OUR SCHOOL VISION
To work together to allow the full potential of each child to develop, through a quality education with high expectations, firmly based on Gospel values and lived out in a caring and worshipping Catholic community.
OUR MISSION STATEMENT
Through the example and love of Father, Son and Spirit we pray together; work together; and always do our best.

St. John the Baptist Catholic Primary School

ENGLISH POLICY 2023

This policy has been approved and adopted by the Governing Body in July 2023 and will be reviewed in July 2026.

Signed by Chair of Governors: _____

Signed by Headteacher: Catherine Whatley

'Pray together, work together and always do our best'

Our Mission Statement is fundamental to all teaching and learning at St John the Baptist. We believe that learning should be a life- long process, making us a community of learners, adults and children alike. Learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone. Through our teaching we focus on inspiring the children to learn, equipping them with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be independent learners who flourish in our care and reach their full potential. We believe that inspiring teaching and learning experiences contribute to children becoming successful learners who lead rewarding lives as responsible citizens.

Rationale

This policy reflects the school's mission statement in relation to the teaching and learning of the English Language. It sets out a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can operate and it gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment. The policy should be read in conjunction with the National Curriculum Guidelines 2014.

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 word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.'

Objectives

These objectives are derived from the aims and inform planning, teaching and assessment:

To develop effective **Spoken Language** pupils are taught to:
 Formulate, clarify and express their ideas using Standard English.
 Express themselves in a variety of situations using language which is appropriate to their needs and the intended audience.
 Give well-structured descriptions, and explanations for different purposes.
 Ask relevant questions to extend their understanding.
 Listen, understand and respond appropriately to others.
 Consider different viewpoints, building on contributions from others.
 Increase their vocabulary and use richer language when exploring a wide range of topics.
 Have a wide knowledge of language, including its origins, as a whole.

To develop as effective **Readers**, pupils are taught to:
 Use phonic strategies, linking spoken word to words on a page
 Develop speedy decoding
 Find and develop their own love of reading.
 Read a variety of texts for purpose and pleasure, accurately, fluently and with understanding.
 Develop a range of reading skills and strategies to enable them to become independent readers.
 Understand and respond to a wide range of books and media texts on paper and on screen.
 Understand the variety of written language, and the differences between fiction and non-fiction.
 Improve their abilities to read, analyse and evaluate a wide range of texts, including heritage literature and texts from other cultures and traditions.
 Develop higher order reading skills, enabling the use of inference and deduction.
 Have high-quality discussions about a range of texts.

To develop as effective **Writers**, pupils are taught to:
 Express themselves clearly and precisely for enjoyment.
 Write for an increasing range of purposes, matching their language and style to the needs of the
appropriate audience.
Use knowledge acquired through reading to write in different styles and genres.
 Develop ideas and communicate meaning to a reader, using a precise and wide-ranging vocabulary and effective style.
 Experiment and expand on their own writing style.
 Plan, draft, proof read, edit and evaluate their writing effectively.

Effective use of **Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation** is taught by:
 Creating opportunities in reading and writing to explore vocabulary and correct spoken language.
 Making sure children are controlling their speaking and writing consciously and using Standard English.
 Knowing the correct grammatical terms and using them in context.

SUBJECT ORGANISATION

Foundation Stage

In Foundation stage children have daily discrete phonics lessons (Letters and Sounds)
Children have opportunities to develop their communication, language and literacy skills on a daily basis in both adult led and child initiated activities.

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1, daily discrete phonics lessons (Letters and Sounds) which continue and are taught in ability groups, while children have daily mixed ability English lessons with an emphasis on real texts. Children take part in both shared and individual reading sessions and have regular story times to develop a love of reading. Literacy skills are developed across the curriculum. Handwriting, spelling, grammar and punctuation are taught within the writing context but also discretely. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes and differentiated class teaching.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2, children have daily English lessons including shared reading and writing. Additional literacy sessions include grammar, punctuation, handwriting and spelling, although all of these areas are also taught within the authentic context of the writing lesson. Literacy skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes and split, differentiated class teaching.

APPROACHES TO SPOKEN LANGUAGE

Spoken language permeates the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children's understanding of language is assessed using the LANGUAGE LINK screening programme in early Autumn of FS (Year R). Language link materials are then used, which build understanding of language concepts, prepositions and verbal reasoning, with Year R children being screened again at the end of the school year. Those not meeting expectations at the second screening receive tailored intervention at the outset of Year 1. Precise intervention continues throughout the year, with children re-assessed in the summer term, and those not meeting expectations re-assessed in Year 1.

Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.
Opportunities to develop these skills include assemblies, Masses and class liturgies, talk homework, talk partners, drama and performances including our KS1 nativity and the KS2 production at the end of the year. The recitation of poetry, learned by heart, to an audience is regularly timetabled and children are given daily opportunities for discussion, with increasing time for formal debate as they progress through the school.

We recognise the need for all pupils to speak, read and write Standard English fluently and accurately, while acknowledging that a pupil's own dialect, or other language is of prime importance. It is our school policy for all staff to model the correct use of own language to the children which encourages Standard English both in speaking and writing. To that end, new vocabulary is specifically taught.

APPROACHES TO READING – See separate Reading Policy

APPROACHES TO WRITING

Writing for pleasure

At SJB, we know that **writing is communication**, hence the need to produce well-structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the reader, and the need for the purpose and audience of the writing to largely dictate its form. But equally **writing is art**, 'a means of creative expression, a record of human experience' (Newbolt Report, 1921), and so our writing experiences at school should creatively satisfy the writer as well as reaching the reader.

As choice encourages creativity, we aim to immerse children in a wide range of rich literature (including audio and film as well as written text), enabling them to use books of their/our choices to inform their own writing, rather than hanging it on a single text. We encourage them to collect plot ideas, characters, favourite lines and settings to inform their own work. Our writing curriculum shows children that through literature we can take and find connections from our own lives - either real or imagined.

Writing is a social act, so we model how to do it as a class with the ultimate aim that children begin to do it on their own - with their own texts.

We share and celebrate our writing throughout the year in many ways, such as:

- Choosing authentic purposes and audiences for our writing, including those outside of our school community (For example, Year 4 wrote to our local MP this year, whilst Year 5 wrote to King Charles III and Sir David Attenborough, 2023)
- Inter-class writing buddies
- Whole school and key stage writing competitions (such as our Imaginary School Reports; Portal Postcards and Spirit of Summer competitions, 2018 - 19; Books Like Home competition, 2023)
- Our school newspaper, The SJB Times, written, edited and published by our pupils
- Weekly Writing Star awards and website publication
- Pupil performance of self-written poems, prayers, recounts, match reports etc. during Mission Assembly
- Themed writing weeks (In 2019: Superheroes in KS1, Writing for film in KS2)
- Spelling Bee competition (Years 2 – 6)

- Organising visits, talks and workshops from published authors
- Handwriting Pen certificates

Grammar and Punctuation

Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. Where possible, grammar is taught in context, identification through guided reading and usage through guided writing, although short, regular discrete teaching sessions are also used, particularly to reinforce terminology. Teaching of grammar terminology is based on the HAM progression and approaches regularly based on the 'Grammar for Writing' document, 'Talk for Writing' materials (Pie Corbett) as well as VCOP resources (Ros Wilson).

Spelling

Spelling is taught and tested in regular discrete sessions and reinforced within independent writing lessons. Teachers model the use of phonics and spelling strategies in shared writing sessions. The planning of spelling is based on the HAM assessment model in conjunction with the Spelling Shed programme. Spelling patterns are taught each week, predominantly through spelling investigation, and then consolidated across the week with follow-up activities and games – using the practise, explore, investigate pattern- as well as being identified in guided reading and modelled within guided writing. Children are explicitly taught to recognise and use word origins, families and roots to build their skills. Regular HFW misspellings are added to the weekly spellings to be learned.

Expectations regarding correction of personal misspellings are applied according to each group and ability, with the teacher's professional judgement. Nevertheless, the explicit teaching of proofreading comes with the expectation that final drafts of written work will be correctly spelled and punctuated. Dictionary usage is explicitly taught from Year 3 upwards. Children from Year 1 upwards are given personal dictionary books in which to attempt unfamiliar spellings, check them thereafter using the book as a personal spelling reference. The expectation is that children will attempt unfamiliar spellings rather than being given them repeatedly.

Handwriting

Handwriting is taught directly in all year groups following the Kinetic Letters scheme (see Handwriting and Presentation Policy). Most children will graduate from pencil to pen over the course of the Year 3, an achievement formally marked with pen presentation and certificate.
Teachers and LSAs are expected to set a good example by writing neatly and in the style agreed when marking children's work or writing on the board.

Guided Writing

Guided writing sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals.

The children are given frequent opportunities in school to write in different contexts using quality texts as a model and for a variety of purposes and audiences. They may be asked to produce their writing on their own or as part of group. Teachers should consider and provide the materials which would best support individual pupils on their journey towards writing independence.

Phase planning

Writing is planned according to the 3-phase HIAS model where an authentic reason to write is the starting point and the feedback from the intended audience the endpoint.

Phase one: Stimulate and generate. Children are given an engaging stimulus which inspires a reason to write, a viewpoint and an audience. Topics or themes for writing are often cross-curricular or inspired by a class text.

Phase two: Capture, sift and sort. Children research an appropriate genre or text type to fit their purpose and audience, looking at a variety of models. Relevant grammar and punctuation are taught in context. Technical, structural and stylistic features of these text types are studied and there is vocabulary immersion. Planning takes place.

Phase three: Create, refine, evaluate. Writing is composed, published, delivered to its audience and evaluated. Writers will inevitably work at different rates and pitches. There is self, peer and adult review.

Children are given opportunities to use ICT for their writing publication. Aware that the whole writing process is being taught and assessed, teachers allocate specific times to the teaching of planning, drafting, proofreading and editing. Children are taught to use editing pens in Year 3 and are encouraged to use them robustly thereafter.

The use of models

Teachers select a variety of accessible and interesting texts with clear examples of the features of the genre with the aim of helping pupils to think like to writer, with a common purpose. Author strategies are made explicit through talk. Models are used only to stimulate ideas and support learning, not to dictate what pupils write or to be learned and regurgitated like scripture. Working walls are used to analyse these model texts. These displays are used to support teaching and learning and reflect current lesson content in a clear and appealing way.
Written homework is regularly set and marked with parallel standards to class writing.

PLANNING

Long and medium term plans provide overviews of content, resources and objectives across each term, whilst short term planning is flexible in reflecting the teacher's formative assessment of achievement after each session. Long term plans are a yearly overview, whilst medium term plans cover purpose-driven writing topics. Short

term planning, reflecting individual lessons, is likely to be detailed for current teaching, but outlined for future teaching, to be fleshed out in response to pupil progress. Planning is in accordance with National Curriculum framework for the coverage of reading, writing, poetry, speaking and listening, drama and role play across a variety of genres. English is planned separately to other subjects and follows established schemes of work for phonics, grammar and spelling to ensure developmental learning based on prior knowledge.

Planning shows differentiation by age and current attainment. Pupils may be grouped by current attainment, with those entitled to Pupil Premium funding (PP), with English as an Additional Language (EAL) or appearing on the Register of Special Needs (SEN) given additional or discrete support, which is tracked and monitored. Similarly, pupils who are currently higher attaining receive differentiated support to ensure continued and progressive attainment.

Teachers seek to take advantage of every opportunity to make cross-curricular links (see the 'Wider Curriculum Entitlement at Saint John the Baptist School' document). They plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum, with a particular focus on writing through all subject areas where the same standard of writing is expected as seen in English books.

ASSESSMENT

Teachers are not expected to mark every book in detail every day, but all work must be marked (as in accordance with our Feedback Policy). Marking in the lesson (by any staff or by children self or peer marking) is encouraged as this supports the development of children's editing skills and their ability to self-regulate their writing.

Formative assessment links to the lesson objectives which are found in children's books, along with relevant success criteria, written in a way that the children can understand. Objectives are purpose –driven rather than task driven. This writing purpose is introduced with a driver question linked to SOLO taxonomy assessment, as with other curriculum areas. This enables pre and post-topic self and teacher assessment and measures progression. Each new writing unit is introduced with this purpose, along with a breakdown (KS1) or an investigation (KS2) of the skills needed to achieve it and this should be evident in children's books as a unit introduction page.

Indication of spellings needing correction should be progressive and adapted to individual attainment (i.e. where an error above the spelling expectation of Year 3 might be individually highlighted in that year group, the same error in Year 4 may be indicated by a the use of highlighter in the margin, with the expectation that it is corrected through a combination of teacher intervention and diligent proofreading. By Year 6, a note to proofread for spelling errors at the end of a paragraph should be sufficient.) This can only be achieved by time devoted to teaching of proofreading and accompanying high expectations for every child.

Assessment procedures are in accordance with the school's assessment, recording and reporting policy, with assessments timetables in accordance with the HAM phase model.

Our formal summative assessment procedures currently include:

- The EYFS Profile
- Schonell Spelling Age tests A and B completed termly
- End of Key Stage statutory national tasks and tests for Years 2 & 6
- Reading: KS1: Phonics testing for children in years 1 and 2; Reading Benchmarking, which can be used on any child, and is ideal for identifying discrepancies between decoding and comprehension.
- End of Key Stage statutory national test for Year 2
- KS2: Accelerated Reader Star Reader assessments.
- Rising Stars summative SATs-style comprehension tests are given at the end of the year (during SATs week)
- Reading and writing inter and intra-school moderation

TARGET SETTING

Target setting in English follows the procedures set out in our separate assessment, recording and reporting policy. Teachers set individual targets in consultation with the children. The children are encouraged to review and assess their own achievements and recognise the learning made against their personal targets.

INCLUSION

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The subject leader monitors and evaluates teaching and learning in English. As this is a core subject, she/he will work closely with headteacher and governors to ensure everything is done to support the school in achieving its statutory target (see English Action Plan). In addition, the school's assessment co-ordinator will collate and analyse English test results, and feed this information into our School Development Plan, Ofsted Self Evaluation Form and teachers' performance management.

GOVERNOR INVOLVEMENT

There will be a governor responsible for working with the English co-ordinators across the year.
The will meet termly. Data headlines will be shared and actions for the subject. The governor will also undertake monitoring activities, i.e. learning walks to view English in action. They will act as a 'critical friend'- to support but also challenge the subject leader.