

Holy Name Catholic Primary School

*“Shine Like the **STARS!**”*

Mission Statement

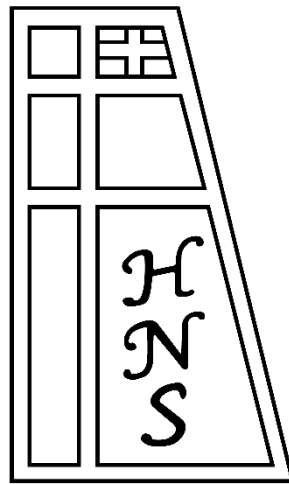
Holy Name is a Catholic Community working in partnership with parents/carers to nurture and educate the whole person, in the way of Christ, enabling all to know their worth and reach their potential.

***S**uccess **T**akes **A**pplication, **R**esilience & **S**tickability*



Vocabulary Policy

Holy Name Catholic Primary School



'If we teach students the words, we give them the world'

Stahl & Kapinus (2001)



Rationale

“The limits of my language are the limits of my mind. All I know is what I have words for.”

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1933)

At Holy Name Catholic Primary School we recognise the importance of our children acquiring a rich and varied vocabulary: enabling them to access the full curriculum; supporting their reading; helping them to progress through education from their earliest starting points; and equipping them with a wealth of knowledge, while increasing their cultural literacy. By taking a carefully considered and rigorous approach to vocabulary development throughout every aspect of our curriculum and the broader life of the school, we know that we are supporting our children and preparing them for their future.

Introduction

This policy has been designed in line with educational research, including the principles and recommendations contained within:

- Bringing Words to Life (Beck, et al., 2013)
- Closing the Vocabulary Gap (Quigley, 2018)
- EEF – Improving Literacy Series
- Bridging the Word Gap at Transition (The Oxford Language Report, 2020)
- Why Closing the Word Gap Matters (The Oxford Language Report, 2018)

Vocabulary is a strong indicator of reading success (National Literacy Trust, 2017). Research has shown that the size of a child’s vocabulary is the best predictor of success on future tests. Children with a poor vocabulary are four to five times more likely to struggle with reading in adulthood (Why Closing the Word Gap Matters: Oxford Language Report, 2018).

At Holy Name Catholic Primary School, we recognise that ‘schooling takes place through the medium of language’ (Hirsch, 2018) and that we play a vital role in closing any potential language deficit amongst our children, thus ensuring equity for all. This can only be achieved through a whole-school approach to vocabulary development within every subject throughout the curriculum, through well-considered choices about the vocabulary we teach and fostering a love of language and ‘word consciousness’ amongst our whole school community.



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Legislation and Guidance

This policy reflects the requirements for schools to provide a broad and balanced curriculum and follows the existing expectations set out within the National Curriculum in England 2013, the Statutory Framework for the Early Years and Foundation Stage 2021 and Ofsted's Inspection Framework 2021.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010.

Planning for Vocabulary Development in Every Subject

Developing a good level of vocabulary occurs in two ways, one of which is through direct, robust instruction. For this to happen, there needs to be clear decisions about what to teach and when to teach it.

While the explicit teaching of vocabulary features regularly within daily English lessons, at Holy Name Catholic Primary School, we recognise the vital importance of a consistent and progressive approach to vocabulary throughout every area of our curriculum. Vocabulary that is vital to the understanding of key concepts and important language that develops children's knowledge are carefully selected by Subject Leaders and mapped throughout the teaching sequences within Medium Term Plans. An overview of vocabulary for each subject is also available as part of the subject's Progression Document. Vocabulary is initially sourced using 'Making Words Work' (SIL), and further refined to ensure cohesion with the school's learning outcomes within the Medium Term Plans.

A Language-Rich Environment

While direct, robust instruction is one way to ensure a good level of vocabulary, indirect instruction is also a key component. Features of indirect instruction include, using rich reading experiences to grow vocabulary 'naturally' and paying attention to context to work out meaning and using background knowledge.

At Holy Name Catholic Primary School, we foster a language-rich environment: adults engage children in high-quality dialogue. These critical 'back- and forth' interactions involve the adult in:

- Thinking out loud, modelling new language for children
- Rephrasing and extending what the children say
- Validating children's attempts at using new vocabulary
- Providing models of accurate pronunciation and grammar
- Making connection between ideas
- Helping children to articulate ideas in well-formed sentences

The Reading Framework, DfE 2021



In addition, the school's learning environment plays an integral part in our language rich environment. High quality displays include language linked to learning. In class, vocabulary features on working walls, not only for maths and English, but for wider curriculum topics. Vocabulary featured on working walls is explained and referred to frequently, to aid understanding and recall. These words though, are not only highlighted within the topic they are linked to, but also when opportunities arise in other lessons or when reading with the children. Adults are adept at exploiting all opportunities to embed understanding of vocabulary within the children.

Further, Holy Name Catholic Primary School nurtures 'word consciousness' throughout the whole school. Quigley (2018) describes this as 'an explicit awareness that words are richly connected, exist in families and exhibit common patterns.' This approach, using morphology and etymology to explore the components of words and their origins, helps develop a love of language within the children and supports them in being able to decipher new and unfamiliar words with confidence and enthusiasm.

Holy Name Catholic Primary School has developed a well-considered reading spine of high quality texts in order to further support the development of children's vocabulary. Fiction and poetry support wider curriculum teaching sequences where appropriate, while non-fiction texts support the development of disciplinary literacy.

Strategies

Teachers develop pupils' vocabulary through spoken language, reading and writing in all areas of the curriculum. The modelling of academic talk supports children in developing their understanding of vocabulary and enables them to use words correctly, in context and with confidence.

Holy Name Catholic Primary Schools take a multi-method approach to the teaching of vocabulary, recognising that the right approach needs to be selected for the right word in order for depth of knowledge to be gained by the children. In addition, a multi-method helps keep the teaching of vocabulary fun and engaging. Strategies employed within lessons include:

- Pupil talk strategies
- Morphology - morphemically rich words (suffix, prefix, root, families)
- Etymology – derivations
- Frayer model
- Focus words for the lesson
- On-line interactive activities
- Word mats
- Questioning
- Low-stakes quizzes
- I say... you say...
- Quick recall games



Roles and Responsibilities

Curriculum Lead:

- Responsible for ensuring a high quality, broad and balanced, curriculum across school that incorporates a progressive and well-considered approach to the development of vocabulary. This will be achieved by supporting all subject leaders to plan for, monitor, assess and report on vocabulary development within their subject area.

English Lead:

- Responsible for the explicit teaching of vocabulary within English and ensuring that this is evident in spoken language, reading and writing. Developing and maintaining a well-considered and progressive reading spine which facilitates children's passion for and understanding of language. Supporting teachers in using strategies within lessons.

Subject Leads:

- Responsible for compiling a progressive plan for vocabulary development for their subject. This should include key concepts to be revisited and built upon, and words that aid understanding of the teaching sequence being covered. In addition, supporting teachers in the delivery of vocabulary for their subject areas and working with the Curriculum Lead to monitor, assess and review vocabulary development against planning.

Class Teachers:

- Responsible for the teaching of planned vocabulary across the curriculum, using a multi-method approach and impactful strategies to engage the children and ensure progress. In addition, to ensure that classroom environments are language rich and that displays are compliant with the school's Display Policy.

Professional Development

When designing and selecting training and support for staff, Holy Name Catholic Primary School focuses on the mechanisms, which are the core building blocks of professional development (EEF, Effective Professional Development Guidance Report, 2021).

Dedicated directed time will be allocated to ensure the successful implementation of the Vocabulary Policy. This will include a focus at Staff Meetings, Phase Meetings and TA Meetings, across the year. A layered approach will ensure that staff are able to fulfil the elements featured within the Policy. This approach will include:

- In-house training from subject leaders
- The use of co-coaching for modelling and sharing good practice
- The commissioning of an external provider for whole school training

In addition to training sessions, educational research papers and text books will be available to staff through the Staff Library in the Staffroom and documents on the school's internal



network. Directed time will be used to allow time for staff to read and discuss the research and approaches within the texts.

Assessment

The assessment procedures employed at Holy Name Catholic Primary School are designed to support the overall vision of the children possessing a wide vocabulary and depth of knowledge that allows them to fully engage in all areas of the curriculum.

Formative assessment will be the primary method of understanding how the children are progressing and identifying those who may require support to ensure that they 'keep up rather than needing catch up'. These methods will be identified within the Medium Term Planning, and may include:

- Low stake quizzing
- Questions (multiple choice, true/false, justify and explain, clarify, example/non-example)
- Observing/listening to children in pair talk and discussions
- Completion of written work
- Completion of presentation
- Questioning at a distance from the learning

Some summative assessment will be employed to identify children's progression in vocabulary and will form part of the overall assessment cycles. This will include:

- Reading tests
- Writing tests
- Baseline testing
- On entry testing