



# School Policy Document

**Title:** English Policy

**Purpose:** Supporting teaching and learning of English

**Lead Role Responsibility:** English Subject Leader – Cathy Spence

**Governing Body Team or Head Teacher Responsibility:** Curriculum and Standards Team

**Reference and Source Documents:** Written and updated by English Subject Leader

**Approved by Leadership:** 02/09/2024

**Reviewed by Governing Body:** 30/09/2024

**Reviewing Cycle:** Annually

**Next Review Due:** July 2025

## Christian Vision and Aims statement

### Inspire, Nurture and Achieve

We believe, as Jesus did, that in our happy, purposeful and welcoming **Christian school** and pre-school **all** are **valued, encouraged** and **cared for**:

- **Inspire** the school community to think and feel positively about themselves and others.
- **Nurture** each child and adult so that they grow with others in a secure and happy environment; where they enjoy a wealth of opportunity and experience a love of learning.
- A place where **achievements** are celebrated and expectations are high for all.

This is underpinned through the understanding that in Jesus, **all** are welcome and unique and have a God given purpose and place in the world. Jesus inspires us that **all** people can flourish.

#### Matthew 19 v14

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

#### **We aim to:**

*Inspire a positive approach to life and learning;*

*Value and **nurture** each child as an individual: developing **resilience, independence, and an understanding** of what they bring to the world;*

*Create a rich, stimulating environment where **achievements** are celebrated and **team work** and **co-operation** are expected;*

*Promote **high expectations** and **self-confidence** for each individual;*

*Ensure each child strives towards **excellence** supporting those who find learning difficult and challenging the most able children;*

*Develop and foster **motivation** for learning and **enthusiasm** for life;*

*Promote a sense of **belonging** and build outstanding **relationships** between school, home, church and the wider community.*

*Help every person understand their **unique purpose** and **place** in **God's world**.*

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## 1. Aims

This policy is for the St Barnabas School Community. It aims to set out:

- Our approach to teaching, monitoring and assessing English, literacy and reading knowledge and skills
- How we will make sure our provision for the teaching of English, literacy and reading is of consistently high quality.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements and expectations set out in the:

- [National Curriculum programmes of study for English](#)
- [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice 2014](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Reading framework 2023](#)

## 3. Our vision for English in our school

At St Barnabas, we ensure that our children become lifelong learners who love to read, are proficient and creative writers and can discuss and present their ideas with confidence. Reading is at the heart of our curriculum and developing early reading skills through the teaching of phonics goes hand in hand with developing a passion for books and stories. We are not shy about being ambitious for our children. Our English curriculum reflects our desire to send children in to the world provided with the skills and interests for a successful and positive future.

Our school aims to develop pupils' skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening. By the time that pupils move on from our school, our aim is for them to:

- Be fluent readers and writers
- Have a positive attitude towards books and reading, reading widely for pleasure and information
- Enjoy writing in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting language and style accordingly
- Be curious and creative when it comes to reading and writing – for example, by being interested in learning the meaning of new words
- Have a wide vocabulary and well-developed oracy skills
- Feel confident speaking in class and be able to clearly explain their understanding and ideas
- Listen carefully and sensitively to adults and their peers

## 4. Our guiding principles for the teaching of English

We teach English best when:

- There is a joyful culture around reading and reading for pleasure in school
- All staff feel they have the knowledge, skills, understanding and professional support they need to teach English and literacy effectively
- There's sufficiently detailed and frequent ongoing assessment of pupil progress
- We expose pupils to different types of reading material, such as through stimulating, high-quality and curiosity-inspiring classroom displays
- We involve families in supporting their child's reading and writing
- The English curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced
- We identify where pupils have learning gaps or are not making the expected progress, and put in place interventions to target these
- Teaching resources are available, up to date, varied and diverse, and match pupil and curriculum needs
- We engage pupils in high-quality back-and-forth interactions and explicitly teach the conventions of discussion and conversation
- We model new language and accurate grammar to pupils
- We support pupils with speech, language and communication needs – for example, by putting on extra small-group story time

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

### 5.1 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Building a team of expert teachers who know and understand the processes that underpin learning to read and write
- Providing teachers with the appropriate training and resources so that they can competently deliver the English curriculum

- Creating a stimulating school environment where pupils are exposed to different types of reading material, such as through displays, books and other classroom resources
- Promoting a culture of reading for pleasure at the core of the curriculum
- Developing links with organisations such as school and public library services, reading charities and others
- Involving parents and families in supporting their children's reading

## 5.2 The English leader

Our English and literacy subject lead is Cathy Spence who works with Rebekah Boulter who leads Read Write Inc. They're responsible for providing leadership and management for English to secure:

- High-quality teaching and subject knowledge of staff
- A coherently planned and sequenced English curriculum where pupils are taught to read from the beginning in reception
- A rigorous programme that includes well-conceived and structured resources for teaching phonics (Read, Write Inc)
- A programme of reading aloud to all pupils from reception to year 6
- Consistent assessment and accurate teacher judgements within English and literacy
- Effective use of resources

## 5.3 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Planning effective reading and writing lessons
- Providing opportunities for pupils to apply their English and literacy skills in a variety of ways
- Completing the relevant marking and assessment
- Demonstrating their understanding of systematic synthetic phonics in their teaching so trainee teachers and new members of staff can learn from them how to teach reading effectively
- Making sure that support staff have:
  - Access to planning materials and resources
  - The knowledge and skills they need to support and challenge pupils
- Planning and implementing effective interventions to ensure all children make rapid progress in learning to read

## 6. Curriculum

In the EYFS we:

- teach phonics systematically following the RWI scheme
- provide opportunities for children to communicate thoughts, ideas and feelings and build up relationships with adults and each other
- incorporate communication, language and literacy development in planned activities in each area of learning
- give opportunities to share and enjoy a wide range of rhymes, music, songs, poetry, stories and non-fiction books
- plan an environment that reflects the importance of language through signs, notices and books

- provide opportunities for children to experiment with writing for themselves through making marks, personal writing symbols and conventional script
- provide stimulating provocations, time and opportunities to develop spoken language through conversations between children and adults, both one-to-one and in small groups, with particular awareness of, and sensitivity to, the needs of children for whom English is an additional language, using their home language when appropriate

In the National Curriculum for 5 - 11 year olds, English is developed through four key areas:

- Spoken Language
- Reading – Word Reading & Comprehension
- Writing – Transcription & Composition
- Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar & Punctuation

This provides a broad and balanced curriculum and gives opportunities for a wide variety of genres to be covered. Some aspects, particularly in Spelling and Grammar, are taught as explicit lessons. Handwriting is also taught explicitly.

All staff use an online tracking system to inform planning and assess how individual children are performing in line with the National Curriculum. Assessment is regularly updated and pupils are carefully tracked to make sure that work is carefully matched to abilities.

Children in Reception, year 1 and year 2 children are set into groups to follow the 'Read Write Inc' programme which closely follows the National Curriculum expectations. From year 2 onwards, when children are reading fluently, they are taught through skills following text-based sequences of learning to inspire and embed learning.

In KS2, children are taught following a text-based approach which incorporates the key skills needed to create pieces of writing including the skills needed for each year group. Our text-based approach for English involves regular writing opportunities through skills teaching as part of a sequence of learning and a final piece of writing which will have been drafted / edited as part of the writing process. In Key Stage 2 some children will continue to take part in RWI or 'Freshstart'.

From years 1 to 6 all children learn spelling rules and patterns following the progression and skills taught through RWI spelling units. Handwriting is explicitly taught in all year groups. In reception, children learn letter formation through RWI approaches and this progresses through into year 1 when the 'Penpals' approach is used to develop cursive style.

English lessons and Reading lessons are taught in every class every day. This develops fluency, comprehension and a love and passion for reading.

## 6.1 Cross-curricular links

We will facilitate cross-curricular learning of English and literacy skills, making sure that the links with other curriculums are natural and not forced. This will be achieved through activities in other subjects such as:

- Annotating sources
- Group discussions
- Comprehension
- Topic research
- Debating
- Speechwriting
- Poetry

## 6.2 Adaptive teaching

We will provide suitable differentiation to make sure that every pupil makes maximum progress in English by:

- Recognising where some pupils need specific help with their English skills, discussing this with the Senco and making sure that adaptations are made within lesson time to include these pupils in all learning. We follow the EEF five a day principles for adaptive teaching
- Providing resources such as laptops, phonics mats and writing frames to scaffold pupils' learning
- Identifying pupils who would benefit from more support in an area of their English learning and running small intervention groups for targeted support daily aid their progress and attainment. We will monitor these closely to move pupils in and out of these groups as needed
- Making sure pupils who need it are extended through the use of additional, more demanding and open-ended tasks and planned challenges within each lesson

## 7. Marking and feedback

Feedback will clearly explain to pupils what they are doing well, and what they need to do next to continue to improve their work. Feedback from both peers and teachers is an essential component of developing readers and writers and will be given in line with the Marking and Feedback Policy 2024.

## 8. Monitoring, assessment and moderation

### 8.1 Monitoring

We will monitor the teaching and learning of English in our school to make sure that all of our pupils make the best possible progress from their starting points. Early reading is an absolute priority at St Barnabas and the RWI and English lead work together to forensically monitor the progress of all children.

Senior leaders, the Governor with responsibility for English and the English Lead will monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning through:

- Conducting learning walks
- Reviewing children's books and progress with them
- Regular pupil progress meetings
- Pupil voice discussions and focus groups with pupils
- Professional discussions with teaching staff
- Book scrutinies
- Analysing data and intervention records

### 8.2 Assessment

We will track pupils' progress using a combination of formative and summative assessment.

Our pupils will sit the following statutory assessments:

- The phonics screening check at the end of year 1
- National Curriculum tests in the summer terms at the end of KS1 and KS2
- KS1 and KS2 grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS) tests

Children will also sit regular formal reading tests termly and data from these assessments will be used to inform next steps. We will provide regular targets for pupils and provide termly verbal reports against these at parents' evenings. Pupils will receive a written report annually.

### 8.3 Moderation

We will standardise writing samples to:

- Demonstrate how pupils' work meets National Curriculum attainment targets for KS1 and KS2, to help with assessment
- Make sure staff have a consistent approach to marking pupils' work

We will refer to the exemplification materials for [KS1](#) and [KS2](#) from the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) to support with this.

We will moderate teacher assessments of reading and writing at least termly both within school and with colleagues from other schools and the Local Authority.

## 9. Learning environment

Pupils will learn English in spaces that:

- Inspire pupils
- Are well-organised
- Represent the school's love of books and reading
- Contain appropriate and good-quality resources for pupils to refer to (in a space where they can find or see them easily)
- Display letter cards and posters showing grapheme-phoneme correspondences that match the RWI programme
- Have working walls that contain resources that will support them in their learning.

## 10. Resources

### 10.1 Books

We will select and use books that meet the recommendations in the [2023 reading framework](#), including that they:

- Cover a wide range of subjects and vocabulary
- Represent our school community and the world around us
- Have a strong narrative
- Have illustrations that are engaging and reflect children from all backgrounds and cultures
- Include fiction, non-fiction, modern and traditional stories

Once we have chosen our books, we will:

- Identify a core set of stories for each year group
- Refresh the list regularly (at least once a year), as new books are published and as our school welcomes new teachers



- › Share the list with parents, and explain its purpose, so they can buy or borrow the books

## 10.2 Book corners

When visiting their book corner, pupils will be able to:

- › Browse the books
- › Revisit the ones the teacher has read to them
- › Borrow books to read or re-tell at home
- › Spend time there

When arranging the book corner, teachers will display books clearly and in an engaging way without clutter.

## 10.3 Rhymes and poems

We will choose rhymes and poems that will develop pupils' language skills. The teachers in conjunction with the English Lead will identify a core set of poems for each year group, based on the criteria in the reading framework.

## 11. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the English Lead. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

## 12. Links with other policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- › Curriculum policy
- › SEN/SEND policy
- › Marking and feedback policy
- › Assessment policy
- › Equality information and objectives
- › Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy