



Intent of the English curriculum

At St. Bernadette's, we intend to provide all children, regardless of any learning barriers, with access to an exciting, relevant and purposeful English curriculum. We want them to become life-long readers, writers and communicators. We intend to give children opportunities to showcase their creativity and imagination and express themselves in different ways. We strive to immerse children in high quality texts that will develop a love for reading and expose them to new words and meanings. We want to encourage children to be readers for life and we want to foster an innate love of reading. Furthermore, we want to ensure that our English teaching gives children the confidence to share ideas and feelings with others through reading, writing, speaking and listening and therefore equip them with the essential tools to continue to achieve and thrive after life at St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School.

We aim for all pupils to:

- read, write and communicate orally with confidence, fluency and understanding
- have an interest in books and literature; whilst practising reading for enjoyment
- discuss reading and writing comprehensively by expressing opinions, explaining techniques and justifying
- preferences about a wide range of literature, using appropriate vocabulary
- understand a range of text types and genres; develop knowledge to appreciate our rich and varied literary
- heritage
- write using a variety of styles and forms
- use grammar and punctuation accurately
- understand and apply spelling conventions accurately within all written work

Implementation of the English curriculum

Reading

We have a systematic, synthetic approach to teaching phonics in EYFS and KS1 following the Little Wandle programme. We place great importance on speaking and listening in our Early Years and we teach different aspects and levels of phonological awareness. We focus on sound discrimination, rhythm, rhyme, oral blending and segmenting, sound talk and enhancing our children's vocabulary. In Years 3-6 the children are explicitly taught reading skills three times a week in guided reading sessions. These lessons continue to build on the emphasis on prosody and fluency taught in KS1. They involve the teacher modelling oral reading and how to answer different question types related to the text before the children have a go themselves.

We follow a text-based learning approach during English lessons. Core texts have been carefully chosen for each year group but there is scope for change if necessary, to reflect the interests of the children and reflect what is happening in the world. A wide range of effective questioning will be used during class discussions to challenge, probe and extend children's understanding and learning. We analyse the text either responding in writing or completing some explicit vocabulary teaching using words from the text. Teachers model writing objectives during whole class teaching and shared writing sessions will be used to meet specific objectives for individuals or groups. Opportunities will be provided to reflect and edit their work whilst drafting – teachers gauge when these times are best. In years 1 – 6 teaching will take place for a minimum of four lessons per week but in Foundation Stage elements may be taught throughout the day. High standards and general English subject knowledge will be reinforced continually throughout all subjects.

For reading at home, all children are provided with two books. One at a currently reading level, which is selected by the class teacher, and children also select a reading for pleasure text from the library once a week. The children record their reading in a Reading Record that is shared between home and school and this forms part of their homework.

We aim to celebrate reading more widely: not only in classrooms but on displays around school to celebrate authors, children's favourite books and children's work based upon texts. In addition, throughout the school year the importance of reading is enhanced through World Book Day, author and poet visits and a range of trips and visits which enrich and complement children's learning.

Handwriting

All children in EYFS are taught to hold a pencil correctly and form all letters correctly. From year 2, children are expected to join up their writing. All staff should model the correct handwriting when they write for any purpose within the classroom. All children should be expected to write in their style of handwriting whenever they write, in all subjects.

Writing including Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling

In line with the National Curriculum, we ensure that each year group is teaching the explicit grammar, punctuation and spelling objectives required for that age group. As well as teaching the objectives, teachers are able to embed the skills throughout the year in cross-curricular writing opportunities and aim for all children to achieve the objectives at the expected level and at a greater depth standard if appropriate. In this sense, assessment of writing is also more fluid as teachers can assess against a set framework. All year groups use the same format for assessing writing, reading and GPS using the Hampshire Assessment Model.

In order to expose children to a variety of genres which helps to utilise and embed the writing skills, teachers use a variety of recommended texts to plan, structure and teach their English lessons. This plan is designed to show progress, teach the pertinent year group objectives, apply and consolidate these skills and develop vocabulary. Writing is taught through the use of a quality text, which exposes the children to inference, high-level vocabulary, a range of punctuation and characterisation. Each text is purposefully selected in order to promote a love of reading, engagement and high quality writing outcomes which reflect a balance of narrative and non-narrative.

Spellings are taught in separate, weekly spelling sessions. All children are taught their year group word list, whilst also revising previous year's lists. Through Little Wandle lessons in KS1 and No Nonsense spelling sessions in KS2, children are to be taught their year group's spelling patterns. We have additional streamed Little Wandle intervention for children where extra support is required throughout KS1 and 2 (e.g. those children who did not pass the Year One phonics screening test or the resit in Year 2).

Speaking and Listening

By the time our pupils leave St. Bernadette's, we aim for our children to be confident, fluent speakers who are able to use a wide range of adventurous and ambitious vocabulary in the correct context. We aim for our pupils to give well-structured descriptions, explanations, presentations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings. Our pupils will make reference back to their original thoughts when their opinions have changed and give reasons for their change of focus. They will maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments with confidence. They will be able to consider and evaluate different viewpoints, adding their own interpretations and building on the contributions of others.

We aim for our pupils to become good listeners who can follow instructions and ask and answer sensible questions in all lessons.

Impact of the English curriculum

We expect that by the end of KS2 all of our children have made considerable progress from their starting points in EYFS. Through our writing journey, our children will become more confident writers and able to talk more confidently about their learning. By the time they are in upper Key Stage 2, all genres of writing will be familiar to them and teaching can focus on creativity, writer's craft, sustained writing and manipulation of grammar and punctuation skills enabling sustained learning.

Our children also become more confident, fluent readers and they realise the importance of reading for pleasure along with reading for information and knowledge.

As all aspects of English are an integral part of the curriculum. We should see cross curricular writing standards improve and skills taught in the English lesson are transferred into other subjects; this shows consolidation of skills, progression and a deeper understanding of how and when to use specific grammar, punctuation and grammar objectives. As children move on from us to further their education and learning their creativity, passion for English and high aspirations travel with them and continue to grow and develop as they do.