



# St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School

## English Policy Document

June 2023

## Mission Statement

### *‘Nurturing Hearts and Minds’*

God’s love is at the heart of all that we do at St Gabriel’s Catholic Primary School.

Hearts and Minds are nurtured in a stimulating and safe environment. We believe that every child is unique and we nurture each child through a creative and rounded curriculum to reach their full potential. Talents are celebrated and differences are respected within a strong, supportive Catholic community.

At St Gabriel’s, children learn to love, respect and care for each other and God’s entire world. Our school is a place where children are filled with a love of life and learning.

As a school, we are aware of our duties under the Equality Act 2010, and we take account of pupils’ race, religion and culture, and of pupils with SEN, a disability and the circumstances of other vulnerable pupils. We aim for this policy to work for the majority of pupils, however on occasion, we understand that adaptations may need to be made depending on circumstance.

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## 1. Aims

The aims of English education in our school are 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**.
- Build an English curriculum rooted in a broad range of quality texts and topics to support and enhance learning.
- Enable our pupils to acquire the requisite skills and knowledge to be successful, independent and motivated life-long learners.
- Enable pupils to become fluent, confident readers and develop in them a love of reading and a passion for learning which will help pupils gain knowledge, skills and understanding in all curriculum areas.

- Place reading at its heart across all curriculum areas.
- Offer pupils the chance, through reading in particular, to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually.

### The intent behind our school's English curriculum

The English curriculum at St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School aims to equip pupils to become fluent, confident readers and develop in them a love of reading and a passion for learning which will help pupils gain knowledge, skills and understanding in all curriculum areas.

By rooting the curriculum in quality texts, consisting of a broad range of genres, we intend to foster a love of reading which encourages children to recognise the pleasure they can get from their reading and to understand that reading allows them to discover new knowledge, revisit prior knowledge and understand more about what they learn, fuelling their imagination for ideas to use in their own work. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually.

Opportunities are provided across all curricular areas for the development and application of **speaking, listening and writing skills** to help all pupils acquire the requisite skills and knowledge to be successful, independent and motivated life-long learners.

Teachers plan lesson sequences which develop pupils' ability to write clearly, accurately, and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.

Our wider curriculum provides regular opportunities for pupils to confidently use and apply the **writing and spoken language skills** they have acquired from the English Curriculum.

Children are taught to apply their **phonetical and spelling knowledge** and their **grammatical knowledge** in their writing.

Word acquisition is made a priority using a structured approach to teaching **vocabulary** and ensures children are exposed to a large number of words at the right level. Children are encouraged to link oral and written vocabulary.

### Impact

- Children will make at least good progress in reading, writing and speaking and listening from their last point of statutory assessment or from their starting point in Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS).
- Children will use their English knowledge and skills, in all curriculum areas, to enable them to be active in their learning so that they can construct their own knowledge and can think creatively and flexibly.
- Children will be confident readers with a love of reading and make at least good progress in reading from their last point of statutory assessment or from their starting point in EYFS.
- Children will use their reading skills as a key tool in helping them to learn, and as a result, they can construct their own knowledge and can think creatively and flexibly.

- Children will be able to produce written work in all areas of the curriculum of a similar standard which evidences good progress from their last point of statutory assessment point or their starting point in EYFS.
- Children will learn strategies for independent word learning and have opportunities to enjoy words.
- Teachers can be confident in their assessments.
- Children take a pride in the presentation of their work.

## 2. Statutory requirements

English is a core subject.

We must teach English as set out in the national curriculum programmes of study and attainment targets outlined by the Department for Education statutory guidance.

We must develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects.

## 3. Content and delivery (Implementation)

### 3.1 What we teach

As stated above, we're required to cover the content for English education as set out in the statutory guidance (linked to above).

Refer to our other subject policies for details about what we teach, and how we decide on what to teach, in those subjects. Information on cross-curricular links with English and quality texts used to deliver other statutory and non-statutory subjects can be found on the school curriculum map. These can be found on our school website.

### 3.2 How we teach it

#### **National Curriculum Programmes of Study and Scheme of Work**

English is planned for, following the EYFS Framework and Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Key Stage 2 (KS2) school curriculum.

English schemes of work are planned for around a broad range of high-quality selected texts which also form Units of Work.

Whilst the National Curriculum forms the foundation of our curriculum, we make sure that children learn additional skills, knowledge and understanding and enhance our curriculum as and when necessary.

English lessons will take place once a day, for at least four out of five days, for one hour, in all classes, but will also feature in a broad range of other subject areas as we strive to promote high levels of literacy across the curriculum.

## **Reading**

### **Phonics**

The systematic teaching of phonics has a high priority throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Phonics is taught daily to all children in Foundation Stage, Year 1 and those in Year 2 who have not passed phonics screening in Year 1.

Staff systematically teach learners the relationship between sounds and the written spelling patterns, or graphemes, which represent them. Phonics is delivered in a whole class format because it enables staff to ensure application across subjects, embedding the process in a rich literacy environment for early readers.

Intervention is planned for those children who are working below expected levels.

'*Little Wandle*' is used as the basis for delivering the phonics sessions in Key Stage 1. The *Little Wandle* online assessment tool is used to track progress.

Pupils will be given book-banded reading books which closely match the phase of phonics they are currently working within.

Parents will be involved in supporting their children's reading by being provided with banded reading books, phonic key-rings/books and guidance as to how best to help their children with reading at home.

### **Reading**

Reading forms the core of our curriculum. All children read and are read to so that they develop a love of reading. Books are selected by teachers with the knowledge of how they link to other areas of the curriculum.

Reception and Year 1 follow the *Little Wandle* reading programme which uses *Big Cat for Little Wandle* reading books. The children read three times a week as part of a group with the teacher or teaching assistant (TA) and then the books are sent home to be read with parents/carers. All books are fully decodable and match sounds that have been taught. There are three sessions of reading a week; decoding, prosody and comprehension.

Reading Scheme – St Gabriel's uses a variety of different reading schemes to provide a wide variety of appropriate quality texts for children to read covering all genres. The schemes incorporated into our reading provision include: Oxford Reading Tree, Project X, Graphic Novels, Rising Stars Reading Planet Rocket Phonics, Phonics Bug, Collins Big Cat. All books are book banded in order to ensure progression and challenge for all children. Once children have progressed through the book bands (usually in Y4-6) they can select reading books from their class library or choose carefully selected books of their own. The notion of becoming a 'free reader' really motivates the older children to read.

Classic Texts – All children will have classic texts read to them in all year groups. This may include traditional fairy tales/rhymes in FS and KS1 to established classic novels in KS2.

Individual Reading – All children in Reception and Y1 follow the *Little Wandle* programme and read three times a week in small groups to a TA or teacher. Lower attaining readers read more often, 1:1.

In Y3, children who are below age-related expectations (ARE) read individually at least once a week, the rest participate in weekly group guided reading sessions with a greater focus on comprehension. In Y4-6, children read individually to a TA or the teacher on a weekly or fortnightly basis depending on ability. Children who are still on book bands will be heard more often.

In addition, teachers provide regular free choice reading time in class where children can select books to read from their class libraries or from topic book selections. Children are strongly encouraged to read for pleasure and to read for knowledge.

Guided Reading – Children from Year 1 - Y6 take part in Guided Reading. These sessions are planned by all teachers to teach a range of skills and techniques which enable children to comprehend the meaning of what they read and develop their understanding of the vocabulary used by authors.

In Year 1 guided reading is part of the *Little Wandle* approach to teaching reading. In Year 2, teachers use the 'Totally Pawsome Gang' approach to reading comprehension – Vocabulary Victor, Retriever Rex, Inference Iggy, Predicting Pip, Sequencing Susie. These characters are displayed in classrooms to reinforce key reading skills.

In Y4 whole class reading takes place regularly throughout the week. Children also participate in shared reading (reading in pairs), vocabulary and pronunciation teaching related to the week's text and differentiated comprehension activities.

Throughout KS2, the VIPERS approach to comprehension is promoted – Vocabulary-Infer-Predict-Explain-Retrieve-Summarise/Sequence.

Y5 and 6 deliver whole class guided reading three times a week. Whole class guided reading takes place at least 3 times a week (timetable of the week dependent).

### **Interventions**

In Y2, children who have not passed the phonics screening in Y1 also participate in guided reading sessions using *Little Wandle*. Precision Reading and Nesy are used for additional teaching and intervention.

In KS1 and Year 3 in KS2 we use the Nesy programme to support children who need it. This can be accessed from school and home. From time to time, *Toe by Toe* is also used as a 1:1 intervention. In Y3, small group phonics sessions, based on *Little Wandle*, are provided for children who need it. Precision Reading is used in Years 2 and 3 to help children who

are struggling to recognise high-frequency words. Dyslexia Gold is used as an intervention in Years 4 – 6.

Home Reading – All children are expected to read at home daily and take home phonically decodable reading books. Links between home and school are strong and parents are very supportive.

In Reception, once phonics teaching begins children are given sight words and phonic sounds to practise at home. All children will start to read the 'Foundations for Phonics' books (*Big Cat for Little Wandle*) and take these home to share with an adult/carer at home. Home readers are changed in school once a week.

In KS1, between 2-4 books are sent home each week to be read with parents/carers. (One *Little Wandle* book and one sharing book in Year 1.) Communication is logged in the child's Reading Record Book. In Y3, 2- 3 books are sent home to be read with parents/carers. Communication is logged in the child's Reading Record Book.

Older children, Y4-6, can read books from the class library or carefully selected books of their own. Children are asked to read daily at home. Communication is logged in the child's Reading Record Book.

All children in Year 1 take home 2-4 reading books on a weekly basis. Children will use their reading skills as a key tool in helping them to learn, and as a result, know more, remember more and understand more. Children in Year 2 take home 3-4 reading books a week.

Reading Areas - All classrooms have inviting class reading areas with age-appropriate reading for pleasure books. Children are encouraged to read for pleasure each day at times determined by individual class teachers. Displays motivate children to read and talk about authors and books they have read.

Library - Each class library is supplemented with books from the Education Library Service annually. In addition, all teachers use the ELS termly to provide good quality topic-related books for their classes.

Hooked on Books – Each half-term, classes are encouraged to participate in 'book-talk' by voting on a new book they would like for their class libraries. This promotes debate and interest in authors and new books and is eagerly anticipated by classes.

Author and poet visits are arranged regularly to provide pupils with the opportunity to interact with real authors.

### **Writing and Language**

Children are given daily writing opportunities. At St. Gabriel's we celebrate children's writing successes on our 'I am a Writer' wall which is prominently displayed for the whole school community.

School plans are rooted in a broad range of quality texts which support and enhance learning in English and ensure the coverage of key objectives in grammar which build competency. The school Curriculum Document outlines the quality texts and genres studied by each year group.

Opportunities for children to apply their writing are planned and links to the wider curriculum are made. The children are given opportunities to write both independently and in guided groups throughout each unit. Their writing is used to inform teacher assessment and the next steps planned.

Children are expected to edit their writing in purple pen. Teachers then check the child's edits and make further suggestions for improvement if necessary. Teachers use green pens to highlight success and pink pens to indicate where improvements need to be made. Children are expected to respond to marking symbols to help them improve their writing.

Formative assessment at St. Gabriel's combines quality teaching with high expectations enabling the teacher to know what the children can do and use this to establish what needs to be taught next. Writing judgements are formally made onto the DCPro tracking system at the end of each term. Analysis of the data impacts upon teachers' planning so pupils' needs can be addressed.

The writing lead moderates writing with the SLT and other primary schools to ensure that teachers' judgements are accurate.

Children are formally checked using DCPro to ensure that they are making at least expected progress if not more. This information is in turn monitored by the subject lead and SLT. Children who are not on track are identified for more targeted support.

At the end of KS1 and KS2, teachers use the Teacher Assessment Framework to report Teacher Assessment.

In Reception, children follow the Early Learning Goals. Our EYFS learning environment is rich with vocabulary. Children are continuously encouraged to talk about their learning, express their ideas, thoughts and feelings. They are supported in their role play to express themselves orally and to make marks or write, applying their phonics skills and knowledge.

Author and poet visits are arranged each year to provide children with exciting, high-quality writing workshops and the opportunity to engage with real authors and poets.

### **Phonics and Spelling**

Phonics is taught in discrete daily lessons and is continually reinforced in English and guided reading sessions.

Phonics activities are practical, engaging and varied to ensure all learners are engaged and making progress. At the end of Reception, children achieving early learning goals in writing will write some 'irregular common words'. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

Y1 is a foundation year for spelling, with children being taught important spelling patterns and exception words as well as how split digraphs work.

They will learn both digraphs (sounds made by two letters such as 'ee' or 'ir') and tri-graphs (sounds made by 3 letters such as 'igh' and 'tch'). They will look at how the same sounds can be made by different groups of letters (such as 'oy' and 'oi' as in 'toy' and 'coin'). Children will also be taught common exception words. These are words commonly found in their English language but which do not follow phonic rules which have been taught so far.

In Years 2-6 children continue to develop their phonological awareness, as well as taking a more in-depth look at rules and patterns within different words. They follow the *Twinkl* Spelling Scheme with some topic words added. Discrete spelling lessons are planned, including weekly spelling activities and tests.

Homework - Spelling lists are sent home for children to practise. Spelling results are monitored to ensure children are sufficiently challenged and support is given to those who are struggling. In Years 3-4 children generally have 10-15 spellings to learn a week. In Years 5- 6 children have 15-20 spellings to learn.

Across the curriculum, spelling errors of words which children are expected to know are self-corrected and children are directed to write them out 3 times (once in Year 1).

### **Vocabulary**

Throughout the school, children will encounter a word-enriched environment exposing them to a wide and varied vocabulary giving them opportunities for incidental word learning.

The promotion and accurate use of a rich cross-curricular vocabulary throughout school is planned in all subjects. This is evident in learning areas.

The promotion and implementation of tiered language across the curriculum provides tools for children to make links across the subjects so that they can acquire the requisite skills and knowledge to be successful, independent and motivated life-long learners.

Vocabulary is systematically and explicitly encountered across structured teaching and learning sequences. Teachers plan to teach vocabulary linked to each topic. Topic vocabulary is displayed in each classroom.

Each classroom has a vocabulary display where the words of the week are displayed. Words are revisited often and pupils are encouraged to use them in their own speech and writing.

### **Handwriting**

High expectations of standards of presentation encourage St. Gabriel's pupils to take a pride in their work. From Year 1, all pupils follow the Nelson Handwriting scheme. In Year 1, pupils learn to form and print their letters correctly. Pupils start learning to write cursively in Year 2. They continue to learn the joins and practise them in Years 3 and 4. In Years 5 and 6 children start to develop their own style and can be awarded a 'pen licence' once they have attained the required standard.

Children have discrete weekly handwriting sessions from Y1- 6.

From Y3, they are expected to apply cursive script into their daily writing, and as they move through Key Stage 2, with increasing legibility, fluency and speed.

Teachers and support staff are expected to model the school handwriting style.

## Language

The promotion of a language rich curriculum is essential to its successful acquisition across the curriculum.

We work closely with Speech and Language therapists so we can refer children who need screening and implement individualised care plans.

The Wellcom Screening Tool enables EYFS practitioners to regularly profile children's speech and language and to identify children at risk of developing delayed communication skills.

The promotion and implementation of tiered language across the curriculum provides tools for children to make links across the subjects so that they can acquire the requisite skills and knowledge to be successful, independent and motivated life-long learners.

Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to use and develop their speaking and listening skills to help them with the writing process across all areas of the curriculum.

## Assessment

We firmly believe in the power of immediate, personalised feedback, so much marking is done 'pen-in-hand' by teachers during lessons or instant verbal feedback is provided. Being next to a child and having a conversation in the moment about their work has far more impact than lengthy written feedback in many instances, so adults create classrooms where this dialogue is possible and powerful. Regular written feedback is still given, following the St. Gabriel's marking policy, after extended pieces of writing. [See Assessment Policy for more information on whole school monitoring and evaluation, tracking and work sampling.](#)

Reading	
Formative Assessment	Summative Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In Nursery and Reception, children are assessed in their early literacy development against the 'Development Matters' goals.</li><li>• Starting in Reception year, teachers and TAs regularly listen to children read individually and in either group or whole class guided reading and continually monitor and assess their reading development.</li><li>• Teachers and teaching assistants monitor children's reading progress closely when listening to them read and during guided reading sessions and where necessary record further action required to help children progress.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At the end of Reception, children are assessed against the EYFS profile and results are shared with parents.</li><li>• Year 1 take the end of year Phonics test in June.</li><li>• Children in Year 2 and Year 6 take end of Key Stage national tests that examine a range of reading comprehension skills.</li><li>• All children from Year 2 complete the Salford Reading Test to ensure they read appropriately challenging books. This is checked and reading book bands are adjusted accordingly. Children are tested at the end of Autumn 1. Tests are diagnostic, providing children with a reading age which takes into account their actual age at the time of testing and a standardised score with '100' being our goal for every child, i.e. their</li></ul>

	<p>reading is at an age appropriate level. Pupils giving cause for concern are tracked and re-tested at the end of Spring 1.</p> <p>All pupils with a reading age below 11 years 3 months are retested at the end of in the Summer 1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition, the <i>Little Wandle</i> assessment tracker is used to assess children in KS1 upwards.</li> <li>• Rising Stars Comprehension tests are used for half-termly assessment of comprehension in Y2-5.</li> </ul>
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Writing	
Formative Assessment	Summative Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formative assessment at St. Gabriel's combines quality teaching with high expectations enabling the teacher to know what the children can do and to use this to establish what needs to be taught next.</li> <li>• First and foremost, pen-in-hand immediate marking or verbal feedback takes place throughout lessons to move children's learning on.</li> <li>• Children's writing is used to inform teacher assessment and the next steps planned.</li> <li>• Children are given 'Success Criteria' that they can use to help them reflect on the structure and language features of their own writing. Y2-6.</li> <li>• At the end of a piece of extended writing, the teacher marks each child's work according to the learning objective.</li> <li>• The teacher highlights in pink where the child needs direction towards improvement using a known technique. Children are given structured time to respond to their feedback and reflect on their learning.</li> <li>• Termly one-to-one writing conferences between pupil and teacher are used to evaluate progress and set new targets for writing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing at the end of KS1 and KS2 is teacher assessed. There is no external assessment of composition, however we routinely ask our Local Authority consultant to moderate our levels. As we do termly assessments, these, along with the children's literacy books, help to form a profile for final teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 and 6.</li> <li>• Externally set and assessed Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG) tests take place in Year 2 and 6.</li> <li>• Children are formally checked using DCPro to ensure that they are making at least expected progress if not more. This information is in turn monitored by subject lead and SLT. Children who are not on track are identified for more targeted support.</li> <li>• Teachers compile examples of unscaffolded, independent writing at regular intervals across the school year.</li> <li>• Assessment of these writing samples may be used to provide over-arching targets for each child.</li> </ul>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Each child has a writing checklist appropriate to age-related expectations.</li></ul> |  |
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## **INCLUSION**

At St. Gabriel's Catholic Primary School, we believe that all children have an equal right to a full and rounded education which will enable them to work confidently towards reaching their full potential and feel that they are a valued member of the wider school community. We provide teaching and learning for all children to gain access to a broad, balanced and appropriately differentiated curriculum.

At St Gabriel's our objectives are;

- To identify any barriers to learning at the earliest opportunity.
- To develop effective whole school provision management of support for pupils, focusing on inclusive practices and removing/reducing barriers to learning.
- To support all pupils with SEND to meet or exceed the high expectations we set for them against national data and based on their age and starting points.
- To ensure that assessment and monitoring systems are effective and provide sufficient information about attainment and achievement for careful planning of progression.
- To ensure that all those involved with children with SEN work as a team to support each child's learning.
- To take into account the views of pupils and their parents/carers and to encourage their participation and partnership in decision-making about provision to meet special educational needs.
- To ensure that every child experiences success in their learning and achieves the best possible educational and other outcomes.
- To support children and young people with SEND and medical conditions to take part in the activities of the school alongside those who do not have SEND.
- To value and encourage the contribution of all children to the life of our school.
- To work with the Governing Body to enable them to fulfil their statutory monitoring role with regard to the specific supervision of the school's arrangements for SEN and disability.
- To work closely with partners in education, health and social care, where appropriate, to support the needs of individual pupils, ensuring that there is a multi-professional approach to meeting the needs of vulnerable learners.
- To ensure that all staff have access to continuing professional development and advice to support quality teaching and learning for all pupils.

- To help children and young people prepare for a successful transition into the next phase of their education and to adulthood.
- At all times, teachers will be sensitive to the individual needs, beliefs and anxieties of the children they teach. At St. Gabriel's, staff conduct themselves in a professional manner. Controversial topics will be handled sensitively with our five 'Be Values' underpinning lessons: Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Polite, Be Your Best. This will give children a clear and recognisable framework in which to discuss difficult topics. Teachers will demonstrate impartiality in respect of their own personal beliefs and attitudes.
- Staff will use a variety of teaching methods to ensure quality first teaching.
- Teachers will report progress to parents in a variety of ways. Teachers will formally report progress in annual reports. They will also discuss progress during parent evenings and when the teacher feels it is necessary to discuss issues that may arise throughout the year.

## **4. Roles and responsibilities**

### **4.1 The governing board**

The governing board will approve the English policy, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

### **4.2 The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that English is taught consistently across the school.

### **4.3 Staff**

The English Leads are Mrs. C. Stevenson (Writing), Mrs. A Rice-Birchall (Reading) and Miss. E Birchenough (Phonics) who will ensure through regular monitoring of teaching and learning that staff:

- Deliver the English curriculum as set out in the national curriculum programmes of study
- Monitor and assess the progress of the children they are teaching
- Stimulate children's enthusiasm for English learning through current displays reflecting the learning that is going on in the subject, including reading, writing and vocabulary.
- Promote high standards of English across the curriculum.
- Keep up to date with latest developments in the teaching and assessment of English.
- Foster a love of reading for pleasure and writing for a purpose.

The English leads will ensure that English remains high profile throughout the school.

### **4.4 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to engage fully in English and, when discussing issues related to English, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Pupils are expected to engage fully with home learning including home reading, learning spellings and completing set homework tasks for English to the best of their ability.

## **5. Monitoring arrangements**

The delivery of ENGLISH is monitored by Mrs C. Stevenson (Deputy Headteacher) and Mrs A Rice-Birchall (Y2 Class Teacher) through:

Half termly monitoring arrangements, such as planning and book scrutinies, learning walks and lesson observations.

This policy will be reviewed by Mrs. C. Stevenson (Deputy Headteacher and ENGLISH Lead) and Mr E. Byrne (Headteacher) annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body and the headteacher.

## **6. Links with other policies**

This policy links to all other curriculum policies.

**Signed:**

**Mr. E. Byrne**  
**Headteacher**

**Mr. M. Mitchell**  
**Chairman of Governors**

**Mrs. C. Stevenson**  
**Deputy Headteacher & ENGLISH Lead**

**Date: June 2023**

**Review Date: June 2024**