

Rationale for the teaching of English at St. Mark's C of E Primary School.

At St. Mark's, we follow a 'Building Blocks' approach so all children – regardless of need – can work towards towards outcomes for end of key Stage/phase that they are in, with the ultimate aim of them being ready for the next stage of their learning.

- In EYFS and KS1 the focus is on about the basics (spelling, hand writing, basic sentence structure and punctuation, word reading, comprehension.) Whatever contexts/outcomes for writing that they are expected to complete, these elements must be a focus. As long as, in KS1, they understand a story has a beginning, middle and end – and can write a sequenced story like this; they understand what a recount is and can write one; they understand instructional writing and, finally, they can structure some form of simple letter/post card, that is adequate, as long as the basics are the focus, the context becomes the motivate and engage part, not the 'what you're assessing' part. For reading in EYFS, children should leave being able to blend as a bare minimum; they should have a love of books and stories and engage with responding to stories also. In KS1, children will explore/read the text for meaning first of all, this 'exploring' to include texts questions/comprehension set by class teachers, to assess their understanding of the skills – based on gaps assessment is showing - but with a more verbal assessment, until they are ready for written responses to the text.
- Year 3 and 4 writing should be about developing a sense of audience and purpose, securing basic text structure and extending knowledge of punctuation and grammar. Before starting any writing, the children will be asked who the audience is, what the purpose of the writing is and for them to answer the question, 'Who am I?' [writing as]. By the end of Y3/4, children should have had the opportunity to write all the different text types, so none are new when they reach Y5/6. For reading in Y3/4, they look more at the structure of the text, in order to write that form, in order to know that form of writing – and the SC that goes with it – really well, but also building on the work done in Y1/2 for sentence structure and punctuation.
- Year 5 and 6 should be about developing independence: application of skills, including using the full range of punctuation accurately, and knowledge (full SPG coverage) for a wide range of purposes and audiences (including the 'Who Am I?') For reading in Y5/6 greater emphasis should be on children reading age appropriate subject matter that is challenging in both that and language. They will use reading as models for their own writing. Knowing a text and characters – from novels/short stories – so well that they can either write like the author or in the style of the characters studied.
Children will choose their own response to the text in written form.
- All year groups, beyond the English curriculum, are explicitly taught reading for the first 40 minutes of the day. For some, this is pure phonics, for most, it is word reading and the full range of skills needed to be able to comprehend a text.