



St Bonaventure's Catholic Primary School
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English Policy 2014-15

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This policy is available at

<http://www.st-bonaventures.bristol.sch.uk/>



1. MISSION STATEMENT

At St. Bonaventure's we strive to be the best we can, guided by the light of Christ.

2. AIMS

At St. Bonaventure's, we believe that English underpins our children's development and in turn their access to all aspects of our curriculum. We aim to deliver quality teaching of reading, writing, speaking and listening in order to enable all our children to become independent and successful readers and writers, who can communicate meaningfully and effectively with others. We want our children to have the best experiences of English at St. Bonaventure's, one which will endeavour to develop and enhance their learning journey throughout the school. Above all, at St. Bonaventure's we want our children to experience a rich and creative English Learning Journey, one which will provide a thirst and excitement for reading and writing.

By the end of Year 6 we want our pupils to:

- read and write with confidence, fluency and good understanding, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences;
- have developed the habit of reading widely and often, reading for both pleasure and information and evaluating and justify their preferences when reading;
- understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately;
- have fluent and legible handwriting;
- have an interest in words and their meaning and a growing vocabulary;
- know, understand and be able to write in a range of genres in fiction and poetry, and understand and be familiar with some of the ways in which narratives are structures through basic literary ideas of setting, character and plot;
- understand, use and be able to write a range of non-fiction texts;
- plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing;



- have acquired a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language;
- be competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate and use discussion in order to learn;
- develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness, through reading and writing;
- read like a writer: write like a reader!

3. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

English is a core subject of the National Curriculum and we use this as a basis for our English planning. This ensures that our English Curriculum teaches pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Alongside the National Curriculum, we use 'The Power of Reading' to enhance children's pleasure in reading and writing using high-quality children's literature creatively in the classroom. We strongly emphasise the link between reading and writing. English at St. Bonaventure's is given at least five hours of teaching time each week. This includes reading, writing, spelling/phonics and handwriting. As we offer a creative curriculum there are often opportunities to write across a variety of subjects.

4. SPOKEN LANGUAGE:

The importance of Spoken Language in the National Curriculum is reflected in our curriculum. At St. Bon's we believe that Spoken Language underpins the development of reading and writing. We use a range of techniques from Pie Corbett's 'Talk for Writing' strategies to strategies from The Power of Reading. We encourage all our children to be active speakers and listeners and give them opportunities to prepare their ideas before they write. Through our creative lessons we ensure that the children have opportunities to take part in drama and role play.

5. READING:



We believe at St. Bonaventure's that reading gives pupils a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. At St. Bonaventure's we encourage all to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading widely and often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. As reported in the National Curriculum: 'Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious young minds'. We are proud to be an ECAR (Every Child A Reader) School and this is embedded throughout the school. It is important that the children develop a passion for reading and use their reading knowledge to aid their writing skills. Throughout the day, children are immersed in reading and print and we want to enable all our children to be fluent, competent and confident readers. Every class has guided reading sessions not only to support their fluency, word reading and comprehension of text but to engage in rich dialogue about the author's use of language and purpose. We also encourage ERIC (Everyone Reading In Class) where everyone in the classroom, including the staff, reads a book. Books are changed regularly in school as follows:

- FS – at least twice a week.
- KS1 – at least twice a week
- KS2 – if children are still on the reading scheme, it should be at least twice a week. If they are 'Free Readers' they can choose their own books and change them when necessary. Children are encouraged to bring a book from home as well as choosing from the class and school libraries.

Phonics and Spelling:

Phonics is taught explicitly in Foundation Stage and KS1 and where necessary in KS2. We use a range of resources to teach phonics including Letters and Sounds. This ensures that young children will be well-placed to read and spell words with fluency and confidence by the time they reach the end of KS1. Phonics is taught each day for at least 20 minutes in a fun way but also with rigour and pace.

Spelling and phonological awareness continues into KS2, following the National Curriculum. Time is set aside for teaching and investigating spelling; this may form part of an English lesson or be taught in isolation. Spellings are sent home for homework, where the children are encouraged to revise the spelling patterns learned that week. They may also be sent home in advance so that the children are learning at home alongside what they are taught at school. Word banks (given and created) along with dictionaries and thesaurus' are encouraged to be used by the children to support their spelling at the point of writing. There are statutory spellings lists that need to be learned by the end of Key Stage 2.

Home Reading:



We believe at St. Bonaventure's that to foster a love and passion for reading, the relationship that children have with books and reading inside school must also continue outside school. The books that the children receive from school are the minimum amount they should be reading. We actively encourage trips to the library with parents, so the children can choose their own books. Parents are given information about how much reading should be done at home during the Parent Information Evenings at the beginning of the academic year. Reception Parents are informed at the Parents Information Evening in June. As mentioned above, all our children have a reading record (FS and KS1) and a reading journal (KS2) which must be brought into school each day. We encourage parents to write a comment in the reading journal, if they have heard their child read.

6. **WRITING:**

At St. Bonaventure's we encourage "Wonderful Writing!" All our writing is valued as we want our children to become fluent, creative and successful independent writers who have a thirst for creative writing. We provide the children with many opportunities for writing, especially through our creative curriculum. In line with the National Curriculum, emphasis is placed on transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing). We teach children how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. We instil a strong sense of 'Authorship' in the children so that when they write, they think carefully about how their writing affects the reader.

Spelling and Grammar:

As previously mentioned, we want our children to have acquired a wide vocabulary and an understanding of grammar and Standard English. Through our creative teaching, using high-quality texts, opportunities for our pupils to enhance their vocabulary arise naturally from their reading. We encourage discussion of words and their meaning throughout our curriculum so that the children can use these in their writing. We encourage this through 'magpie-ing' from Pie Corbett's Talk for Writing. This ensures that the link between reading and writing is emphasised. Grammar lessons may also be taught explicitly.

Handwriting:

At St. Bonaventure's we follow the Nelson Handwriting Scheme. Children need to be adult directed when learning handwriting and so there are dedicated sessions at least twice a week for FS and Year One, once a week for Years Two, Three and Four and at the teacher's discretion in Year 5 and 6. Support is given to those with poor pencil grip through triangular pencils and/or pencil grips. Left-handed writers are seated on the left hand side of the table or row of desks to ensure they have enough room to write. In Foundation Stage and KS1 the children use pencils to write. Pens are introduced in the later part of Year



Three or when children achieve their Pen License. They are then used throughout Key Stage Two. The children are allowed to bring in their own pens from home, but cannot use biros.

7. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Our reception classes follow the EYFS Statutory Framework which is split into seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive:

- communication and language;
- physical development;
- personal, social and emotional development.

Communication and Language and Literacy Development:

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations. Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest. At St. Bon's we provide our children with a wealth of learning experiences to foster a love for reading, writing and communicating. Children in our reception classes also follow 'The Power of Reading' scheme.

8. ENGLISH REQUIREMENTS

This is a document written by the English Leader and SLT. It shows the requirements for the teaching and assessment of English throughout the year. This document is followed by all staff members and is reviewed at the end of each academic year in preparation for the following year. This is written in conjunction with the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

8. CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENTS

The print-rich environment in our classrooms encourages our children to interact with displays, follow instructions and signs and organise themselves and others by knowing where things belong. The reading area is attractive, comfortable and inviting and somewhere the children can access easily. The books are clearly labelled in categories that the children find easy to use. Themed displays in the reading area are encouraged - children are encouraged to complete books reviews. The children have



great respect for the reading area and look after the books they read, placing them back in the right place after use. Displays and classroom labels show a mixture of handwritten and typed words. Each class has a 'Working Wall' which changes dependent on the teaching topic. Every class encourages 'Wonderful Writing' through a 'Writer of the Week' award that is displayed in a prominent area in the classroom. Examples of our 'Wonderful Writing' is collated and put onto a whole school display.

9. THE SCHOOL LIBRARY

We are very proud of our new school library. The school library provides reference and reading materials for children. Each class has dedicated time each week at lunchtime to go and choose new books. The school encourages all children to join and use their local library.

10. ASSESSMENT AND TARGET SETTING

Writing

In KS1 and KS2 we use the APP (Assessing Pupil Progress) Writing Grids to assess the children's writing each half term. Year 6 also use the Department for Education (DfE) Writing Moderation Guidelines. We then set individual targets which are discussed with groups of children so that they are clear about what their next steps are. In Reception the children are assessed alongside the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework – we have also developed APP Writing Grids for the children in their classes that need to move onto National Curriculum Levels (generally in Term 6). Children's books are looked at daily and long pieces of writing are marked in accordance with the marking policy at least once a week. Comments that reflect the learning objective and move the children's learning forward are given to the children by the teacher at least twice a week. They also include comments on how their writing had an effect on them as a reader. Moderation of writing is done at least three times a year to ensure that are levels are correct across the school.

Reading

Progress in reading is measured throughout the year during Guided Reading time using statements that correspond to the APP Reading Grids. In KS2, there are optional SAT tests that may be used by the teachers to inform their assessment alongside their APP judgement. In Reception, KS1 and where it is needed in KS2, the children are benchmarked to find their reading level which then corresponded to the banded books that they read. Children are identified in Reception for Reading Recovery which takes place throughout Year One. We also have staff and parents who are trained as Better Reading Partners



which is a catch-up reading intervention and takes place over a ten week period. This may involve children from every Key Stage.

SATs

The national curriculum tests (often referred to as SATs) are designed to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding of specific elements of the key stage 2 programmes of study. Schools must administer the tests in May each year, according to a statutory timetable produced by the Department for Education. The children in Year Two are tested in reading, maths and writing. Their teachers mark the tests and submit a teacher assessment level. The children in Year Six are tested in reading, maths, grammar, punctuation and spelling. These tests are sent off to be marked externally and the results are published in July. Year Six teachers will also submit writing assessment data which has been moderated internally.

The Assessment and Target Setting of English follows our school Assessment policy. Please refer to this for further information.

Year One Phonics Screening Test

Children in Year One are required to take a statutory phonics assessment to ensure they are on track for Year Two. This is a 1:1 screening test done with the class teacher. It includes a mix of real words and pseudo-words.

10. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

All the children at St. Bon's are offered a rich and varied learning experience. All their needs are taken into account through Quality First Teaching. Teachers provide a differentiated curriculum taking into account the needs of all learners in their class. This provision may be provided at different levels: 1:1, small group work or whole class. This could include: guided reading/writing, shared reading/writing, 1:1 reading/writing or could be in the form of writing frames, word charts, access to computer for typing up writing, pencil grips, story tapes, interactive e-books (shown on the Interactive Whiteboard). Please refer to Special Educational Needs Policy for more information.

11. ROLE OF SUBJECT LEADER:

The English Coordinator works in conjunction with the S.L.T. The role of the subject leader involves:

- modelling good practice;
- being responsible for the upgrading and ordering of resources and arranging for their storage;



- keeping informed about developments and new initiatives to support the teaching of language and English and ensure staff are informed;
- auditing needs and organising staff training;
- training staff in teaching and learning of English;
- monitoring planning on a termly basis; scrutiny of books and lesson observations with constructive feedback and monitoring of classroom environments through learning walks;
- supporting teachers in planning and using resources;
- keeping the English board in the PPA room, up-to-date with latest information and resource samples;
- updating the school policy.

This policy also needs to be in line with other school policies and therefore should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- KS1 Transition Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Marking Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- ICT Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy