

# ST. BERNADETTE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

## English Curriculum



*Learn to Love, Love to Learn*

Miss Lakin & Miss O'Toole 2020/2021



## Intent

St Bernadette's is a Catholic School and we are committed to the Catholic faith, recognising and valuing every individual as special and unique, created in the image and likeness of God. We are a beacon of hope in our community and we live by the motto Learn to love, love to learn.

Teachers at St Bernadette's endeavour to deliver the English Curriculum in a positive, stimulating and thoughtful way. Through the medium of language, we aim to provide the children with a positive self-image and promote opportunities for freedom of expression and exploration of their own thoughts and feelings. Our children are encouraged to listen to views of others and taught to respect their opinions.

We want our children to be able to express their thoughts and intentions fluently and confidently by speaking clearly and audibly, taking into account their audience; listening with concentration to enable the recall of key learning; reading fluently with enthusiasm and independence and writing with accuracy and stamina, incorporating required writing skills and exuding their own individual style.

At St Bernadette's School, English is the foundation to our entire curriculum. Every opportunity is taken to ensure that the fundamental skills of the English curriculum are embedded and consolidated through all subjects taught in school. In turn, we strive to deepen the children's knowledge and retention of information acquired in other subject areas through immersing them in high quality texts and the opportunity to write for a purpose. Through this we endeavor to instill a love for reading, a passion for discovery and a confidence to explore their imaginations. We firmly believe that this will then enable and inspire our pupils to become competent and creative writers who can communicate their intent to a range of audiences.

We believe that all children including those who are disadvantaged and pupils with SEND deserve the opportunity to be exposed to and enjoy challenging, vocabulary-rich



texts, 'enabling them to grow and learn in an environment without prejudice or inequality' (2018 Birmingham Curriculum Statement).

## **Implementation**

At our school we promote a love of reading, aiming for all our children to be confident speakers and readers with a wide vocabulary and enjoyment of books.

In Reception, pupils are initially given picture books. These give pupils the opportunity to learn how books work, including which way they are held and how pages should be turned. Students are encouraged to look at the illustrations to find out what is happening in the story. Letter sounds are then taught each day and pupils are taught to blend the sounds together to read words. We do this by following the RWInc programme. Set 1 sounds are taught first, followed by Set 2 and finally Set 3. Our aim is to prepare children to learn to read and provide them with strategies to decode so they can become fluent readers.

In KS1, children read every day from a phonically matched RWInc Reading book as part of their daily lesson. Revisiting RWInc reading books during the school week and at home, with parents and carers, allows children to become confident with the text and supports their progression as readers.

In KS2, children share a book every day in a whole class reading session. These books are purposefully selected to challenge yet engage. During the course of a week, all children will have the opportunity to listen to the teacher model reading (including 'echo' reading), discuss unknown vocabulary, read independently both aloud and silently and read a book of choice for pleasure. During these morning sessions, there is also a time set aside to quiz on the Accelerated Reader book that has been read at home. Parents and carers are requested to sign reading diaries to support this home reading.

Our daily story time session (1-2 times a week in KS2) allows children to listen to stories from the five plagues or purposefully selected books from the year group's Top 20. This provides them with opportunities to listen to and discuss books from a



wide variety of authors and at a level which is often above their independent reading ability. Children also have an area of their classroom that houses quality texts linked to the Topic they are learning about in the afternoon.

Reading comprehension is taught weekly and during these lessons, children encounter a variety of different genres. Children are exposed to retrieval, inference, summarising and prediction questions and are also encouraged to make links between texts.

We aim to enrich pupils' vocabulary through the use of high quality texts and discussion in lessons. Word banks and word walls are created and vocabulary is modelled by staff throughout the day. This provides a vocabulary rich environment for the children and broadens the range of words they can use in their writing. Our English lessons develop children's spoken language, handwriting and phonics knowledge, developing their ability to apply these, along with taught spelling rules, to their written work. In Key Stage 1, each unit of work begins with children learning a new story and discussing their understanding. Using the Talk for Writing method, children rehearse and retell the story before moving on to create a piece of writing on a linked theme in a different genre. In Key Stage 2, we have recently implemented elements of the Jane Considine approach: The Write Stuff, which focuses heavily on sentence construction and the use of rich and varied vocabulary.

During each writing unit, children are taught and learn how to use grammar features that link to the genre being studied. A range of text, word and sentence level activities are taught that cover the year group objectives. Teachers also include books by different authors on the same theme to further develop children's knowledge and understanding of a topic. Through the sequence of lessons, children are provided with multiple writing opportunities to demonstrate their newly acquired vocabulary and sentence knowledge. At the end of each unit, children complete an independent piece of writing that draws in all of the teaching from the lessons allowing children to showcase their writing.

Whenever pupils write, we believe they should be encouraged to take pride in their work and its presentation. All children in KSI are taught handwriting in 10 minute



slots at the start of each English lesson using the Nelson Handwriting Scheme. By using this scheme, we aim to develop all children's ability to write in a neat, legible and joined style in line with curriculum expectations. KS2 continues with this scheme in weekly lessons.

## **Impact**

At Saint Bernadette's we endeavour to make sure that our student's attainment is in line with or exceeds their potential when baseline starting points are considered. It is our intention that the number of pupils working at Age Related Expectations and Greater Depth within each year will at least be in line with the national average. We hope to see progress, sustained concentration in increasingly longer pieces of writing and perseverance when accessing a longer, more complex text. We aim to see children developing a wide range of vocabulary and skills they can transfer to other subjects.

We hope that as children move through their school life, their creativity and passion for reading and writing grows and develops with them. We hope the impact of our English curriculum will ensure our pupils are academically prepared for their journey beyond primary school.