



ST BERNADETTE'S R C J & I (NC) SCHOOL ENGLISH POLICY 2022-23



Our Mission

Learn to Love: Love to Learn

At St. Bernadette's Catholic School you will find us caring, hardworking and co-operative. We follow the ways of Jesus using our talents and gifts to make our school special. We show respect to all and welcome you.

THE 2014 PRIMARY NATIONAL CURRICULUM IN ENGLAND STATEMENT

'English has a pre-eminent place in education and society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotion to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them.'

ST BERNADETTE'S – A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Teachers at St Bernadette's endeavour to deliver the English Curriculum in a positive, stimulating and thoughtful way. Through the medium of language, we hope to provide the children with a positive self-image and promote opportunities for freedom of expression and exploration of their own thoughts and feelings. They are encouraged to listen to views of others and taught to respect their opinions.

Linguistic development is delivered in the context of a school that seeks to promote spiritual and moral values and enhance pupil's self-esteem.

Aims

The overarching aim for English in the National Curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas

ST BERNADETTE'S R C J & I (NC) SCHOOL ENGLISH POLICY 2022-23

- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Subject Organisation

As per the 2014 National Curriculum, the programmes of study for English are set out year-by-year for Key Stage 1 and two yearly for Key Stage 2.

From Reception onwards, the children are set according to their ability for English lessons. In EYFS and Year 1, this is largely based on their phonic ability, but as they move into Year 2, their writing ability takes on an equal weighting in deciding how the children should be grouped.

EYES

In Nursery, the children have four *language and understanding* lessons and two Literacy lessons. Four phonics sessions a week are introduced in Spring term. In the second part of Summer term, the children are arranged according to their phonic ability into sets in preparation for Reception.

In Reception, the children have five 30 minute phonics lessons a week and two 1hr 40 mins English lessons – which are made up of handwriting and writing for a purpose. There are daily story sessions plus an additional timetabled story lesson which is the reading focus for the week.

Key Stage 1 (Years 1 & 2)

In Key Stage 1, the children have five 1hr and 20 mins English lessons each week. These lessons will commence with 10 minutes of handwriting teaching and time to practise the new letter or join. This is followed by 20-30 minutes of phonics, moving onto whole class reading when the phonics scheme has been completed. One lesson each week will have a reading comprehension focus and the remaining four lessons are dedicated to developing writing and grammar skills using the *Talk for Writing* programme. Spelling is taught and tested weekly in Year 1 and Year 2. Spelling is taught using *Spelling Shed* which focuses on a specific spelling rule each week.

Key Stage 2 (Years 3 – 6)

In Key Stage 2, the children have five 1 hr 30mins English lessons per week. These lessons commence with a 20 minute whole class reading session with focused book related activities. This is followed by a ten-minute spelling activity (or 1 x 20/30min session at the start of the week). One hour lesson each week will have a comprehension focus, one a grammar and punctuation focus and the remaining three lessons are dedicated to developing writing skills in a variety of genres. Handwriting sessions are to be included in this time.

Spoken Language

The 2014 National Curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers at St Bernadette's therefore ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills from their entry into school in Nursery or Reception. Pupils are supported to develop their love of books through high quality story-telling and their understanding of books and other reading. They are taught how to prepare their ideas verbally before they write. Through our writing programme, the children are taught how to verbalise and internalise conventions and features of both narrative and non-fiction genres. Role play, drama, debate, oral presentations and performance poetry are incorporated into lessons in order to develop the children's social and linguistic skills as well as helping them to prepare and be confident in their ideas before they write,

The statutory requirements which underpin all aspects of spoken language across Key Stage 1 and key Stage 2 are also reflected and contextualised within the reading and writing domains which follow.

READING

The programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of 2 dimensions:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading).

Reading is the key that unlocks the whole curriculum, so the ability to efficiently decode is essential.

Phonics

We use the *Read, Write, Inc.* phonics scheme in EYFS and Key Stage 1. Where necessary, this is continued in Key Stage 2. The scheme is an inclusive literacy programme for all children learning to read. It teaches synthetic phonics. Children learn the 44 common sounds (*speed sounds*) in the English language and how to blend them to read and spell.

ST BERNADETTE'S R C J & I (NC) SCHOOL ENGLISH POLICY 2022-23

The children begin to be exposed to this phonics programme in Nursery from the beginning of the Summer term. Here, children are taught their *set one speed sounds* four times a week for 20 minutes and this is then continued and built upon in Reception. They begin by learning one sound per week and this increases to two sounds per week in the second half of the Summer term. In Reception, the children continue to learn their speed sounds during daily 30 minute sessions per week, which also include using the RWI books. When learning the set one sounds, the children are introduced to one sound per day. As they move through to the set two sounds, this is reduced to learning one or two new sounds per week and for the set three sounds, children are again expected to be learning one or two new sounds per week. By the end of Reception, it is expected that all children will know all of their set one and two sounds and be able to read words containing these known sounds.

By the end of EYFS it is expected that:

- Children read and understand simple sentences.
- They use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately.
- They also read some common irregular words.
- They demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read.

Reading Opportunities

In Nursery, the children take home a book a week to share with their parents. In addition to this they are exposed to a fortnightly topic book. This book is read to the children and the fortnight's group activities, including role play are then based around it. The children receive an additional daily 20 minute story time session. From the second part of the Summer term, the more-able children are also given an Oxford Reading Tree take home book.

In Reception, the children take home *Green/Red Word Lists* to support their reading and phonics development. Once they move onto set two sounds, they also take home their associated RWI book. In the Spring Term, they can choose a "Take-home" book to share at home with their parents. Children are heard reading their home readers once a week in their groups and this is conducted in a similar fashion to a guided reading session. In the Spring term, Year 1 CEW lists are sent home with Reception children of above average ability, so that they can begin to learn and be assessed on these. This is delayed until the Summer term for the lower ability children. In addition to this, the children have free access to the story table and book corner throughout the day to choose and read books for their own enjoyment.

During the Spring Term, parents of Reception children are invited into school for two mornings a week to read with their child.

Accelerated Reading (Y3-Y6)

In 2019, St Bernadette's started using the Accelerated Reader programme (AR) as the main reading approach from Y2 AA set upwards. Accelerated Reader is a computer based programme which helps teachers to manage and monitor children's independent reading practise. Pupils pick a book (a hard copy – not a computerised version) from our library at his/her reading level and reads it at their own pace. When the pupil has completed reading the book, he/she takes a short quiz **in school** on the computer and if they pass the quiz, this is an indication that they have understood what has been read. All children have been assessed in reading using a programme called **Star Reader** and this indicates the level at which the children are reading and the types of books they should be able to access. This programme aims to give our children more choice and ownership over the books they read at home, thereby increasing their interest and motivation to read. They are also awarded points for each book they complete successfully. The children receive a certificate as they progress through the reading levels to commend them on their achievements.

Children in KSI and KS2 are exposed to an additional text during their whole class reading sessions.

As well as reading with an adult at least once a week, children in KS2 are given the opportunity to share and discuss books, group read a text, read silently, E.R.I.C (Everyone Reading in Class) – from 8.45 – 9.00 and listen to a complete story in their weekly story time slot.

Range of Reading

Throughout each Key Stage, the children encounter a wide range of reading material. As well as the wide range of texts explored in English lessons, children in Reception, Year One and Year Two are exposed to a set of 12 books per year as recommended by Pie Corbett's Reading Spine, the year bands Top 20 books and the year band five plaques texts. As they move into Key Stage 2, these 12 books are replaced with sets of high quality class reading books – 16 copies per set – so the children can read the books themselves as well as listening to reading being modelled by the teacher. Children are also taught to read the common exception words for their year band and the year band word list. As children progress through school, they are expected to read with fluency and expression.

Guided Reading

In Key Stage One, children are heard to read their Read Write Inc book each day in their English lessons. From Year 3 to Year 6, each English lesson begins with a daily 20-minute whole class reading session. These sessions follow one of the 'five plaques', five challenging texts which include: archaic, nonlinear time sequence, complexity of the narrator, complexity of story and resistance texts. Across a phase, children will be exposed to all five plaques. At the start of each chapter, children will discuss a non-fiction element of the book to develop a background knowledge of the content, and a 'dual coding' day enables pupils to learn new upcoming vocabulary with visual aids. All children will hear teacher modelled reading and will read aloud one or two days each week. An additional aspect of these reading sessions is to allow for and encourage reading for

enjoyment opportunities for the children. Reading areas in each classroom have been developed into engaging and nurturing areas where the children love to go to read independently and for their own enjoyment.

Comprehension

Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and of background knowledge of the world. This knowledge is built upon and comprehension skills are developed through high quality discussion with the teacher, as well as reading and discussing a wide range of stories, rhymes, poems and non-fiction. It is recognised that many children do not have some of the first hand experiences to develop their background knowledge and so it is essential that this is developed through secondary sources delivered through a wide range of media.

Reading skills essential to fully comprehend what is being read are further developed in comprehension lessons by ensuring the teachers and children are fully aware of the specific skills they are using. All questions in comprehension activities are coded according to a specific reading skill. From Year 1 onwards, the children are taught which skill they are using in order to answer individual questions. Staff use a range of texts and questioning, often devised by themselves in order to ensure the children are exposed to the full coverage of reading skills and texts which provide sufficient challenge.

In KS1 and KS2 Comprehension lessons take place weekly. A focus text is usually studied for two weeks with each session focusing on a selection of the reading codes. The first week of the cycle will focus on developing predicting, clarifying, summarising and basic retrieval skills. During week 2 of the cycle, the children are given the opportunity to 'dig deeper' into the text, developing the skills of inference and deduction, understanding authorial intent and exploring themes and viewpoints. As children in Year 1 BA set still follow the RWI scheme, comprehension teaching focuses the RWI book being studied.

Library

KS2 have the opportunity to visit Yardley Library three times during a year. This session is led by a qualified librarian who instructs on Dewey System and correct library use. Children are encouraged to use the library facilities out of school hours. In addition, the staff at Yardley Library liaise regularly with the Literacy co-ordinators to arrange additional themed visits, e.g. Visiting Author Workshops.

Parental Support

Parents are actively encouraged to complete the child's reading record in order to liaise with the teacher and support the individual child's needs, in a weekly basis. This allows a mutual supportive relationship whereby we can support the child continually and monitor their progress.

All parents attend a year band welcome meeting, where our reading philosophy is addressed.

ST BERNADETTE'S R C J & I (NC) SCHOOL ENGLISH POLICY 2022-23

Parents are invited to attend a reading meeting in Reception and Nursery at which the reading philosophy and resources are explained. Parents are encouraged to discuss any problems or queries concerning reading. Each parent receives a reading with their child guidance booklet and a curriculum guide highlighting English objectives, which they can support their child.

In addition, parents are invited to an informative Year 1 phonics meeting and have the opportunity to participate in a Year 1/2 phonics workshop in order to see the RWI scheme in action and work with their child.

WRITING

EYFS

In Nursery, the writing priority focuses mainly on developing good pencil grip and control. The children are encouraged to draw pictures about the stories they are learning about and to make marks associated with these. In the mornings, they have the opportunity to practise writing their names on the whiteboards. During the Summer term, the children are taught how to write some of the initial sounds and the Nelson pre-cursive handwriting scheme is followed.

Writing lessons in Reception focus on the teaching of correct letter formation, following the Nelson pre-cursive handwriting scheme and the development of fine motor skills. Children are given the opportunity to begin to write for a variety of purposes including: creating story maps, labels, lists, non-fiction, letters, posters, instructions and story retells.

By the end of Reception it is expected that most children will:

- Use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds.
- They also write some irregular common words.
- They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others.
- Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

KS1 & KS2

The programmes of study for writing at Key Stages 1 and 2 comprise of:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing)

It is essential that teaching develops pupils' competence in these 2 dimensions. In addition, pupils should be taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing have been incorporated into the programmes of study for composition.

ST BERNADETTE'S R C J & I (NC) SCHOOL ENGLISH POLICY 2022-23

From Reception onwards, children's writing is expected to be accurate, legible and set out in an appropriate way. Children will see the writing process being modelled by the teacher and take part regularly in composing, spelling and handwriting activities. During Key Stage 1, children are expected to write independently, whilst building up accuracy and speed. Whilst in Reception children are introduced to the principles of Talk for Writing mainly through story telling. This is carried through into Year 1 and Year 2. Talk for Writing is powerful because it enables children to imitate the language they need for a particular topic orally before reading and analysing it and then writing their own version. It builds on 3 key stages: Imitation, Innovation and the Independent application of a text or story. (See Talk for Writing Information booklet for more detail).

During each writing unit, texts are analysed and key language and organisational features studied in detail. Year band specific sentence types, modelled on those of Alan Peat, are taught to complement the style of writing and encourage sentence variety. Writing is crafted in sections, modelled firstly by the teacher and then allowing the children to write independently. At the end of this process the children are given the opportunity to independently plan and write their own full/part version of the text type, applying the specific skills and sentence types taught throughout that unit.

Throughout Key Stage 2, this is continued and in addition, we have adopted elements of "The Write Stuff" by Jane Considine to bring clarity to the mechanics of writing. "The Write Stuff" follows a method called "Sentence Stacking" which refers to the fact that sentences are stacked together and organised to engage children with short, intensive moments of learning that they can then immediately apply to their own writing. An individual lesson is based on a sentence model, broken in to three chunks:

1. Initiate section – a stimulus to capture the children's imagination and set up a sentence.
2. Model section – the teacher close models a sentence that outlines clear writing features and techniques.
3. Enable section – the children write their sentence, following the model.

The teaching of grammar goes alongside and there is a progressive emphasis on the skills of planning, drafting, revising, proofreading, editing and the presentation of writing.

Handwriting

We encourage all children to use a pen by year 6. Children are encouraged to produce neat, legible handwriting and present their work carefully and thoughtfully. We follow the published Nelson scheme throughout school. In EYFS, handwriting is taught once a week as a discreet lesson. It is also interwoven into the children's phonics lessons. KS1 have 5 x 10min sessions and KS2 children have 1 x 30 mins lesson of focused handwriting per week. Nursery, Reception and Year 1 follow the pre-cursive handwriting programme,

ST BERNADETTE'S R C J & I (NC) SCHOOL ENGLISH POLICY 2022-23

while from Year 2 onwards, the diagonal and horizontal strokes are taught. The transition to ink (Penship Award) takes place when the child's style is deemed suitable – this could be at any stage. Children are given the opportunities to write in different forms for different purposes, e.g. faster script for notes.

Spelling

In KS1 children's spelling are linked to their phonics lessons. The sound and related words are taught and covered during the weeks phonics lessons. The spellings are also available through an online scheme called *Spelling Shed*. This online scheme is divided into six stages, each stage corresponding to the respective school year. Within each stage there are weekly objectives and spelling lists that give a steady progression through the curriculum as well as review and challenge lists to extend vocabulary. For each week's spelling list, a traditional printable practice sheet is provided that follows the look-cover-write-check format. Online games give children the chance to practise their spellings at home where points can be built up over time. A printable activity is also provided for each list that can be used in class, as a homework or where technology is not available. Statutory curriculum words are covered throughout the course of the year in all year groups.

INCLUSION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The special needs department provide extra help and suitable materials to assist any child experiencing difficulties in line with the child's Individual Educational Plan. The work is regularly reviewed and further targets set by grouping, the class teacher aims to provide differentiation of teaching to suit the individual needs of the child. Each child is valued and it is our aim to build on strengths and weaknesses. Where appropriate, the Special Needs teacher will complement/support/prepare the children for the targets set from the English lesson.

PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT

Teachers plan within their year groups in order to meet the programme of study set for their year group from the 2014 Primary National Curriculum in England. Planning is evaluated by the English Co-ordinators and feedback is given in order to support the teacher. A monitoring proforma is used to record formal feedback.

Assessment criteria are matched to St Bernadette's own English records based on the Primary National Curriculum criteria.

The children are assessed in a variety of ways:

- 1) Oral e.g. speaking and listening records are used in KS1 with reading groups.
- 2) Written e.g. Key Assessment Opportunity (independent writing task) in narrative or non-narrative.

- 3) Observation e.g. guided reading
- 4) Pupil peer/self-assessment – e.g. writing checklist,
- 5) Formal assessments e.g. SATS/NFER/DfE Phonics Screening

Formal Assessments

EYFS assessments are carried out in Reception at the beginning of the school year (national baseline assessment) and at the end of the year.

Year 1 children will undergo a Phonics Screening Test in the Summer Term in accordance with DfE guidelines.

Children in Years 2 and 6 complete formal statutory assessments in Reading and in and Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation.

Formative and summative assessments are on going throughout the academic year in all year bands. These include KAOs for narrative and non-narrative (writing assessments) and formal Reading and Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation assessments using the NFER tests at the end of each term. This assesses children against the year band expectations. Children are assessed to be either working towards, working at expected or working at greater depth at each stage of the curriculum.

Using the data from these assessments in addition to teacher judgement, the individual pupils' attainment and progress will be monitored on a half termly basis. Children under attaining or not making the expected progress, will be targeted for small group intervention in reading and writing. The impact of this will be reviewed after a period of intervention has taken place.

Targets are set within writing, comprehension books as and when necessary and are personal to each child.

HOMEWORK

Throughout the week, children are encouraged to complete the appropriate homework set for their individual needs. Hence each teacher might include a variety of reading/comprehension/spelling tasks/focused spellings to learn/research projects. We feel that this encourages the children to become independent learners and supports the learning objectives. All tasks are set on our online platform, Seesaw.

Each child has an individual reading record in which they record aspects of their own reading progress and ensure continuity. Children are encouraged to record books they have read independently and are praised for doing so.

REPORTING

ST BERNADETTE'S R C J & I (NC) SCHOOL ENGLISH POLICY 2022-23

One parents evening per year is dedicated to informing parents of progress in English. This is supported by a written report in the summer term. Parents also receive a termly report, which briefly details their children's attainment in relation to year band expectations and effort in English.

WEB PAGE

Examples of children's work in language can be found on St Bernadette's web page (www.stberns.bham.sch.uk) reflecting the high standards we are proud of and wish to share with others. Children can access this web page and share other children's work.

VISITORS

Visitors are actively encouraged as an excellent resource to enhance literacy skills. Theatre companies visiting our school are a valuable asset, as well as an annual trips to the theatre.

Governors attend a meeting once a year to consult with the English co-ordinators. They also have access to the Literacy policy and schemes of work. English co-ordinators report annually to the governors and to the staff on the SIP day to share objectives on the action plan. The English policy will be reviewed and updated annually.