



# St Paul's Catholic Primary School

## Policy for English

(September 2022 – 2025)

At St Paul's, we aim for excellent teaching and promote high expectations and a nurturing ethos, so that all our children are happy, independent and resilient, and have the skills, knowledge and self-belief to become confident, creative citizens who can make a difference to the world and keep themselves safe. We educate and celebrate the whole child as an individual, preparing them spiritually, morally, physically, socially, intellectually and emotionally for their future lives. We want to support everyone on their faith journey, allowing them to deepen their personal relationship with Jesus and to recognise the love of God in their lives.

### Teaching and Learning at St Paul's

We want all children to make good progress through knowing more and remembering more. In all subjects, we ensure that pre-knowledge and skills are revised and links are made with current learning. Children are given the opportunity to overlearn key concepts through repetition, modelling and scaffolding of learning. Learning is progressive and sequential. Reading, vocabulary and oracy are emphasised in all subjects.

### Vision Statement

Our vision is to inspire children to love learning, which enables EVERY child to do their very best and to build a deep friendship with Christ. The children understand this to mean, 'United through Jesus, in faith, love and learning.'

### Intent of the English Curriculum

English has an important place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.

### Implementation of the English Curriculum

At St Paul's we support the aim for English expressed within the National Curriculum: 'to promote high standards of 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.' Spoken Language This underpins the development of reading and writing and is vital for pupils' development across all aspects of the school curriculum. We provide children with a wide range of opportunities to hear and use good quality vocabulary, focusing also on variety. Children are encouraged to ask questions, discuss in pairs and groups and to use conventions for discussion as well as debate. Opportunities for drama are sought throughout the curriculum as it is recognised that the skills that are developed through this medium are unique. We are currently

focussing on Oracy. Teachers are receiving training in this field and all children in the school are learning a poem off by heart, x6 times a year, to perform to the rest of the school.

## **READING**

Quality children's literature at the heart of all learning. Throughout Reception, Key Stage 1 and 2 we teach reading using Bug club books. These are closely linked with the children's knowledge (phase) of phonics. Children engage with high quality picture books, novels, poetry and non-fiction through a wide range of teaching approaches. Our aim is to teach children to read fluently and accurately so that they have a full understanding of text, resulting in enjoyment of what they have read. We share this aim with parents, and to this end, use a variety of strategies including, at KS1, children having the ability to access their books electronically at home and gather little virtual prizes for answering questions about the text. Our children's reading experiences continue and develop, with them learning to read for a purpose – why are they reading? This of course reflects directly upon their writing skills, when the two are allied and the connections are made known to the children! Children are, therefore, encouraged to make choices about their reading matter, according to why they are reading. When reading for information, higher reading skills are taught so that they can skim/scan text for what they need. Skills such as recapping what children have read, predicting what might happen next and inviting opinion as to why, are vital to children progressing as readers and these skills are encouraged from our earliest readers. Whole class reading books are introduced in LKS2 and very often linked to the topic children are studying. Comprehension skills are taught from KS1 onwards. As ever, reading for pleasure is paramount and all children from Year 1-6 are given time to read quietly and independently. We have a superb library with a librarian who keeps the books and systems working well. She informs the English Lead if more resources are needed.

### **Reading and Phonics**

Phonics and reading are core elements of our curriculum at St Paul's. We follow the 'Bug Club' synthetic phonics programme throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 to teach the children essential phonic skills that are required to successfully read and spell. Cued articulation is used alongside Bug Club in Foundation Stage to support the children when first learning to recognise the letters and to ensure the children pronounce the associated sounds correctly. The Oracy project on which we are currently engaged, has helped enormously with this. The children also practise their reading with fully decodable books (Bug Club) that are chosen by the teacher and contain only sounds which the children have been previously taught. The children are given reading books have been carefully matched with a decodable Bug Club book, then from a Bug book which introduces many of the tricky words and unfamiliar words. The books that the children read from this scheme are also available on-line and they can complete little 'quizzes' which are also a way of assessing their comprehension. We supplement these with a range of other reading materials and these have been re-ordered to reflect the progression followed in Bug Club. (Colours) We ensure that children enjoy a range of fiction/non-fiction and poetry texts. Children are able to choose and take home school library books weekly. KS2 also have the Bug Club books available to them as well as sets of 'real' books written by well-known authors. Their skills are taught to them in small, weekly reading groups. All KS2 classes have a class reading novel which is based on the topic being studied in class. To ensure comprehension skills are learned, each child from Y2-Y6 has a comprehension lesson x1 weekly and also a comprehension book which forms part of their homework. Time is spent looking at the homework weekly. We ensure that our children receive high quality phonic teaching on a daily basis throughout school. We use the 'Bug Club' teaching s in EYFS and Key Stage 1 and move on to Support for Spelling in Key Stage 2 to ensure that our children are well placed to read and spell words with fluency and confidence



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### Writing

The development of children's ability to communicate in writing is given high priority and we achieve excellent standards in this important skill. Writing for purpose and for an audience is important and evident in planning. We ensure children know 'why' they are writing: to inform, to entertain, to explain, or to persuade. High standards of writing are the expectation for all subjects, not just in English. Learning to write is a complex process that involves a variety of skills but is an extremely powerful medium. It can last longer than the spoken word and can, and often has, been immortalized. We encourage all our children to become "authors" in their own right. Initially, a child needs to be able to form the letters needed and then be able to express one's ideas using these letters. Through shared and guided writing opportunities, we equip children to develop the skills of writing clearly and legibly. When the child is confident with these basic skills, they will work towards being able to write with a greater sense of purpose and learn to organize their writing according to this purpose. Children are equipped with the necessary tools to do this, being given daily opportunities to focus on spelling and/or grammatical structures. Our children work using a variety of real texts – the link between reading and writing is made very clear.

### Handwriting

We strive for our children to form correct letter formations, joining and good handwriting habits so that they can write fluently and legibly by the end of KS2. Children are introduced to cursive style writing from early years. This is taught with a sequential and progressive approach with teachers and TAs modelling the handwriting style throughout the school. We believe that children's self-esteem and pride in their work can be raised by good quality presentation. To teach children to write with a flowing hand which is legible, swift and pleasant to look at. To enable children to develop their own style of handwriting as they progress through Key Stage 2. To support the development of correct spelling and to aid in the elimination of letter reversals by the learning of word patterns and the correct joining of letters. To ensure that children of differing abilities are provided with appropriate and achievable goals. To assist children in taking pride with the presentation of their work. During lessons, we ensure that children sit, position their paper/book and hold their pen/pencil correctly using their other hand to hold their work firmly. It is important that in the Early Years and at Key Stage 1, children are observed closely during the lesson to ensure that letter formation is correct and corrected if needed. In addition to specific handwriting lessons children are expected to apply their learning in their exercise books and to show care for the presentation of their work. Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling strategies are taught explicitly in interactive and investigative sessions.

Pupils are taught to recognise which strategies they can use to improve their own spelling. Pupils are encouraged to apply learnt strategies to their independent writing. The teaching and learning of grammar and punctuation is embedded within the English teaching sequence. This means, grammar and punctuation skills and knowledge are built into a sequence of preparatory work which is then applied within longer pieces

of writing at the end of the teaching sequence. As they become more confident, children are encouraged to check spellings using a dictionary and to expand their vocabulary using the thesaurus

### **Impact of the English Curriculum**

At St Paul's School we aim for our pupils to become fluent and effective writers. Accurate use of grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS) is a means to that end. We use the National Curriculum 2014 as a basis for teaching Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling by introducing patterns or conventions and continually practising those already introduced.

**D – DETERMINATION**

**E - ENQUIRY**

**S – STAMINA**

**I - INQUISITIVENESS**

**R - RESILIENCE**

**E - ENJOYMENT**

### **Equal Opportunities**

All pupils receive teaching in English with a view to meeting all children's needs regardless of gender, ability, ethnicity, language and special educational needs. Staff recognise that each child has their own range of skills and understanding. Adjustments are made, and extra support put in place as necessary, to help us to fulfil our ambition for all children to succeed.