

# St. Ann's R.C. Primary School

## English Policy

Last Reviewed: October 2024

Next Review by: October 2025

## **Our School's Mission Statement**

***'We, the family of St. Ann's, rejoice in our learning; striving for excellence.***

***We challenge ourselves, follow Jesus and empower each other to be the best we can be.***

***Love, Respect, Service.'***

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*N.B. This policy has been written alongside the following documents: Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy, Reading for Pleasure Policy, Early Years Foundation Stage Policy, SEN Policy, Phonics policy, EAL Policy, Diversity Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Marking Policy.*

## **1.0 Mission Statement**

‘We, the family of St. Ann’s, rejoice in our learning; striving for excellence. We challenge ourselves, follow Jesus and empower each other to be the best we can be.

Love, Respect, Service.’

## **2.0 Policy Aims**

In line with our mission statement, the 2014 National Curriculum and through our teaching, we aim to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding;
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information;
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language;
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage;
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences;
- use discussion in order to learn (they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas);
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

## **3.0 Strategies for Implementation**

English is developed through four key areas:

- Spoken Language
- Reading – Word Reading & Comprehension
- Writing – Transcription & Composition
- Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar & Punctuation

It is important to note that each is closely interrelated with the next, so it becomes increasingly difficult to consider one without the other(s).

### **3.1 The Early Years Foundation Stage**

English in Early Years is based upon the Foundation Stage Profile strand of Communication and Language and Literacy.

Communication and language and literacy depend on learning and being competent in a number of key skills, together with having the confidence, opportunity, encouragement and support to use them. This area of learning includes: communication; speaking and listening in different situations and for different purposes; being read a wide range of books; reading simple texts and writing for a variety of purposes.

To give all children the best opportunities for effective development and learning in communication and language and literacy, practitioners should give particular attention to:

- Providing opportunities for children to communicate thoughts, ideas and feelings and build up relationships with adults and each other.
- Incorporating communication, language and literacy development in planned activities in each area of learning.
- Giving opportunities to share and enjoy a wide range of rhymes, music, songs, poetry, stories and non-fiction books.
- Giving opportunities for linking language with physical movement in action songs and rhymes, role play and practical experiences.
- Planning an environment that reflects the importance of language through signs, notices and books.
- Providing opportunities for children to see adults writing and for children to experiment with writing for themselves through making marks, personal writing symbols and conventional script.
- Providing time and opportunities to develop spoken language through conversations between children and adults, both one-to-one and in small groups, with particular awareness of, and sensitivity to, the needs of children for whom English is an additional language.

### **3.2 Key Stage 1**

Children should learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They should begin to read aloud and write independently and with enthusiasm. They should use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

### **3.3 Key Stage 2**

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.

### **3.4 Spoken Language**

The National Curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar as well as their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers should therefore ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills.

Pupils should develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They must be assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others and teachers should ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils should also be taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

All pupils should be enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils should be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role.

They should have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances. Statutory requirements which underpin all aspects of spoken language across the six years of primary education form part of the national curriculum. These are reflected and contextualised within the reading and writing domains which follow.

### **3.5 Reading**

At St Ann's we believe reading is an essential skill to master in order for them to fully access every aspect of the curriculum and school life. We aim for every child to leave school a competent, independent and passionate reader. As such, reading underpins our entire curriculum.

Staff are encouraged to share their love of reading with the children by modelling good reading habits and engaging in 'book talk'. Children are encouraged to find their reading materials from a wide range of sources inclusive of, but not limited to books. This includes magazines, websites, comics etc.

Children are taught to analyse meanings and share their opinions of various texts. We provide children with challenging subject matter that broadens perspective and extends thinking.

#### **3.5.1 Whole Class Guided Reading (KS2)**

The programmes of study for reading at KS1 and KS2 consist of two dimensions:

- Word reading
- Comprehension

It is essential that teaching focuses on developing children's competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

Please see our reading and phonics policy which has been written alongside our English policy for further information on our approach to reading.

#### **3.5.2 Reading for Pleasure**

Please see Reading for Pleasure Policy which has been written alongside the English policy.

### **3.5.3 Independent Reading (Home/School Readers)**

- In order to support the children in developing the skill of reading alongside a love of reading, we have a broad range of books within our reading scheme. Our reading scheme consists of material from a variety of published schemes, such as Ginn 360, Collins Pathways, Oxford Reading Tree, Treetops, All Aboard (Ginn), Nelson, Tiddlywinks, Kaleidoscope, Phonics Bug (Pearson), Get Reading Right and Oxford University Press.
- We have worked with specialist consultants to ensure books are banded appropriately using the 'Book Bands' system (Purple upwards).
- Throughout EYFS and KS1, books are grouped to match the phonics programme, 'Supersonic Phonic Friends'. When children complete the phonics programme they move onto the banded system which begins at turquoise.
- We have worked closely with English Consultants to ensure books are grouped and banded appropriately.
- Each child has an individual reading record and is encouraged to read each night with an adult. Adults are asked to comment in the reading record after each book has been completed or once a week as a minimum.
- Staff keep a thorough record of when books are changed and where children are up to within the reading scheme.
- Each child will be given an Independent Reading book which corresponds with their reading ability.
- In EYFS and KS1 children will be heard read individually once a week as a minimum. Children who fall within the lowest 20% of readers within the year group as well as those who do not have adult support with reading at home, will be heard more often through interventions.
- In KS2 children will be heard read individually once every half term as a minimum. Children who fall within the lowest 20% of readers, as well as those who do not have adult support with reading at home, will be heard once a week as a minimum and will be heard through interventions.

### **3.5.4 Class Libraries and Independent Reading**

Every class has a class library which children can access and select books from independently.

Teachers may provide support and guidance as appropriate when children are making selections from the class libraries.

In EYFS and KS1 all libraries have a section of banded books which children can access and read independently, as well as fiction, non-fiction, poetry and topic books to select from.

In KS2 Fiction is alphabetised by author; non-fiction is organised into sections e.g. art, history, science etc. Each class library also has a poetry section. In LKS2, for those children

who are unable to access books from the class library, a selection of books is taken from KS1 class libraries and replenished throughout the year as appropriate.

Funding is set aside each year within the English budget to replenish class libraries and provide reading material for specific needs and themes.

Opportunities for independent reading are given throughout the week.

For further information on reading, please see our phonics and reading policy which has been written alongside the English policy.

### **3.5.5 Class Novel**

Every day, between 3.00pm and 3.30pm, all classes 'read for pleasure' (see reading for pleasure policy). This is an opportunity for children to be exposed to high quality texts; for teachers to model good reading habits and reading skills including expression and characterisation, intonation and pace; to broaden and develop children's vocabulary; to develop comprehension skills; to engage in discussion and debate; to introduce more challenging subject matters; to foster a love of reading.

### **3.5.6 Phonics**

As of September 2022, we follow the Supersonic Phonic Friends scheme. Phonics is taught as a whole class followed by instant interventions which take place on the same day using the 'wobbly wallet' system. Children receive targeted phonics sessions on a daily basis and are formally assessed each half term in addition to daily informal assessments. Please see the phonics policy for more information.

Please see our Phonics and Reading Policy which has been written alongside our English policy for more information.

## **3.6 Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation**

Opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing. As vocabulary increases, teachers should show pupils how to understand the relationships between words, how to understand nuances in meaning, and how to develop their understanding of, and ability to use, figurative language.

They should also teach pupils how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than one meaning. Pupils should be taught to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English. They should be taught to use the elements of spelling, grammar, punctuation and 'language about language' listed in the curriculum.

Teachers should teach pupils the vocabulary they need to discuss their reading, writing and spoken language. It is important that pupils learn the correct grammatical terms in English and that these terms are integrated within teaching. The above will be interwoven into reading and writing lessons as well all subject areas.

### 3.6.1 Spelling

Spelling at St Ann's is developed through:

- The systematic teaching of phonics in EYFS and KS1 using the Supersonic Phonic Friends scheme and the teaching of spelling strategies throughout KS2;
- Weekly spelling tests (spellings are taken from the National Curriculum);
- Developing an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar which are taught implicitly and explicitly throughout Year 1-Year 6;
- Regular dictionary and thesaurus work;
- Use of word banks;
- Regular opportunities to identify and use spellings within context;
- Regular opportunities to identify and correct spelling errors through the editing process.
- The use of websites such as Spelling Shed where children can play and access further spelling homework.

### 3.7 Writing

The programmes of study for writing at Key Stage 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading:

- Transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- Composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing)

At St Ann's we follow the 'Reading and Writing Journey' structure (see appendix 1). Reading and writing are interlinked. One cannot be taught without the other. High quality texts are embedded throughout our English Curriculum which link to the broader curriculum as well as events taking place therefore giving children a real purpose for writing in a context which makes sense to them. All writing tasks should have an identified audience, clear purpose and should cover all aspects of the writing process, as shown in appendix 1.

Using this structure, writing is developed in the following ways:

Shared Writing: This provides an opportunity for teachers to demonstrate writing, including the thought processes that are required. Teachers should make explicit references to genre features, as well as word and sentence level work within the context of writing. Pupils contribute to the class composition by sharing their ideas with partners, in small groups and through whole class discussion and through use of mini-white boards, poster paper etc. This is also the time when children are given the opportunity to discuss, verbalise and refine ideas before committing to print. With knowledge of text type from shared reading sessions, children should be able to generate a list of features that they would expect to use in the writing genre that they are learning about. This can be used by teachers and children alike as one way of assessing children's writing and their understanding of the purpose and organisation.

Guided Writing: Children are given the opportunity to work as part of a small group to complete a piece of writing with the support and guidance of their teacher and peers. Children work together to begin a piece of writing and then continue independently whilst the teacher moves around the group and supports with individual needs as they arise. It is important that guided writing sessions are used with the range of abilities represented across the classroom and are planned carefully according to children's needs to promote progression in writing skills for all children.

Independent Writing: Children should be given the opportunity to write independently, following the writing process outlined in appendix 1 in its entirety. Independent writing activities will link to whole class writing objectives.

Writing is marked by teachers with the child's successes and areas for development highlighted in marking for children to continue to work on in subsequent writing pieces. Areas for development may be discussed as a whole class, or on an individual basis, as necessary.

### **3.7.1 Opportunities for extended writing**

All children are given the opportunity to write an extended piece of writing every week either in English lessons or other subject areas. The minimum requirement for extended writing opportunities within English lessons is once every two weeks. Where no extended writing has taken place in English lessons for a particular week, it should be evident in another subject area.

Children should be given the opportunity to self-assess and peer-assess writing. Children should be given time to edit and improve work using the green editing pen which is introduced in Year 2 (see editing progression document).

### **3.7.2 Handwriting and Presentation**

At St Ann's high standards of handwriting and presentation are expected across the school. We follow the PenPal handwriting scheme providing a coherent approach throughout the school.

The PenPal handwriting scheme leads children through five distinct stages:

1. Physical preparation for handwriting.
2. Securing correct letter formation.
3. Beginning to join.
4. Securing the joins and practising speed.
5. Developing a personal style.

The PenPal handwriting scheme teaches children:

- How to write letters with an exit flick in preparation for a joined style;
- Which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined.

Entry strokes and loops are not taught, however in the upper stages, children are encouraged to develop their own style of handwriting which may include these nuances.

Handwriting lessons should take place at least once per week throughout Key Stage 2.

Handwriting lessons should take place at least twice weekly throughout Key Stage 1.

Handwriting lessons should take place at least three times a week in Reception. Activities to promote handwriting through continuous provision should be available everyday throughout EYFS.

Poetry presentation lessons take place every half term where children are encouraged to present a piece of poetry to the very highest standard.

Children are given opportunities throughout the year to publish work for display which requires the highest standards of presentation.

High standards of presentation are encouraged in all aspects of children's work. This is reflected in the comments made by teachers in their marking.

Handwriting interventions are in place for those children who require it.

### **3.8 Homework**

- One piece of English homework is set every Friday alongside maths homework. It is due in the following Wednesday.
- As appropriate, topic homework is also set which runs throughout a half term.
- Spellings are set every Friday and tested the following Friday.
- Homework is marked each week before books are sent home again.
- Teachers will refer back to difficulties which have arisen in the children's homework in their teaching.
- Teachers will work with children on an individual basis, as necessary, where problems have arisen.
- Homework will be differentiated according to children's ability.

### **4.0 Inclusion and Equality of Opportunity**

All children, regardless of ability, race or gender, will be given access to high quality English lessons and staff will work together to ensure the individual needs of all pupils are met.

In their planning, the teachers will aim to:

- provide breadth and balance of language activities for all children;
- provide a differentiated English curriculum to meet the needs of all the children through the continuity of experiences;
- set suitable activities for individuals or small groups of children;
- respond to pupils diverse learning needs;
- liaise with the SENDCO to ensure that provision is made for all children with SEN;
- relate activities for SEN children to their individual targets and personal needs;

- identify individuals and vulnerable groups who are not making expected progress, and provide appropriate support, overcoming barriers to learning and assessment.

### **5.0 SEN Provision**

Pupils identified as needing extra support in English will be given the appropriate help in the classroom. Providing for pupils with special educational needs should take account of each pupil's particular learning and assessment requirements and incorporate specific approaches which will allow individuals to succeed, such as using texts at an appropriate level of difficulty and planning for additional support.

### **6.0 EAL Provision**

Teachers will take into account the needs of pupils with English as an additional language. Planning should be differentiated for these children but also allow them time to be immersed in the language, modelling high quality talk at every opportunity.

### **7.0 Diversity**

Our English curriculum has been designed to ensure children access books written by a wide range of authors, including authors from other countries and cultures; include books with varied subject matters which reflect cultural differences both locally and globally and books which contain a diverse range of characters which reflect the many facets of society promoting diversity, equality and inclusion.

### **8.0 Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Assessment is regarded as an integral part of teaching and learning and is a continuous process. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to assess all pupils in their class. The school policy for assessment, recording and reporting is followed (Please see Assessment Policy).

Teachers continually assess children and record their progress. Teachers strive to make their assessments purposeful, allowing them to pitch work correctly to meet the needs of individual pupils, thus benefitting the pupils and ensuring progress.

A variety of assessment techniques are used by teachers, including:

- Observations and questioning (both whole class and when working with a focus group)
- Marking of written work
- Written assessment pieces
- Weekly spelling tests
- Oral assessments of key objectives through focused group work
- Oral assessments of key objectives through whole class work
- Formal Testing (in-house)
- Formal Testing (SATs Tests)
- Phonics screening test

- Termly phonics assessments (EYFS-KS1 inclusive of those children in KS2 who still require phonics intervention)
- Reading Benchmarking

### Formal Assessments

SATs take place in Year 2 and Year 6.

Formal tests in Reading and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling are taken in all year groups (Year 1-Year 6). Twice a year (End of Autumn term and End of Summer 1 half term). The results of these tests are analysed and feedback shared between staff.

### Informal Assessments

Writing assessments take place every half term. Individual successes and targets are identified in each assessment piece.

'Reading Benchmark' tests are completed for individual children as necessary where general reading ability, tests scores, classroom observations and phonics assessments do not align.

Children's work is marked in accordance with the marking policy.

Interventions are set based on ongoing assessments throughout the year.

### Reporting

Formal reporting to parents on individual achievement is given at parents evening twice a year and through end of year reports. Opportunities for discussion of children's progress also arise throughout the academic year and parents are invited to speak with teachers when appropriate.

### 9.0 Staff and Inset

The English Coordinator will feedback to staff after attending any training and keep them informed of recent developments.

School Inset days are used for English as necessary.

The implementation of the National Curriculum for English will be reviewed throughout the academic year by the English Coordinator and Senior Leadership Team.

The implications for the results of the annual SATs tests will be reviewed by the coordinator at the end of the academic year and teachers will be informed of these in staff meetings.

### 10.0 Roles

#### Head Teacher and Governing Body

- Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- Ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning;
- Monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations;

- Monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies in raising pupil attainment;
- Ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching.

### English Subject Coordinator

The coordinator will have an impact on raising standards of attainment for English across the whole school by:

- Ensuring continuity and progression from year to year;
- Providing all members of staff with progression documents and guidelines to show how aims are to be achieved and how the variety of all aspects of English is to be taught;
- Advising on CPD to individual staff where appropriate;
- Organising whole staff CPD where appropriate;
- Advising and supporting colleagues in the implementation and assessment of English through the school;
- Assisting in the requisition and maintenance of resources required for the teaching of English;
- Leading school and local cluster moderation meetings;
- Regularly monitoring the English throughout the school.

### Class Teachers

Class teachers will ensure the effective implementation of the National Curriculum for English by:

- Adapting and using the programme of study for English so that it effectively meets the need of the children;
- Making effective use of Assessment for learning within English;
- Ensuring work is planned and activities designed to enable all children to reach their full potential;
- Ensuring effective and purposeful marking;
- Working with parents, support staff, SLT and SENDCO to support the children's individual needs;
- Following the reading and writing journey (appendix 1) in its entirety;
- Committing themselves to continued professional development.

### Teaching Assistants

- To support the class teachers in the effective implementation of English.
- To commit themselves to continued professional development.

## Parents/Guardians

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- holding parents' evenings to discuss children's progress;
- sending an annual report to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can develop their learning;
- explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework and English learning including phonics and reading.

## 11.0 Resources

- Year group/ class specific resources are stored in individual classrooms such as dictionaries, class library books, phonics games etc.
- In both KS1 and KS2 there is a central area where more general resources are kept such as big books, teacher books etc.
- Home/School reading books are kept in the reading cupboards in both KS1 and KS2 buildings.

## 12.0 Health and Safety

Good practice regarding Health and Safety issues will be taught and followed through the teaching of English. All teachers will aim to provide opportunities to handle equipment safely.

## 13.0 Review

This policy document and its implementations will be reviewed at the end of each year.

### **Appendix 1 Reading and Writing Journey**

