



## Blessed Robert Widmerpool Catholic Voluntary Academy

### English Policy

**We walk kindly in the footsteps of Jesus Christ as we live and learn.**

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

*John 1:1*

The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, whilst using language to communicate ideas, views and feelings. It enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of a range of texts. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations. English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. The yearly teaching programme at BRW identifies the key objectives in English for each year and ensures there is a challenging and inspiring curriculum provided across all year groups.

**Intent (What do we want children to learn? What beliefs and values underpin this?)**

**At BRW, we strive to:**

- Enable all children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners;
- Enable all children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- Develop all children's abilities to reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used;
- Enable all children to evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama activities;
- Develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge;
- Encourage all children to become inspired, enthusiastic and reflective readers through contact with a wide range of challenging and lengthy texts;
- Help all children enjoy writing and recognise its value;
- Enable all children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction;
- Increase all children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work;
- Plan opportunities for Quick Quizzes and revisits to provide repeated recall opportunities.

**Implementation (How will children learn it? How is learning organised?)**

**At BRW, we:**

- Plan and teach engaging English lessons that are based upon the 2014 English National Curriculum. English lessons are sequenced appropriately so that children have the skills needed to write independently with confidence and flare;
- Use progression documents that sequence Reading and Writing objectives when planning to ensure progression and challenge throughout each stage of school;
- Use the Little Wandle Phonics Scheme to teach systematic synthetic phonics to all children that need support with learning to read;

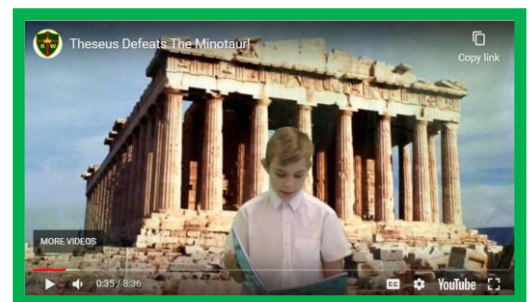


- Teach reading in small groups in FS and Year 1 to ensure children are provided the opportunity to practise reading with personalised adult support and regular intervention;
- Teach reading in Whole Class Reading form in Years 2-6 with a focus on fluency, vocabulary and knowledge that challenges and inspires all children;
- Choose core texts for each cohort that are linked to each of the five plagues of reading so that our pupils have a varied reading diet;
- Provide opportunities for regular recall and revisit activities that check in with children's long-term understanding of reading and writing;
- Ensure the bottom 20% of readers in each cohort are provided with reading and writing interventions;
- Use speaking and listening opportunities to allow children the time to elaborate on their understanding of the texts they have read;
- Use a variety of teaching pedagogies (Talk 4 Writing / Drama / Shared Writing/ Modelled Writing) in order to teach writings genres in an engaging way.;
- Use a variety of teaching resources to ensure all children have the ability to achieve and thrive when reading and writing;
- Provide opportunities for children to share and perform their writing and reading skills (celebration assemblies, the blog, the BRW radio, Twitter etc);
- Use AFL strategies to ensure children are supported and challenged appropriately during lessons;
- Provide opportunities for children to peer and self-evaluate their work;
- Use individual or whole class feedback to support and challenge children where appropriate.

### **Impact (How do you know the children have learned it? What do you do if they haven't?)**

#### **At BRW, we have:**

- Enthusiastic readers that want to read a wide variety of novels;
- Motivated and inspired writers that enjoy showcasing their range of writing skills and talents;
- Children that are proud of their writing and are happy to perform it in front of others;
- Authors who edit and improve their writing to ensure the best possible experience for their reader;
- Children who are confident enough to take risks with their writing to produce an original and engaging piece of writing.



#### **At BRW, we evaluate our impact by:**

- Conducting summative assessments each term to track their progress over the course of the year;
- Using AFL daily so that teachers have an excellent understanding of their pupils and can recognise which pupils need further intervention;
- Using pre-teach and post-teach strategies to challenge gaps in pupil's knowledge;
- Testing the children regularly through Quick Quizzes and similar activities;
- Providing tailored phonics interventions for pupils in FS/KS1 who are below the expected standard;

- Providing tailored phonics interventions for pupils on KS2 who do not achieve the expected standard in phonics assessment by the end of Year 2;
- Planning in time to read 1:1 with pupils in years 2-6 who need further support after Whole class Reading Session;
- Providing 1:1 conferences with pupils who need personalised feedback after independent writing pieces;
- Planning lessons that are tailored to inspire and motivate pupils who do not yet show a passion for reading and writing;
- Conducting and triangulating regular monitoring (Book Looks, Data, Pupil/Staff/Parent Pupil Voice- interviews, questionnaires etc) to assess teaching, learning and attitudes to reading in order for leaders to have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning and strengthen and develop it further.

### The BRW Reading Curriculum

***“Reading gives understanding. Reading will make you free.”***

***– Paul Rand***



### Curriculum Progression

To ensure the progression across the whole school, class teachers refer to the BRW whole school reading progression document which has assigned objectives (linked to the national curriculum) for each year group – this ranges from EYFS to Year 6. This also allows teachers to look back on previous objectives and make sure they are revisited in line with pupil progress/attainment data. Class teachers use their professional judgement to decide when each objective will be covered over the course of the year; some objectives will link more naturally to certain texts and writing genres. The coverage of objectives is monitored throughout the year by SLT/English lead book looks, shared staff books looks, learning walks, staff voice and pupil voice.

From Year 1 to Year 6, each year group has five key texts that the children must read and learn about during the course of the year. These five key texts are linked to each of the five plagues of reading (D. Lemov, 2016). This is to ensure that over the course of the year, our pupils experience reading stories from all five different plagues and will have the ability to access more complex books expected of them at secondary school. These five plagues are covered over the course of the year and have been chosen for each year group carefully to ensure progression and challenge each year. Where possible, class teachers will have picked a text because it links to the children’s wider learning and will build upon knowledge that they can apply to the text. Sometimes, texts will have been chosen purely as an outstanding piece of literature. We encourage class teachers to take risks and experiment with new novels. Class teachers can use the BRW Literature Spine to help them to pick texts linked to each plague of reading that will appropriately challenge their year group. Each term, each class will also

cover at least one non-fiction text and one poem to ensure children have a rounded understanding of literature. We ensure children are provided with high quality poems appropriate for their year group by using 'the Works' poetry spine (organised by Pie Corbitt). The coverage of the five plagues and weekly reading lessons is monitored throughout the year by SLT/English lead book looks, shared staff books looks, learning walks and pupil voice.

### **Learning to Read**

The sequencing of teaching reading fluency and phonics skills is based upon the Little Wandle Revised Letters and Sounds Phonics Scheme Progression. There are daily phonics lessons in EYFS-Yr 2 based upon this teaching sequence. There are weekly phonics/spelling sessions in KS2 (with added phonics interventions for those on the phonics tracker in KS2). Each class teacher has identified the lowest 20% of readers in their cohort and they are given time to read with an adult 3-5 times each week.

See our Phonics Policy for more information.

### **Reading to Learn**

Within a synthetic phonics teaching programme, the children in FS2 and Year 1 engage in weekly Guided Group Reading sessions. These reading sessions to allow for precise feedback and teaching that is appropriate for the children's age and ability. These sessions are based upon the objectives in BRW whole school reading progression document.

In Years 2-6, children are taught to read using Whole Class Guided Reading sessions. The Reading session focuses on three main elements: fluency, vocabulary and knowledge. These sessions ensure coverage of the objectives in the BRW whole school progression document. Lessons are planned and feature within the weekly English Plan using age-appropriate, varied texts which are inspiring for the children and recommended by credible sources in education. These longer whole class reading sessions follow a sequence of reading fluency, Tier 2 vocabulary, and knowledge skills. Each lesson will allow children to practise their reading fluency with support from teacher or peers; a discussion about five new Tier 2 vocabulary choices from the text and scaffolded reading comprehension with contextualised understanding of the text. Class teachers use their professional judgement to decide when and how to cover the reading objectives from the progression document during their weekly reading sessions. Children will also revisit the five new Tier 2 words from the previous week during their English lessons the following week to ensure this knowledge of vocabulary is embedded. Weekly reading sessions are monitored through book looks, learning walks and pupil voice.

### **Our BRW Reading Aims**

Children are encouraged to become confident, enthusiastic, critical and independent readers. They are given opportunities to experience print produced in a variety of forms and for a variety of purposes and to read for information, interest and enjoyment.

Opportunities are provided so that children develop:

- An understanding of the features of a book and how it works.
- An interest in words and their meanings.
- A range of strategies which will help them to read with meaning, fluency, accuracy and expression.
- Appropriate reading strategies to find and interpret information.

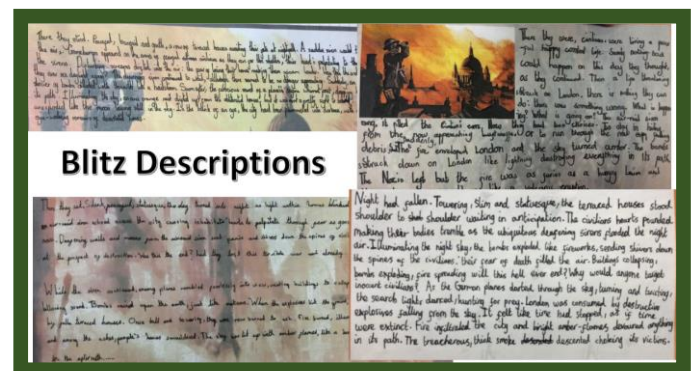
- The ability to reflect on their reading and offer a personal response to a wide range of texts.
- An understanding of how the format and language changes with different genre.
- Inferential skills to find meaning beyond the literal.
- An appreciation of the tools of the writer and the techniques used to involve the reader in the text
- An appreciation of the work of individual authors, illustrators and publishers through inspiring learning activities and participation in annual book themed events such as World Book Day
- The ability to use a range of resources, including classroom materials, ICT based reference materials, the school and public libraries for a range of reading materials.

### The BRW Writing Curriculum

***“If you want to change the world, pick up your pen and write”  
Martin Luther King***

### Curriculum Progression

To ensure the progression across the whole school, class teachers refer to the **BRW whole school writing progression document** which has assigned objectives (linked to the national curriculum) for each year group – this ranges from EYFS to Year 6. This allows teachers to look back on previous objectives and make sure they are revisited in line with pupil progress/attainment data. Each year group has been assigned certain writing genres to cover each year. These writing genres have been selected and organised from Michael Tidd’s ‘writing for a purpose’ document that ensures pupils have a range of ‘reasons to write’ over the course of the year.



Class teachers use their professional judgement and Jane Considine’s ‘Progression in Writing Genres’ document to ensure that SPaG objectives are planned for effectively within teaching sequences.

### Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation

#### Spelling:

Children are encouraged to develop as independent and accurate spellers who are confident to use an evolving and adventurous vocabulary in their own writing. Building on the daily phonics sessions in EYFS and KS1, KS2 classes have a weekly Phonics/Spelling session that explores the spelling patterns in their weekly spelling list. KS2 spelling lists are based upon the National Curriculum spelling appendix. In these sessions, children will be encouraged to ‘crack the spelling code’. Teachers will continue to emphasize to pupils the relationships between sounds and letters, even when the relationships are unusual. They will also encourage pupils to recognize the role morphology (smallest meaningful unit of language) and etymology (the study of the origin of words). With this in mind, pupils are taught to develop a range of spelling strategies that they can use to attempt unknown words and a sound knowledge of irregular high frequency words for use in their daily work. They are made aware of the differences between spoken dialect and written English in terms of spelling. Children are regularly

tested on key spellings; misconceptions are identified and discussed so that children can apply their knowledge of sounds to spellings in future.

Children should:

- Attempt words for themselves using a range of strategies. They should always begin by using their phonetical knowledge.
- Write an increasingly wide range of words from memory.
- Use a variety of resources to help with spelling e.g. dictionaries, word banks, classroom environment, computer spell-checks, iPad Applications etc.
- Develop an understanding of spelling patterns and rules through investigations and identifying the exceptions to those rules as "interesting" or "exciting" and understand that some prefixes and suffixes can change the meaning of the words.

### **Vocabulary:**

Expanding a child's vocabulary provides them with a greater ability to build a robust picture or concept of incoming language, whilst helping them to identify the meaning of an unknown word (Maguire et al, 2018). We strive to create as many opportunities as possible to expose our pupils to a wide range of vocabulary. With this in mind, we ensure children learn five new Tier 2 words each week during their Whole Class Reading lessons. Other opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing. As vocabulary increases, teachers show pupils how to understand the relationships between words, how to understand nuances in meaning, and how to develop their understanding of, and ability to use, figurative language.

### **Grammar and Punctuation:**

The teaching of grammar and punctuation is organised progressively in our BRW Writing progression document (based upon the expectation of the National Curriculum). Research shows that a writing curriculum which draws attention to the grammar of writing in an embedded and purposeful way at relevant points in the learning is a more positive way forward (Myhill et al, 2012). Our staff teach SPaG elements alongside writing so that children have the opportunity to apply their learning in a purposeful way. The Jane Considine 'Progression of Writing' document helps teachers to choose relevant SPaG objectives to teach alongside certain writing genres.

### **Handwriting**

It is important for children to be able to write clearly and develop a fluent and legible handwriting style. As the skills of handwriting and spelling are inter-dependent they are taught together. This reinforces the visual and motor elements of both skills.

Children should be able to:

Form letters correctly

Use upper and lower case letters appropriately

Begin to use a joined style from the Foundation Stage through writing letters with a flick when developmentally appropriate

Use a correct and comfortable pencil/pen grip

Use a handwriting pen by the end of Year 3



The school adopts the Nelson handwriting style with the exception of some letters (joining from the letter 's').

### **Our BRW Writing Aims**

It is important for children to develop as independent, enthusiastic and expressive writers, who are able to write in a meaningful way. They should be able to use a range of forms for a variety of purposes and audiences. They should be confident in their choice of genre and language style for a specific purpose. Children are encouraged to regard themselves as writers and value their own work and that of others.

Activities are carefully planned so that children:

- Use writing as a means to communicate ideas and information to a reader.
- Write in a grammatically accurate way.
- Develop an increasingly wide vocabulary suited to the purpose and genre.
- Write in a particular genre with a good understanding of the features of that genre.
- Understand the conventions of written language.
- Use teacher modeling as a means to understand the writing process.
- Understand how writers can have an effect on the reader.
- Incorporate ideas and skills of other authors into their own writing.
- Collaborate with others during the writing process.
- Draft and re-draft, making significant revisions where appropriate.
- Work collaboratively with other children to discuss the editing of written work.
- Use IT as a tool and a motivator for writing.
- Use spelling, punctuation and syntax accurately and with confidence.
- Children in The Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2 use the Talk for Writing strategies of teaching and learning where and when appropriate according to individual and cohort needs to ensure children enjoy, achieve and succeed in the writing process.



### **The BRW English Curriculum**

#### **Learning and Teaching**

A variety of learning and teaching styles are used in order to achieve the aims of our English curriculum. Children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in English are developed through whole-class and group teaching. Opportunities are provided for children to use skills in relevant and meaningful ways. Children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and use a range of resources.

We recognize that using technology to effectively teach is paramount in the digital era (Ministry of National Education, 2013). Our children are growing up in a digital world (even more so due to the Coronavirus Pandemic) and we need to respond accordingly. IT is an integral resource in all year groups. Children are encouraged to use IT in English lessons where it enhances their learning, as in drafting their work and using multimedia to study how words and images are combined to convey

meaning. iPad applications are used where appropriate to enhance and inspire learning in a range of ways, from the creation of a television advert to the audio-recording of stories. Children are encouraged to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

To cater for a range of abilities learning opportunities are provided for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. Teaching Assistants support children and enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

## **Speaking and Listening**

All children are encouraged to become confident, thoughtful and purposeful speakers as well as considerate and active listeners.

Speaking and listening skills are specifically planned for in English and reinforced across the curriculum. Vocabulary is extended through the teaching of appropriate terminology and language enrichment.

Children are given planned opportunities to use a range of dramatic forms to express feelings and ideas both verbally and non-verbally. They are encouraged to appreciate drama, both as participants and observers, through theatre visits, visiting drama groups, assemblies and performances to a range of audiences.

Performances are evaluated in order to enhance learning with the use of IT equipment during lessons (iPads, digital photographs, audio etc). Children are encouraged to use drama to link ideas in English through role-play, hot seating, tableaux, mime and freeze-frame techniques. These provide a valuable writing stimulus. Teachers monitor the achievement of their children and plan for individual and group progression.



## **English Planning**

When developing the curriculum overview grids, teachers have opportunity to organise their core texts and writing genres in a way that allows for texts to best support wider learning. Medium-term plans, give details of the main teaching objectives for each term. These plans define what is taught and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. Teachers map out the use of core texts throughout the year to ensure children are exposed to a range of texts that cover all 5 'Plagues of Reading'.

Class teachers complete a weekly plan for the teaching of English. This includes details of what each group of children will be learning, challenge and support, key questions and assessment opportunities. The learning intentions and success criteria for each lesson are clearly identified on planning and are shared with the children as part of the 'learning culture' created within our school.

Planning reflects a commitment to taking learning outside





and provides high quality outdoor learning opportunities to inspire reading, writing, speaking and listening. Taking a Forest School approach brings learning to life.

The English Subject Leader, alongside the SLT, monitor the subject, through analysis of planning, scrutiny of children's work and observational evidence.

## **The Foundation Stage**

English is an integral part of the curriculum in Early Years Foundation Stage. The Early Years Curriculum Guidance underpins the planning for children aged three to five. Greater emphasis is initially given to the Prime Area of Communication and Language, developing aspects of listening and attention; understanding and speaking. This area continues to be fundamental throughout the EYFS. As children develop, aspects of reading and writing, grow out of the prime areas and provides important contexts for learning.

Speaking and listening skills are vitally important as they underpin all learning at this stage. Consequently, all children are given opportunities to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their range of vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore, enjoy, learn about, and use words and text in a range of situations.

Activities build on the language skills that children bring from home. Development of these skills is encouraged through talking to accompany play activities such as listening to stories and poems, joining in with rhymes and songs, participating in drama and imaginative play, responding to simple instructions etc.

Knowledge about books is developed through activities such as, retelling a story in their own words, reading a big book with the teacher, re-reading favourite stories as a group/class, guided reading, listening and responding to stories on the Interactive Whiteboard etc. Home-school activities raise awareness of the importance of speaking and listening.



Success in phonics depends on children being able to listen well and speak clearly. Children's phonemic awareness is developed throughout the foundation stage, through the teaching of systematic, synthetic phonics, appropriate small group activities and opportunities for children to apply within all activity areas inside and outside.

Emergent writing is encouraged through role-play e.g. in the shop, office, cafe etc. where children are provided with a range of writing materials. Children are encouraged to write in role, e.g. lists, forms, menus, prices. Shared, guided and other small group focus activities give children a wide range of meaningful contexts in which to develop writing skills.

## **Supporting Children with English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

Extra support is provided for children who speak a language other than English at home in order to develop their skills and enable them to access the curriculum effectively.

Children learning English as an additional language are involved in learning activities which involve practical activity and discussion. To ensure that understanding does not depend on oral language alone, children's understanding is supported by concrete items, pictures, etc. Curriculum resources used are relevant and interesting to every child in the class. Bilingual children learn alongside competent English speakers. As children naturally modify their talk towards that of their peers other children can provide good models of English. Effective use is made of Teaching Assistants and outreach staff to support learning.

### **Contribution of English to Teaching in Other Curriculum Areas: Learning Links**

The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every subject of the curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of the curriculum.

Our teaching of Religious Education is at the heart of all that we do. During each Come and See topic, teachers plan for one high quality piece of writing. Pupils frequently analyse and explore scripture, which continues to build their vocabulary knowledge.

Reading and writing opportunities are frequently found in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils will complete 'learning links' tasks to provide them with time to link their learning to books they have already read. Thus deepening their knowledge of stories and learning themes.



### **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

Children have particular learning and assessment requirements that could create barriers to learning. When planning, teachers provide rich learning opportunities, responding to children's diverse learning needs which are matched to the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. Provision made enables all children to participate effectively in a wide range of activities. Targets set for individual children feature on Individual Provision Maps.

Teachers use a wide range of quality first teaching strategies to ensure all pupils can achieve and progress. Examples of QFT strategies use to support English are:

- Use of word banks/cloze paragraphs and writing scaffolds to support independent writing
- Use of collaboration to engage all pupils
- Varied methods of recording to engage
- Use of timers and countdowns
- Use of peer teachers/buddy system

- Varied tasks to challenge and support
- Talk 4 Writing technique used to engage children and develop S+L skills/knowledge of sentence structure
- Use of Colourful Semantics to progress and develop S&L
- Additional adult support
- Use of ICT to support recording

### **Home School Links**

Parents are involved in the school's English programme through informal discussion and the use of home school diaries. Targets are communicated to both parents and children at the beginning of each academic year. This ensures that parents are part of the target setting process and that children are taking responsibility for their learning. Each class teacher publishes a class newsletter and a class blog which provides information about topic areas covered, advice and ways to help with the learning of English.



As stated in the Home School Agreement, children are required to complete tasks at home. These are recorded in the child's homework diary. These diaries are an effective part of the communication process between home and school.

We invite parents in to take part in Reading Workshops so that they have a greater understanding of how to support and challenge their child with their reading.

### **Assessment and Recording**

Short-term assessments and daily feedback helps teachers to adjust to daily plans and inform future planning. Quick quizzes are used regularly to provide opportunities for frequent revisits of previous learning and opportunity for daily AFL. These short-term assessments are matched closely to the teaching objectives. Termly summative assessments measure progress against the key objectives, and enable teachers to plan effectively for the future.

Long-term assessments are made towards the end of the school year using end of Key Stage tests and teacher assessments which assess progress against school and national targets. Children's self-assessment is an important part of this process.

Standardised Assessments include:

End of Key Stage National Assessments	Y2 Y6
Phonics Screening	Y1/ Yr 2

End of year assessments enable teachers to set targets for the next school year and summarise the progress of each child. These assessments are communicated to parents through written reports and verbally at parents' meetings.

Test and assessment results are analysed and used to identify strengths, weaknesses and trends. This enables us to set challenging targets across the school.

The attainment of children is projected at the end of Key Stage 2 using attainment and knowledge of the children at the end of EYFS and Key Stage 1. Following this, children in years 2-6 are set individual targets which helps teachers to support and challenge when planning and tracking progress through KS2.

Teachers regularly review individual examples of work against the national exemplification material and moderate termly.

### **Resources**

A wide range of resources supports the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and a range of age-appropriate thesauruses. New books are purchased regularly to ensure children are provided with a range of current reading material. We are committed to ensuring that our pupils 'see themselves' in the books they read, therefore, we regularly research new culturally diverse texts to purchase. Children have the opportunity to suggest new books for purchasing each year through specific pupil voice and conversations with class teachers. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts.



Children in Key Stages 1 and 2 have access to iPads upon which a range of applications and books are purchased termly relating to the current class topics.

Children have access to the Internet in the Computer Lab and through classroom interactive whiteboards and computers.

Access to the Internet is also available in the library area. The library contains a range of non-fiction books to support individual research.

A library of professional reading provides essential access for all staff to research and ideas.



Pupil Premium Children are invited to choose new books to order each year to enable them to build up a library of high-quality books at home.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching is the responsibility of the School Leadership Team, supported by the Curriculum Subject Leader. The role of the Curriculum Lead and SLT involves supporting colleagues, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The team informs the SLT of their evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement. The Subject Leader reviews evidence of the children's work, updates development plans

and works alongside teachers to support and evaluate teaching across the school. Staff also use coaching systems to ensure all staff are challenged and supported in their teaching of English.

Samples of the children's learning are reviewed by the whole staff. Lesson observations of English teaching across the school are made by the SLT.

**Reviewed by English Lead: September 2023**

**Reviewed by SLT:**

**Review by Governors:**