



ST JOSEPH'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL
BACUP

ENGLISH

Curriculum Subject Policy

“Jesus is the Centre of our lives”

God wants me to be the best me I can be

Our Mission

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.

2026–2027

Policy information

Document control	Details
Policy title	English Policy
Subject leader	R Birtwistle
Review date	Autumn Term 2028
Audience	Staff, governors, families and other stakeholders

1. Purpose and scope

This policy sets out St Joseph's approach to English from the Early Years Foundation Stage to the end of Key Stage 2. It applies to all staff involved in planning, teaching, supporting, leading and monitoring spoken language, reading and writing and should be read alongside the school curriculum overview, English progression documents and related policies.

2. Catholic life, mission and Gospel values

English enables pupils to listen to others, speak truthfully and confidently, encounter the experiences of people across time and place, and communicate with God and the wider world. Love, friendship, respect, truth, hope and forgiveness shape discussion, choice of texts, collaborative learning and the ways pupils respond to different perspectives. Every child's voice is valued as that of a unique and precious individual created by God.

3. Curriculum intent

Our English curriculum develops enthusiastic, confident and increasingly independent speakers, listeners, readers and writers. Reading is central: pupils gain the word-reading and language-comprehension knowledge needed to read accurately and fluently, enjoy a rich range of literature and access the whole curriculum. Writing enables pupils to communicate clearly, creatively and accurately for different audiences and purposes.

Learning is ambitious and accessible for every pupil. Knowledge, vocabulary and conventions build coherently from Nursery to Year 6 through high-quality texts, explicit teaching, modelling, purposeful practice and responsive assessment. Pupils develop spoken language, phonics, fluency, comprehension, composition, spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting as connected but distinct areas of knowledge.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils should read widely and with understanding, discuss texts thoughtfully, communicate ideas with confidence and write clearly, accurately and coherently. These foundations prepare pupils for secondary education, participation in their community and life as informed global citizens and courageous advocates.

4. Curriculum aims and entitlement

- Listen attentively, speak clearly and use discussion to learn, explain, present, question and debate.
- Read easily, accurately and fluently with secure understanding.
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often for pleasure, information and learning.

- Acquire a rich vocabulary and knowledge of grammar and linguistic conventions for spoken and written language.
- Appreciate a broad literary heritage and encounter diverse authors, forms, cultures and perspectives.
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting language and style for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.
- Develop fluent transcription through spelling, handwriting and appropriate use of technology.
- Reflect on, edit and improve communication with growing independence.

5. Curriculum content, progression and sequencing

English progression and long-term planning define the knowledge, texts, genres, conventions and vocabulary to be taught. Planning builds systematically from the EYFS educational programmes into the National Curriculum, protects sufficient time for reading and writing, and ensures that mixed-age teaching avoids unnecessary repetition or gaps.

Read Write Inc. supports systematic synthetic phonics and early reading from Nursery and Reception onwards. The Write Stuff provides a principal teaching sequence for writing in Key Stages 1 and 2. Twinkl Spelling, Nelson Grammar and Letter-join support agreed progression in spelling, grammar and handwriting. Teachers adapt resources to St Joseph's pupils and curriculum; published schemes support, rather than replace, professional knowledge and responsive teaching.

6. Spoken language and vocabulary

Spoken language underpins reading, writing and learning across the curriculum. Teachers create structured opportunities for pupils to listen, rehearse, explain, retell, discuss, justify, present and debate. Adults model standard English and precise vocabulary while respecting pupils' identities, dialects and home languages. Misconceptions in grammar, tense and word choice are corrected sensitively and explicitly so pupils learn to adapt language for different contexts.

Vocabulary is deliberately selected, explained, revisited and used. Stories, non-fiction, poetry, conversation and subject teaching broaden pupils' language and background knowledge. Pupils are supported to use full sentences and increasingly complex structures when this serves the purpose of communication.

7. Phonics and early reading

Read Write Inc. is taught daily through a structured and systematic synthetic phonics programme in EYFS and Key Stage 1, and for older pupils who still need it. Teaching follows the agreed sequence and includes frequent review, explicit teaching, practice and application. Pupils learn grapheme-phoneme correspondences, blending for reading and segmenting for spelling.

- Staff delivering the programme receive appropriate training, coaching and ongoing support so teaching is consistent and precise.
- Assessment is frequent and used promptly to place pupils in the most suitable teaching group and identify children at risk of falling behind.
- Keep-up and catch-up support is timely, targeted and closely matched to the programme.
- Reading books for pupils learning to decode are closely matched to the sounds and words they have been taught, enabling successful practice at school and home.
- Practice develops accuracy and automaticity while daily story and book sharing develops language, comprehension, imagination and enjoyment.

- Statutory phonics screening arrangements are followed and outcomes inform teaching and additional support.

8. Reading fluency, comprehension and pleasure

As decoding becomes secure, teaching increasingly develops fluency through accurate reading, appropriate pace, phrasing, expression, repeated practice and teacher modelling. Comprehension is taught through rich discussion and purposeful strategies, including activating background knowledge, clarifying vocabulary, retrieving information, making inferences, summarising, predicting, explaining authorial choices and comparing texts.

Pupils encounter high-quality fiction, non-fiction, poetry and performance texts from a broad range of authors and traditions. Teachers read aloud daily and protect regular time for independent reading and book choice. Shared and guided reading, text immersion, library access and reading across subjects help pupils build knowledge and develop a lasting reading identity. Home reading is monitored supportively and partnership with families is encouraged.

9. Writing: composition and the writing process

The Write Stuff supports explicit modelling, sentence construction, vocabulary development and progression towards independent composition. Units are rooted in engaging texts and experiences and provide meaningful audiences and purposes. Teachers make thought processes visible, model planning and composition, and invite pupils to rehearse and refine ideas orally before writing.

Pupils regularly plan, draft, compose, reread, evaluate, edit, proofread and publish where appropriate. Independent writing provides evidence that pupils can select and apply learning without over-scaffolding. Feedback is timely and helps pupils understand strengths, misconceptions and next steps. Writing across the curriculum is taught with the subject knowledge, audience and conventions needed for that context.

10. Transcription: spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting

Transcription is taught explicitly so that pupils can devote increasing attention to composition. Read Write Inc. links early spelling to phonics. From Year 2, Twinkl Spelling supports progression in statutory patterns, rules, morphology, etymology and word lists. Pupils practise applying spelling in meaningful writing as well as through focused activities. Dictation is used purposefully to connect phonics, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure and handwriting.

Nelson Grammar supports planned teaching from Year 1 to Year 6, reinforced through reading, discussion and writing. Teachers model and expect accurate sentence structure, tense, agreement, capitalisation and punctuation. Common spoken or written misconceptions, such as confusion between 'was' and 'were' or 'should have' and 'should of', are addressed explicitly and revisited.

Letter-join provides the agreed handwriting progression. Regular taught sessions develop posture, pencil grip, letter and number formation, joins, spacing, legibility and increasing fluency. In Key Stage 1, adults consistently reinforce correct formation, orientation and finger spaces. Reasonable adjustments and alternative methods of transcription are provided where needed.

11. Early Years Foundation Stage

In the EYFS, communication, language and literacy grow through warm interaction, stories, rhymes, songs, role play, purposeful mark-making and a language-rich environment. Staff follow children's interests responsively while deliberately teaching agreed knowledge and vocabulary. Read Write Inc. begins in an age-appropriate way, alongside daily sharing of high-quality books and systematic support for oral blending, phonological awareness and early writing.

12. Inclusion, SEND, equality and home language

Every pupil is entitled to an ambitious English curriculum. Assessment identifies barriers early and teachers work with the SENCO and families to provide responsive adaptations. These may include additional language teaching, carefully chosen texts, explicit vocabulary, decodable materials, pre-teaching, visual support, repeated practice, alternative recording, assistive technology and targeted intervention. Support promotes independence and does not unnecessarily narrow pupils' access to rich language and literature.

Texts and resources represent diverse families, cultures, identities, abilities and perspectives without tokenism or stereotype. Home languages and dialects are valued as part of pupils' linguistic knowledge. Pupils learning English as an additional language receive rich models of English, purposeful talk and appropriate support; language acquisition is not treated automatically as SEND.

13. Assessment, moderation and responsive support

Assessment is closely aligned with the intended curriculum. Day-to-day observation, questioning, reading with pupils, discussion, phonics checks, writing and pupils' explanations help teachers identify what is secure, what is misunderstood and what to teach next. Summative judgements and standardised or statutory assessments are used proportionately and in line with school and national arrangements.

Teachers use agreed tools, including English KLIPS and LAPS where appropriate, to support judgements. Termly moderation develops shared expectations and checks the accuracy of assessment. Pupils who are at risk of falling behind receive prompt, evidence-informed support that is specific to the identified barrier. The effect of intervention is reviewed regularly; it supplements and reconnects pupils to strong classroom teaching rather than becoming a separate, lower-expectation curriculum.

14. Resources, technology and the learning environment

The school provides phonics resources and matched books, high-quality class texts, home-reading books, dictionaries, grammar and spelling resources, library books and suitable digital tools. Displays and working walls support current learning without creating unnecessary visual overload. Technology may support planning, drafting, editing, accessibility, research and publication when it strengthens the English objective. Online content, copyright, data protection and responsible AI use follow school policies.

15. Partnership with parents and carers

Parents and carers play a vital part in children's language and literacy development. The school shares clear information about phonics, reading books, reading records, spelling, homework and ways to support talk and reading at home. Families are encouraged to read with and to children regularly, discuss books and daily learning and contact school if they have concerns. Expectations are supportive and inclusive of varied family circumstances.

16. Roles and responsibilities

- The English subject leader, R Birtwistle, develops curriculum coherence, supports staff, oversees resources, monitors provision and standards, coordinates moderation and professional development, and reports priorities to senior leaders and governors.
- The Read Write Inc. phonics leader, R Birtwistle, supports programme fidelity, training, grouping, assessment, keep-up and catch-up provision and the match between teaching and decodable books.
- Class teachers plan and teach the agreed curriculum, model accurate language, assess responsively, maintain high expectations and work with families and support staff.
- Support staff reinforce agreed approaches, promote independence and deliver targeted support under teacher direction.
- Senior leaders and governors provide strategic oversight, appropriate challenge, time, resources and accountability.

17. Professional development

Professional development reflects monitoring, staff dialogue, curriculum priorities and pupil need. It may include phonics coaching, reading fluency and comprehension, text selection, writing instruction, grammar and spelling subject knowledge, handwriting, SEND and moderation. Leaders create opportunities for modelling, collaborative planning, rehearsal and feedback so agreed approaches are implemented consistently.

18. Monitoring, evaluation and impact

The English leader and senior leaders evaluate implementation and impact through a proportionate range of evidence, which may include curriculum and planning review, pupil and staff voice, reading conversations, book scrutiny, assessment information, learning walks, lesson visits and professional dialogue. No single source is used in isolation. Findings lead to clear actions, support and curriculum improvement.

Impact is evident when pupils read accurately, fluently and with understanding; choose and discuss books with enthusiasm; use a rich vocabulary; speak and listen with confidence; write increasingly effective, accurate and coherent texts; apply English across the curriculum; and are well prepared for their next stage.

19. Related documents

- School curriculum overview and English progression documents
- Phonics and early reading materials and assessment arrangements
- Handwriting policy
- SEND policy and equality information and objectives
- Computing, online safety and data-protection policies

20. Approval and review

This policy will be reviewed by the English subject leader and senior leadership team and reviewed on a review cycle or sooner if curriculum, assessment or statutory requirements change.