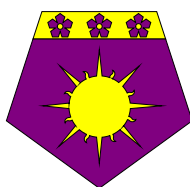


# St John's C of E Primary School

## English Policy

School Policy	<b>Prepared by L. Barrett Subject Leader</b>
School Staff were consulted on this document:	<b>Spring 2023</b>
It was approved by the Full Governing Body:	<b>Spring 2023</b>
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# **St John's C of E Primary School**

## **English Policy**

### **Contents**

1.	Aims	P3
2.	Teaching and Learning – Intention	P4
3.	Teaching and Learning – Implementation	P5
4.	Teaching and Learning – Impact	P8
5.	Assessment and Recording	P9
6.	Resources	P9
7.	Monitoring and Review	P10
8.	Role of the Subject Leader	P10



### **Our Vision**

Learn Together • Achieve Together • Celebrate Together  
"and let your light shine" Matthew 5:16

### **Our Mission Statement**

To enable all children to achieve their true potential in a caring Christian community.

### **Our Values**

Respect • Responsibility • Kindness • Truthfulness • Perseverance

## **Introduction**

Language is a vital life skill and is central to all learning. Effective use of language empowers the learner and is essential for independent learning, the world of work and most other aspects of everyday life.

Literature in English is rich and influential, reflecting the experience of people from many countries and times. In addition to being a subject in its own right, the English skills they are taught enables children to access all other areas of the curriculum.

## **English at St John's**

In our English curriculum at St. John's, we strive to provide all children with the knowledge, skills and understanding to become life-long learners and confident readers. We want all children to desire to read and write for a range of purposes and a range of audiences, as well as making links with other curriculum areas and discovering things for themselves. We place reading at the centre of our English curriculum to immerse and engage our pupils in a literature-rich environment. We believe that reading is the key to unlocking children's learning potential.

## **Aims**

- To promote a positive attitude to reading, writing, speaking and listening.
- To develop children's ability to become confident users of language, both oral and written.
- To ensure children have access to a broad, balanced and creative literacy curriculum.
- To provide clear and consistent teaching throughout the school.
- To communicate the school policy on English to all staff, Governors, parents and other interested parties.
- To use language as a vehicle for personal development and fulfilment, and as a source of pleasure.



## Teaching and Learning

### Intention

As children at St John's, we expect them to be avid readers, children who read fluently and widely and are able to express preferences and opinions about the texts that they read. We want them to read for pleasure, having had access to a wide range of text types, genres and authors in order for them to make informed opinions about their favourites. We want to produce children who write with confidence and accuracy for a variety of purposes and audiences whilst developing their own individual flair. We want our children to be able to write with grammatical accuracy and be able to apply spelling patterns correctly using a neat handwriting style. We aim to expose our children to a wide range of vocabulary so that they are able to decipher new words and then use them when speaking both informally and formally. We also aim for our children to apply all of these English skills to all areas of the curriculum. In English, we have high expectations for ALL learners, regardless of their needs or starting point.

These intentions are underpinned by:

- High Expectations - **All** children are expected to succeed and make progress from their starting points.
- Modelling - Teachers teach the skills needed to succeed in English providing examples of good practice and having high expectations.
- Fluency - Children apply English skills with ease throughout all of the curriculum.
- Vocabulary - Ambitious vocabulary is taught and modelled and is expected to be applied in everyday situations.

### Statutory Requirements

The school will follow the statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English as laid out in the National Curriculum English Document (2014) and in the Communication and Language Development section of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (2019).

**In the Foundation Stage** children should be given opportunities to:

- speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities;
- use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum;
- become immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

**At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2)**, children should learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They should begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They should use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.



**At Key Stage Two (Years 3-6)**, children should learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They should read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They should explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

## **Implementation**

### **Reading**

Following the National Curriculum for English, we ensure that Reading is taught across the whole curriculum. Reading comprehension skills are taught with a 'whole-class' approach in English and with smaller group intervention when required.

- We aim for children to develop an interest and pleasure in reading as they learn to read confidently and independently based around rich stimulating texts.
- Phonics is taught daily in Early Years, Year 1 and the first term of Year 2. Children are taught initially in class groups and then are grouped for phonic activities as appropriate by the class teacher. This work is built on in Year 2 and in KS2 as needed in intervention groups.
- Reading at home is essential and is recorded in the homework diaries for home-school communication.
- Each class visits our school library either weekly or bi-weekly for a dedicated time slot to exchange, share and discuss books and reading for pleasure; this is also modelled by the class teacher.
- Guided reading is also delivered in small groups across Key Stage Two. This allows children the opportunity to read aloud with an adult but also promotes a conversation about what is being read, without the expectation of written responses.
- Each child has a login to Reading Eggs/Eggspress, which promotes the learning of phonics and reading comprehension skills. This is available at school and at home.

### **Phonics**

Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why phonics is emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners (i.e. unskilled readers) as they start school.

Daily phonics sessions are taught from Reception through to Year 2, when this embedded phonics work closely matches the spelling requirements of the curriculum.

At St John's, we use the 'Twinkl Phonics' scheme with Rhino Reader books to support this. Twinkl Phonics is a DfE validated full systematic, synthetic phonics programme that contains everything you need to deliver phonics teaching to children from the very beginning of learning to read and write to full fluency.



When children reach the middle of Year 2, if they have not been able to meet the threshold to pass the phonics screening assessment, they will receive extra intervention with a trained member of staff. This intervention will be assessed and reviewed and if the desired progress has not been made, we will put a new initiative in place.

## **Writing**

Following the National Curriculum for English, we ensure that writing is taught across the whole curriculum and we ensure that writing skills are embedded in all forms of writing in all subjects.

- We use Jonathan Bond's English Planning kit which outlines a progressive term by term set of reading, writing, speaking and listening and spelling objectives based on the 2014 National Curriculum. The kit has been enhanced to make it bespoke to our school.
- This approach is utilised throughout the school, from Reception to the end of Year 6, enabling children to build upon previous knowledge throughout the school.
- From the very earliest stages of writing development, we promote talk to aid writing.
- Writing is taught through the use of high-quality, model texts and the children will always have a clear purpose and audience for their writing.
- Children write a range of narrative and non-narrative texts, as well as poetry.
- Writing is modelled throughout the school, by the teacher with a plan, write, edit, and publish process.
- The use of success criteria (toolkit) are essential for children to become independent writers.
- Children have access to a range of resources to support their writing and are taught to use these.
- Children are given the opportunity to self and peer-assess throughout our writing units; this develops the children's ability to discuss their writing and take on board any advice or feedback their partner has for them.
- Dictionaries and thesaurus are available for all children to use.

## **Handwriting**

At St John's, we have devised our own handwriting scheme. In Reception and Year 1, children are taught to print, focussing on correct letter formation and sizing. When children progress into Year 2, some joins are taught to prepare them for learning full joining when they move into Year 3 and 4. We teach the children using a continuous cursive approach and by the time children reach Year 5, they should be confident in this unless they have a specific fine motor control difficulty.

Please see our separate handwriting policy for more information.



## **Spelling**

Spelling is taught in line with the National Curriculum, with all statutory spelling patterns taught in the appropriate age phase and most of the non-statutory work is followed. From 2022, we have been following Jonathan Bond's spelling kit from Years 2-6. A spelling pattern is focused on in class for a one or two week period and is revisited regularly throughout the scheme. Assessment of spelling includes a 'quiz' or a dictation, when children are also expected to demonstrate their wider grammar and punctuation skills. In Reception and Year 1, the spellings given to the children are in line with the phonic sound they are learning in school.

Most children are exposed to the age-related spelling teaching linked to the national curriculum, however children who need additional support may have more personalised spellings to learn each week in line with their needs.

## **Grammar and Punctuation**

As stipulated in the National Curriculum, the grammar of our first language is learnt naturally and implicitly through interactions with other speakers and from reading. Explicit knowledge of grammar is, however, very important, as it gives us more conscious control and choice in our language. Building this knowledge is best achieved through a focus on grammar within the teaching of reading, writing and speaking. Once pupils are familiar with a grammatical concept (for example 'modal verb'), they should be encouraged to apply and explore this concept in the grammar of their own speech and writing and to note where it is used by others. Young pupils, in particular, use language that is more complex in speech than in writing, and teachers should build on this, aiming for a smooth transition to sophisticated writing.

When we want to teach children to apply a grammar term in their writing, we will either teach that concept within a writing lesson or a completely discrete lesson. For discrete lessons, we use The Natural Curriculum to support our teaching.

The teaching of punctuation is taught in relation to age related expectations in the National Curriculum and alongside grammar. Children are taught that the use of punctuation will aid the readers' comprehension of their work. Opportunities across the curriculum will allow children to consolidate punctuation concepts.

## **Spoken Language**

Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing across the whole curriculum. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Pupils develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write through talk. They are assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others and teachers ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils are taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate as well as taking on different roles in drama.



## **Adaptive Teaching**

We recognise the fact that we have children of differing ability in all our classes, and so we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child whilst maintaining high expectations for all. We achieve this through a range of strategies:

- Setting common tasks that are open-ended and can have a variety of responses.
- Setting tasks of increasing difficulty where not all children complete all tasks.
- Providing a range of challenges with different resources.
- Using additional adults to support the work of individual children or small groups.

## **Strategies and Planning**

At St John's, we use long-term plans to inform our weekly planning. We do not use a set, weekly or daily planning format as we firmly believe that the planning process is to inform and equip teachers, and whatever planning they do, should work for them. However, we do expect to see evidence of planning in lessons, through resources prepared and a well-structured lesson.

To inform our writing planning, we use the Jonathan Bond Kit and prepare our own resources to support this plan. Each year group has a range of teaching materials available to them to aid in this.

## **English Across the Curriculum**

### **'Life-long literacy and learning'**

At St John's, we firmly believe that English is an essential skill to enable students to read and write as experts in every subject across the curriculum. These skills are vital to make sense of the world around us. As such, the better we are at these skills the more successful we can expect to be in life. At St John's, we recognise that improving literacy can have an impact on students' self-esteem, motivation, behaviour and attainment.

The teachers at St John's actively plan and seek out opportunities for our children to have experiences of developing literacy skills across the curriculum. Teachers will intentionally plan for children to reinforce literacy skills in other curricular areas. Emphasising these skills across the curriculum ensures that our children see the relevance in what they are learning and provides them with opportunities to use these skills in real-life contexts and situations.

## **Impact**

At St John's, we know our carefully thought through and engaging English curriculum has had an impact through employing the following strategies:

- Pupil voice - Through discussion and feedback, children talk enthusiastically about reading and writing and understand the importance of this subject. They can also talk about books and authors that they have enjoyed and can make reading recommendations.
- Evidence in knowledge - Pupils can make links between texts and the different themes and genres within them. They can recognise similarities and differences. Children understand the reading and writing journeys.



- Evidence in Skills - Children are taught reading and writing progressively and at a pace appropriate to each individual child. Teachers subject knowledge ensure that skills taught are matched to National Curriculum objectives.
- Outcomes - At the end of each year we expect the children to have achieved Age Related Expectations (ARE) for their year group. Some children will have progressed further and achieved greater depth (GD). Pupils falling into the lowest 20% category make progress from their starting point and as with all pupils are proud of the progress they have made.

## **Assessment and recording**

### **Assessment**

Children's progress in English is assessed by:

- NFER reading and GPS assessments are used each term to aid assessment for teachers.
- Teacher's assess writing of pupils using many different mediums and not just the work in English books. We use writing assessment grids to assess each child termly.
- Annotating planning to inform future individual learning.
- Hearing and discussing children's reading in weekly Guided Reading sessions and individual reading sessions.
- Early Years Foundation Stage Assessments and SATs tests.
- Ongoing formative assessment of reading, writing and speaking & listening throughout the curriculum.

### **Recording and Reporting:**

Evidence of progress in English is taken from:

- Target Tracker data, and evidence of achieving targets in reading and writing.
- Teachers' and LSAs' reading records and ongoing entries in individual reading records, noting progress and future targets.
- Foundation Stage, SATs and Teacher Assessments.
- Termly parent consultation through Parents' Evenings and an annual written report sent to parents in the summer term.

### **Resources**

Classroom resources for English include:

- A class reading area containing a range of fiction and non-fiction texts.
- Wordbooks, dictionaries and thesauri (age appropriate), word mats etc. as appropriate.
- Graded Guided Reading Book sets.
- An English Working Wall showing LO, Success Criteria for current writing (toolkit) and a model of the text; related interactive activities; word banks; current phonic or spelling focus objectives.
- Upstroke Handwriting formation charts.
- Displays to encourage and celebrate English development and to show standards.



Central resources for English include:

- A whole school library.
- Selection of Big Books.
- Colour coded collection of individual reading books.
- Non-fiction collection covering a range of subject areas.
- Computers, laptops and tablets.

### **Monitoring and review of policy:**

The English Subject Leader, Mrs Barrett, will monitor the implementation of the policy alongside the Assessment Manager and English Curriculum Governor.

This policy will be reviewed in Autumn 2026.

### **Role of the Subject Leader**

- Take the lead in policy development and ensure progression and continuity throughout the School.
- Support colleagues in the development and implementation of planning, assessment and record keeping activities.
- Monitor progress in English, working alongside the Assessment Co-ordinator in tracking individuals and classes.
- Monitor teaching and learning in English, providing support where necessary.
- Take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of English resources.
- Keep up to date with developments in English teaching, disseminating information to colleagues as appropriate.
- Attend appropriate INSET courses.
- Lead or organise English staff meetings.
- Keep Governors and parents informed of school issues.
- Organise special events to raise the profile of English within the school.
- Devise a yearly English Action Plan following analysis of data, and share with teachers and LSAs