Younger children use digital literacy as a source of information and as a way of enabling them to present their completed work effectively. Older children use the Internet when researching a topic and use different software to present their work. Children use the planning and proofing tools available on the computer when checking their draft work. We encourage all children to use digital literacy as a resource for learning, whenever they feel it is appropriate.

### **Role of the Subject Leader**

Moderating the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English Subject Leader alongside members of the Senior Leadership Team. The work of the English Subject Leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The English Subject leader gives the Headteacher a termly report in which s/he evaluates strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement. This will inform the evolution of the school's development plan.

In addition, the Subject Leader:

- ensures teachers understand the requirements of the National Curriculum and helps them to plan lessons;
- leads by example by setting high standards in their own teaching;
- prepares, organises and leads CPD;
- works closely with the Inclusion Manager and SLT;
- observes colleagues with a view to identifying the support they need;
- discusses regularly with the Headteacher and the English governor, the progress of implementing the National Curriculum for English in school;
- monitors and evaluates English provision in the school by conducting regular work scrutiny, climate walks and assessment data analysis;
- briefs a named member of the school's governing body to oversee the teaching and learning of English. This governor meets regularly with the subject leader to review progress.

### **Impact**

We strive to produce children who are fully literate and articulate, and are prepared for their secondary education and later life. Through engaging lessons, we aim to foster a love of English and language and an enjoyment of learning. We challenge children of all abilities and in order to make good progress in all areas of the English National Curriculum. They are encouraged to have a growth mind-set and to develop the skills of perseverance and resilience. Through reading, pupils are given a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. The Oracy Framework provides children with the necessary skills to effectively communicate and demonstrate their ideas and understanding - an approach that is essential for success in later life.

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### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the English subject leader, in consultation with the staff, and as and when elements of English are identified or prioritised within the School Development Plan.