



# St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School English Policy

## **Mission statement**

Through His teaching we aim to value ourselves and each other as unique and precious individuals created by God; We encourage and develop love and respect for each other and for our world; We strive to promote and deepen our Catholic faith through prayer, work and play; We aim to foster a loving, caring environment in which each child can freely learn and develop to their full potential.

## **Gospel Values underpinning our curriculum**

Love, friendship, respect, truth, hope and forgiveness.

**Updated October 2025**

## **Curriculum Intent**

At St Joseph's we aim to develop in the children we teach, an enthusiasm for English in all its forms and the confidence to express themselves both orally and through the written word. By developing a comprehensive range of reading skills, we aim to foster in the children a love and appreciation of a variety of literature. Our passion is to develop early reading and writing. We aim to provide children with a rigorous and sequential approach to the reading curriculum that develops pupils' fluency, confidence and enjoyment in reading.

At St Joseph's we strive to create a quality English curriculum that prepares children for the world of today and tomorrow. We believe this curriculum should develop children's love, capability and confidence in speaking, listening, reading, writing enabling them to communicate with each other, the wider world and God. and be adequately prepared for their next stages of education at secondary school.

We want our children to have a positive attitude towards communication and to be able to independently express their emotions and their ideas.

Through our English Curriculum, we strive to teach the children how important their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills will be in the real world and that all these skills are of equal value and infinite worth. By giving this context to their learning, the children understand the value of English to them now, and in their futures. Therefore, they can then grow towards being global citizens and courageous advocates.

We regularly assess reading at all stages, to make sure gaps are addressed quickly and effectively for all pupils. We provide children with reading books that connect closely to the phonics knowledge pupils are taught when they are learning to read. We ensure the focus is on ensuring that younger children gain phonics knowledge and language comprehension necessary to read, and the skills to communicate, gives them the foundations for future learning. Our children's love of reading and the enrichment of their vocabulary allows them to be confident writers in a variety of genres. Children work through 'The Write Stuff' programme for their writing lessons which enables them to become confident and independent. These skills will enable them to access all aspects of the curriculum.

At St Joseph's reading is at the center of everything we do. We have a sharp focus on ensuring that younger children gain the phonics knowledge and language comprehension necessary to read as well as the skills to communicate which will give them the foundations for future learning. We understand the importance of reading for pleasure and ensure this is timetabled into our daily routine. Children are given the opportunity to read and be read to. Pupils read widely and often, with fluency and comprehension appropriate to their age.

## **Aims of the Curriculum**

We aim to:

- Provide a curriculum which is enriching and challenging, where children experience the opportunity to learn in a wide range of contexts, one that is relevant to today's world and is current.
- Ensure that the individual needs of all pupils, including those with SEND and those who

- are more able, are met through a coherently planned and sequenced curriculum.
- Provide children with the knowledge to develop their interpersonal skills, build resilience and become creative, critical learners.
- Provide an effective Early Years curriculum that lays foundations for lifelong learning.

## **Our Vision for English**

We are preparing our children to read easily, fluently and with good understanding of what they are reading. To develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information. We ensure every child is able to acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language. We teach a variety of authors and texts to make every child aware of and appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage. We will constantly promote high expectations so every child can write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences. Our pupils will be able to use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas. Therefore, children are able to be competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Mrs Birtwistle is the English leader within school. Mrs Howarth is the Read, Write, Inc phonics leader. Every member of staff delivering Read, Write, Inc has taken part in training to make sure the phonics curriculum is effective throughout Nursery to Year 2.

## **Implementation of our Curriculum**

In EYFS the curriculum is planned around the development matters. In EYFS we see the importance of planning around children's interests. We follow the RWI phonics from Nursery into Reception. As the children enter Nursery we make sure they are surrounded by vocabulary and books to develop an early love of literature. As the children move into the National Curriculum the long-term planning is designed to meet the needs of our school to provide the children with high quality texts that inspire and motivate them to learn. In Key stage 1 and 2, we follow The Write Stuff teaching sequence to make sure there is high quality instruction throughout English lessons.

At St Joseph's Primary School, we believe that reading is the key to learning and improving life chances. Therefore, we focus on the teaching of two key skills.

Reading requires two processes:

- Phonics: the reader recognises that letters or groups of letters make sounds and these blend together to make words.
- Comprehension: the understanding of written and spoken language.

## **Phonics and Early Reading**

A structured and systematic synthetic phonics programme is taught every day for children in Key Stage 1 and for those who need to continue, in Key Stage 2. We use the Read, Write Inc scheme to deliver these sessions. The programme was first created by Ruth Miskin in 2002 and is the UK's leading synthetic phonics programme. It is a complete literacy programme which helps all children

learn to read automatically, accurately and quickly, so they can focus on developing their comprehension skills, vocabulary and spelling.

- The programme encourages children to develop a love of books by reading to them daily, at home and at school.
- It gives children access to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books at school and at home.
- The teaching of reading and writing is rigorous, consistent and of the highest quality so that Year 1 children can reach the expected standard of the Phonics screening check.
- Lesson pace ensures every minute of learning is maximised. Lessons are fun and engaging, and excellent behaviour for learning is achieved through praise, teacher passion and an emphasis on participation.
- Teachers are able to support children of all reading abilities.
- Regular half termly assessments take place to ensure children are grouped effectively, so that every child learns at their level.

Phonics lessons take place every day in EYFS and KS1 from 9am. Children are taught key skills that will give them the tools they need for the primary curriculum and beyond.

- Children are taught grapheme-phoneme correspondence which allows them to synthesise (blend) phonemes in a word to read it.
- Our early readers learn to segment words into their constituent phonemes for spelling and that blending and segmenting are reversible processes.
- Each session is planned and delivered to include review, teach, practise and apply.
- Children are taught in phonics groups according to their phonic ability and attainment.
- Children are individually assessed at the completion of each set of sounds and at the end of each term to ensure children are making appropriate progress and are being taught in the correct phonic group matched to their ability.

## **Reading**

- Shared reading – to be used to teach age-related comprehension and decoding skills.
- A substantial amount of time must be spent in immersion in texts; for interpretation, response and enjoyment.
- Reading to inform writing is at the heart of our English curriculum.
- Opportunities during the day should be given for children to enjoy personal reading.
- Children should be given opportunity to change home reading books when completed and this must be closely monitored by the class teacher.
- Parents are encouraged to comment on their child's reading at home in their reading diary.
- If children have had their reading record signed three times in one week they will receive

a raffle ticket for prizes, which will be drawn at the end of each half term.

- Reading books whilst the children are in the RWI phonics programme are linked to their phonetic ability. The children are sent home with books matched to the sounds they have learned in lessons.
- Once the children finish the RWI phonics programme, they will move onto levelled books in the KS2 library. They will begin on age related level turquoise.

## **Spelling**

From Year 2 onwards, we use the Twinkl Spelling Scheme. This follows immediately on from Read Write Inc Phonics.

Twinkl Spelling has been specially created to meet the higher demands of the National Curriculum (2014).

- Lessons are daily and are included in each year group's timetable.
- Spelling rules are introduced at the start of each week and spelling tests are conducted every Friday. Year 1 children will also receive ten weekly focus words linked to their phonics learning.
- The scheme teaches the children all of the spelling rules that are a statutory requirement in National Curriculum English Appendix 1 and will prepare the children for the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum Spelling Tests. Year 6 will be given additional support in preparation for this.
- In addition to spelling rules, the children are also taught the National Curriculum Word Lists for Years 3 & 4 and Years 5 & 6.

## **Grammar**

As a school, we have designed a curriculum that meets the needs of our children. Each class follow the Nelson Grammar scheme for lessons that take place three times per week (Y1-6). Children can also refer to their grammar knowledge organisers that are year group specific and stuck into each child's English book.

## **Writing**

As a school, we follow the 'The Write Stuff' programme for the teaching of writing, which breaks down the writing process into experience days, sentence stacking lessons and independent writing. Each unit is carefully chosen by the class teacher so that it will inspire the children's creativity, as well as broaden their cultural understanding.

## **Modelled 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 or using individual white boards. This is also the time when children are given the opportunity to discuss, verbalise and refine ideas before committing to print.

## **Independent Writing**

Children should be given the opportunity for a range of independent writing activities which link to their class text. These tasks will need an identified audience and purpose in addition to covering set ARE objectives. Children should be given the opportunity to draft, self-assess and peer-assess writing, based on a success criterion linked to the learning objective/year group objectives for that task. During this process children will be given 'live feedback' from an adult, allowing them to learn from their misconceptions and understand their targets for future pieces of writing. As a school, we build in regular cross-curricular writing opportunities, using our rich and varied curriculum as an engaging stimulus for the children.

## **Handwriting and Presentation**

At St Joseph's, children are taught to maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed, in line with the National Curriculum guidance. We follow the Letter-join programme of study in all classes. We follow a school handwriting policy and set aside a session a day to focus on handwriting and presentation skills to develop transcription skills in a clear and progressive way. For further information, please see our handwriting policy.

## **Assessment**

Formative and summative assessment for learning is used in every class, this is through daily observation and discussion with the teacher as well as formal tests. Assessment is on-going, which is then monitored by the English leader and SLT. We also take part in termly moderation meetings prior to the assessment deadline dates. This ensures that the data being uploaded is accurate.

Children read with an adult weekly to ensure they are reading at the correct level for their age as well as making the correct levels of progress. If children are working below ARE, they are then highlighted as requiring intervention. The interventions can group children by ability and supports on going teacher assessment. This is monitored regularly for effectiveness.

## **Inclusion**

By on-going formative and summative assessments, the class teacher identifies children who need support with literacy skills at the earliest possible stage. Within the classroom, the teacher targets children with difficulties and attempts to address them by differentiated activities and extra support where possible. Where a child has a greater need, the school's SEN policy is implemented. Classroom assistants and learning support assistants provide in-class support where appropriate. The class teacher and the SEN coordinator work closely together to formulate strategies which will support the child's acquisition of literacy skills.

## **Monitoring**

Monitoring is done through a combination of pupil voice, staff voice, book looks, formal lesson observations and learning walks. SLT organise a yearly monitoring timetable. This is shared with staff at the beginning of the school year. Monitoring is led by Miss Hodson, feedback is given promptly and actions feed into any training needs. This is then shared with SLT and added to the school action plan.

## **Impact**

We intend for our children to have the knowledge and skills to be able to achieve whatever they desire in life. The impact of our curriculum is clear: progress, sustained learning and transferrable skills. We enable our children to be increasingly confident, from Nursery to Year Six, in their use of the English language in its spoken, written form.

## **Assessment and Target Setting**

Work will be assessed in line with the Assessment Policy. Teachers use English KLIPS and LAPS to support their summative and formative assessments throughout the year and set appropriate targets for pupils.

Phonics tracking, statutory Phonic screening checks, standardised tests, lesson observations, book scrutinies and pupil discussions all provide evidence of the positive impact of our English teaching.

At the end of each year, we expect children to have achieved age related expectations (ARE) for their year group. Some children will have progressed further and achieved greater depth (GD). Children who have gaps in their knowledge receive appropriate support and intervention.

## **Resources**

Phonics resources – including reading books and teacher resources are available to all staff who are delivering the RWI scheme.

Home reading - All children are provided with a home-school reading book which follows the Read Write Inc programme in KS1 and a levelled book in KS2.

Library - Children are given the opportunity to choose a book from the school library on a weekly basis.

## **Cross-curricular English Opportunities**

As well as the planned writing outcomes in the English scheme, additional opportunities will be provided for the children to write across other curriculum subjects.

## **The Use of Technology**

Opportunities to use IT to support teaching and learning in English will be planned for and used as appropriate.

## **Equal Opportunities**

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background. Please see equalities policy.

## **Role of Subject Leader**

The Subject Leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

Monitoring and evaluating in English: -

- Pupil progress
- Provision of English (including intervention and support programmes)
- The quality of teaching and learning in English
- The quality of the learning environment
- The deployment and provision of support staff
- Taking the lead in policy development
- Auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD purchasing and organising resources
- Keeping up to date with recent English developments

## **Parental Involvement**

At St Joseph's RC Primary School, we believe that parents play a vital part in their child's education and as such, we attempt to involve them at every level of their child's learning in English. We do this by encouraging you to read with your child every night and record this in their reading record, discuss their daily learning with them and complete homework on a weekly basis.

## **Conclusion**

This policy also needs to be in line with other school policies and therefore should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Handwriting Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment and Record Keeping
- Responding to pupils' work / Feedback / Marking policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Computing Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

**Subject Leader: R. Birtwistle**  
**Reviewed October 2025**

**To be reviewed Autumn 2026**