

St Monica's Catholic Primary School



English Curriculum Overview

Philosophy

Every child is a unique gift from God, with his or her own unique gifts. Our Catholic school, inspired by the teaching of Jesus Christ, will always endeavour to meet the needs of every child within our school.

At St. Monica's, we strive to ensure that all children and staff are offered the opportunity to develop to their full potential in individual, educational, moral, intellectual and spiritual needs.

Our Mission Statement is "Let Trust, Respect and Love live here."

Intent (What We Aim to Achieve)

At St Monica's, we believe that a high-quality English curriculum is the foundation for all learning. English enables pupils to speak, read, and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas, thoughts, and feelings effectively to others.

Our core intent is to build **strong foundational skills**, including phonics, early reading, fluent handwriting, accurate spelling, and structural writing confidence, from the very beginning of a child's educational journey. Aligning directly with DfE guidance on *Stronger Foundations*, we recognise that securing early language and literacy skills is vital to unlocking access to the wider curriculum.

Key Intentions:

- **High Expectations for All:** We maintain ambition for every pupil. We expect all children to achieve their full potential regardless of their starting points.
- **Full National Curriculum Coverage:** We deliver a broad, balanced, and progressive English curriculum that meets and exceeds all statutory requirements of the National Curriculum.
- **Inclusion and Adaptive Teaching:** We make purposeful adaptations for children with SEND or additional learning needs to ensure barriers are removed, enabling every pupil to achieve, thrive, and experience success.
- **Readiness for the Next Stage:** We aim to equip pupils with the necessary literacy skills, stamina, and vocabulary to transition seamlessly between key stages and leave primary education fully prepared for secondary school.

2. Implementation (How We Deliver Our Curriculum)

Our curriculum is systematically designed to build upon prior knowledge, ensuring concepts are embedded into long-term memory through structured progression models.

Early Reading & Phonics

- **Read Write Inc. (RWI):** We deliver systematic, synthetic phonics using the validated *Read Write Inc.* program. Phonics instruction begins immediately in EYFS and Key Stage 1 to establish firm decoding and blending skills.
- **Targeted Intervention (Y3/Y4):** For pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 who require further reinforcement of phonetic knowledge, targeted RWI keeps-up and catches-up sessions continue to secure fluency.
- **Fresh Start (Y5/Y6):** Older pupils in Upper Key Stage 2 requiring rapid intervention access the *Fresh Start* program, which delivers age-appropriate, rigorous phonetic consolidation to bridge learning gaps before secondary transition.

Reading Comprehension & Reading Culture

- **VIPERS Framework:** To develop reading comprehension skills, we use a progressive, spiral curriculum based on **VIPERS** (*Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explanation, Retrieval, Sequence/Summarise*). This ensures pupils repeatedly revisit and deepen core analytical reading skills across increasingly complex texts.
- **Fostering a Love of Reading:**
 - **Protected Story Time:** Daily dedicated read-aloud sessions expose pupils to rich, diverse literature above their independent reading level.
 - **School Library:** A vibrant library space encourages independent text selection, research skills, and pleasure reading.
 - **Accelerated Reader:** We utilise *Accelerated Reader* across Year 2 and Key Stage 2 to track independent reading progress, provide accessible challenge, and celebrate pupil achievements.

Writing, Grammar & Handwriting

- **I am a Clever Writer Approach:** We embed the *I am a Clever Writer* methodology across the school for writing and handwriting instruction. *Please note: Specific unit overviews for this approach are subject to copyright and cannot be displayed publicly on our website; however, the framework systematically breaks down learning into explicit, manageable key skills.* Pupils build sentences incrementally, master grammar in context, and refine their handwriting, leading to significant, rapid progress across all year groups.
- **Spelling:** We follow a progressive, sequential spelling curriculum sourced from **Purple Mash**, ensuring full coverage of National Curriculum spelling patterns, rules, and statutory word lists.

Adaptive Practice & Inclusivity

In line with the DfE *Stronger Foundations* and SEND recommendations, teachers adapt delivery rather than reducing expectations. Adaptations include targeted scaffolding, visual prompts, pre-teaching key vocabulary, assistive technology, and continuous formative assessment.

3. Impact (How We Measure Success)

The impact of our English curriculum is evident in pupils' academic success, work outcomes, and overall confidence as communicators.

Measuring Pupil Progress:

- **Attainment & Progress:** Children make strong progress from their varied starting points, achieving well in national assessments.
- **Work Quality & Pride:** Pupils demonstrate clear, rapid steps of progress in their exercise books. Their writing displays expanding vocabulary, accurate grammar, and fluent, legible handwriting.
- **Fluency & Comprehension:** Children develop as confident, articulate readers who can decode unfamiliar words and engage thoughtfully with texts using VIPERS skills.
- **Culture of Literacy:** Pupils speak passionately about books, demonstrate independence in choosing reading material, and show genuine enjoyment in creative and formal writing.

Curriculum Map Summary

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Curriculum Area	Primary Approach / Scheme	Target Year Groups	Key Focus
Early Phonics	Read Write Inc. (RWI)	EYFS – Key Stage 1	Decoding, blending, and early fluency
Phonics Intervention	RWI (Y3/Y4) / Fresh Start (Y5/Y6)	Years 3, 4, 5 & 6	Catch-up phonics and reading fluency
Reading Comprehension	Spiral Curriculum (VIPERS)	Years 1 – 6	Explicit comprehension skills & analysis
Reading Culture	Story Time, Library & Accelerated Reader	Whole School	Reading for pleasure and vocabulary development
Writing & Handwriting	I am a Clever Writer	Whole School	Explicit key skill breakdown & sentence structure
Spelling	Purple Mash Progressive Scheme	Years 1 – 6	Statutory word lists and spelling rules