

'Caring, Curious and Confident'
Curry Rivel Church of England Primary School



Curriculum Overview: English

Our curriculum approach to English reflects our vision: 'Caring, Curious and Confident'. In particular, we aim for pupils to develop curiosity across the disciplines of English, as well as providing opportunities to work co-operatively with others and become confident and resourceful learners.

Intent

Our Literary Curriculum, a book-based approach, immerses children in a literary world and aims to create strong levels of engagement from all pupils to provide meaningful and authentic contexts for English. We aspire that children will become critical readers and value their developing authorial style as they encounter a wide-range of significant authors and a variety of fiction, non-fiction and poetry.

We recognise that English is unique and includes its own substantive knowledge, disciplinary knowledge and skills. We are a six-class school and nursery, with mixed age classes. Due to demographic changes and unpredictable in-year admission numbers, our class structure is not guaranteed to be the same year after year. Therefore, we have sequenced the content of the English curriculum based on a two-year 'rolling programme' for each class. This ensures that, whatever path a pupil takes through the school, the National Curriculum content is covered (Programme of Study Coverage Map). More importantly, our curriculum is a 'spiral curriculum' in which the writing journey, genres and outcomes are presented repeatedly throughout the curriculum, but with deepening layers of complexity.

The components are:

- Writing (composition and transcription), including handwriting and spelling
- Reading and viewing
- Listening and viewing
- Speaking and representing
- Grammar and vocabulary

'Substantive' knowledge', for example terms in punctuation and grammar, is carefully 'curated' and **skills objectives** are progressive through the use of the **Programme of Study Coverage Map**. We are also deepening our understanding of **disciplinary knowledge** for each subject so that genres and outcomes connected to a unit of work are revisited across the age ranges. Through sequenced and progressive themes, we are able to embed knowledge and create natural and explicit connections with prior understanding, therefore making the learning 'sticky', helping to inspire lifelong informed, enthusiastic readers and authors.

The English national curriculum (2014) states that: 'The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.'

- We believe the exposure of **children's literature** within the primary school setting is vital as a rich context for learning; not only within English as a subject but to support building a reading culture throughout the school.
- We aim to use high quality books that offer opportunities for empathy and can aid philosophical enquiry, as a means of developing the spoken language requirements through debate, drama and discussion using the issues raised through, and within, the text.

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In English, our learners' understanding of the writing process is constantly modelled, embedded and deepened throughout a pupil's journey through the school:

- Generating ideas
- Planning
- Drafting
- Editing
- Re-drafting
- Publishing/performing/sharing



We explore and model how this writing process is not linear, but completely interconnected.

Implementation



English Hubs
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By placing books at the core, we are allowing teachers to use the text as the context for the requirements of the national curriculum. The national curriculum states that:

'This guidance is not intended to constrain or restrict teachers' creativity, simply to provide the structure on which they can construct exciting lessons.'

This would suggest that a context for learning is vital – and this is where our chosen approach can support teachers with **ensuring that objectives for reading and writing, including those for grammar can have purpose.**

We will always aim for our **writing opportunities to be meaningful**; whether short or long and that the audience is clear. Books offer this opportunity: our final aim would be that that children have real reasons to write, whether to explain, persuade, inform or instruct and that where possible, this can be embedded within text or linked to a curriculum area. Writing in role using a range of genres is key to our approach as is writing a critique of the text and making comparisons – all writing skills that will support children in preparation for their time in secondary school. This sits comfortably alongside the following statement from the English national curriculum:

'The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.'

We use 'Literacy Tree' as a source of high quality planning for our teachers and, where needed, planning sequences are adapted, personalised and differentiated to ensure all access arrangements can be made to support children with the requirements and to ensure parity between classes where necessary.

In collaboration with the Literacy Tree, we have mapped the coverage of the English Programme of Study for KS1 and KS2, as well as meeting the needs of the statutory (March 2017) Early Years Framework. In many cases, objectives are covered more than once and children have opportunities to apply these several times over

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the course of a year, as well as to consolidate prior knowledge from previous years. We believe strongly that children should be secure in applying the skills of curriculum 2014 within their writing and their reading and that this approach is fully comprehensive.

Each week, children receive:

- Four English writing lessons
- Three 30-minute guided reading lessons
- One spelling instruction lesson and 2 opportunities a week for consolidation
- Two explicit handwriting sessions each week
- One discrete PaG lesson
- Daily opportunities for class story embedded into the school day, with class ownership and story journals

We set high expectations and develop 'Cultural Capital' by:

- Using **high quality literature and texts** across the curriculum.
- Valuing '**oracy**' and teaching high-level **vocabulary**.
- Using '**authentic**' high quality resources.
- Making links to '**Primary Futures**', which shows children that what they are learning at school can lead to interesting, exciting future jobs or careers.

Teachers use 'Assessment for Learning' strategies including 'fast feedback' and the 'Teacher Assessment Record' to check learners' understanding systematically, identify misconceptions accurately and provide clear, direct feedback.

Impact

- We want children to feel engaged and inspired by the literary curriculum so that they develop a love of English - to value themselves as authors, storytellers and lifelong readers. We want children to be able to talk confidently about what they have learned and how this is connected to other units of work they have been taught.
- Equipping the children with literacy skills at the highest levels, and building their imagination and creativity, means that they feel empowered to achieve their dreams - now and in the years to come.
- Children's learning will be shared and celebrated. Their extended writing will be published into a published workbook once each half term and assessed against interim standards. This will be moderated internally as a staff and by the subject leader and externally, as appropriate.
- The children's creativity and learning will be celebrated in their reading journals, of which they feel a sense of freedom and ownership, which can be widely shared with their peers and community.
- The Subject Leader uses a range of tools to evaluate the English curriculum, including half-termly extended writing, staff and pupil voice, learning walks, internal and external moderation opportunities and through collaboration with Sarah Cook from the English Hub and the Literacy Tree consultant team.
- The subject leader will ask:
 - Is the curriculum working- what do assessments tell me? Are children progressing?
 - What impact is the curriculum having? If children are not progressing, is my subject sequenced correctly? Are layers of learning there? Are we revisiting things enough? Is teacher subject knowledge good enough? Are we meeting the needs of SEND pupils?
 - What can/cannot children do? What have they learned/not learned? How do I know?
 - What is this telling me about the organisation and sequence of the DT curriculum?

Reviewed by Ali Pook and Fay Tucker (June 2021)