



St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy
Writing Policy

January 2024

1. Overview

In accordance with the academy's philosophy, we seek to inspire all our pupils with a positive attitude towards English. We hope to enable our pupils to be confident and competent users of English skills in the academy and in their everyday lives. Throughout the academy, pupils are provided with cross-curricular opportunities to develop their English skills. We aspire to set our pupils on the path to life-long learning through the continual development of English skills.

We have a 'no child left behind' policy when it comes to teaching writing. The phonics scheme that the academy follows is robust in its teaching of reading and picks up any gaps at the earliest opportunity. This scheme also focuses on spelling which is taught from the children starting in Reception. The handwriting scheme we use is also linked which ensures consistency across the curriculum.

Writing is a key part of our teaching in the academy. Our 'Talk for Writing' curriculum encourages fluency in speaking and increased vocabulary in order to equip children with the skills and confidence needed to flourish when writing. We aim to make inspiring and creative writers by giving children as many opportunities across the curriculum to write. All of this ensures that children make excellent progress, achieve well and are prepared for their next stage of education when leaving our academy.

2. Main Educational Aims and Intent

This policy is for the staff in our school. It aims to set out:

- Our approach to teaching, monitoring and assessing Writing.
- How we will make sure our provision for the teaching of Writing is of consistently high quality.

We endorse the statements in the National Curriculum 2014. St. Bernadette's English curriculum aims to ensure that through careful assessment, planning and preparation, all children are well prepared for the next stage of their education; as well as their futures post-16. We want to ensure our teaching of Writing is consistent across the academy.

This policy reflects the requirements and expectations set out in:

- The [National Curriculum programmes of study for English](#)
- The [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice 2014](#)
- The [Equality Act 2010](#)

Our school aims to develop pupils' skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening. By the time that pupils move on from our school, our aim is for them to:

- Be fluent readers and writers
- Enjoy writing in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting language and style accordingly
- Be curious and creative when it comes to reading and writing, for example by being interested in learning the meaning of new words
- Have a wide vocabulary and understanding of grammar
- Feel confident speaking in class and be able to clearly explain their understanding and ideas
- Listen carefully and sensitively to adults and their peers

3. **Our guiding principles for the teaching of English and literacy**

We teach English and literacy best when:

- There's a joyful culture around reading in the school
- All staff feel they have the knowledge, skills, understanding and professional support they need to teach English and literacy effectively
- There's sufficiently detailed and frequent ongoing assessment of pupil progress
- We involve families in supporting their child's reading and writing
- The writing curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced
- We identify where pupils have learning gaps or aren't making the expected progress, and make sure interventions target these
- Teaching resources are available, up to date, varied and diverse, and match pupil and curriculum needs
- We model new language and accurate grammar to pupils

- We support pupils with speech, language and communication needs, for example by putting on extra small-group storytimes.

4. Curriculum Organisation

Across the Academy, children have a daily English lesson where they are taught knowledge, skills and understanding as set out in the National Curriculum. English is given a prime spot on class timetables from Nursery (F1) through to Year 6.

The children are taught in their classes and within these children are grouped in ways most beneficial to their immediate learning needs. The children have been set into their classes based on ability. This enables more efficient adaptive learning to take place and ensures that all children are accessing lessons that will help them to reach their full potential and make the most possible progress in every lesson.

Due to our 1.5 form entry we have mixed year group classes. In order to accommodate these classes, English genres are taught over a two year cycle ensuring consistency across phases of the school and ensuring that all children in each year group receive the same learning opportunities and do not repeat previous learning.

On a weekly basis, the children in our EYFS unit are taught Communication and Language lessons, the children in F2 then take part in weekly guided writing lessons and short daily handwriting lessons. Children in F1 do a weekly 'Dough disco' session which helps to build hand strength and improve fine motor skills. This then leads into 'Pen Disco' weekly sessions in F2 which focuses on fine motor skills, pencil grip and pencil control.

In Key Stage One and Key Stage Two the pupils are taught have the below English/writing lessons:-

- 1 discrete Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation lesson per week.
- 2 discrete Spelling lessons per week (including a weekly spelling test)
- 1 discrete handwriting lesson per week
- 3 'Talk for Writing' lessons per week

Talk for Writing

Our main programme for teaching writing in our academy is 'Talk for Writing' which is an engaging teaching framework developed by Pie Corbett. Talk for Writing is an approach to teaching writing that encompasses a three-stage pedagogy: 'imitation' (where pupils learn and internalise texts, to identify transferable ideas and structures), 'innovation' (where pupils use these ideas and structures to co-construct new versions with their teachers), and 'invention' (where teachers help pupils to create original texts independently). These tasks aim to improve writing ability by giving pupils an understanding of the structure and elements of written language. It is powerful because it is based on the principles of how children learn. It enables children to imitate the language they need for a particular topic orally, before reading and analysing it, and then writing their own version.

Speaking and Listening

Speaking and Listening is taught across the curriculum, opportunities for this are not confined to English lessons. We have created a curriculum that enables pupils to engage in conversation with adults and their peers at frequent opportunities. The use of talk partners within lessons is a powerful tool in giving children the

confidence to discuss ideas with their peers and share them with the class. Our choice of the ‘Talk for Writing’ curriculum shows our intent on putting speaking and listening to the forefront of our educational offer. We believe that children need to be able to speak competently in order to be able to write effectively.

Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation

VGP is taught through the talk for writing process and the skills are constantly referred back to within writing lessons. However, we choose to teach a discrete lesson per week alongside this so that children can be taught the skills needed and then can transfer those skills more confidently over to their free independent writing. Vocabulary is engrained across our curriculum and has a focus in every lesson that is taught in the academy, evidence of this is detailed on our academy medium term planning.

Spelling

Spelling is taught discreetly across the academy. In Reception and Year 1 spelling is taught through the Little Wandle Phonics Programme which is taught for 30 minutes daily. In Year 2 the children progress onto the Little Wandle Spelling programme which is taught for 20 minutes daily. From Year 3 upwards the children are taught twice a week using resources provided by the academy (see list of resources below) Spellings from Year 1 upwards are sent home for the pupils to practise and a weekly spelling test takes place to assess understanding.

Handwriting

Handwriting is taught from Reception through to Year 6 using the Happy Handwriting Scheme (Collins) this scheme is linked closely to the Little Wandle SSP and uses the same script. This ensures fidelity across the academy. Reception practise 4 times per week in their workbooks to help reinforce the retrieval of basic formation. Pupils from Year 1 upwards practise handwriting discreetly once a week in their workbooks. Handwriting is a focus across the curriculum and is focused upon by all teachers across all subjects.

Ways in which we support this include

- Direct instructional teaching and modelling.
- Interactive oral work involving the whole class or set, often using an interactive whiteboard, individual whiteboards and supporting resources where necessary.
- Using interactive whiteboards, computer programs, websites and other ICT resources to reinforce and enrich learning.
- Adaptive learning which takes account of different abilities within classes.
- Applying writing in different areas of the Curriculum to reinforce learning and to provide a relevant context for using the knowledge and skills which have been acquired.
- Development of the knowledge, skills and resilience needed to achieve their greatest attainment in the end of key stage tests.
- Weekly testing of spellings.
- ‘Flashback 4’ lesson starters at the start of Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation lessons to aid retention of previously learnt objectives.

5. Resources

The above lessons for pupils in Year 1-Year 6 are resourced by the following high quality teacher workbooks.

Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation Lessons

1. English Grammar and Punctuation Workbook (Headstart)
2. Skills Builders- Grammar and Punctuation (Rising Stars)
3. Pupil Book 2 Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation (Collins)

Spelling Lessons

1. Pupil Book 2 Spelling (Collins)
2. Skills Builders- Spelling and Vocabulary (Rising Stars)

Talk for Writing Lessons

1. Talk for Writing- Across the Curriculum
2. Talk for Writing- Creating Storytellers and Writers
3. Talk for Writing- Writing Models

Handwriting (scheme is used from Reception through to Year 6)

1. Happy Handwriting Scheme (Collins)

Dictionaries and thesauruses

To support with writing and spelling, we will make sure that pupils have access to dictionaries and thesauruses by

- Having at least 1 dictionary and thesaurus available in each classroom
- Allowing pupils to use the computer during lessons to look up word meanings and synonyms

The academy recognises that the most valuable classroom resource is the class teacher. Children become fluent in writing when they have lots of 'hands on' experiences and opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills. Teachers work hard to create these experiences for our pupils. They demonstrate a high level of subject knowledge and provide an excellent model when communicating and writing. Teachers use a high level of vocabulary and have this as a focus in their teaching throughout all lessons. The work of other adults, including TAs, who work in a range of support programmes should be carefully planned by the teacher, in consultation with those adults.

6. Timetabling

EY1

- 1 x Dough Disco session per week for pupils attending 15 hours, 2 x Dough disco sessions per week for pupils attending 30 hours.
- 1 x Communication and Language sessions per week for pupils attending 15 hours, 2 x Communication and Language sessions per week for pupils attending 30 hours.

EY2

- 1 x Communication and Language lesson per week.
- 1 x Guided writing lesson per week.
- 1 x Pen Disco lesson per week.
- 3 x handwriting lessons per week.

KS1

- 1 x spelling test session per week
- 1 x VGP lesson per week
- 3 x Talk for writing lessons per week
- 1 x handwriting lesson per week

KS2

- 2 x spelling sessions per week (including a test)
- 1 x VGP lesson per week
- 3 x Talk for writing lessons per week
- 1 x handwriting lesson per week

7. Cross-curricular links

We will facilitate cross-curricular learning of English and literacy skills, making sure that the links with other curriculums are natural and not forced. This will be achieved through activities in other subjects such as:

- Annotating sources
- Group discussions
- Comprehension
- Topic research
- One piece of longer writing per term is closely linked to the topic being taught in Science, Geography, History, Art and Design and Design and Technology.
- RE lessons are used as a way for pupils to practise the skills they have learnt in English lessons and apply their writing skills.

8. Environment

EYFS

The environment in our Early Years Foundation Stage Unit is set up to encourage all prime areas and specifically 'Communication and Language' the play provision that is provided for the children is set up with key questions and key vocabulary to use with the children in these areas. Mark Making areas are then provided in each of the 5 areas of provision in early years (both indoor and outdoor) to encourage children to make marks and express themselves through various media. Please see below full details of provision in EYFS.

Continuous Provision

EY1 Continuous Indoor Provision- Continuous provision is available for the children in EY1 during

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'extension of learning' times. Areas available as continuous provision are:-book area, painting, mark making, wet sand, small construction, workshop/exploration centre, home corner and dough areas.

EY2 Continuous Indoor Provision- Continuous provision is available for the children in EY2 during 'extension of learning' times. Children play in their own classrooms in the morning and then free flow between the two classrooms in the afternoons. Areas available as continuous provision are:- real life role play, fantasy role play, mathematics tuff tray, book corner, small and large wood block areas, small construction, dry sand, workshop, mark making, small world and dough areas.

Continuous Outdoor Provision- Continuous outdoor provision is available for the children in EY1 and EY2 during 'extension of learning' times. They have their own outdoor areas. Outdoor continuous provision consists of:- water, literacy, building/construction, den making, mathematics, ride ons, sand and mud kitchen.

Enhanced Provision

The continuous provision that is available to the children is then enhanced in line with topic work e.g. fantasy role play based on the gruffalo or books on bats placed within the book corner. Provision is also enhanced by children's interests e.g. Mr Men interests so Mr Men in the mark making area or book corner. Enhanced provision is also used to extend children's learning within continuous provision.

KS1 and KS2

Within the academy, we see the pupils' learning environment as an opportunity to inspire and engage the pupils in different ways. The learning environment is used to support the pupils within their English lessons. English display walls will often include work and vocabulary linked to the current lessons and that of prior learning. The pupils' work and knowledge is celebrated on these displays with writing as a particular focus. Vocabulary rich classrooms help to support the pupils in their learning.

9. Planning

- Each class has an individualised long term plan which details how English is covered across the year.
- Coverage Plans for VGP, Spelling and Writing that have been written by Academy staff and based on the National Curriculum are followed by all staff from Year 1 upwards.
- Writing genre maps detail the genres that are being covered in each phase of the academy over our two year cycle.
- Medium Term Plans are being written on a termly basis (commencing in Advent term 2023) these are individualised for classes and details on a weekly basis what is being covered in English lessons. This helps to ensure consistency across phases.
- 'Talk for Writing' Progression Map is used to plan writing, this includes text structure, sentence construction, word structure/language, punctuation and terminology that should be being used for each year group.
- Short term planning for English is undertaken by some teachers. (an academy format has been provided) Essential elements for all short term English planning are: objective, progression of tasks and assessment incorporating the success criteria/learning outcome.
- Success criteria are specific. Teachers assess writing against the objectives. Marking is linked to the success criteria and in line with our whole school marking policy.
- English planning is monitored by the English Leader and members of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Cross-curricular links are used wherever possible in our termly topics.
- ICT and interactive resources are used where they will enhance learning.

10. Homework

- Homework provides children with opportunities to practise and consolidate English skills and prepare them for future learning. Homework is sent out across the academy in English/Writing as follows:
 - Reception- one piece per week (commencing in Lent Term)
 - KS1 -one piece per week
 - LKS2 - one piece per week
 - UKS2 - two pieces per week
- The academy has purchased CGP materials for English work in KS2 which are often used for homework, along with other supporting resources the teacher feels fits appropriately for weekly objectives.
- Homework should relate to the work being undertaken in class that week or previous week. Opportunities should also be created to provide feedback on homework to enable misconceptions to be addressed.

11. Inclusion

The academy aims to make all pupils feel included. We recognise the entitlement of all pupils to a balanced and broad curriculum. All English planning and teaching should take adaptive teaching into account, to ensure appropriate pupil access to learning and to maximise their progress. Pupils are taught within their classes and within these are grouped according to their needs at that moment in time. The class teacher's role is crucial in the provision of high quality teaching and learning in English and lessons are personalised according to the children in that class and their requirements.

All English sessions should take into account the particular requirements for children on the SEND register, as outlined in their Running Records or EHCPs and in accordance with the academy SEND Policy document. Any additional support or resources will be put in place where appropriate.

Those pupils entitled to pupil premium are supported within lessons and carefully monitored in order to ensure sustained progress is made. Some are then identified and given additional English support and this is effectively monitored through our intervention tracking/pupil progress system.

Pupils with EAL are given additional support in all aspects of English, this could be through additional adaptations as well as an English language rich environment. We seek support and guidance from outside agencies to help ensure we tailor the learning to meet the needs of all individual pupils.

Using our formative and summative assessment tracking, we identify our Gifted and Talented pupils. These children have the opportunity to write creatively and have freedom to experiment with their language and skills to produce pieces of work to an excellent standard.

The Equal Opportunities Policy document should be consulted to ensure balanced and fair access to the English curriculum for all groups.

Opportunities via the National Framework should be taken to encourage positive attitudes towards our multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society.

12. Training (CPD)

All staff are encouraged to take full advantage of English training opportunities, to develop their confidence and update their expertise, through academy and LA-based INSET. Regular staff questionnaires and audits of subject knowledge will be conducted to inform training decisions to help the academy achieve their intent for mathematics. A record of training needs and provision is maintained by

the Assistant Head teacher.

13. Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher's role will include the following responsibilities:

- Building a team of expert teachers who know and understand the processes that underpin learning to read and write
- Providing teachers with the appropriate training and resources so that they can competently deliver the English curriculum
- Creating a stimulating school environment where pupils are exposed to different types of reading material, such as through displays, books and other classroom resources

The English Leader's role will include the following responsibilities:

- High-quality teaching and subject knowledge of staff
- A coherently planned and sequenced English curriculum
- Consistent assessment and accurate teacher judgements within English and literacy
- Effective use of resources
- To monitor, review and update medium-term planning English;
- To monitor and evaluate short term planning for English and evaluate this against the requirements of the National Curriculum for English
- To monitor pupils' outcomes (at least termly).
- To lead staff meetings and training sessions on issues related to the implementation of the English curriculum throughout the academy;
- To attend relevant training and subject leader meetings to update knowledge; and to disseminate advice and current information in the subject to staff;
- To undertake an audit/evaluation and action plan on an annual basis;
- To maintain, evaluate and assess the resource base for English teaching, including strategic budgetary planning and the identification of future resource needs;
- To promote parental and governor interest in English
- To liaise with secondary schools to ensure continuity and progression at the point of transition.

The Class Teacher in English (Writing)

The class teacher's role is crucial in the provision of high quality teaching and learning in English. The academy supports all teachers, so that they:

- Planning effective English and literacy lessons
- Providing opportunities for pupils to apply their English and literacy skills in a variety of ways
- Completing the relevant marking and assessment
- Making sure that support staff have:
 - Access to planning materials and resources

- o The knowledge and skills they need to support and challenge pupils
- Take account of the age, gender, ethnicity and capability of their pupils
- Show good subject knowledge being competent in teaching the curriculum at their age group and have a knowledge of what comes before and after
- Challenge and inspire pupils, having high expectations of them
- Use a variety of methods which enable all pupils to learn effectively
- Manage pupils well and insist on high standards of behaviour
- Use time, support staff, other adults and resources, including ICT, effectively
- Assess pupils' work thoroughly and use assessments to help and encourage pupils to make progress
- Use homework effectively to reinforce and extend what is learned in school

The Pupil in English (Writing)

The academy supports pupils, so that they:

- Acquire new knowledge and skills, linked to targets
- Develop ideas
- Increase their understanding
- Apply intellectual and creative effort in their work
- Are productive and work at a good pace
- Build resilience when faced with challenge
- Work collaboratively: developing their ability to justify, argue and prove
- Show interest and pride in their work
- Are able to sustain concentration
- Think and learn for themselves in independent sessions
- Assess their own progress and abilities for each objective
- Demonstrate in the plenary and at other times that they understand what they are doing, how well they have done and how they can improve

14. Assessment and Reporting

Marking and Feedback

Feedback will clearly explain to pupils what they're doing well, and what they need to do next to continue to improve their work.

It will be given daily and in accordance with the academy marking and feedback policy.

Assessment

- The academy uses Summative and Formative assessment on O-Track (pupil tracking) as part of its assessment procedure.
- Academy statutory assessments in English include:
 - Early Years 2 GLD Literacy Reading Comprehension, Word Reading and Writing, GLD Communication and Language-Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking.
 - Phonics Screening Check Year 1
 - SATs in Year 6
- All English assessments are made in accordance with Assessment Policy guidelines.

- Years 1-6 complete end of term tests to help inform assessments.
- Attainment and progress is reviewed at the end of each term in Pupil Progress Meetings for individual pupils, year groups and classes.
- English lessons are structured consistently across the school to support congruent assessment and moderation between same year group classes and key stages.
- Through INSET class teachers undertake moderation training; the academy will also be carrying out moderation with other schools in the Trust.
- Use is made of any national and LA assessment criteria.
- The academy is regularly moderated by the LA

Moderation

We will standardise writing samples to:

- Demonstrate how pupils' work meets National Curriculum attainment targets for KS1 and KS2, to help with assessment
- Make sure staff have a consistent approach to marking pupils' work
- We will moderate teacher assessments of reading and writing at least termly

15. Monitoring

We will monitor teaching and learning of English and literacy in our school to make sure that all of our pupils make the best possible progress from their starting points.

The English Leader will monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning through:

- Conducting learning walks
- Reviewing marking and feedback
- Termly pupil progress meetings
- Gathering input from the English Subject Champions
- Planning scrutinies
- Book scrutinies

16. Reporting / Record Keeping

Reporting to parents of attainment and progress in English will be in accordance with Government Legislation and the academy's Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy. They will be informed of their child's progress and attainment in English twice yearly at Parents' Evenings and at the end of each year in a formal written report.

The following English records are maintained in each child's evidence folder and are passed to the following class teacher/school:

- Early Years 2 GLD, and SATs results;
- OTrack sheets for English;
- Pupil Progress sheets;
- Provision maps of intervention work;
- Individual targets are known to children and all children on the special needs register have Running Records;

- EAL records;

17. Parental Involvement

We aim to involve parents directly in the life of the academy, and thus in the development of children's skills, knowledge and understanding in English. Parents are recognised as educators too, and their support in English is encouraged at every opportunity, formally through homework and in other ways. Information relating to English is provided, to foster positive relations and to provide guidance and support. There is also guidance and advice each September in the curriculum newsletter.

18. Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the English Leader and after every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

Supporting documents

The following school policy documents should be consulted to support the English Writing Policy:

Curriculum Policy

Reading Policy

Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy

Marking Policy

SEND Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Safeguarding Policy

ICT Policy

EYFS Policy

Behaviour Policy

Policy Review date: January 2026