



...we learn, we love, we look after our world. We strive to be the best that we can be, following in the footsteps of Jesus...

### English Policy

At St. George's Catholic Primary School, we value English as a discrete subject and as a vehicle for teaching the wider, broad and balanced curriculum. Understanding written and spoken language provides access to the whole curriculum; fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success throughout our pupils' time in school and is essential for their lives beyond school.

### Aims of English

The study of English develops our pupils' ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide variety of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, views and feelings. In our school, pupils will be enabled to express themselves creatively, imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of a wide range of fiction (both modern and classic), non-fiction and poetry. Pupils in our school will gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins; they will use their knowledge and skills in a multi-faceted way.

### Objectives of English

English teaching at our school will promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping our pupils with a strong command of the spoken word, developing a love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment, and, as a result, our pupils will achieve the following:

- fluent reading with a strong and varied comprehension skills
- a natural habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- an acquisition of a wide and ambitious vocabulary that can improve the standards of their writing and be used in context accurately
- an understanding of grammar, punctuation and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading and written and spoken language
- an appreciation our rich and varied literary heritage
- the ability to write with enjoyment and confidence, clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- strategies for discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain their ideas and understanding clearly
- competency in the arts of speaking and listening
- understanding that writing is a tool for their own thinking and learning
- plan and review their own writing and learn how to constructively appraise their own and others' writing
- writing in response to a variety of stimuli encompassing the whole curriculum
- a neat, cursive and legible handwriting style
- as a confident and independent speller

## Teaching and Learning

### 1. Planning:

At St. George's Catholic Primary School, we use a variety of styles in our delivery of this core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the latest 2014 document as a basis for our planning so that we implement the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English across Foundation, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and we supplement this with our own personalised school approach.

We have implemented a long term coverage which is coherent, progressive building on the skills our pupils are taught in previous terms and in previous year groups. This spiral approach is delivered through a curriculum which is rich in texts and linked to class topics, where appropriate.

We carry out Medium Term Planning for each year group for each unit of work to identify the topic features (both textual and grammatical) specific to that genre of text to be studied and our subsequent shorter term planning outlines individual lesson content and outcomes and specifies the statutory requirements covered.

We use online schemes such as CLPE, Literacy Tree, Literacy Shed and Literacy Shed Plus and we aim to teach at least one unit per year using a Talk for Writing approach by Pie Corbett in Key Stage 2 and at least once a term in Key Stage 1 and also a unit based on a film/picture stimulus. The majority of our writing curriculum is centred around fiction and non-fiction books, matched where possible and where appropriate to the class topic. Our ambition is to have a strong writing curriculum which is underpinned by strong, quality texts which engage, inspire and enthuse the children of our school to be confident and able writers.

We plan the activities in English so that they build on the children's prior learning. Whilst we give pupils of all abilities the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding, we also plan progression throughout a unit of work and indeed across year groups, so that there is an increasing challenge for the children as they move up through the school, in-line with age-related expectations as outlined in No Nonsense Writing Exemplifications and End of Key Stage Exemplification and No More Marking Comparative Judgement.

### 2. Reading:

The teaching and learning of reading runs across the entire curriculum as it is vital to access all subjects and leads to success in education and in later life.

Each classroom will have an area dedicated to reading where a passion for reading is promoted. Our school uses the National Curriculum 2014 to assess and plan for reading and its progressions within and across year groups and we use our in-house assessment procedures with NTS Reading & Rising Stars to inform our planning. We use a 'VIPERS' approach for the delivery of our reading lessons to ensure pupils are taught strategies to support their fluency, decoding, comprehension: deduction and retrieval; inference, prediction, sequencing and summarising of what they read.

Phonics is taught as a daily lesson throughout Foundation Stage and KS1 using the Sounds Write Phonics Scheme. Any gaps in learning continue to be provided for into KS2 using this phonics programme so that all children have a sound phonological knowledge and are able to use it in other aspects of their work. In addition to guided phonics sessions, FS2 and KS1 children are heard reading at least once a week individually, although in reality it is more than this.

In order to broaden vocabulary, teachers and adults read high quality texts to their classes to expose children to a literary rich environment and this happens through English writing lessons but also within dedicated 'Reading for Pleasure' time adopted throughout the school – this supports emotional involvement in books which is key to enjoyment. The texts covered within reading lessons have been linked closely to studied texts in writing lessons to ensure depth, variety and exposure to a range of content which feeds into their writing. Our motto as a school for reading is:

**We breathe in reading, and breathe out  
writing...**

Each class has their own personalised reading spine which outlines the recommended texts that our pupils should be reading at an age-appropriate level, taking into account of the following categories: modern fiction, non-fiction, picture books, graphic novels, diversity and inclusion, reluctant readers etc.

Our class libraries reflect our reading spines and are changed termly. They are inviting spaces which encourage pupils to read.

As per the Reading Framework 2021, each class has devised a set of songs and poems and rhymes which are displayed in the environment.

Our pupils have a dedicated space for the gathering, sharing and celebration of vocabulary for them to explore, use and apply in their writing. Our English writing lessons and reading lessons are strongly connected and have a focus on vocabulary and we ensure they correlate and are taught in conjunction with each other. Vocabulary is celebrated in our school through the use of a Vocabulary Ninja Reward scheme which is a whole school approach that has been adapted for use in St. George's and brings vocabulary to the centre for all pupils, displayed centrally for all to see and celebrated in a whole school environment through assemblies.

The school's partnership with parents is essential in enabling children to become fluent readers. Every day, pupils take their reading books home, so that parents can share in their pupil's reading journey. The value of parents helping pupils with their reading cannot be over-estimated. The relationship between teacher and parent/guardian in the development of the child's reading is logged in the Reading Record Book in Foundation & Key Stage 1 or Student Planners in Key Stage 2, in which teachers and parent/guardians are free to comment.

All children are expected to read daily at home and keep a reading log in their Student Planners with their parents signing the children's planners to keep an overview. It is recommended that parents continue to hear their children read and read to them throughout their time at primary school.

In Key Stage 2 and Year 2 in Key Stage 1, all classes follow the 'Reading Olympiad' initiative whereby they are encouraged to read for 10 – 20 minutes every day and complete a series of challenges which underpin the reading strands within each year group programme of study. A display to celebrate progress is in each classroom and is updated termly and awarded. Key Stage 1 have an equivalent 'x books by date' for each term to feed into their writing strands.

The school has invested in the 'Big Cat' Reading Scheme and, consequently, the school possesses a wide and varied library of books which are modern, relevant and engaging and are finely tuned to meet the needs of the Reading curriculum. Each pupil is allocated a book band colour matched to their year group and they endeavour to read all books within that colour band. The pupils must stay within the band for their year group. In the instances where children need to be challenged, they are recommended to 'free-read' from the class reading spines from both school and home and in the instances where the Big Cat books are too challenging, they can either read from a lower band or use the dual access reading books.

Books may be borrowed from the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 Libraries.

### Big Cat Colour Bands:

#### Early Years - Ages 3 to 5:



#### Year 1 - Ages 5 to 6:



#### Year 2 - Ages 6 to 7:



### Year 3 - Ages 7 to 8:



Band 12      Band 13  
Copper      Topaz

### Year 4 - Ages 8 to 9:



Band 14      Band 15  
Ruby      Emerald

### Year 5 - Ages 9 to 10:



Band 16  
Sapphire

### Year 6 - Ages 10 to 11:



Band 17      Band 18  
Diamond      Pearl

All teachers read daily to their classes using a class readers, a book for pleasure, which will either match the class topic or is a standalone choice, either way it will be specifically matched to the year group and provide challenge and interest.

### Reading Teaching:

Whole Class Reading takes place throughout the school for Key Stage 1 and Key stage 2 with high-quality texts which change frequently or excerpts of texts. Throughout the school, and in addition to book-based reading lessons, children complete reading activities with a 'RIC' focus: Retrieve, Interpret and Choice. They match the key reading skills which are developed across the school and they are the following:

- Vocabulary
- Inference
- Prediction
- Explanation
- Retrieval
- Summarising and sequencing

Whole class reading takes place weekly (3 x sessions per week) in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and they refer directly to the reading domains of the National Curriculum:

2a give/explain meanings of words in context

2b retrieve and record information/identify key details from fiction and non-fiction

2c summarise main ideas from more than one paragraph

2d make inferences from texts/explain and justify these with evidence from the text

2e predict what might happen from details stated and implied

2f identify/explain how information/narrative content is related and contributes to meaning as a whole

2g identify/explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases

2h make comparisons within a text

### Assessment of Reading:

Classes are assessed using the Rising Stars scheme during assessment weeks using the PIRA National Standards Tests and the NATS Standardised Tests. Their progress is tracked as a class and individually. Progress as a class and individually is documented and comparisons are made with the national averages in each reading skill. Forward planning is then adjusted to meet the needs of the cohort. The progress of specific groups of children within each cohort is also closely monitored. Teachers use medium term planning to track the skills covered in a year group, within each half term.

### 3. Writing:

FS (foundation stage) children receive English teaching in line with EYFS guidance. Children have the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and each other, to listen carefully and to practise and extend their communication skills, in preparation for writing. Early writing focuses on mark making and enabling children to use letters and marks for meaning. As their knowledge of letters increases so does the use of these and writing becomes more phonetically plausible.

Writing is taught following the Primary National Curriculum for English and the associated programmes of study in Years 1 – 6. Cross-curricular outcomes and writing for a purpose is strongly encouraged. SPAG is a feature of English lessons where it is taught indiscreetly and also discreetly in timetabled sessions at other sessions in the week.

Writing is taught by following an agreed process based on talk for writing process:

- Reading and the reading environment
- Broadening and deepening vocabulary
- Using and applying grammar in context
- Shared writing, modelled writing, guided writing, independent writing
- Spelling
- Handwriting

There are 3 key principles: 1. Teacher models the speaking, listening, vocabulary and sentence patterns the children need 2. Oral rehearsal-pupil stalk the text before they write it 3. Making the learning visible-display the work in progress; text map, boxing up, toolkit, shared writing, word bank and model text, to help children innovate.

Writing must be focused on formative assessment identifying children's learning needs adapting concepts to the age and stage of children. Units of work are genre based and could follow this process:

- Warm up-daily focus on word
- Immersion in text-deconstructing
- Imitation-oracy for writing, GPS focus that is purposeful
- Innovation-from telling to writing
  - Short burst writing takes place across the unit to develop use of language and grammar and text features
- Application

#### Assessment of Writing:

Assessment structure has been implemented across the school, linked to year group objectives for age-related expectations and above age-related expectations.

Our teachers used a combination of on-going formative assessment, highlighting objectives which children are using independently and outside of the context of the given unit. We also identify and map out opportunities across the year where children can apply the features and skills taught in previous units within an independent context within the broad and balanced curriculum.

Evidence of writing assessment is demonstrated on our 'Progression Tree Display' in school and it is also kept in our yellow Writing Assessment books which follow children as they move through the school as this supports an evidence base for progression.

In-house moderation as a staff will form purpose of staff meetings throughout the year on a regular basis as well as 'Book Looks' carried out by ESL, SLT & HT in conjunction with class teachers.

## Feedback in Writing:

Our school has recently begun our journey for feedback using the Mark for Impact strategy and we are underway with its roll out across the school and through each of the phases of implementation. Our philosophy will be as follows:

St. George's has adopted the '**Mark for Impact**' strategy to ensure that all pupils have their work responded to in such a way that it is meaningful, manageable and motivating with a clear view to rapidly improving learning, developing pupil self-confidence and raising self-esteem. Pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) are prioritised to ensure an equitable approach as part of our Pupil Premium strategy.

Each element of the **Mark for Impact** strategy (Pupil Conferencing, Class Conferencing and Learning Steps) brings together threads of evidence based, successful teaching practice to create a high impact approach to effective feedback. **Mark for Impact** supports the principles and practice of high quality teaching and fully aligns with recommendations for the EEF tiered approach to improve pupil outcomes alongside published guidance for effective feedback.

We believe that the most effective feedback happens through discussion and personalised approaches and this can take place in a variety of different ways including 1:1, group or whole class discussion and feedback sessions. Our strategy places an emphasis on all teachers regularly engaging with pupils in a discussion based manner and is based on a combination of **Pupil Conferencing** and **Class Conferencing** opportunities, underpinned by **Learning Steps**. More traditional **written** marking and feedback still has a place at points where a focus on individual next steps are being reviewed.

### **All feedback at St George's School will:**

Positively and rapidly move learning forwards

Be clear, meaningful and precise

Be consistent

Inspire and motivate pupils to improve their learning

Follow the Mark for Impact strategy

<b>CONFERENCING</b>	
<b>PUPIL CONFERENCING</b>	<b>CLASS CONFERENCING</b>
Weekly 1:1 sessions between class teacher and pupil and/or group Teacher uses <b>Pupil Conferencing</b> template to record discussion, evidence specific feedback areas for individual pupils and identify pupils who have attended sessions; Focus is on a collaborative discussion regarding strengths and positive progress, misconceptions, review of progress towards achievement of Learning Steps, targeted support for securing a detailed aspect of learning (e.g. column subtraction, apostrophes); Reinforces the school's general high expectations for presentation, handwriting and spelling; Further develops a positive teacher/pupil relationship and boosts confidence.	At regular key points in an English unit (Writing) and, as appropriate, for Maths and other curriculum areas; Teacher uses <b>Class Conferencing</b> template as a tool to support discussion and provide quality feedback on progress towards the objective(s); Reflects on achievement of LO, whole class strengths, misconceptions, individual achievement, next steps and progress towards <b>Learning Steps</b> ; Frequently uses examples of pupil's work to model achievement, misconceptions etc; Reinforces the school's general high expectations for presentation, handwriting and spelling; Identifies focus group/individuals that the teacher will be working with during next steps; Requires pupils to regularly reflect on progress towards class and individual <b>Learning Steps</b> .
<b>LEARNING STEPS</b>	
<b>Learning Steps</b> underpin the conferencing strategy for securing, and celebrating, pupil progress and achievement in Writing - grammar and punctuation, handwriting and spelling (HFW and common exception words); The menu of <b>Learning Steps</b> is used diagnostically to identify whole class/group/individual gaps in learning which teachers can then plan to address with rapid impact on pupil progress; <b>Learning Steps</b> are then used as a skills menu for planning, teaching and targeted support in writing, including giving feedback through Class Conferencing; Achievement of <b>Learning Steps</b> is regularly monitored, providing evidence of whole class and individual progress over time. Pupils in receipt of the PPG, and other vulnerable pupils, should be prioritised for additional support and regular practice;	

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Pupils are regularly given effective feedback, verbal and/or written, in order to move their learning forward. Teacher time is used effectively for maximum impact on pupil progress and attainment while reducing workload;

All pupils know how to improve, through use of Learning Steps and Pupil/Class Conferencing opportunities, and are actively involved in reflecting upon their learning.

A clear, supportive dialogue between adults and pupils is visible within lessons, in books, during meetings and evidenced in recordings on Pupil/Class Conferencing templates.

Pupils are regularly inspired by the good practice of their peers and through modelled examples which they reflect on during Class Conferencing sessions;

Learning is put into context with real life models of success/misconceptions being meaningfully pupil led;

Feedback is often discussion based (either whole class, group or individual) and effectively communicates next steps through a positive dialogue with the teacher;

In Class Conferencing, teachers are able to address areas that will quickly move the learning of the whole class forward while supporting pupils individually with deep marking and Pupil Conferencing sessions;

Pupils are able to quickly see progress through achievement of Learning Steps;

## Evidence of feedback and progress

Feedback and progress will be evidenced through the use of *Pupil Conferencing* and *Class Conferencing* templates, in books using the marking code and editing codes and in diagnostic tools/templates for individual pupils or a whole class overview.

## VERBAL FEEDBACK

Throughout the lesson, verbal feedback can be given at any point, by any member of teaching staff, to help move a pupil's learning forward. This dialogue should focus upon successes, areas for development, next steps and to set targets for future learning.

## USE OF VISUALISERS

Visualisers are a vital tool in each classroom and may be used to support feedback at any point, including during Class Conferencing sessions and to support peer or self-assessment models.

## 4. Handwriting

Handwriting is taught across the school following the Letter-join scheme and pupils will be taught mostly on a whole class level. Pre-cursive begins in Foundation with children beginning to write cursively from Year 1 onwards. In Foundation and Key Stage 1, pupils should be taught handwriting at least three times a week and Years 3 and 4, at once a week, with further support for those that need it. Followed by Years 5 and 6, with sessions once a fortnight and extra sessions given where needed.

High expectations with presentation and handwriting are non-negotiable throughout the school. Pens will be awarded from late Year 2 and Lower Key Stage 2. Pupils write in black handwriting pens and edit and re-draft with a purple pen, or purple pencil in Years 1 and 2.

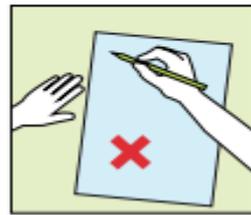
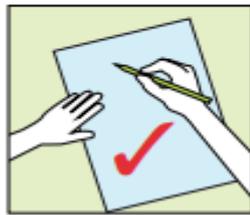
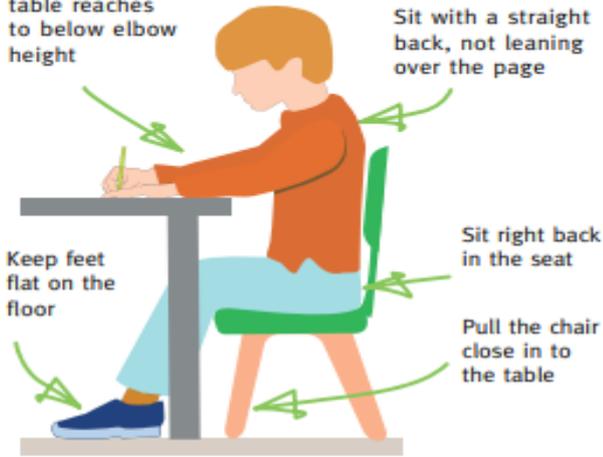
---

PENCIL GRIP

Seating position and pencil grip

## How to sit comfortably

Make sure the table reaches to below elbow height

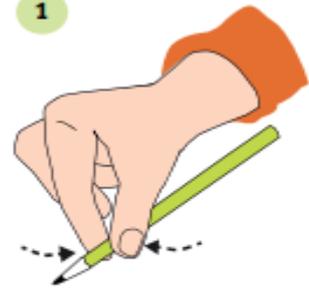


Paper positioning for right-handed children.

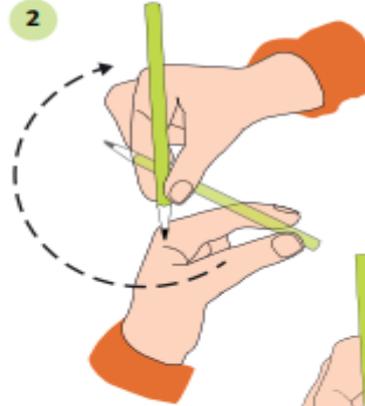
## Tripod pencil grip

Both right and left handed children should be encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows the pen/pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pen/pencil nib.

1



2



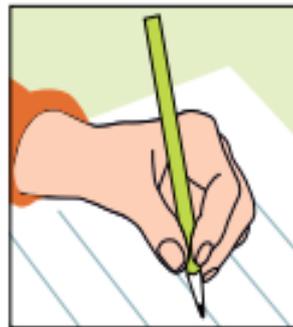
3



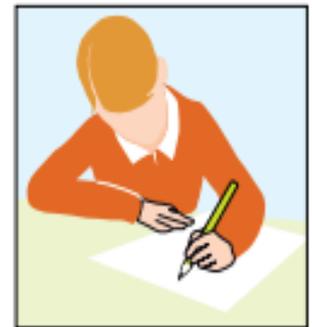
## Seating and handwriting positioning for left-handed children

Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow right-handed teachers as they demonstrate letter formation (and vice versa). Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis.

- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.
- Pupils should position the paper/book to their left side and slanted, as shown.
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision.
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.



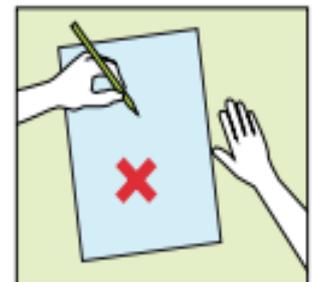
Tripod grip for left-handed children.



Paper positioning for left-handed children.



Paper position for left-handed children.



All classes will follow the Handwriting Progression:

Year Group	Font	Timeframe	Notes
Reception	Letter-join Air No-lead	September – July	*Children can move to the next stage of handwriting if developmentally appropriate for progression outside of the timeframe.
One	Letter-join Air Plus	September – May	
	Letter-join Plus	May – July	
Two	Letter-join Plus	September – July	

## 5. Speaking and Listening and Oracy

Speaking and listening is planned for explicitly and implicitly as part of reading and writing planning as well as cross-curricular planning. Children are exposed to a range of purposes for speaking and listening:

- storytelling
- as observers to respond back to groups
- persuasive arguments/debate
- group discussion
  - talk partners
- describing events, observations and experiences
- giving reasons for actions
- explaining ideas and opinions in discussion
- planning, prediction and investigation in small groups
- presentation to an audience
- reading aloud
- imaginative play and drama - hot seating
- listening to audio and radio
- podcasting
- animation
- collaborative group working with specific roles Children are encouraged to speak to a range of audiences
- groups of different sizes
- friends, class, teacher, other adults in school
- video/audio
- other year groups

Children are encouraged to speak in full sentences and is supported by our use of Tower Hamlets – Progression in Language Structures, all classes will have this vocabulary displayed and it will be expected to be used across the curriculum both orally and written.

## 6. Spelling

Spelling is taught in our school using the No Nonsense Spelling Scheme linked to the appendices in the English Programme of Study. Pupils in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 are assessed through phonics teaching and learning and are tracked accordingly. Statutory word lists are also taught and assessed and are placed on pupils' spelling lists frequently. Spelling assessments will be made using the Rising Stars Scheme and children will be tracked with a spelling age. Spelling lessons are taught twice a week.

Our pupils also follow a 'Success at Spelling' format (which replicates the Maths and Reading format) whereby pupils' spellings lists in Key Stage 2 will feature the spelling focus or foci for that week for a cohesive and comprehensive approach to spelling learning. Spellings are tested weekly. Inclusive approach to spelling is based on 'Dyslexia-Friendly' spellings and these are personalised for each child who needs support with spelling.

## 7. GAP

Grammar and Punctuation teaching is linked to the objectives within the English Programme of Study for each year group and each year group will teach discrete sessions in addition to their English teaching. GAP teaching should also be a prominent feature of each English lesson.

GAPS objectives are outline in the medium term planning of writing units as this links to current and contextual teaching. Work completed within a unit of writing is placed in pupils' writing books and any additional grammar work (such as revision or addressing a class gap or misconception) that is not explicitly linked directly to writing text unit is placed in the SPAG books.

A cohesive approach is used for the strategies and tools required to embed the grammar content so that pupils of our school receive a consistent approach.

**Reviewed by Teaching Staff:**

**May 2022**

**Approved by Governors:**

**Next Review Date:**

**Approved by Governors:**