

**St. Vincent de Paul Catholic  
Primary School**



**A curriculum policy for  
English**

Speaking and Listening  
Reading  
Writing  
Spelling and Grammar  
Handwriting

*“We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus  
as we learn, love and grow together”*

School's own version

Reviewed: Autumn 2023

To be reviewed: Autumn 2026

Reviewed by the Teaching and Learning committee  
Subject Leaders – Mr Crump & Mrs Heath

Signature:

Chair of Governors

Date ratified: 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023

## **Introduction**

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. All learning takes place using English during a child's primary education. This makes English the most important subject in the curriculum.

The teaching of English embraces all aspects of speaking, listening, reading and writing. The ability to communicate effectively is essential for children if they are to achieve their potential at school.

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of English in our school.

The school policy for English reflects the consensus of the whole teaching staff and has the full agreement of the governing body.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all the teaching staff and SLT

## **Speaking and Listening**

### **The Nature of Speaking and Listening**

Children need to be able to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose.

They need to be able to:

- listen and respond to texts and other stimuli
- give, receive and follow instructions
- develop turn taking in discussions and conversations

Speaking and listening skills are fundamental to progress in other areas of the curriculum and to the general emotional and intellectual development of the child.

### **Entitlement**

Children are expected to:

- listen attentively and respond appropriately
- use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences
- interact with others in play and in accomplishing a task

Children participate in school assemblies and productions to audiences of parents, governors and children. They also take part in class liturgies and collective worship. Children watch plays, musicals and visual media.

### **Implementation**

When planning, reference will be made to the programme of study for Speaking and Listening, identified in the National Curriculum and EYFS.

Speaking and listening activities encourage children to match style and response to audience and purpose.

Staff engage in conversations with groups of children and individuals. We listen attentively to their contributions so that they feel valued. We model correct responses in Standard English, so that their language skills are developed.

Children are encouraged to value each other's local accents and dialects. Classroom activities are planned to encourage full inclusion. Children with specific speech and auditory problems are identified and helped appropriately.

## **Assessment**

All staff will make Teacher Assessments against National Curriculum and EYFS Development Matters Statements & Early Learning Goals.

## **Reading**

### **The Nature of Reading**

Reading is a multi-strategy approach to gaining meaning from the written word. Children need to decode marks on a page and read a wide range of texts with understanding. Our main aim is that the children become confident and enthusiastic readers who enjoy a wide range of books and other texts. Further information can be found in the '*Phonics and Early Reading Policy*'

### **Entitlement**

All children have daily reading opportunities. This includes:

- shared reading in whole class teaching
- guided reading in small groups
- individual reading with an adult in school and taking a book home to read
- adult modelled reading – whole class book

### **Implementation**

Successful readers need to learn to use a range of strategies to get meaning from a text. These strategies are:

- phonic knowledge
- grammatical knowledge
- word understanding
- context knowledge

Knowledge of synthetic phonics is required throughout primary school.

Children are taught to read during reading lessons. Guided reading is adult led with learning objectives. Children are taught in ability groups with a text that is challenging, 90% – 94% accuracy. Children all read a number of pages as directed by the teacher. The teacher 'listens in' to children in turn and then asks questions to probe understanding of the text.

Our reading scheme is supplemented with a wide range of good quality literature from classroom library areas and the school library, plus the Essex Library Service. The books give children the opportunity to practise their reading at an independent level, 95% - 100% accuracy.

In the EYFS, children are taught that print is meaningful and that spoken word can be represented in a written form. This is developed through the teaching of phonics using the approved Little Wandle phonics scheme.

We believe in a strong home/school partnership. We value the encouragement and support parents give to their children. We invite parents to share books and read with their own child. EYFS and KS1 children have a reading record book in which parents and teachers comment.

### **Assessment**

EYFS assess using the statements for reading. KS1 and KS2 assess reading using standard assessment tasks towards the end of the key stage. Continuous assessment occurs throughout Y1 to Y6, using Herts for Learning age related expectations. Development Matters Statements & Early Learning Goals are the measure in the EYFS.

## **Writing**

### **The Nature of Writing**

Writing is a developmental process. Children's writing is highly valued and praised. Children learn to write so that they can communicate meaning to a wide range of audiences. They learn to structure their writing so that it is understood. Using correct grammar, punctuation and spelling helps children to make the meaning of their writing clear to the reader. Developing interesting and powerful vocabulary further improves their writing.

Children's ability to communicate in writing affects their performance in other areas of the curriculum.

### **Entitlement**

The programme of study for writing at KS1 and KS2 comes from the Herts for Learning long term plans. This includes the elements of grammar, spelling and punctuation and ensures that pupils write in a range of genres.

Children will be given many opportunities to write in context across the curriculum for a range of audiences. They will begin to write independently from EYFS.

### **Implementation**

Writing is taught using the HFL teaching sequence for writing. Grammar is taught from EYFS and is cumulative. It is expected that all grammar taught will be revised and seen in children's writing.

### **Assessment**

EYFS assess using Development Matters Statements & Early Learning Goals. KS1 and KS2 assess writing against Herts for Learning age related expectations and these are recorded each term on Arbor.

Moderation of writing will take place between year groups, key stages and whole school throughout the year. External moderation takes place at the end of each key stage.

## **Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar**

### **The Nature of Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar**

Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPAG) is taught in context as part of the teaching sequence for writing. Children are taught the correct grammatical terms in English to give them the vocabulary they need to discuss their reading, writing and spoken language.

There are five areas:

- Word structure - spelling
- Sentence structure - grammar
- Text structure - writing
- Punctuation - a collection of symbols to help us organise words
- Terminology - vocabulary of spelling, grammar and punctuation

### **Entitlement**

Children have daily opportunities to write. They are taught appropriate grammar, punctuation and spelling (SPAG) for their year group in line with the 2014 curriculum for English. This is made explicit in Herts for Learning medium and long term planning.

### **Implementation**

SPAG should be taught regularly as part of the daily English lesson. It should be given a context, allowing the children to embed their skills through daily speaking and writing activities.

Children are encouraged to develop an investigatory approach to spelling patterns so that spelling is taught rather than simply being learnt.

Vocabulary development is prioritised alongside spelling so that new appropriately challenging vocabulary is introduced and used appropriately.

### **Assessment**

Teachers will assess SPAG using extended pieces of writing where children can demonstrate their learning as well as in formal; grammar activities. Pupils will be assessed against age related expectations in spellings.

At the end of Key Stage 2 there is a formal SPAG test.

# **Handwriting -**

## **The Nature of Handwriting**

Children need to learn cursive handwriting to enable them to develop fluency and speed and to achieve a neat legible style forming and orientating letters correctly. It should be taught throughout the whole school ensuring good presentation in all areas of the curriculum. Further information can be found in the '*Phonics and Early Reading Policy*'

## **Entitlement**

In the Foundation Stage handwriting is linked to the teaching phonics, following the Little Wandle Scheme, so children learn to 'say, read and write' phonemes. They are taught to make use of a regular, consistent and pre-cursive script.

There will be some examples of cursive script in classroom displays and on the Smartboard.

## **Implementation**

Children will be taught handwriting during English. They will always be encouraged to use neat cursive handwriting every time they write.

Teachers and Teaching Assistants are expected to model effective handwriting at all times.

Children will write with a standard HB pencil. Junior children are encouraged to use pen when the teacher feels they are ready to do so.

## **Assessment**

Teachers will assess handwriting continually and give advice on how to improve where necessary.