



English at St Luke's

Intent

We believe every pupil deserves a broad and ambitious English curriculum. At St Luke's, we aim to equip pupils for their future through a well sequenced English curriculum enabling pupils to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for their present and their future. We aim for readiness. We aim to develop a love of reading from the very start of every pupil's St Luke's journey, where pupils are intrinsically motivated to read (Clark and Teravainen, 2017).

We want to enable all pupils to read fluently and confidently across the curriculum. We see reading as the key skill that unlocks opportunities to gain knowledge in other subjects (Castles, 2018). We aim for all pupils to read confidently and for pleasure.

We aim for pupils to use writing to engage, inform and entertain. We believe pupils should see themselves as writers, developing their cultural capital by actively removing barriers in a curriculum that has embedded opportunities to read, learn and experience a variety of cultures.

Implementation

Since the pandemic, teachers have carefully chosen texts in their classrooms to enable emotional "catch up" and support pupils in becoming more relationally connected, leading pupils to develop culturally, emotionally, socially and spiritually (Kumschick, 2014). Teachers lead dialogic classrooms with purposefully planned opportunities to incorporate the principles of classroom talk (Alexander 2020).

From nursery to year 1, the Little Wandle approach is used to teach synthetic phonics. This aspirational and robust scheme is taught with fidelity and

consistency across the school. Once pupils have exited the phonics scheme, in year 2, pupils develop their fluency through Little Wandle fluency chapter books which support pupils to improve their word count per minute, fluency and understanding to avoid the Matthew Effect (Rothlisberger et al 2023). Daily phonics lessons support the acquisition of new grapheme/phoneme correspondences (GPC). Phonics lessons review prior learning, teach new learning and provide opportunities to apply these each day in reading and writing. Reading books at home and in school are matched to pupils' knowledge of GPCs to ensure pupils can read fluently.

Throughout the school, pupils are given opportunities to engage in a wide variety of texts in free reading, home reading and in reciprocal reading lessons. At home, pupils use an online platform paid for by the school so as to be free to all (Reading Eggs) to develop skills, word count per minute, fluency and comprehension. In the classroom, book talk is rich in language and content. The school is language rich and books are deliberately placed in classrooms and corridors to complement display boards and reflect our love of books. In KS2, teachers deliver whole class reciprocal reading lessons. These lessons use high quality books (linked to the inter-connected curriculum) to model fluency and prosody, explore and clarify new vocabulary, summarise, predict, retrieve, infer and think wider about concepts and themes in the book. Each pupil shares a copy of the whole class book with their partner to support each other in talk for learning which enables partner book talk and whole class book talk (Tennent and Reedy, 2021).

Teachers lead dialogic classrooms and deliver the National Curriculum in well sequenced units. Teachers in lower school focus on early language, early reading and mark making into writing. The Little Wandle phonics scheme also has letter formation mnemonics to ensure letters are formed accurately from an early age. In KS1 and KS2, teachers build on prior learning with a strong emphasis on vocabulary and oracy prior to writing. The sequence of learning explicitly links planning, talking, writing and editing which leads to fluent transcription and effective composition (Mason, 2001).

Teachers link reading and writing and enable pupils to read as a reader, read as a writer and then encourage pupils to use their knowledge to write in more depth in writing opportunities that reflect our inter-connected curriculum.

Teachers plan a wide variety of opportunities for pupils to write in short writing and at length. As a result, pupils write with stamina and pace. Lessons include a balance of instruction and opportunities to write. Pupils have some agency over their writing, able to apply their knowledge in their own genre of choice. Pupils also enjoy a short daily creative writing session that allows for imaginations to flourish. In English lessons, teachers explicitly teach the

sequence of writing including planning, drafting, revising and redrafting. Pupils improve as teachers explicitly and systematically follow the GPS overviews and apply these in teaching strategies for writing. Assessment for learning informs next steps and ensures each pupil makes progress based on their starting point (Clarke, 2023).

The school's professional growth approach strategically maximises opportunities for staff to build and strengthen their own teaching strategies and also allows for staff to have agency and choice in their CPD to ensure it reflects the current need in their class. This personalised approach complements the whole school CPD offer to ensure English instruction and teacher modelling is effective and helps all pupils to learn. (Sherrington, 2020).

Impact

Pupils leave St Luke's able to clearly articulate what they want to write and how they want to write, applying grammar for effect. Pupils see themselves as authors, journalists and poets. Pupils read widely for pleasure and are becoming more intrinsically motivated. As a result of our well sequenced and engaging English curriculum, pupils leave St Luke's ready for secondary school (La Paro and Pianta, 2000).