St. Joseph's

Catholic Primary School

English Policy

March 2024

ENGLISH INTENT, IMPLEMENTATION & IMPACT STATEMENTS

Intent – what are we trying to achieve?

At St. Joseph's, the English curriculum equips our children with the necessary skills and knowledge to allow them to communicate effectively whilst also developing passionate and literate young minds with vivid and excited imaginations. English is embedded within all our lessons and we strive for a high level of English for all. We believe this is vital for achieving success at school and later in life. We aim to ensure that every child becomes primary literate and progresses in the areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening. We believe that the ability to read and write is fundamental to our children succeeding; enabling them to access the next stage of their education and beyond.

Our English teaching recognises the importance of high-quality talk and a language-rich environment and builds on pupils' spoken language as a starting point for communication. Children develop decoding and comprehension skills for reading and build the effective transcription and composition skills to enable them to communicate effectively through writing. Our children use synthetic, systematic phonics from Early Years and throughout KS1 to develop their knowledge of the written word as units of sound and meaning and use this to build their skills of words, captions, and sentences. As pupils progress through the school, teachers build upon pupils' decoding skills to teach knowledge and understanding of more complex vocabulary and wider spelling patterns; using guided reading, discrete teaching of spelling and the Writing Process to teach specific skills, as well as how to apply their knowledge to writing for specific genres and reading different types of text.

Our English curriculum promotes children's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development, ensuring that they are reflective and responsible citizens. Fundamental British Values are actively promoted in English lessons in order to prepare the children for life in Modern Britain. Our Gospel Values and distinctiveness, alongside our school mission statement of 'we work, we care, we pray, we share' are at the heart of our curriculum and all that we do at St. Joseph's.

Our teaching enables children to:

- Read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- Develop the habit of daily reading across various genres, for both pleasure and information
- Acquire a rich and expansive vocabulary, an understanding of grammar, and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- Write clearly, accurately, and coherently, adapting their language and style to suit a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- Use spoken language as a catalyst for learning; be able to have quality discussions, clearly elaborating on and explaining their understanding and ideas.
- Be competent effective speakers and listeners.

Implementation:

In English, we implement an inclusive curriculum that meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. Our curriculum is well-planned and provides children with the opportunity to engage with high quality texts that span across all text genres.

At St. Joseph's, we have a daily discrete writing lessons and ensure that there are many reading opportunities embedded throughout the week. English is the cornerstone of our entire curriculum. It is embedded within all our lessons and we strive for a high standard of English for all. Our 'literacy-rich' curriculum uses high-quality texts, immerses children in vocabulary-rich learning environments and ensures curriculum expectations and the progression of skills and knowledge are met. We also provide our children with a vast array of opportunities to develop their spoken language. Our curriculum is delivered through highly effective 'quality first teaching'. Enrichment opportunities,

including outdoor learning, inspirational visitors and exciting educational visits, provide our children with rich experiences and enhance teaching, learning and knowledge.

Reading

We work hard at St. Joseph's to make sure that our school environment is language rich and 'book focused'. Teachers are supported to build a love of reading in their classroom and encourage a regular reading habit, fuelled by enjoyment. We are determined that every child will read well, are motivated to read, think positively about reading, identify themselves as readers and can also confidently relate to books and talk about their reading preferences.

'Fantastic Five ' Reading Spine

Due to the growing complexity of reading across the curriculum, St. Joseph's have developed a Reading Spine that will expose children to a variety of texts that will support them in order to successfully navigate reading with confidence.

Using Doug Lemov's research from 'Reading Reconsidered', we have factored the five types of text into our English & Reading curriculum. These are complex beyond a lexical level and demand more from the reader than other types of books.

Our whole school reading spine can be found below, which also explains each of the 5 text types.



St. Joseph's 'Fantastic Five' Reading Book Spine

In his book 'Reading Reconsidered', Doug Lemov points out that there are five types of texts that children should have access to in order to successfully navigate reading with confidence. These are complex beyond a lexical level and demand more from the reader than other types of books. The idea is that in each year, a child will cover all 5 plagues of reading so that, by the time they reach year 6 and beyond, they have a good understanding of all of them and are able to access the more complex books expected of them in secondary schools

VERTICAL LINE	Archaic Texts	Non- Linear Sequencing	Narratively Complex	Symbolic Texts	Resistant Texts
	Texts that were written between 50-100 years ago, whose vocabulary, syntax and context for culture are more complex than modern stories.	Texts where the texts to leap around and double back on itself.	The narrator can sometimes be unreliable; at times there may be more than one narrator.	Some texts use metaphor and images whilst others convey an allegorical meaning.	These texts are purposely difficult to comprehend. The reader has to assemble meaning around nuances, hints and clues.
Year 1 A	The Cat in the Hat	Gigantic	Roald Dahl The Fox	The Tiger Who Came to Tea	The Colour Monster
Year 1 B	The Owl and the Pussy-cat	Wish the Rains Come	The Day the Crayons Quit	Owl Babies	Lost and Found
Class 2 A	Peter Pan	The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales	Nim's Island	Gangsta Granny	Topsy-Turvy World
Class 2 B	Where the Wild Things Are	Michael Rosen	Voices in the Park	The Iron Man	Farmer Duck
Class 3 A	The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe	The Odyssey	The Boy in the Dress	Fantastic Mr Fox	Goldfish Boy



Phonics:

St. Joseph's uses FFT phonics, which has a variety of appropriate quality de-codable texts for children to read covering all genres. All books are book-banded in order to ensure progression and challenge for all children.

Focused teaching of reading takes place in a number of ways:

- Shared story telling
- Shared reading
- Discrete vocabulary teaching
- Guided Reading lessons
- Reading interventions to close any gaps in learning

Please see our READING POLICY for more in depth detail.

Reading Comprehension:

Please see READING POLICY for more details.
Below is a copy of our Reading Ladder

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Reading Skills

ON THE LINES The answer is right there in the text **RETRIEVAL**			
Find Can you find the information?	**Sequence** Can you put events into order?	**True or False** Can you spot what a text is and is not telling you?	**Summarise** Can you sum up a piece of text?
BETWEEN THE LINES **You have to follow clues in the text to work out the answer** **INFERENCE**			
Key words Can you understand text by working out the meaning of unfamiliar words?	**Unpick pronouns** Can you work out who or what a pronoun refers to?	**Instead of said** Can you recognise feelings or tone from instead of said words?	**Show not tell** Can you work out feelings or thoughts from what someone says or does?
Ask Questions Can you ask questions to find out more?	**My life?** Can you understand a situation better by putting yourself in someone else's shoes?	**Predicting** Can you suggest what might happen next from given or implied details?	**If this is the answer, what is the question?** Can you use evidence in the text to thin of a question to match the answer?
	Impressions What do you think of the character/setting using evidence in the text?	**Adverbs/verbs** Can you recognise feelings or tone from adverbs/verbs?	**Visualisation** What can you visualise based on what you have read?
OUTSIDE THE LINES **The answer is about the way the text is organised or presented** **LAYOUT**			
Print Do you know why the author has used a different font or print?	**Paragraphs** Do you know the job a particular paragraph or heading is doing?	**Pictures** Do you know what a picture or caption adds to a text?	**Diagrams** Do you know why some information has been presented in a table or diagram?
BEYOND THE LINES **You have to think about the words that the author chooses or any ideas/themes in the text to work out the answers** **AUTHOR CHOICE/INTENT**			
Key words Can I understand why an author has chosen particular words?	**Impact** Can you recognise what the words an author uses make you think or feel?	**Comparing** Can I make comparisons within a text and across different texts?	**Fact/opinion** Can I tell the difference between statements of fact and opinion?
	Themes Can I recognise themes within a text and across different texts?		

Phonics:

We are committed to a systematic, synthetic phonics programme of learning. We have fidelity to the FFT phonics scheme. We ensure that we use appropriate resources, have fully decodable books matched to pupils' phonic knowledge, provide high-quality staff training and achieve strong results. Our approach meets the expectations of the 16 essential core criteria. Used alongside our strategy for supporting children with additional needs and dyslexia, the approach works for all children, including the most disadvantaged.

- direct, focused phonics is taught every day in Reception and key stage 1 and children read from books with the sounds they know, while they are learning to read.

The structure of our phonic lessons are:

- Revisit and Review
- Teach
- Practise
- Apply

- teachers and teaching assistants provide extra practice through the day for the children who make the slowest progress (the lowest 20%)
- Phonics in Year 2 is still taught with those who need additional further support accessing daily intervention. Please see READING POLICY

Writing

The Write Stuff Approach

As a school, we have adopted 'The Write Stuff' by Jane Constantine to bring clarity to the mechanics of writing. 'The Write Stuff' follows a method called 'Sentence Stacking' which refers to the fact that sentences are stacked together and organised to engage children with short, intensive moments of learning that they can then immediately apply to their own writing.

This approach makes sure that all of our children are exposed to high quality texts that stimulate quality responses to reading, high quality writing and purposeful speaking and listening opportunities. Our curriculum ensures that all children have plenty of opportunities to write for different purposes. We encourage writing through all curriculum areas and use quality reading texts to model examples of good writing. Writing is taught through a number of different strategies. We believe that children need lots of rich speaking and drama activities to give them the imagination and the experiences that will equip them to become good writers.

An individual lesson is based on a sentence model, broken in to three chunks:

The Write Stuff is based on two guiding principles; teaching sequences that slide between experience days and sentence stacking lessons. With modelling at the heart of them, the sentence stacking lessons are broken into bite-sized chunks and taught under the structural framework of The Writing Rainbow. Teachers prepare children for writing by modelling the ideas, grammar or techniques of writing.

- **Initiate section** – a stimulus to capture the children's imagination and set up a sentence.

- **Model section** – the teacher close models a sentence that outlines clear writing features and techniques.

- **Enable section** – the children write their sentence, following the model.

Initiate	Model	Enable
Initiate – a stimulus to capture the children's imagination and set up a sentence.	**Model** – the teacher close models a sentence that outlines clear writing features and techniques.	**Enable** – the children write their sentence following the model and have the opportunity to 'deepen the moment'.
		

Example:

Plot Point 1		
Initiate	Model	Enable
Verbs for how different animals move. Adverbs to add detail. Adjectives to describe forests, rivers and mountains. **Book images**	He swiftly soared past the frozen, frozen forest.	Verb, 2A, Adverb, repetition **DTM** – Noticing sentence. What can the character see when they look closer?
Adjectives to describe snow, snowflakes and ice. Similes to describe how they covered the land. Use colour thesaurus. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vplX-qr4AIE **Gif stimulus.**	Crisp snow covered the ground like a pearl white blanket.	Adjective, -ed suffix, colour synonym **DTM** – Checking sentence. What can the character hear as they scan the land?
Negative emotions. Synonyms for weary, hungry and cold. **Shade-o-meter**	All of the animals were weary, famished and frozen.	List sentence **DTM** – Action sentence. How do the characters show their emotions?

Key benefits of The Write Stuff:

● Support for teachers so that they have a deeper and more flexible knowledge of sentence structure.

● Pupils who understand how to apply sentence scaffolds to their independent writing as they develop their

expertise.

● Standards improve because many worked examples are provided over the year that extend understanding through a wide range of genres and non-fiction text types.

● Children have a clear view of what high quality writing looks like and their learning is structured clearly and misconceptions dealt with.

● Pupils know how to improve their writing and make it more focussed and actionable feedback is provided to guide their learning.

● Children have a concept of how to build, plan and complete a piece of writing due to narrative maps and on-fiction shapes.

● Teachers have clear pathways of how to guide pupils in weak areas such as cohesion and paragraphs.

How does it improve outcomes for disadvantaged children?

As a school, we have decided that implementing one strategy well, will be more effective in helping improve the outcomes of our disadvantaged and lower attaining pupils. The Write Stuff uses effective approaches for tackling disadvantage which is heavily supported by the EEF. Wider research shows us that disadvantaged children have lower self-esteem and feel less successful; they have a reduced vocabulary; less or different life experiences and we know relationships really matter to these pupils. We need to make it our job to help these children with these particular areas so that they become confident and independent writers.

How will an effective implementation of The Write Stuff Approach support our most vulnerable learners?

1. Experiences - every unit ensures that all children have experiences to build ideas on which to write. There are no assumptions, the experience days are varied and provide an opportunity to talk and build up a vocabulary bank which is meaningful. The experience has a direct link to the learning.

2. The Writing Rainbow scaffolds learning providing clear ideas, tools and techniques for writing.

3. Vocabulary and words are integral to every lesson. This provides opportunities for children to be exposed to a growing number of words and begin to identify the effect and nuance they bring to the meaning of the writing.

4. High expectations on all children. A strong, high-quality model will direct the children to craft high quality sentences themselves.

5. Success drives motivation and working in sentences with clear goals sets an achievable target. Building writing over time in a directed way provides the support needed to deliver independent writing at a later date.

6. The structure of the lessons into chunks prevents the working memory being overloaded and therefore offers a higher chance of success, building self-esteem and motivation.

7. Relationships are developed through the approach; talking partners, kind calling out and sentence selection and appreciation all provide a positive respectful learning relationship to evolve between pupils and adults.

8. All children including our most vulnerable have a voice within the approach. The expectation to CHOT and Kind calling out mean everyone's contribution can be valued.

9. Feedback through sentence stacking wall appreciation and editing stations promote independence and a sense of

ownership. The feedback is more likely to be well received due to the positive relationships and the sense of success and ownership.

10. The nine areas above support us as teachers to provide high quality teaching using direct instructions but setting high expectations of all. The plans and the training materials allow us to refine our practice and get the best from all our children.

Progression in Teaching Writing:

- Encoding (Encoding breaks a spoken word down into parts that are written or spelled out – practise until fluent)
- Model and practise simple sentences
- Move towards teaching and practise of varying different sentence structures and grammatical conventions
- Teachers always model the component parts, first at word level, then sentence and then paragraph, moving towards whole text composition later.
- Oral composition is vital to allow children to practise complex narratives verbally.
- It is imperative that our children have the opportunity to secure the foundational knowledge before moving to more complex tasks. We do not move children on to the next task without ensuring that they are ready.

How we teach writing:
We use a variety of teaching approaches to develop children's writing. These include:

- Interactive approaches (e.g. involve children / using whiteboards / use interactive whiteboards/use of ICT)
- Shared sessions where a teacher will be working with the whole class demonstrating, sharing ideas and giving examples. These sessions include both modelling and shared writing • At the end of each non-fiction unit, teachers plan an extra dimension which allows the children to embrace not only the key features of the genre but also their own creativity
- Guided Writing sessions where the teacher works with small groups. The teacher focuses on the group's or individual's writing needs
- Shared sessions when the teacher works with the whole class, inputs information, mini plenaries and reminders during whole class writing sessions
- Opportunities for children to practice their skills and knowledge learnt or demonstrated.
- Focused writing outcomes where children are required to use a range of skills in producing a longer piece of writing
- Encouraging the drafting, editing and publishing process.
- Ensuring that the children write every day
- Children become effective independent writer

Speaking and Listening/ORACY

Speaking; listening; group discussion and interaction permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. The first stages of each English unit involves many opportunities for pupils to interact with each other as they gather ideas, build techniques, skills, understanding and vocabulary. Children are encouraged to engage in activities such as improvisation, role play and the performance of scripted drama. Techniques such as hot-seating and freezeframing are used to develop thinking.

At St. Joseph's **spoken language** is developed from EYFS and beyond. We want our children to be able to express themselves with confidence, as we believe that it is central to their learning. Children's developing use of language underpins success across the curriculum and lays the foundations for active involvement in society. We nurture children's spoken language skills through a variety of approaches. We develop these skills so that our children are capable of expressing their own ideas clearly and confidently, in a safe and supportive environment, in all aspects and areas of their school life. These skills are being encouraged in every area of our curriculum as good communication skills can enhance every type of learning. The children are encouraged to explore ideas through talk; challenge each other's opinions and develop their own reasoned arguments, as well as talking in full sentences with a clear and confident voice.

Developing Language

Storytelling, rhymes, poems and class novels are used to engage pupils both within the English lesson and beyond. These provide children with quality examples, language and inspiration to support their learning. Each term children learn a poem to recite off by heart. Pupils will build on the oral language skills that have been taught in preceding years. Opportunities will be made for children to work in groups of different sizes including pairs, small groups, large groups and whole class. They will be taught to take turns, listen to others and know when and how to participate constructively in conversations and debates. Teachers will support the development of a broad, rich and varied vocabulary in order to discuss a wide range of topics and concepts. Pupils will receive constructive feedback on their spoken language and listening skills in order to help them improve their overall language knowledge, skills and understanding. Children are taught to debate, make speeches and to participate in discussion.

Grammar and Punctuation

At St. Joseph's, we are determined that every child that leaves in Year 6, will have accessed and experienced detailed and precise teaching of all expected grammar objectives. If these are not achieved at the expected time, then these will be reviewed and covered in consequent year groups.

Spellings:

At St. Joseph's, we feel strongly about supporting children to be brave spellers. We understand the importance of children learning to spell correctly, but we also want to engage and inspire children with a love of words. This is why we have implemented the Jane Considine approach to spelling which puts the children's love of words at the heart of learning to spell.

Lessons encourage children to look deeply at words, draw and build upon their knowledge of phonics from KS1 and make connections with spellings or letter patterns that they may already know.

Starting in Year 2 and into all our KS2 classes, the children will complete spellings on a two-week timetable.

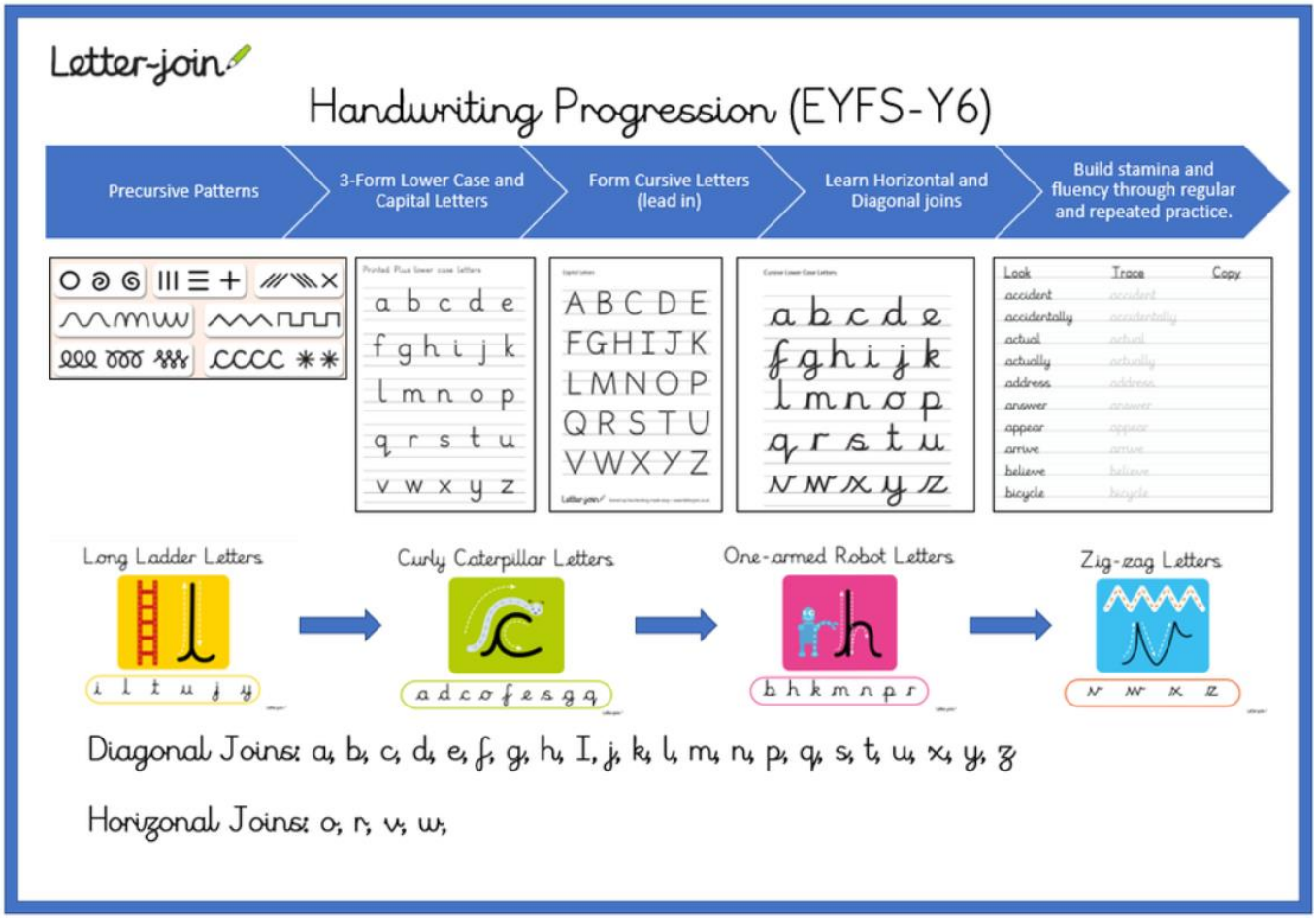
During Week 1 the children will have a spelling investigation to complete and will practice the spellings of 6 focus words. The investigation is where the children explore proving or disproving a spelling hypothesis.

During Week 2, the children will have **five** 10-minute sessions that will work on children practising and applying spellings under time pressure to support their ability to spell more accurately in lessons and other real-life writing scenarios.

This approach is about helping children make plausible spelling choices in their writing that make sense and, even if not correct, have phonetical reasoning at the heart of the letter choices being made.

Handwriting:

We are very proud of our pupil's handwriting and take particular care in our cursive handwriting style. We use Letter-join's on-line handwriting resource and progression as the basis of our handwriting policy as it covers all the requirements of the Early Years Framework and the National Curriculum and builds fluency and stamina for writing. The children can access Letter-join both in school and at home which reinforces letter and number formations taught at each phase and the phonics and the statutory spellings and grammar for all year groups.



Impact

Our well-planned English curriculum ensures that children develop the skills, knowledge and vocabulary that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively through spoken and written language.

Through the breadth and depth that our curriculum offers, children are equipped with the skills to become lifelong learners and to enjoy and appreciate literature and its rich variety. It leads them to become informed, enthusiastic and skilled readers and writers, who can engage with texts and the world around them, as reflective and independent thinkers.

The impact as our children journey through school from EYFS to Year 6 is clear: progress, sustained learning and transferrable skills. We are able to measure attainment using the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 national assessments, along with the information provided by teacher assessments for writing, reading and Grammar, punctuation and spelling. We hope that as children move on from us to further their education and learning that their creativity, passion for English and high aspirations travel with them and continue to grow and develop as they do.