

# St John Vianney Catholic Primary School, West Denton



*Through following Jesus, we aim to be a caring, happy school, where everyone is valued and appreciated and can reach their true potential. We hope to act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly with our God*

## English Policy 2023-2025

Date reviewed: November 2023

Date of next review: November 2025



## Our whole school curriculum vision

### Vision

At St John Vianney Catholic Primary School, we endeavor to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which inspires and provides opportunities for success for all of our learners. Through our curriculum, we strive to create independent, curious, creative and critical thinkers, problem solvers and innovators. We aim to provide engaging learning opportunities that encourage our pupils to develop and fulfil their potential academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually. We strive to provide a range of activities and opportunities through a carefully sequenced and progressive curriculum in all subject disciplines, which fosters a passion for learning, stretching beyond the confines of primary school and creates lifelong learners. Our vision is that our curriculum will ignite passion, expand horizons and raise aspirations for all of our learners. We aim to equip our pupils with the knowledge and skills that will prepare them for the world of work in an ever-evolving landscape, and with the confidence, resilience and tolerance to live harmoniously with others.

### Intent

Through our curriculum we aim to:

- be inclusive to all learners and provide opportunities for all learners to succeed, regardless of their individual starting points;
- foster a lifelong love of learning;
- develop a rich subject knowledge, including substantive and disciplinary knowledge, conceptual and procedural knowledge;
- make meaningful links between topics within a subject, between different disciplines and across year groups;
- make links to the world in which we live, which goes beyond the white western experience, thereby instilling a positive attitude of respect and tolerance of other societies, cultures and religions;
- raise the self-esteem of children as capable and resourceful learners;
- develop children's ability to think creatively, solve problems and innovate;
- develop children's capacity and confidence working independently and collaboratively;
- to understand the purpose and value of their learning and how it is placed on a timeline of the past, present and future.

We believe that all learners should experience success across the curriculum and be allowed to develop their own interests and passions within the curriculum. Therefore, our curriculum is delivered with the understanding that all of God's children are blessed with different talents and skills, and the knowledge that there is 'something for everyone' within both core and foundation subjects. For this reason, we ensure that the same value and high standards of learning and teaching are upheld in all subjects across the curriculum. In ensuring success for all children across the curriculum, we aim that this will create confident, resilient and impassioned children who have high self-esteem as learners.

Alongside academic success, the emotional, spiritual and physical wellbeing of children is of high priority, and as such, regular and meaningful opportunities for personal development are integrated throughout the curriculum. We believe that it is our duty to educate and develop the whole child. Our PSHE and RSE curriculum has been refined to ensure that pupils build positive relationships with others, feel valued and those who are most vulnerable are identified and supported. Our curriculum has the flexibility to respond to the needs and priorities of our children and of the local area.

It is our aim that all children develop a knowledge and understanding of and take pride in the British Values of our rich and diverse society and its history. Throughout the curriculum, we present children with the experiences of a diverse range of people, through texts, key figures in different disciplines and exploring the history through a lens that is not always that of the white western experience.

We believe that successful learners are aware of the key skills and strategies of that help them to 'know more and remember more' and make progress. We developed a toolkit of fundamental characteristics of effective learning – LEARNER. These principles are explored with children and modelled within lessons by teachers, creating an ethos of 'lifelong learning' within St John Vianney Catholic Primary School.

At St John Vianney Catholic Primary School, we aim for all pupils to receive a broad experience in English, which will feature as part of the termly Curriculum Plans.

### **Intent of English**

A high-quality education aims to place English at the heart of everything we do. At the core of our English curriculum is Reading, which is the gateway to the rest of the curriculum and plays a vital role in extending vocabulary and developing comprehension skills across the entire curriculum. Furthermore, it is a life skill which will impact the future of our children. We want our children to develop a love of Reading, recognising its importance as a tool for learning but also enjoying the pleasure that books can bring. For this reason, our intent is to increase our children's access to high quality texts, improve vocabulary, challenge children to become more confident, keen and capable readers but, most of all, promote greater enjoyment of books. We recognise that these elements are all intertwined; each relies on the other if our children are to become life-long readers.

Our aims:

- To teach children the five cornerstones to Reading:
  - Phonemic awareness (ability to hear sounds)
  - Phonics (blending and segmenting)
  - Fluency (reading easily and accurately with expression)
  - VIPERS skills (Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explanation and Evaluation, Retrieval, Sequencing and Summarising)
  - Comprehension.
- We have structured plans in place to teach each aspect throughout the primary years. We have established non-negotiable routines which include:
  - Daily story time across the whole school
  - Regular opportunities to read for pleasure

- Daily teaching of phonics in Reception, KS1 and regular intervention in KS2 (x3 times per week)
- Guided reading (daily) in KS1 and whole-class Guided Reading x3 times per week in KS2
- Daily comprehension (oral and/or written) from Nursery to Y6.
- Children are engaged and motivated to deepen their knowledge in specific areas linked to the National Curriculum.
- Develop cross curricular links and strengthen further links with the local and wider community and global world.
- Deepen children's knowledge and understanding by planning extracurricular visits.

Throughout the school, opportunities to develop pupil's spoken language in a range of contexts underpins the development of reading and writing. Pupils at St. John Vianney school are encouraged to speak clearly, confidently and with expression in order to communicate their ideas and feelings. They are taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate. Pupils are given many opportunities through drama, role play, performances, presentations, debate and the continual use of talk partners in many areas of the curriculum on a daily basis.

Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation is taught both discretely and as part of English lessons. We use progressive spelling lists across the school, which are matched to the expectations of each key stage in the National Curriculum. These are adapted to meet the needs of individual pupils when appropriate. Grammar and Punctuation are taught on a daily basis in class as part of a unit of work that is being studied or as a discrete lesson. In Guided Reading, SPAG skills are additionally taught through the teaching of VIPERS skills, which further enhances this element of the curriculum.

It is our vision, at St. John Vianney school, that every child will become a creative and imaginative writer and hold the skills to be able to write effectively across a range of genres. We aim always to use what we learn in our Reading into our Writing.

We use all areas of the curriculum to develop writing skills and generate purposeful writing experiences for our learners, which will give our children the opportunity to engage in writing that they are interested in and inspired by.

We use a cross curricular approach to writing opportunities, which enables children to make links with other areas of the curriculum and apply their skills across a range of subjects. This ensures that writing opportunities are relevant and real to our children and they can see a clear purpose to their work.

We often seize opportunities to write for real life purposes including competitions, letters to local councillors etc.

Pupils complete one piece of extended Writing at the end of every unit of work in English. Writing is formally assessed termly and teachers work together to regularly moderate writing across the school.

## **Implementation of the English**

- Design and construct a varied and engaging long term plan that is ambitious and ensures the projects are linked to the National Curriculum but are also linked to the interests of the children in school.
- Enable pupils to recognise that English lies at the heart of the curriculum. We pride ourselves on offering a rich English curriculum, which includes carefully-chosen core texts which are responsive to wider cross-curricular learning opportunities and reflects today's society and the needs of our children.
- At the core of our English curriculum is reading, which is the gateway to the rest of the curriculum and plays a vital role in extending key vocabulary and developing comprehension skills across the entire curriculum.
- Use a variety of resources, including ICT to develop teaching and learning The National Curriculum Themes and Breadth of Study.
- Teachers have good knowledge of the subject they are teaching.
- This is achieved through a range of exciting enrichment opportunities including workshops by children's authors, events led by the Catholic High schools, visits to the theatre and theatre groups in school and other cultural visits.

## **English Content**

### **Early Years / Key Stage 1**

*Please see End-of-Year Expectations Document*

[https://www.stjohnvianneynewcastle.org/web/end-of-year\\_expectations/539821](https://www.stjohnvianneynewcastle.org/web/end-of-year_expectations/539821)

### **Key Stage 2**

*Please see End-of-Year Expectations Document*

[https://www.stjohnvianneynewcastle.org/web/end-of-year\\_expectations/539821](https://www.stjohnvianneynewcastle.org/web/end-of-year_expectations/539821)

## **Planning**

We ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge in each project. Planning ensures progression throughout the scheme of work so that the children are increasingly challenged as they move up through the school. Long term planning is compiled across a whole school basis, which is determined by the requirements of the 2014 National Curriculum and the EYFS Curriculum. Planning is monitored by the Senior Team and the English Team.

## **Impact**

- Children are engaged and motivated to learn developing their understanding further.
- Cross curricular links are made and this, therefore, deepens the children's knowledge.
- Children understand that the presentation and quality of work is essential in all areas.
- Our children come to St. John Vianney with skills that are broadly in line but increasingly below what is typically expected at the time of entry to school. As a result, Early Years build on a child's prior knowledge and experience as soon as they start Nursery. They are exposed to stories, rhymes and develop their phonemic awareness in preparation for the Reception curriculum. A lot of effort is put into engaging parental support from the very onset with an Autumn Term Curriculum Evening, which has a strong focus on Reading. In Key Stage 1, we build upon the positive progress made throughout Early

Years and this is reflected in our phonics results, which have been above national average for the last five years. Parental engagement continues to be a strong focus and we offer further parental workshops at the Curriculum Evenings. In Key Stage 2, progress continues at a pace. Our approach to whole-class Guided Reading across Key Stage 2 (with a simplified version in place in Year 2) ensures that the VIPERS reading skills of Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Evaluation, Retrieval and Sequencing/Summarising are targeted and developed across the school.

- For statutory data showing impact for our school, please visit:  
[file:///C:/Users/cme/Downloads/School%20Website%20Data%202023%20\(Detailed\)%20~St%20John%20Vianney%20RC%20Primary%203913477.pdf](file:///C:/Users/cme/Downloads/School%20Website%20Data%202023%20(Detailed)%20~St%20John%20Vianney%20RC%20Primary%203913477.pdf)

### **Pupils with SEN**

Teacher's make appropriate adaptations to the curriculum and their teaching style. This ensures that all pupils regardless of need, are able to access the curriculum and succeed across the curriculum.

### **Metacognition in English**

Within all subjects at St John Vianney, teachers employ metacognitive strategies in lessons, which are based upon EEF research and guidance. In English, these strategies are evident within lessons, through:

- activating relevant prior knowledge from previous lessons within an English topic, across previous English topics and previous year group English topics (vertical curriculum links);
- activating relevant prior knowledge from other curriculum areas within the current year group (horizontal curriculum links);
- activating relevant prior knowledge from other curriculum areas and year groups (diagonal curriculum links);
- explicit instruction of strategies, knowledge and skills in reading and writing;
- teacher modelling of strategies, knowledge and skills, and effective learning behaviours in reading and writing;
- memorisation of strategies, knowledge and skills in reading and writing;
- guided practice of tasks in writing and reading;
- independent practice of tasks in writing and reading;
- structured reflection upon understanding and learning behaviours, which is seen in English, namely through end of lesson discussion and feedback, verbal self-assessment and RAG rating of lessons.

Metacognition is also promoted across whole topics of work, such as through the use of Grammar Blasts, which encourage children's retention of knowledge by drawing prior learning back into the working memory, building upon it and creating schemas in the long-term memory – the principle behind this being to ensure that learning is not forgotten. 'Grammar Blasts' refer children back to learning of previous year groups, topics and lessons. Within writing and reading lessons, 'Think Alouds' or explicit modelling of strategies are skilfully employed by teachers to verbalise the internal voice of the reader or writer and model the skills and self-regulation used by a successful reader or writer.

### **Assessment**

We assess children's work in English by making informal judgements during each English and VIPERS/Guided Reading lesson. Learning is promptly evaluated after each lesson and this is then used to inform future planning. Pupils are assessed as WTS / EXP / GDS three times a year and reported to parents.

### **Monitoring**

The English team is responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in English. The English Team is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of English for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The English team gives the headteacher an annual audit in which they evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement. We allocate specific time for the vital task of reviewing samples of children's work, talking to the children about English and for visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject. These tasks are carried out at least three times a year, with staff being given dedicated time out of class to support this.

### **Equal Opportunities**

We are committed to providing a teaching environment conducive to learning. Each child is valued, respected and challenged regardless of ability, race, gender, religion, social background, culture or disability, in line with the School Policy for Equal Opportunities.

### **Supporting Documents**

This policy is to be read in conjunction with and used alongside the subject 3I statement and where appropriate the End of Year expectation document.

Headteacher's signature \_\_\_\_\_

English Lead's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Chair of Governor's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: Governor approval 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Renewal time frame: Revisited every two years