

# St. John Vianney Catholic Primary school

## English and Reading Statement



June 2022

# ENGLISH AND READING AT ST. JOHN VIANNEY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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At the core of our English curriculum is Reading. We feel that this is the gateway to the rest of the curriculum. Considerable time, resource and training have been put into our Reading philosophy. 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 start the process of acquiring phonic knowledge very quickly. A lot of effort is put into engaging parental support from the very onset with an early doors Curriculum Evening, which has a strong focus on Reading. To foster a love of reading, the curriculum across the school is centred around texts of all genres.

In Key Stage 1, reading progress is good. Our phonics results have been above national averages for the last five years. St. John Vianney Primary school puts a lot of resources into skilled intervention teaching by all members of the team. Our home-school reading scheme is now closely matched to our phonics scheme and pupils read Guided Reading books and home-school Reading books and Library books on a weekly basis. There has historically been strong parental support with this across the school. However, we are now working hard to engage parents and carers post COVID.

In Key Stage 1, children access Guided Reading sessions on a weekly basis with the class teacher using phonic books from *Unlocking Letters and Sounds*.

In Key Stage 2, reading 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 that will be extended into Year 1 in September 2022) ensures that the VIPERS reading skills of vocabulary, inference, prediction, evaluation, retrieval and sequencing/summarising are targeted and developed across the school.

Our reading spine, throughout the school, offers a broad range of high order texts chosen carefully by teachers that link in to all other subjects. Children are afforded opportunities to read a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry in Reading lessons. Reading based lessons have a set formula using VIPERS to develop and extend reading strategies and skills. Children learn and consolidate reading skills individually in Lower Key Stage Two, before progressing to combine a range of skills within each Reading lesson in Upper Key Stage Two. Reading skills are modelled by teachers in every VIPERS lesson. The teaching of vocabulary remains a focus in every Reading lesson, addressing a common barrier to reading for our children.

## INTENT

At St. John Vianney Primary school, we value reading as a key life skill and are fully committed to enabling our children to become competent and life-long readers. We place reading and books at the core of our whole curriculum, recognising the important role it plays in extending vocabulary and developing comprehension skills both in Literacy and across other subjects. 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.

These principles underpin our rigorous and robust approach to Reading. Without fluency in Reading, our children will struggle to access a wider curriculum. As research shows, that there is a strong relationship between children's attainment and a school's reading culture and it is therefore essential that our structured approach aims to overcome these barriers and enable our children to move on from our school as successful and competent readers.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

We believe there are 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 (x2 times per week in KS1 and whole-class Guided Reading x3 times per week in KS2)
- Daily comprehension (oral and/or written) from Nursery to Y6.

## **Phonics**

*Unlocking Letters and Sounds* forms the basis for all Phonics teaching throughout our school. It aims to build children's speaking and listening skills in their own right as well as to prepare children for learning to read by developing their phonic knowledge and skills. It sets out a detailed and systematic programme for the teaching of phonic skills with the aim of children becoming fluent readers.

Children are taught phonics from Nursery to aid their awareness of aural discrimination of sounds. Children learn to recognise and distinguish between environmental, instrumental and body sounds and they are introduced to the concept of initial sounds in words. During the Summer term, children who are phonically ready access Phase 2 sounds.

In Reception, phonics sessions take place daily. Children are taught within a whole-class setting and lower attaining children are supported by Classroom Teaching Assistants through a Quality First Teaching First approach to learning. Daily intervention takes place for children who need repetition and support.

In Year 1, children work in whole-class groups across the cohort, participating in 5 sessions per week. Children who are not making expected progress also receive additional phonics/reading intervention sessions with our KS1 CTAs daily on a one-to-one basis. The effectiveness of these interventions are monitored weekly.

We complete Phonics assessments on a half-termly basis.

At the end of Reception, our aim is for all children to be working within Phase 4 sounds. Some children may be progressing further and will be able to confidently use segmenting and blending skills to read and write words.

At the end of Year One, our aim is for all children to be working with Phase 5 sounds through consolidation and mastery. This will include reading, writing, blending and segmenting words.

At the end of Year Two, our aim is for all children to complete the Phonics programme by Christmas and increase their confidence using and applying them confidently when Reading and Writing.

When children progress into KS2, we identify and track children who still require phonics input. These children receive booster phonics teaching 5 times per week and continue to read books that match and reinforce the sounds they know. This is monitored by our Phonics Lead. All staff have been trained in Unlocking Letters and Sounds and early identification of pupils requiring intervention is strong. Decodable phonics books are also available for every child who continues to access Phonics or Phonics intervention, based on their assessment which matches their phonetic ability.

### **Reading in the Classroom**

We have worked hard to develop our teaching of reading and use of high-quality texts in the classroom. This has been very successful, created a whole school curriculum for English that is comprehensive and progressive, improved the quality of teaching and children's acquisition of key reading skills.

We teach a text based English Curriculum from Reception to Year 6.

We have created our own whole school 'Reading Spine' based on recommendations from Pie Corbett and incorporated these into our whole school English Curriculum. This provides a structured approach to the texts our children will experience and can be found on our school website.

"Imagine a primary school where, over seven or eight years, children are read to, enjoy, discuss and work with a core of around 80 books. These 'essential reads' would be a store of classics, creating a living library inside a child's mind. This is the 'reading spine'. Schools that have a reading spine build a common bank of stories that bind the community together." Pie Corbett, Literacy expert.

Children enjoy daily story times across Early Years, KS1 and KS2. This focuses on developing listening skills, story structure, recall and enjoyment with the aim of fostering a lifelong love of reading.

We use a Guided Reading group approach in Reception.

In Reception, children work in ability groups, reading a book that matches the sounds that children know. The sequence of reading books shows a cumulative progression in phonics knowledge matched closely to our phonics programme. Books are re-read throughout the week to build up fluency. The same book is read at home for consolidation.

In Year 1 and Year 2, children access VIPERS Guided Reading sessions three times weekly using extracts of text.

In KS2, all classes have an allocated text from the Reading Spine to use in Reading lessons each half term. In addition, children will study non-fiction texts and poetry every half term in Reading lessons. Three 45-minute sessions a week are allocated for whole class Reading lessons, during which: teachers and children discuss the purpose of each reading skill; key vocabulary is taught; teachers skilfully model the reading skills used in each lesson; children are given time to read an allocated section of text in carefully chosen, mixed ability pairs and children then answer focused questions based on the text.

We have devised a common set of 'sentence stems' based on the 2016 reading domains, which allows children to articulate their ideas and discuss the text (Vocabulary, Infer, Predict, Explain and Evaluate, Retrieve and Summarise – VIPERS). Teachers continually encourage children to ask questions about what they are reading and make links within and across texts as they read. Children are also provided with support and scaffolding to allow them to take part in higher level discussions based on texts. Question stems from National Curriculum Test frameworks allow teachers to devise questions based on a text and ensures that all children are given the opportunity to access the full range of reading skills.

### **Fostering a love of Reading**

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. We achieve this through a range of enrichment opportunities which include: visits to Seven Stories, visits by famous children's authors including Vivian French and Adam Bushnell, workshops led by the Catholic High schools on Shakespeare and other famous writers, visits to the theatre and theatre groups in school. We pride ourselves on having a lively World Book Day, which is celebrated by all. Staff plan innovative and highly creative lessons, tapping into digital clips and resources including The Literacy Shed. All of these activities aim to bring literature to life for all of our children.

### **Reading at Home**

## **EARLY YEARS**

Children read two books at home each week. They read at home the book they have read in Guided Reading. The home reader is a consolidation book. This is often supplemented by a reading book at the same level and a class library book. Children are also given tricky words to read by sight. Each week, the teacher informs parents and carers of the sounds covered in phonics sessions and parents/carers are requested to comment on their child's reading of these books.

'Jenson' (Reception class toy pet) travels home with a child each weekend in a pet carrier containing all of his equipment that he will need over the weekend including a story. Children are encouraged to read Jenson his bedtime story over the course of the weekend.

## **KEY STAGE 1**

Until children are secure with Phase 5 phonics, their home reading book continues to be chosen to match their current phonics phase. After that, they will progress to our colour band system through Oxford Reading Tree. Children in KS1 also have a set of tricky words and phonemes to practise in their phonics folders. This is further supplemented by a class library book. Across the phase, children have opportunities to read for pleasure. School supports parents by providing guidance and modelling our approach to Reading through our Curriculum Evenings and information letters sent home.

In Key Stage 1, Guided Reading is teacher assessed weekly. We have additionally introduced termly Reading assessments (PIRA assessments), which further support teacher assessment of reading across the school.

## **KEY STAGE 2**

In KS2, KS1 and Early Years, children's reading skills are assessed termly using PM Benchmarking. This test provides a Reading age. Using this assessment, children are levelled according to Book Bands. Brown (ORT stage 8-11), Grey (ORT Stage 12-14) Dark Blue (ORT Stage 15-16) and Dark Red (ORT Stage 17-20). The Colour bands are wide, which will allow for teacher assessment and decision as to where children are at within them. Children do not need to read every book in the set before moving on.

In Key Stage 2, Guided Reading is assessed during weekly, whole-class sessions which develop their VIPERS skills and this informs the teacher assessment of Reading, and the next steps to learning as evidenced through assessment labels in Guided Reading books. We have additionally introduced termly Reading assessments (PIRA), which will further support teacher assessment of reading across the school.

Class Teachers and/or Classroom Teaching Assistants assess every child's Reading on a weekly basis. They monitor every child's reading through the reading of their home-school Reading book at least once every week. The lowest 20% attaining pupils across the school receive an additional two reads per week with Katie Allan (a designated Classroom Teaching Assistant).

## **Intervention**

There is additional phonics-based sessions for children who are not meeting expectations, both in Reception, KS1 and KS2. These comprise:

Flashcards and Tricky word work

BRP Intervention (45 minutes x 3 sessions weekly) from Y1 – Y6

IDL Reading intervention from Y1 – Y6

One-to-one reading intervention for lower attaining children

Lunchtime Reading Club

St. John Vianney school operates a Quality First Teaching First approach to learning.

## **School Library**

We have recently re-established the School Library in the Reading Hub.

The School Library is stocked with a wide variety of fiction, not only popular authors, but also authors our children would not normally encounter.

A range of non-fiction texts have been specifically matched to the topics studied across the wider curriculum.

## **Speaking and Listening**

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**

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.

## **Writing**

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

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.

## IMPACT

### **EYFS DATA:**

Reading in EYFS is consistently above National Averages. In 2019, for example, 86.7% of children in Reception were EXS+ for Reading in comparison to 77.0% (National Average for 2018). 27.1% of children exceeded the Learning Goal in comparison to 18.6% (National Average, 2018). Children have the chance to enjoy a range of texts in Reception including story time to foster a love of reading and gain a much wider vocabulary.

Writing in EYFS is consistently above National Averages. In 2019, for example, 79.7% of children in Reception were EXS+ for Reading in comparison to 73.7.0% (National Average for 2018). 11.9% of children exceeded the Learning Goal in comparison to 11.1% (National Average, 2018).

### **PHONICS DATA:**

The Year 1 Phonics Screening Test scores are consistently above national averages and show a three year upward trend with figures of 86.9% (2017), 92% (2018) and 93.3% (2019).

Performance Measure - All pupils	2017	2018	2019
Yr 1 Phonics Screening Check	86.9% (Newcastle – 81.6% National – 81%)	92% (Newcastle – 82.9%)	93.3% (Newcastle – 80.5% National – 81.9%)
% of children who passed Y1 Phonics	95%	95%	96.7%

Screening Check by end of Y2	(Newcastle 91%)	–	(Newcastle 90.7%)	–	(Newcastle 91.4%)	–	(National 91.4%)	–
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The percentage of children who passed the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check by the end of Year 2 is also consistently above national averages as the table illustrates above.

#### KEY STAGE ONE DATA:

#### EXPECTED STANDARD and GREATER DEPTH STANDARD:

St. John Vianney Primary school has always been above national averages at the Expected and Greater Depth Standard. Again, we feel that this represents strong progress from children's starting points in Reception.

Performance Measure - All pupils	2017	2018	2019
KS1 Expected+ Standard Reading	81.4% (Newcastle 74% National – 76%)	82% (Newcastle- 76% National – 76%)	83.3% (Newcastle 75% National – 75%)
KS1 Greater Depth Reading	25.4% (Newcastle LA 23% National – 25%)	43% (Newcastle 26% National – 26%)	31.7% (Newcastle 26% National – 25%)
KS1 Expected+ Standard Writing	79.7% (Newcastle 68% National – 68%)	77% (Newcastle 72% National – 70%)	76.7% (Newcastle 71% National – 69%)
KS1 Greater Depth Writing	18.6% (Newcastle 15% National – 16%)	22% (Newcastle 17% National – 16%)	21.7% (Newcastle 17% National – 15%)

#### KEY STAGE TWO DATA:

**EXPECTED STANDARD and GREATER DEPTH STANDARD:**

Reading in Key Stage 2 has always been significantly above National Averages.

Performance Measure - All pupils	2017	2018	2019
KS2 Expected+ Standard Reading	86.7% (Newcastle – 71% National – 71%)	97% (Newcastle – 76% National – 75%)	86.7% (Newcastle – 72.0% National – 73.0%)
KS2 Higher Level Reading	20% (Newcastle – 24% National – 25%)	71% (Newcastle – 30% National -28%)	40% (Newcastle – 27.0% National – 27.0%)
KS2 Expected+ Standard Writing	90% (Newcastle – 77% National – 76%)	87% (Newcastle – 80% National -78% )	93.3% (Newcastle – 78.0% National – 78.0%)
KS2 Higher Level Writing	46.7% (Newcastle – 19% National – 18%)	58% (Newcastle – 22% National -20%)	40.0% (Newcastle – 22.0% National – 20.0%)
KS2 Expected+ Standard SPAG	93.3% (Newcastle – 77% National – 77%)	100% (Newcastle – 79% National – 78%)	93.3% (Newcastle – 76% National – 78.0%)
KS2 Higher Level SPAG	40% (Newcastle – 31% National – 31%)	74% (Newcastle – 37% National- 34%)	53.3% (Newcastle – 35.0% National – 36.0%)

We are very proud of how reading and writing is taught in our school and this data shows that our approach is successful in improving reading and writing skills and outcomes across the school.

**CULTURAL CAPITAL**

At St. John Vianney school, we approach cultural capital through English. The Cultural Learning Alliance defines cultural capital as a way to 'celebrate and embrace the different backgrounds, heritage, language and traditions of all the children living in this country'.

At St. John Vianney school, we promote a varied curriculum that taps into many of the social, moral, spiritual and cultural elements that help a child be prepared for the next step in their lives. This is achieved in a multitude of ways including providing plenty of opportunities to explore new activities through lunchtime and after-school clubs, prioritising school trips (to local theatres and high-schools to participate in, and watch, performances) and providing many opportunities for questioning, curiosity and creativity through the English curriculum delivered. We also aim to build experiences and knowledge through English by immersing children in the language and literature around them. Examples of this in English include: visits to school by visiting storytellers and authors, appreciation and love for books through visits to Seven Stories and local libraries, celebrating texts through time and bringing Reading and Writing to life through visits and visitors to school.

Lunchtime clubs as well as a rich and varied curriculum provide an opportunity to introduce activities to help develop pupils' cultural capital hands on. These include whole-school Reading projects and outdoor learning activities in addition to providing many external experiences through school trips and visits.