

English Policy

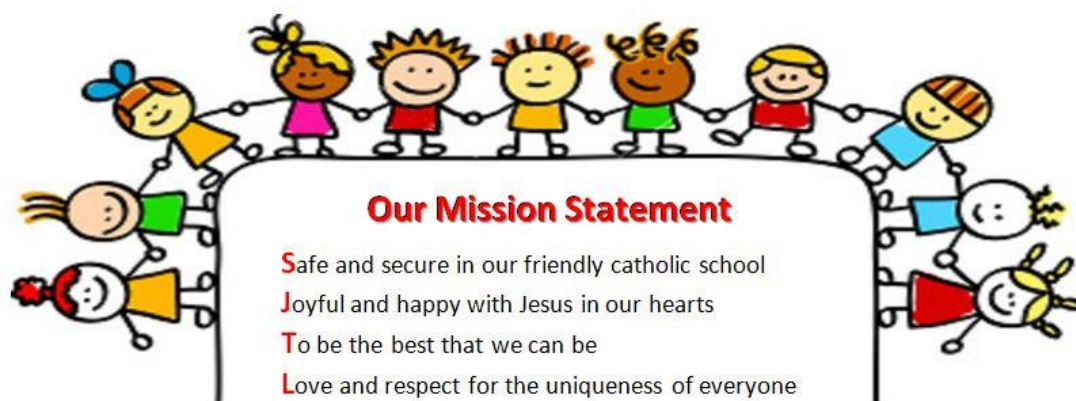
2025-26



ST. JAMES THE LESS



www.stjamesthelessschool.co.uk



The teaching of English develops the ability of pupils to communicate effectively both in speech and writing, and to listen with understanding. All pupils in our school are entitled to a full, stimulating, and well-structured curriculum. The children's skills are developed within an integrated programme of speaking and listening, reading and writing, and extended through other areas of the curriculum.

English Intent

- To promote high standards of English by providing children with an enriching and ambitious English curriculum;
- For pupils to be confident and competent in spoken language and listening skills, therefore underpinning the development for reading and writing;
- To foster a love of reading within school, ensuring all pupils are confident, fluent and expressive readers, to support them in their forthcoming education.

We aspire for English learners at St James the Less RC Primary to leave our school as competent in the art of speaking, listening, reading, and writing, acquiring all the skills of language that are essential to participate fully as a member of society.

Our aim is to provide a broad and balanced English curriculum covering fiction, non-fiction and poetry from Reception - Year 6. All classes explore a wide range of authors, genres and diversity through class novels, which are appropriately selected to challenge the pupils and expose them to texts and authors that they may not consider themselves. Through our well-structured English curriculum, we aim to develop children culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually.

Statutory Requirements

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335186/PRIMARY_national_curriculum_-_English_220714.pdf

English Implementation

At St James the Less, our English curriculum has been developed based on the Early Learning Goals in Foundation Stage (Appendix I), and the National Curriculum 2014 in Key Stages 1 and 2. With guidance from the Curriculum with Unity Schools Partnership (CUSP) support materials, all English teaching and learning is sequential, progressive and ambitious following the CUSP teaching sequence for Reading and Writing. Throughout each teaching sequence, we ensure that all children are given the opportunity to continuously develop their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. There is the expectation that these skills (taken directly from the NC and broken down into scaffolded learning) are then applied and practised across the wider curriculum. Teachers differentiate according

to the needs of the pupils and use adaptive teaching strategies, immediate intervention and flexible groupings to support the needs of all children. Interventions are planned for targeted support if needed.

Computing is used where it enhances, extends and complements English teaching and learning. Any work completed on Google Classroom is to be printed and recorded in English books, so the sequence of learning is evident. Additional adults are used to support the teaching of English. They work under the guidance of the teacher with small groups of children or individuals.

Spoken Language

At St James the Less, all children need to be able to: communicate effectively, speaking with increasing confidence, clarity and fluency; participate in discussions and debate in a variety of contexts; listen to the views, opinions and ideas of others with increased interest; articulate ideas and thoughts clearly with appropriate tone and vocabulary recognising audience; respond to questions and opinions appropriately; retell stories and poems which are known by heart and ask questions with increasing relevance and insight.

Teachers and other adults in school model speaking clearly. This includes clear diction, reasoned argument, using imaginative and challenging language and use of Standard English. Listening is modelled, as is the appropriate use of non-verbal communication, respecting the views of others.

Approaches to develop spoken language:

- Participating in discussion and debate
- Book talk
- Talk for writing
- Retelling stories and poems
- Expressing opinions and justifying ideas
- Listening to stories read aloud
- Taking part in school performances
- Responding to different kinds of texts
- Listening to ideas and opinions of adults and peers
- Use dramatic techniques, including work in role to explore ideas and texts
- Working collaboratively on an investigation

Reading

As a school, we recognise the key importance of reading to unlock the school curriculum for all, to enable children to step through doors into imaginary worlds and experience times gone by. As readers, children at St James the Less will become lifelong learners who have a love of books and literature, which will ultimately enrich their lives.

At St James the Less, we aim to develop positive attitudes towards reading so that it is a pleasurable and meaningful activity; use reading skills as an integral part of learning throughout the curriculum; read and respond to a variety of texts whilst gaining increased level of fluency, accuracy,

independence and understanding; develop different strategies for approaching reading and be able to orchestrate the full range of strategies.

Approaches to reading:

- Teach daily systematic, synthetic phonics teaching from the start of Reception (read in conjunction with the phonics and early reading policy)
- Shared reading during English lessons
- Daily whole class Reading sessions using the CUSP support materials (Y2 - 6)
- Shared reading, echo reading, partner reading, independent reading
- Home reading
- Reading in other areas of the curriculum
- Accelerated Reader to assess reading abilities and comprehension of texts (Y3 - Y6)
- Provide a stimulating reading environment with a range of fiction and non-fiction texts
- A literature spine that has been harmonised with the wider curriculum, where appropriate

Reading Sessions

Year 2 - 6 engage in daily Reading sessions. In these sessions, the children will be explicitly taught reading skills and strategies to enable them to approach different reading tasks: language meaning, retrieve key details efficiently and effectively, summarise, perform, make meaning of the text, thematic and structural understanding, authorial intent, comparison and connection, reading behaviours and personal response. The literature spine has been carefully mapped out to ensure that the appropriate and suitable breadth of experiences, authors, texts and themes, whilst harmonising with the wider curriculum are addressed across the Primary Curriculum.

Home Reading

Pupils select texts under the guidance of the teacher for independent and home/school reading. Reading at home is regarded as a vital part of reading development. Parents are encouraged to hear their child read every day and respond to their child's reading through Home-School Reading Record Books (EYFS - Yr4). When children's reading becomes more fluent and independent, they are encouraged to read independently and record the pages that they have read themselves in their reading record.

Accelerated Reader

All children in KS2 complete the Star Reader Assessment quiz four times a year (September, December, April and July). When this assessment has been completed, these results will outline their reading age and their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The ZPD will be shared with each child. The children will select appropriate books within their ZPD, and be encouraged to read a range of different genres within their range. After a child has finished reading a book, they will complete a quiz to assess their comprehension and understanding. Teachers will monitor the use of this programme.

Reading Frequency

EYFS - Children take home a picture book to develop oral story telling. Once children are secure blending CVC words, they will take home an appropriate book.

Books changed when needed (read in conjunction with the phonics and early reading policy).

Children are heard read weekly by a staff member (including the guided session during RWI - read in conjunction with the phonics and early reading policy).

KS1 - Books are changed when needed (read in conjunction with the phonics and early reading policy).

Children are heard read weekly by a staff member (including the guided session during RWI - read in conjunction with the phonics and early reading policy).

Bottom 20% of readers also read with TA/CT daily.

KS2 - Children change books for themselves when completed and after taking the AR quiz.

Bottom 20% of readers also read with TA/CT daily. Children listened to read during the taught Reading sessions each day. Where needed, interventions are put in place to support reading and identified on the Class Intervention Map.

Writing

At St James the Less, children should learn to: write in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences; be increasingly aware of the conventions of writing, including grammar, punctuation and spelling; plan, draft and edit their writing to suit the purpose; use technology to present work and manipulate text; form letters correctly, leading to a fluent, joined and legible handwriting style, giving increasing regard to presentation. Teachers promote writing and look for ways to inspire and motivate pupils so that they see themselves as 'writers'.

Approaches to writing

- Oral story telling
- Emergent writing
- Guided write with a small group;
- Shared writing;
- Independent writing;
- Writing in different curriculum areas;
- Grammar and punctuation starter activities daily;
- Handwriting practice.

Emergent Writing

The Reception year is vital in laying the foundations to writing, setting children up for future success. Pencils and paper are available for all children in different areas in and out of the classroom, exposing children to writing opportunities through continuous provision. Teachers and Teaching Assistants demonstrate drawing and writing through play. Handwriting and writing are both also taught discretely during lessons to all children (read in conjunction with the handwriting policy).

Guided Writing

In response to teacher assessment, the Class Teacher or Teaching Assistant will work closely with a targeted group of children to create a short piece of writing together. This is to move their writing forward and target next steps.

Shared Writing

During Writing lessons, teachers will model writing for the children at the appropriate level. Other opportunities for shared writing (short writing opportunities) are embedded throughout the English unit and other areas of the curriculum.

Independent Writing

At the end of each English unit, all children will complete an independent piece of writing in the same genre/style. This enables teachers to assess what skills they can apply independent of the teacher.

Grammar and Punctuation

Grammar and punctuation skills are taught through a daily warm up session at the start of each English lesson. Teachers model how to apply these skills through guided and shared writing.

Spelling

In EYFS and KS1, spelling is taught through systematic, synthetic phonics (read in conjunction with the phonics and reading policy). Y2 to Y6 use CUSP Spelling as a basis for their planning for the teaching of spelling. At St James the Less, we aim for all children to spell high frequency words correctly and age appropriate words from the statutory word lists.

Spelling Homework

Spellings are sent home on a weekly basis linked to the spelling strategies and key words taught in class that week. The Spelling Frame programme is used by children in KS2 to embed spelling rules and parents are encouraged to use this resource at home. Spellings are tested online in KS2 using the Spelling Frame programme and throughout year groups the application of spelling in day-to-day classwork is monitored by the teacher.

Handwriting

Children in Reception are taught how to form the letters that correspond to the Read, Write, Inc Phonics Programme. In Year 1, the children are then introduced to the curly 'k', preparing children for cursive handwriting. All children, Reception to Year 6, are exposed to discrete handwriting sessions (read in conjunction with the Handwriting Policy outlining the handwriting modules). Teachers use the Letter Join Scheme to support their teaching. It is expected that all members of staff, class teachers and teaching assistants, model the school handwriting style at all times i.e. when

writing on the board or in children's books. Read in conjunction with the Phonics and Early Reading Policy and Handwriting Policy.

Writing Equipment

All Key Stage 1 pupils use pencils when writing. Pens are introduced to children in Year 3 in the autumn term. The aim is to use generic BIC biro pens in Key Stage 2, although specific individuals may use other pens and/or grips, to support their fine motor skills. All mistakes are to be crossed out with one line using a ruler. Rulers start being introduced in Year 1 to help develop this skill.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessments are made in line with the school assessment policy.

Records of progress kept for each child:

- Reading record and comments (EYFS & KS1 weekly, KS2 bottom 20% of readers)
- Marking ladders used at the end of each writing unit
- Phonics tracking in EYFS, KS1 and KS2 children identified for the catch-up curriculum
- KS2 Accelerated Reader Assessment
- Accelerated Reading Quizzes (KS2)
- Target Tracker (Completed termly - whole school)
- Daily formative assessment
- Subject leader keeps samples of children's work in a portfolio
- Moderate individual work with staff
- Appropriate CPD where necessary
- Analysis of SATS data
- Analysis of Year 1 phonics screening data
- Teacher assessment
- Pupil progress meeting - discuss concerns

SEN

At our school, we teach English to all children, regardless of their ability and individual needs. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education, with high expectations for all children. Through our English teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all the reasonable steps to achieve this. All teaching in English is in conjunction with the SEND policy.

Intervention Strategies

At St James the Less, intervention strategies are implemented depending on the needs of the children. All interventions are identified on Class Interventions Maps.

- IDL
- Catch-up phonics (RWI intervention)
- Fresh Start (Phonics for Year 5/6 pupils)
- Tailored intervention throughout school

Role of the Subject Leader

The Subject Leader should be responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

- Ensuring the policy is embedded throughout school
- Supporting colleagues in their professional development
- Monitoring and tracking progress across school
- Purchasing resources to support teaching
- Keeping all staff up to date with current developments
- Monitoring the teaching of English
- Monitoring the quality of the learning environment including working walls
- Monitoring the deployment of support staff

Monitoring

Monitoring is carried out by the Senior Management Team and Subject Leader. This involves:

- Staff questionnaires
- Pupil voice
- Lesson visits
- Walk throughs
- Book looks
- Internal moderation
- External moderation
- All staff will be involved in a lesson study to share good practice

English Impact

By the time children leave St James the Less, they are appreciative of our rich and varied literacy heritage, passionate readers, who read both widely and often, are competent in the art of speaking and acquire listening skills needed to support them to succeed in forthcoming education. They acquire a wide vocabulary range and a thorough understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.

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

- Phonics and early reading policy
- Teaching and learning policy
- Assessment policy
- Marking and feedback policy
- Special Education Needs policy
- The Writing Framework
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/686e7890fela249e937cbeeb/The_writing_framework.pdf

Appendices

Please see:

- Appendix I - Early Learning Goals

Review

This policy will be reviewed.....

Appendix I

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS_framework_-_March_2021.pdf

Communication and Language

1. Listening, Attention and Understanding ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions;
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding;
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

2. Speaking ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary;
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate;
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

3. Self-Regulation ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;
- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate;
- Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

4. Managing Self ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge;
- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly;
- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

5. Building Relationships ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others;
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers;
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

Physical development

6. Gross Motor Skills ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others;
- Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing;
- Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

7. Fine Motor Skills ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing - using the tripod grip in almost all cases;
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery;
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

Literacy

8. Comprehension ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary;
- Anticipate - where appropriate - key events in stories;
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

9. Word Reading ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs;
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending;
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

10. Writing ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed;
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters;
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

Mathematics

11. Number ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number;
- Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5;
- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

12. Numerical Patterns ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system;
- Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity;
- Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

Understanding the World

13. Past and Present ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society;
- Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;

- Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling;

14. People Culture and Communities ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps;
- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and - when appropriate - maps.

15. The Natural World ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants;
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class;
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

Expressive Arts and Design

16. Creating with Materials ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function;
- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used;
- Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.

17. Being Imaginative and Expressive ELG

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher;
- Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs;
- Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and - when appropriate - try to move in time with music.

