



At St Mary's we champion every child to be the **best that they can be**. Our knowledge-led curriculum therefore endeavours to develop our children's **character**, **core skills**, **creativity** and sense of **community**.

Supported by our school's vision, ethos and position as a junior school, we believe that our specialist knowledge of the Key Stage 2 age range ensures **improving outcomes, opportunities and experiences for all our children**. To achieve this, we are aspirational for our pupils, instilling high expectations, the passion, perseverance and stamina to succeed.

English Policy

Ely St Mary's CofE Junior School

Written/reviewed by: Rebecca Gilpin-Davies

Date: 27th September 2021

4th November 2022

Next review due by: May 2026

1. Introduction & Aims

Our English curriculum aims to inspire and develop children to **'Read as a Writer'** and **'Write as a Reader'**. We believe that success in reading is inextricably linked with success in writing and the curriculum as a whole.

Our English curriculum as a whole, including the teaching of writing and speaking & listening, is taught with **audience and purpose at its forefront**, where pupils acquire and experiment with a wide variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures, with the confidence and ability to select and apply techniques with an awareness of their impact on the reader or listener. This priority is underpinned by a **thorough and targeted approach towards the teaching and application of the technical skills required for accurate transcription** (punctuation, spelling and handwriting), with frequent opportunities to consolidate English skills across the wider curriculum.

1.1 Objectives

- To have a good foundation in the basic skills needed for English (spelling, punctuation, grammar, handwriting and oracy).
- To be able to write according to the audience and purpose.
- To be able to read using a range of strategies, including those set out in the Sounds-Write phonics scheme.
- To be able to understand, describe and select information from a range of texts.
- To use drama to explore creativity and viewpoint.
To develop a range of vocabulary to build schema, communicate effectively, interest the reader/listener and deepen meaning.
- To be able to listen and respond appropriately to others.
To speak with clarity and confidence and listen with attention and understanding.
- To use cross curricular links to deepen understanding where relevant.

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Reading

Reading, particularly Reading for Pleasure, is central to every child's educational development and fundamental to inspiring children to be life-long learners into secondary school and adult life. We believe that having access to a wide range of texts and genres, and support in enjoying them where required, is a core part of every child's educational entitlement, whatever their background or attainment. At Ely St Mary's, we take a multi-layered approach to the teaching of reading. Our multi-layered approach consists of:

- Promotion and prioritisation of individual reading (facilitated by the use of Accelerated Reader)

We encourage children to read independently at home and in school. Accelerated Reader, a graded reading scheme using an excellent range of texts, provides appropriate and highly motivational structure to support children to make excellent progress. Parents are encouraged to support their children's learning by regularly listening to their child read.

- Whole- class Guided Reading using Doug Lemov's approach, focusing on:
Fluency, Accountability, Social, Expression

We understand the potential of whole-class reading to not only improve functional skills but also to develop vocabulary, shared experiences and a life-long appreciation of reading. In whole-class Guided Reading sessions, pupils share varied, high quality texts which provide opportunities for rich discussions and vocabulary development. Guided Reading texts are carefully selected to address the 'plagues of reading' outlined in Reading Reconsidered, supporting children to engage with texts which provide interest and challenge.

During Guided Reading sessions, children are introduced to high-level vocabulary and taught to apply new words in different contexts. Children are encouraged to read aloud with confidence and to engage in high quality book talk which encourages higher order thinking and discussion. Reading texts are 'marked up' in advance with questions which support and encourage children to access the text at a deeper level. For example, in addition to 'information retrieval' questions, children are also asked to comment on an author's language choices; to make inferences and predictions based on what they have read; and to make connections with other texts to support their answers.

- Phonics-based Guided Reading in Year 3

In addition to whole-class reading, early reading skills are also specifically taught in Year 3 through the Sounds-Write phonics programme. Sounds-Write teaches children the common ways of representing sounds and provides opportunities to practise the skills of segmenting and blending to enable them to read fluently. For more confident readers, the scheme also teaches common exception words and homophones.

- Reading skills teaching

Throughout the school, there is teaching of functional reading behaviours and skills eg to skim texts for information, to summarise, to explain etc. Children are taught to apply these skills in written comprehension tasks.

- Reading for pleasure

Our aim is to foster a love of reading and to ensure that children have access to a wide range of quality texts. Reading for pleasure is promoted through the whole-school Reading Passport initiative, which has been informed by the research of Doug Lemov. Each year group has a Reading Passport library of fiction and non-fiction texts which are carefully chosen to provide a high level of interest and challenge. They can be borrowed for independent reading but will often be used as shared class texts. The books introduce children to some of the reading challenges identified by Lemov eg engaging with archaic texts, stories with non-linear time sequences, and texts with complex narration.

All classes have their own library. This is made up of books from the Reading Passport and a range of books which have selected to engage children and provide a good balance of text types. There is also a 'bridging library' and passport available to those pupils who are making the transition from phonics-based reading to becoming independent readers.

Writing

We believe that when children write, they should have a strong awareness of the purpose of their writing and the impact it has on the reader. They are taught to use writing to entertain, persuade, discuss, instruct and

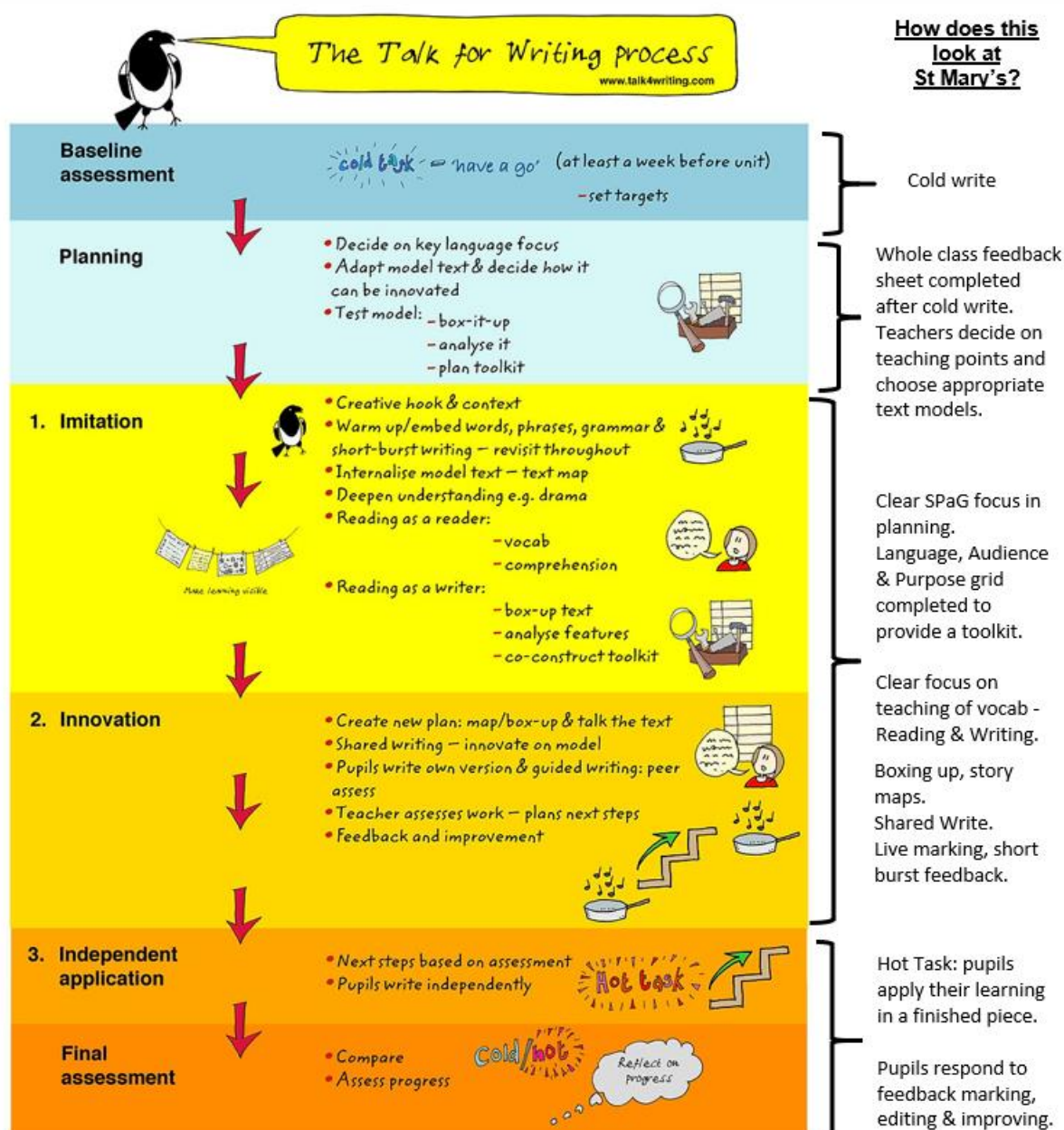
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inform. Children are given regular opportunities to apply their writing skills in all areas of the curriculum, allowing them to write for different purposes and for different audiences.

Whilst we do not follow Talk for Writing as a scheme, we structure our writing units around the principles of a Talk for Writing feedback cycle (as outlined in the diagram below), focusing on the technical skills required for accurate transcription. Teaching sequences involve modeled and shared writing, and a systematic approach to the teaching of grammar and spelling. Grammar teaching is supported by Ely St Mary's sentence types, adapted from the work of Alan Peat, ensuring a clear progression throughout the school. Daily SPaG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) and dictation tasks ensure that core skills are regularly revisited and consolidated.

We encourage pupils to reflect on their own writing and that of peers. Live marking and short burst feedback supports children to review and edit their own work, reflecting on the accuracy of transcription and the extent to which it has fulfilled its purpose.



Spelling and handwriting

As a junior school, we also recognise that whilst all of our children have been exposed to phonics teaching in Year 1, not everyone will have mastered a secure level of phonics (reading and spelling) upon arrival in Year 3.

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We therefore ensure that all pupils in Year 3 receive phonics teaching in class, with additional opportunities for acquisition and consolidation via intervention if required. In Years 4 to 6, teaching focuses on National Curriculum words and spelling patterns, following the progression set out in the Spelling Shed programme. Spelling Shed activities are set for homework and revisited in class. All year groups follow the Nelson handwriting program, which encourages clear modelling and frequent practice of pre-cursive and cursive script.

2. Procedures and practice

2.1 Teaching & Planning:

At Ely St Mary's, we have a clear sequence for our Writing units. We begin each unit with an 'Audience, Purpose Features' session where children explore the unit text type through high quality texts and gain a solid understanding of the purpose and audience of their writing.

The teaching sequence includes word and sentence level work, where planning is guided by writing Key Learning Indicators and ESM sentence types for each year group. These provide a clear progression of skills across the school.

Through modelled and shared writing, children gain confidence in applying grammatical rules in their writing and are able to reflect on how best to connect with their audience. Children receive live marking feedback and are encouraged to look for opportunities to edit and improve their own work.

Years 3 to 6 participate in whole-class reading sessions. These are based on carefully chosen texts (taken as a whole or in excerpts) and planning consists of texts which have been 'marked up' with opportunities for key vocabulary teaching and questioning to encourage high quality book talk. Reading plans show a clear progression of reading skills across the year groups.

2.2 Organisation:

Reading and writing (including handwriting and spelling) are taught daily and a minimum of 6 hours curriculum time is allocated to English. Children's work is recorded in their red 'application' books. English skills are also taught across the curriculum in our foundation subjects, where children learn to apply their English skills in a range of contexts, considering how to adapt their language to meet their audience and purpose.

2.3 Resources:

All classrooms are allocated laminated sentence types and phonics posters for display. Children are given access to Spelling Shed to support their spelling practice. Teachers have access to Nelson Handwriting on-line to facilitate the teaching of handwriting.

2.4 Equal opportunities:

Every child has the right to access the full English curriculum regardless of gender, race and ability. Learning objectives, activities and adult support will be adapted to meet the needs of all pupils including those with SEND and higher attaining children. See both our SEND policy and our Most Able Policy. Pupil Premium funding can also be allocated to facilitate disadvantaged pupils in pupils in accessing extracurricular opportunities in subsidising enrichment trips, visits and experiences relating to English.

2.5 Assessment:

Our Ely St Mary's writing assessment criteria was developed as a staff team to reflect the priorities of our curriculum. Each year group has 'essential' criteria that must be met in order for a child to be assessed as achieving age-related expectations at the end of the year. Our sentence types are mapped to reflect the expectations of each year group.

Ongoing informal assessments are made by class teachers throughout daily work. Applied written work is marked using assessment for learning marking, with improvement comments clearly linked to the extent to

which the writing is appropriate in terms of audience and purpose, as well as individual learning targets. Teacher assessments are carried out every half term and assessment data recorded on Pupil Asset throughout the year. This is then discussed by the SIT team and any outcomes and actions are then considered twice termly in Pupil Progress meetings.

All year groups participate in trust-wide moderation through the national No More Marking scheme, with supplements termly within school moderation sessions.

Reading is assessed through a combination of teacher assessment based on teaching sessions, and performance in comprehension tasks. Termly DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) assessments are also used to measure reading fluency. Analysis of DIBELS data enables teachers to detect risk and monitor the development of early reading skills.

2.6 Monitoring and Evaluation:

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the subject leads for English and Heads of Phase/Year. The quality of English work will be evaluated through lesson drop ins, pupil voice and work sampling. The link English school governor will support the monitoring of this subject area at least annually (e.g. via our Governor Day).

3. Contribution of English to other subjects in the curriculum

Pupils are encouraged to apply their writing and reading skills across the curriculum. Foundation subjects provide opportunities for reading and discussing a variety of text types. Pupils are also supported to write for a range of purposes and audiences. For example, they will have the opportunity to read and write non-chronological reports in Science, History and Geography; evaluate and reflect on their DT projects; and develop reasoned arguments in RE.

In all foundation subjects, pupils are taught the meaning, use and spelling of technical and specialist vocabulary.

4. Concluding notes

4.1 Consultation

This policy and English Curriculum was written by Rebecca Gilpin-Davies, leader for English education, in consultation with:

- Teaching staff and LBG representative, Alexa Minett.
- Governors – Governor Day monitoring visit 6th February 2022.

4.2 Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored and review by the subject leader responsible for English.

4.3 Links to other policies

- Full English Coverage Map and Progression of Skills can be found in the Ely St Mary's Curriculum Document here: <https://www.elystmarys.org.uk/web/overview/503308>
- SEND Policy
- Pupil Premium Strategy
- Most Able Policy
- Feedback Policy

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