



## St Monica's RC Primary School Literacy Policy 2022

---

*Here at St. Monica's, we recognise that we are all cherished members of God's family.  
We love and care for one another and trust God to guide us in all we do and say.  
By learning together, we aim to achieve and working together, we will succeed.*

This policy sets to outline our approach to teaching, reflecting the school's aims and objectives in relation to the teaching and learning of English. It sets a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can operate. The policy should be read in conjunction with the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and the 2014 National Curriculum. These set out the rationale for teaching each area of the English Curriculum and specify the skills that will be developed for the majority of pupils in each year group.

### **INTENT**

At St Monica's Primary School, we want all of our children to be happy and to have the skills and knowledge needed to develop their confidence and love of reading, writing and discussion so that they can become active members of the school, parish and community.

We intend that our pupils develop their skills in Language and Literacy so they continue to improve in their ability to:

- Communicate effectively in speech so they can talk appropriately with confidence to different audiences.
- Use discussion to communicate and further their learning.
- Listen attentively with understanding.
- Express themselves clearly in writing using appropriate spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Write in ways appropriate for an intended audience and/or for the intended purpose.
- Take pride in their writing and write clearly and accurately.
- Read a range of materials fluently and with understanding, for enjoyment and for information.
- Appreciate our rich literacy heritage through exposure to a range of texts.
- Develop reading skills so that they can analyse and extract meaning from increasingly challenging texts.
- Enjoy reading a wide range of quality texts.
- Acquire a wide range of vocabulary and apply this through reading, writing and spoken language.

We ensure that our Literacy curriculum reflects the diverse society that we live in and therefore we plan lessons to meet the needs of all our children, taking into account disability, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and sex.

We follow a mastery approach that sets high expectations for all pupils. Work will be differentiated and may include, but is not limited to supported through adult intervention, template, word mats, support sheets and use of technology. We seek specialist help and

advice as considered necessary. Support plans are in place for all children identified and for children accessing intervention programmes additional to and different from quality first teaching. We ensure that all lessons are planned and delivered using dyslexia friendly approaches.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

### **WRITING**

The 2014 Curriculum divides writing skills into two dimensions:

- Transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- Composition (articulating ideas in speech and writing)

We recognise that these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of these skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, reading, grammar and vocabulary.

As a whole school, we use the principles of the Jane Considine approach to teaching writing; 'The Write Stuff'.

The Write Stuff brings clarity to the mechanics of the teaching of writing. It follows a method called 'sentence stacking'. Sentence stacking refers to the fact that sentences are grouped together chronologically or organizationally to engage children with short, intensive moments of learning that they can apply immediately to their writing. An individual lesson is based on a sentence model, broken into three separate chunks:

1. Initiate section – a stimulus to capture the children's imagination and set up a sentence
2. Model section – the teacher close models a sentence that outlines clear writing features and techniques
3. Enable section – the children write their sentence following the model

It reinforces grammar through the use of:

- The FANTASTICs which are an acronym that summarise the ideas of writing
- The Grammar Rainbow is a classroom tool that enables the teacher to drive key grammar messages.
- The BOOMTASTIC which helps children capture 10 ways of adding drama and poetic devices to writing in a vivid visual way.

In EYFS the children are exposed to the FANTASTIC symbols in lessons and child centred learning with deeper questioning from adults. The main focus is on language development and acquisition. They then progress to using the FANTASTIC symbols in word and sentence writing. There is a big emphasis on phonics in EYFS as the building blocks to progress to writing.

In KS1 and KS2 children are taught writing through the Write Stuff. We teach the composition of writing using carefully selected quality texts, images and videos that cover a range of genres, including fiction and non-fiction texts. This is developed over a unit of work that leads to an independent write.

Opportunities are also identified and planned for extended writing in other curriculum areas. The symbols for writing are also used across the curriculum to reinforce what is taught and guidance for writing.

### **VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT**

At St Monica's we understand the importance of developing vocabulary as it is key to learning and progress across the whole curriculum. It allows pupils to access a wider range of words when writing and for them to understand and comprehend texts efficiently. We develop this through the 'Write Stuff' using the shade 'o' metre to broaden their vocabulary and analyse their word choice. In EYFS and KS1, a class puppet is used to introduce new vocabulary to the children that can be used in their discussions and writing. Through the

use of high quality texts, we expose the children to new and ambitious vocabulary. In KS1 and KS2, we use reading VIPERS to discuss new vocabulary within a range of texts to help the children develop their understanding and to discover synonyms for words that they already know. Subject specific vocabulary is displayed in the classroom, word mats and sent home for SEND pupils for prior learning. In our spelling sessions, the children study the etymology of words so that they can understand their meanings and apply them in their writing.

## **SPELLING, GRAMMAR AND PUNCTUATION**

Daily phonics sessions are taught from Nursery to Y1 using the Read Write Inc programme to teach the phonetics used for spelling. Year group spellings are taught a minimum of three times a week using Spelling Shed and a range of teacher resources, alongside the teaching of common exception words and high frequency words. Spelling Shed is then used for home learning with set spelling games that match the in school learning from that week. A spelling award is given out weekly to those children who have worked hard in school and at home on these set spellings. Children often use dictionaries, thesaurus, word mats and other programmes to help support their spelling. Keywords are displayed that are linked to topic and unit as a visual aid for spelling.

Grammar and punctuation sessions are taught every week or in blocks following the National Curriculum objectives. The sessions are taught either discretely or through 'The Write Stuff' and then applied to independent writing.

## **HANDWRITING**

Throughout year 1 - 6, the Nelson Handwriting Scheme is used. This supports teachers in making sure children develop correct letter formation which then leads into accurate joining of handwriting. Following the Nelson Scheme, we start teaching handwriting in EYFS with our youngest children to develop fine motor skills and letter formation that matches their current phonic sounds. We teach joined writing in each class from Y1 to Y6. The recommended stage for the introduction of joined writing is towards the end of the second term of Year 1 or the start of the third term. If a child cannot form letters with the correct orientation then they will consolidate this before progressing onto joins. Children who join the school with established fluent joined handwriting will continue with their current style of handwriting. By the end of KS2, we want children to be able to write fluently at speed so that they can communicate by writing. Handwriting lessons are 10- 15 minutes long and are taught a minimum of three times a week in KS1 and KS2.

## **READING**

The 2014 Curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions:

- Word reading/ decoding
- Comprehension

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, writing, grammar and vocabulary. We also understand that reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning and we encourage and praise children at every stage.

At St Monica's we are proud to say that we are a Gold Reading Award School where we motivate and inspire our children through offering a reading curriculum that promotes a true love of reading and enables pupils to be able to read competently, so that they can become confident and informed learners.

## **Independent Reading**

Children are encouraged to read independently every day to develop fluency and reading for pleasure. Every classroom has a reading corner stocked with a range of books selected for pupils of their age groups and interests that the children can access. In EYFS, the book in reading corners are carefully selected by the teacher to link with topics and interests of the children. In Years 1 - 6 the books are organised into ability sections to guide the children to choose an appropriate book so that they can access and enjoy.

Our early readers use the RWI banded books for independent reading with an adult that match with the sounds that they have learnt in class. They read 1:1 with an adult in school and then take at least one book home a week for home reading. They also take another book as a shared text to explore with an adult to develop reading for pleasure. When children have completed the programme, they then move onto the Oxford Reading Tree Bands. In KS2 when the children have reached Dark Red and are confident readers in fluency and understanding they then choose their own independent read with guidance from their teacher.

## **Guided Reading**

Pupils have regular guided reading sessions, where our early readers focus on fluency through a shared text with verbal questioning. EYFS have guided reading books that are carefully selected to link with the sounds that they have covered, giving them extra opportunities to apply their phonics to reading.

We use reading VIPERS from Year 1 - 6 in guided reading sessions to aid the recall of the six reading domains.

VIPERS in an acronym for:

**V**ocabulary

**I**nference

**P**rediction

**E**xplanation

**R**etrieval

**S**equence or **S**ummarise

This uses a mastery approach to teaching where all children will be exposed to high quality texts and those who need support will be read to as needed and comprehension questions will be discussed verbally.

In KS1 guided reading is taught throughout the week where children access a range of rotational reading activities, which includes one adult led focus reading group a week for each child. Children who are lower attainers have daily adult led focus reading groups. The books are selected to link with their phonetic ability to allow them to develop their fluency alongside comprehension. The children will be questioned verbally using a range of VIPERS questions. Each week they will have a whole class guided reading session where they will explore a text using a range of the VIPERS questions. They will read small sections of the text in pairs and the lower attaining children will be supported by an adult to access the text. The class teacher will use echo reading and choral reading at certain points during the text to demonstrate a high quality model for the children and to develop fluency. The children will answer questions verbally and then certain questions will be selected for them to record in their books.

In KS2 the children will have three whole class 20 minute guided reading sessions a week where they will explore a text using the VIPERS questions both verbally and written. The teacher will regularly read extracts from the book to demonstrate positive role models, model fluency and expose the children to high quality texts. The children will read sections of the text and this will then be discussed in guided questioning followed by the children writing their answers in their guided reading books. The lower attaining children will be supported in class by an adult. A range of reading styles will be used such as echo, choral,

paired and independent reading. KS2 will also use fiction, non-fiction and poetry written comprehensions linked to the VIPERS throughout their Literacy topics.

### **Shared Reading**

Books are shared throughout the week through guided reading sessions, story time and using books linked to topics. Teachers will lead a reading assembly in each department to develop a love of reading and provide good reading role models as well as an exposure to a wide range of texts.

We use reading buddies throughout the school to promote a shared love for reading and expose younger readers to more ambitious vocabulary, whilst our older readers are able to develop their ability to read to an audience.

As a school we promote school-home links and invite parents/ carers into school for a stay and read morning each term to strengthen and promote our reading culture.

### **Reading intervention**

All children throughout the school are tracked using pupil progress tracker so that teachers can identify children that are not making progress and therefore need intervention. We highlight the lowest 20% and monitor the impact of the interventions they are receiving. We also use phonic progression trackers to identify gaps within their sound knowledge so children can be targeted as soon as possible for specific intervention each week. Key Stage Two pupils who are struggling with reading or making slow progress are given accelerated reading support through Phonic Sessions, Rapid Reading online, extra 1:1 reading and tailored intervention groups.

### **Phonics**

EYFS and KS1 learners are taught phonics daily through the rigorous, systematic synthetic phonics programme of Read, Write Inc. Phonics. Pupils in KS2 who have not grasped all of their sounds yet will continue with phonic intervention work through the Read, Write Inc Phonics programme or through guided support from the SEND Coordinator for an alternative teaching route for reading, such as precision teaching.

### **Cross Curricular**

We incorporate reading into all areas of the school curriculum. We use high quality texts to engage and deepen children's learning across the curriculum. Books are displayed that relate to topics covered to promote wider reading.

### **Wider reading**

Pupils are encouraged to borrow a book from the school library to take home. In the school library there are a variety of books available to support the children in their learning and enjoyment of books. The library is used for story time by individual classes and each class is shown how to use the library. Junior Librarians from Year 5 have been trained to run the library at lunchtimes. Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure using reading buddies, quiet reading time, listening to an adult read and the various methods outlined above. Every year group has a set of recommended reading texts that is displayed in the classroom. Pupils are exposed to a range of texts from their literacy heritage during their time at school.

### **SPEAKING AND LISTENING**

At St Monica's we encourage our pupils to speak clearly and confidently and articulate their views and opinions. We teach the children to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose. Opportunities for listening and discussion are built into our daily lessons to allow them to become effective communicators. This is done through class assemblies, school plays, events with the community and PSHE time. As well as planned debates, discussions, drama and role play

across the curriculum. We recognise that spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing.

### **LITERACY EVENTS**

A whole school book day is held annually as we celebrate World book day. Visits from authors, poets, librarians and illustrators are organised. Visits to local libraries and theatres are arranged when relevant and we have a close working relationship with our local independent bookshop. Regular literary events such as drama workshops also take place. Book Fairs are also held at least once a year to encourage parents to buy books for their children, which also generates funds to purchase books for class libraries.

### **LINKS WITH PARENTS**

Parents and members of the Parish are encouraged to participate in literacy events that are held during the course of the year. In the autumn term the parents are given guidelines and helpful suggestions to support their child with their reading. Also in the autumn term, parents are encouraged to discuss any problems or concerns with the class teacher at a parents' consultation evening. Parents are invited into school for a read with your child morning throughout the year.

### **Home Reading**

Every pupil has a home/school diary that contains a record of all reading books with a comment about the reading with both parents and teachers. Children also answer one question about the book they have read using their VIPERS Key Stage Reading question bookmark.

In EYFS and KS1 children have the opportunity to take home a `book in a box` to share with an adult at home to promote reading for enjoyment.

In KS2 children have a reading recommends scrapbook where they recommend a book they have read either at home or at school to the class.

## **IMPACT**

### **ASSESSMENT – TARGETS – RECORDING**

Informal daily assessment are taken place in classrooms that informs the teacher's future planning for individuals or groups. Outcomes are measured against the learning objective and success criteria and progress towards writing criteria is recorded half termly. The school marking policy is integral to this process through the use of marking symbols and verbal feedback.

### **Writing Assessment**

Written assessments are conducted at the end of each unit of work and at least every half term to map progress. Children have in year targets that are in their books and sent home at the start of every academic year and individual targets are set where appropriate.

The staff moderate examples of writing assessments to ensure clarity of judgement both internally and externally. The teacher is responsible for inputting all data onto OTrack where data is then easily monitored, used for tracking pupils, groups and cohorts, make comparisons, discussed and targeted in pupil progress meetings.

### **Reading Assessment**

Termly assessments are conducted using the PiRA Reading testing, reading of Common Exception words per year group, and reviewing the National Curriculum year group reading checklist expectations. SATs test are taken for Year 2 and 6, these provide a summative assessment of the child's annual progress in relation to national expectation.

School parents evening and annual reports are also be used to inform parents.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATING**

The Literacy coordinators and the Senior Leadership Team monitors Literacy. Having identified priorities and after consultation with all staff members, the School Improvement Plan is written by the SLT and governors. From this, an action plan is written. This forms the basis of monitoring activities including classroom observations, initiatives, book monitoring and the analysis of data.

The Literacy coordinators monitor the teaching and learning of Literacy throughout the year through work scrutinises, learning walks, questionnaires, monitoring Literacy learning walks and children`s work on display.

This policy was updated on 25th November 2022