



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*

English is at the heart of the curriculum and underpins learning across all subjects. Through speaking, listening, reading and writing, pupils develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to communicate effectively and express themselves creatively. At Blessed Robert Widmerpool, we provide a rich, ambitious and inspiring English curriculum that fosters a love of language and literature while ensuring pupils make strong progress in line with the National Curriculum. The curriculum is carefully sequenced to develop the key knowledge and skills required at each stage of learning, enabling all pupils to achieve their full potential.

Intent

At BRW, we strive to:

Our English curriculum aims to:

- Develop confident speakers who can communicate clearly, effectively and appropriately for different audiences and purposes.
- Foster strong speaking, listening and oracy skills through discussion, debate and drama.
- Develop fluent, independent readers with a love of reading and exposure to a wide range of high-quality texts.
- Promote reading for pleasure, vocabulary development and deep comprehension.
- Enable pupils to write accurately, fluently and purposefully across a range of genres and subjects.
- Develop secure transcription skills, including spelling, handwriting, correct letter formation and presentation.
- Teach pupils to plan, draft, edit and improve their writing independently.
- Build knowledge and long-term retention through regular retrieval practice, revisits and quick quizzes.
- Ensure all pupils become confident, enthusiastic and successful users of language, prepared for the next stage of their education.

Implementation

At BRW, we:

- Teach engaging, carefully sequenced English lessons that build the skills needed for confident, independent writing.
- Use progression documents to ensure clear progression and challenge in reading, writing and handwriting across all year groups.
- Teach systematic synthetic phonics through the Little Wandle programme.
- Provide targeted phonics and reading support for pupils who need additional practice.
- Teach guided reading in EYFS and Year 1, with personalised adult support and intervention.

- Teach Whole Class Reading in Years 2-6, focusing on fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and knowledge.
- Use high-quality core texts to provide a rich and varied reading diet.
- Explicitly teach letter formation, handwriting and presentation to develop fluency and accuracy in writing.
- Build writing stamina and composition skills through modelled, shared and independent writing opportunities.
- Use a range of approaches, including Talk for Writing, drama, shared writing and modelled writing.
- Plan regular retrieval practice, quick quizzes and revisits to strengthen long-term learning.
- Ensure pupils requiring additional support receive targeted reading and writing interventions.
- Develop speaking and listening through discussion, questioning, debate and presentation opportunities.
- Use adaptive teaching and a range of resources to enable all pupils to succeed.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to celebrate and share their reading and writing achievements.
- Use effective assessment for learning strategies to support, challenge and inform teaching.
- Enable pupils to self-assess and peer-assess to improve their work.
- Provide timely verbal and written feedback to move learning forward.

Impact

t BRW, we have:

- Enthusiastic readers that want to read a wide variety of novels;
- Pupils that have an excellent knowledge of vocabulary and understand how to apply this vocabulary in different contexts;
- 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 in Reading

To ensure progression across the school, teachers follow the BRW Reading Progression Document, which maps National Curriculum reading objectives from EYFS to Year 6. Objectives are carefully sequenced and revisited to strengthen understanding, retention and application. Coverage and progression are monitored through book looks, learning walks, staff discussions and pupil voice.

From Year 1 to Year 6, each year group studies five core texts linked to Doug Lemov's *Five Plagues of Reading*. These texts are carefully selected to provide challenge, broaden pupils' reading experiences and prepare them for the demands of secondary education. Texts are chosen to build knowledge, enrich vocabulary and develop reading comprehension through exposure to a range of literary styles and contexts.

In addition, pupils study a range of high-quality non-fiction texts and poetry each year to ensure a broad and balanced reading curriculum. Poetry is supported through *The Works* poetry spine by Pie Corbett. Reading curriculum coverage is monitored regularly by senior leaders and the English Lead through book looks, learning walks and pupil voice.

Learning to Read

The teaching of early reading is based on the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme. Daily phonics lessons are taught in EYFS and Key Stage 1, following a carefully sequenced progression that develops phonics knowledge, decoding, fluency and reading confidence.

Pupils who require additional support receive targeted phonics intervention to help them keep up and catch up. Reading practice sessions provide opportunities for pupils to apply their phonics knowledge and develop fluency, accuracy and prosody. Priority readers receive regular additional reading opportunities with an adult.

See the Phonics Policy for further information.

Reading to Learn

In EYFS and Key Stage 1, pupils take part in guided reading practice sessions matched to their phonics knowledge, enabling them to develop fluency, comprehension and confidence.

From Year 2 to Year 6, pupils participate in whole-class reading lessons using a wide range of high-quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Lessons focus on developing reading fluency, vocabulary, background knowledge and comprehension skills through rich discussion and purposeful questioning.

Explicit vocabulary instruction is embedded within reading lessons, with carefully selected Tier 2 vocabulary revisited and applied across the curriculum to support long-term retention. Reading objectives are sequenced through the BRW Reading Progression Document to ensure consistent coverage and progression across the school.

The quality and impact of reading provision are monitored through book looks, learning walks, pupil voice and curriculum review.

Our BRW Reading Aims

We aim to develop confident, fluent and enthusiastic readers who read for pleasure, knowledge and purpose. Through exposure to a rich range of high-quality texts, pupils develop the skills needed to become independent, thoughtful and critical readers.

Pupils will develop:

- Fluency, accuracy, prosody and understanding when reading.
- A love of reading and enjoyment of a wide range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry.
- A rich vocabulary and understanding of language.
- Effective strategies to retrieve, interpret and evaluate information.
- The ability to infer, predict and justify ideas using evidence from the text.
- Knowledge of how authors use language, structure and organisation to create meaning.
- An understanding of different text types, genres and purposes.
- The confidence to discuss, reflect on and respond to what they read.
- Knowledge of significant authors, illustrators and diverse voices in literature.
- The skills to access information and reading materials through books, libraries and digital resources.

The BRW Writing Curriculum

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

Curriculum Progression

Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation

To ensure progression in writing across the school, teachers follow the BRW Writing Progression Document, which maps National Curriculum objectives from EYFS to Year 6. Learning is carefully sequenced to build on prior knowledge and revisit key skills over time.

Pupils are taught a progressive range of writing genres that provide meaningful purposes and audiences for writing. Through high-quality texts, explicit teaching and modelled writing, pupils develop their understanding of composition, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Writing is taught through a clear sequence of plan, draft, revise and edit, enabling pupils to improve the quality of their work and write with increasing accuracy, fluency and independence. Handwriting and letter formation are taught systematically from the early years to develop fluent, automatic transcription skills that support writing stamina and composition.

Spelling

We aim to develop confident, accurate and independent spellers who can apply spelling knowledge across the curriculum. Spelling builds on the phonics foundations established in EYFS and Key Stage 1 and follows the progression set out in the National Curriculum.

In Key Stage 2, pupils receive regular spelling instruction focused on spelling patterns, rules, morphology (word structure) and etymology (word origins). Pupils are taught to use and apply spelling strategies, recognise common exceptions and make links between spelling, vocabulary and meaning.

Pupils are encouraged to:

- Apply phonics knowledge when spelling unfamiliar words.
- Learn and accurately use age-related spelling patterns and statutory word lists.
- Understand how prefixes, suffixes and root words affect spelling and meaning.
- Use a range of strategies and resources to check and improve spelling.
- Identify and correct spelling errors through editing and proofreading.
- Apply spelling knowledge independently across all areas of writing.

Spelling is regularly revisited and assessed to identify misconceptions and strengthen long-term retention.

Vocabulary

We believe that vocabulary is central to pupils' success in reading, writing and communication. A rich vocabulary enables children to understand increasingly complex texts, express their ideas effectively and access the wider curriculum.

Vocabulary is taught explicitly and systematically across the curriculum. Through reading, discussion and writing, pupils are exposed to a wide range of ambitious language. In reading lessons, pupils are taught and revisit carefully selected Tier 2 vocabulary to deepen understanding and support long-term retention.

Pupils are taught to:

- Understand and use new vocabulary in speaking, reading and writing.
- Explore the meaning of words through context, discussion and direct instruction.
- Recognise relationships between words, including synonyms, antonyms and word families.
- Develop an understanding of figurative language and its effect on the reader.
- Apply ambitious vocabulary independently across the curriculum.

Vocabulary development is woven throughout all areas of English to support pupils in becoming confident, articulate and successful communicators.

Grammar and Punctuation

Grammar and punctuation are taught progressively through the BRW Writing Progression Document, which is aligned to National Curriculum expectations. These skills are taught within meaningful reading and writing contexts to enable pupils to apply their learning accurately and effectively.

Teachers use the Jane Considine *Progression in Writing Genres* and BRW progression documents to identify, sequence and revisit grammar and punctuation objectives across writing units. Regular

retrieval and application opportunities ensure knowledge is embedded and transferred across a range of genres.

Handwriting

Handwriting is a fundamental skill that supports pupils in communicating their ideas fluently and effectively. At Blessed Robert Widmerpool, we use the Letter-join programme to provide a consistent, progressive approach to handwriting from EYFS to Year 6.

Handwriting is taught explicitly and practised regularly to develop accurate letter formation, automaticity and presentation. By securing transcription skills, pupils are able to focus more fully on composition and the quality of their writing.

Pupils are taught to:

- Form letters correctly and consistently.
- Use correct letter size, orientation and spacing.
- Develop a comfortable and efficient pencil grip.
- Use upper- and lower-case letters accurately.
- Progress from printed to joined handwriting when developmentally ready.
- Write fluently, legibly and with increasing stamina.
- Take pride in the presentation of their work across the curriculum.

The Letter-join progression ensures that handwriting knowledge and skills are systematically built over time, enabling pupils to develop a fluent and automatic handwriting style.

BRW Writing Aims

At BRW, we aim to develop confident, enthusiastic and independent writers who can communicate effectively for a range of purposes and audiences. We want all pupils to see themselves as writers, take pride in their work and understand the power of written language.

Through carefully planned learning opportunities, pupils will:

- Write to communicate ideas, opinions and information effectively.
- Write with increasing accuracy in grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Develop a rich and ambitious vocabulary.
- Understand and apply the features of different genres.
- Write appropriately for different audiences and purposes.
- Learn from high-quality texts and teacher modelling.
- Understand how authors influence and engage their readers.
- Plan, draft, edit and improve their writing.
- Collaborate with others to discuss and refine their work.
- Develop stamina and independence as writers.
- Use technology to support and enhance writing where appropriate.
- Apply transcription, grammar and composition skills confidently across the curriculum.

The school's writing curriculum is aligned with the National Curriculum and informed by evidence-based approaches to writing instruction, ensuring pupils develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to become effective communicators.

The BRW English Curriculum

Learning and Teaching

At Blessed Robert Widmerpool, we deliver a high-quality English curriculum that enables all pupils to become confident speakers, fluent readers and effective writers. Teaching is carefully sequenced to build knowledge and skills over time, ensuring pupils know more, remember more and can apply their learning across the curriculum.

Lessons are underpinned by high expectations, explicit instruction, modelling, guided practice and opportunities for independent application. Teachers use assessment effectively to identify misconceptions, adapt teaching and provide appropriate support and challenge so that all pupils make strong progress from their starting points.

Pupils are exposed to a diverse range of high-quality texts, vocabulary-rich learning experiences and meaningful opportunities to read, write, speak and listen for a range of purposes and audiences. Oracy is embedded throughout the curriculum to develop pupils' confidence, language acquisition and ability to articulate their thinking.

Learning is adapted through high-quality first teaching, scaffolding, adaptive provision and targeted intervention. Teachers and Teaching Assistants work collaboratively to ensure all pupils, including those with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, can access the curriculum and achieve success.

Technology is used purposefully to enhance learning, enabling pupils to draft, edit, publish and present work using a range of digital tools. This supports creativity, communication and prepares pupils for life in an increasingly digital world.

Regular retrieval practice, feedback, reflection and opportunities for editing and improvement help pupils secure learning, develop independence and achieve high standards in English.

Speaking and Listening (Oracy)

At Blessed Robert Widmerpool, we aim to develop confident, articulate and respectful communicators who are able to listen attentively, express their ideas clearly and engage thoughtfully with others.

Speaking and listening skills are explicitly planned for within English and reinforced across the wider curriculum. Pupils are provided with regular opportunities to develop spoken language through discussion, questioning, explanation, debate, presentation and collaborative learning. Vocabulary is taught explicitly and systematically to extend pupils' language, comprehension and communication skills.

Drama is used purposefully to enhance learning and deepen understanding of texts. Through role-play, hot seating, freeze frames, tableaux and performance activities, pupils explore characters, themes and ideas while developing confidence in spoken language. These experiences provide valuable opportunities to rehearse language and support the writing process.

Pupils are encouraged to perform and present to a range of audiences through assemblies, productions, class presentations and wider enrichment opportunities. Where appropriate,

technology is used to support speaking and listening activities through recordings, photography and digital presentations.

Teachers assess and monitor pupils' spoken language development and plan opportunities that build confidence, vocabulary and communication skills progressively across the school.

English Planning

The school has developed a coherent English curriculum, supported by high-quality medium-term plans that are reviewed and adapted to meet the needs of individual cohorts.

Curriculum overviews identify core texts and writing opportunities for each year group, ensuring progression and full coverage of the National Curriculum. Texts are carefully selected to develop reading fluency, vocabulary, knowledge and a love of reading.

Medium-term plans outline key knowledge, skills and outcomes in reading, writing, spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting. Learning is sequenced to build on prior knowledge, with regular opportunities for retrieval, practice and application.

Writing is taught through a structured sequence that enables pupils to explore high-quality models, understand audience and purpose, develop the necessary language and transcription skills, and produce independent pieces of writing. Pupils are supported to plan, draft, revise and edit their work, developing increasing independence and accuracy over time.

Teachers use curriculum plans to create responsive lessons that provide appropriate support, challenge and adaptive teaching, enabling all pupils to make progress from their starting points.

The Foundation Stage

English is at the heart of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The development of communication and language provides the foundation for future success in reading, writing and learning across the curriculum.

Children are immersed in a language-rich environment where speaking, listening, stories, rhymes, songs and high-quality texts develop vocabulary, comprehension and communication skills. Staff model rich language and provide frequent opportunities for meaningful conversation, discussion and imaginative play.

Early reading is taught through the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme, with systematic daily phonics teaching and regular opportunities to apply phonics skills through reading and play. A strong emphasis is placed on developing phonological awareness, language comprehension and a love of reading.

Children are exposed to a wide range of high-quality books and stories and are encouraged to develop positive reading habits through shared reading, story time, book talk and reading practice sessions. Early writing develops through mark-making, drawing, fine motor development and purposeful writing opportunities within continuous provision and adult-led activities. Children are encouraged to write for real purposes and begin to apply their developing phonics knowledge to independent writing. Through a carefully planned environment and high-quality interactions, children develop the foundational knowledge and skills needed to become confident readers, writers and communicators.

Supporting Children with English as an Additional Language (EAL)

We are committed to ensuring that pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) are fully included and able to access the curriculum successfully.

Teaching is adapted to support language development through the use of high-quality interactions, explicit vocabulary teaching, visual prompts, modelling and practical learning experiences. Pupils are provided with opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills alongside their reading and writing.

Where appropriate, resources, scaffolds and targeted support are used to aid understanding and participation. Pupils learn alongside their peers in a language-rich environment, enabling them to develop confidence, fluency and independence in English while valuing and celebrating their home language and cultural heritage.

Teaching assistants and external agencies may provide additional support where required to help pupils access learning and make good progress.

Contribution of English to Teaching in Other Curriculum Areas

English is central to learning across the curriculum. The skills pupils develop in speaking, listening, reading and writing enable them to access knowledge, communicate ideas and succeed in all subjects.

Meaningful opportunities for reading, discussion and writing are planned across the curriculum to help pupils apply and strengthen their English skills in different contexts. High-quality texts are used to enhance learning, build vocabulary and deepen subject knowledge.

Pupils also make links between texts and their wider learning, enabling them to draw on prior knowledge, develop understanding and make meaningful connections across the curriculum. This supports long-term retention and helps pupils become confident, articulate and effective learners.

Led by Faith

Religious Education is at the heart of our curriculum and reflects our Catholic mission and values.

Our English curriculum supports pupils in developing both their literacy skills and their spiritual, moral and personal understanding through high-quality texts, discussion and writing opportunities.

Where appropriate, pupils engage with meaningful reading and writing activities linked to the RE Branches within the Religious Education Directory (RED). Through the exploration of scripture, religious narratives and discussion, pupils develop their vocabulary, comprehension, speaking and writing skills while deepening their understanding of faith and the world around them.

Catholic Social Teaching

Catholic Social Teaching is woven throughout our English curriculum through the texts we study, the discussions we have and the writing opportunities we provide. Pupils explore themes such as human dignity, compassion, justice, stewardship and the common good, enabling them to reflect on their faith, values and responsibilities as active citizens. Through reading, discussion and writing, pupils

are encouraged to consider how Catholic values can influence their actions and contribute positively to the world around them.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

We are committed to ensuring that all pupils, including those with SEND, can access and succeed in the English curriculum. Teachers use adaptive teaching strategies and Quality First Teaching to remove barriers to learning, enabling all pupils to make progress from their starting points.

Provision is tailored to individual needs and may be supported through Individual Provision Maps, targeted interventions and specialist advice where appropriate.

Strategies used within English may include:

- Explicit teaching and modelling.
- Small-step instruction and scaffolded learning.
- Pre-teaching and revisiting key vocabulary.
- Visual supports, word banks and sentence stems.
- Colourful Semantics and other language-based approaches.
- Oral rehearsal and structured talk opportunities.
- Reading support and guided practice.
- Adaptive resources and assistive technology.
- Additional adult support where appropriate.
- Retrieval practice, feedback and overlearning.
- Quiet workspaces and reduced distractions when needed.

Teachers maintain high expectations for all pupils and provide appropriate challenge and support to ensure every child can participate fully and achieve success within the English curriculum.

Home-School Partnership

We recognise the important role parents and carers play in supporting children's language, reading and writing development. Strong communication between home and school helps pupils make the best possible progress in English.

Parents and carers are kept informed about learning through regular communication, curriculum newsletters, school information platforms and parent consultation meetings. Guidance and resources are shared to help families support reading, spelling and writing at home.

Reading is promoted as a key partnership between home and school. Pupils are encouraged to read regularly at home, and parents are supported through reading workshops, information sessions and guidance materials.

By working together, we aim to foster a lifelong love of reading, language and learning.

Assessment and Recording

Assessment is used to identify what pupils know, remember and can do, and to inform future teaching. Ongoing assessment takes place through questioning, observation, discussion, retrieval practice, quizzes and review of pupils' work. This enables teachers to adapt teaching and address misconceptions promptly.

Regular formative assessment is closely linked to the intended learning and provides pupils with clear feedback to support improvement. Opportunities for self-assessment and reflection help pupils develop independence and ownership of their learning.

Summative assessments are completed at key points throughout the year to monitor progress, identify next steps and inform curriculum planning. Statutory assessments and teacher assessment are used, where appropriate, to measure attainment against national expectations and support pupils' progress through the English curriculum.

Standardised Assessments

Statutory and standardised assessments provide information about pupils' attainment and progress and help to inform future teaching and curriculum planning.

These include:

- Phonics Screening Check (Year 1 and Year 2 re-check where applicable)
- End of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum Assessments (Year 6)
- School-based standardised reading and spelling assessments where appropriate

Assessment information is used to identify strengths, gaps in learning and trends across classes, year groups and the whole school. This enables leaders and teachers to evaluate the impact of the curriculum and provide appropriate support and challenge for pupils.

Teachers regularly moderate pupils' work within school and, where appropriate, with external partners to ensure that judgements are accurate and consistent with national expectations.

Parents and carers are informed of their child's attainment and progress through annual reports, parent consultation meetings and ongoing communication throughout the year.

Resources

A wide range of high-quality resources supports the teaching of English across the school. Classrooms provide access to age-appropriate dictionaries, vocabulary resources and a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts to support reading and writing.

We are committed to promoting reading for pleasure and ensuring that all pupils can see themselves reflected in the books they read. Our reading provision includes a diverse range of contemporary and classic texts that represent different cultures, experiences and perspectives. Pupils are encouraged to contribute to the selection of new books through pupil voice activities and recommendations. The school library and classroom reading areas provide access to a broad range of high-quality literature and information texts to support learning across the curriculum.

Digital resources, including iPads, online texts and educational applications, are used to enhance reading, writing, research and communication skills. Technology is also used, where appropriate, to support accessibility and inclusion.

Staff have access to professional reading and subject-specific resources to support the continued development of high-quality English teaching.

Monitoring and Review

The monitoring of standards in English and the quality of teaching is led by the Senior Leadership Team and the English Subject Leader. Together, they ensure the English curriculum is effectively implemented, regularly reviewed and continually improved to meet the needs of all pupils.

The English Subject Leader provides strategic leadership for the subject, supports colleagues, keeps abreast of current developments and evaluates the impact of the English curriculum. Findings are used to identify strengths, priorities for development and actions for improvement.

Monitoring activities include:

- Lesson visits and learning walks.
- Book looks and work scrutiny.
- Pupil voice and staff discussions.
- Analysis of assessment and attainment information.
- Review of curriculum implementation and progression.

The Link Governor for English meets regularly with the Subject Leader and receives reports on standards, provision and developments within the subject. The Local Governing Body is kept informed of curriculum effectiveness and outcomes.

The Trust Director of Performance and Standards provides additional monitoring, support and challenge through the review of assessment information, curriculum implementation and pupil outcomes.

Regular moderation, professional dialogue and coaching support staff in maintaining high expectations and continually improving the quality of English teaching and learning across the school.

Policy Reviewed: September 2026

Next Review Due: September 2027

Approved By: Local Governing Body

Monitoring: Senior Leadership Team, English Subject Leader, Link Governor and Trust Director of Performance and Standards.