

## **Academic Year 2024-25**

### **Intent for the teaching and learning of English**

Our intent for English at St Austin's is to promote high standards of literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for pleasure. We believe that literacy and communication are key life skills. Through the English curriculum, we will help children develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively through spoken and written language and equip them with the skills to become lifelong learners. We want children to enjoy and appreciate literature and its rich variety. In English we have high expectations for all learners, regardless of their needs or starting point.

### **Implementation**

At St Austin's we want all of our pupils to be capable readers, writers, spellers and speakers who can transfer their English skills to other curriculum subjects and who are prepared for the next stage of their education.

Reading is a priority. Children are taught phonics through the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised program. It is a systematic and fast paced approach to the teaching of phonics starting in the first couple of weeks of reception. The children are taught to apply their phonic skills by reading decodable books that closely matched to their phonics level. All teachers and support staff are fully trained in the Little Wandle program. Fluency, automaticity, prosody and comprehension skills are taught through small group reading sessions in KS1 and through whole class reading lessons in KS2. All teachers read a book or poem to their classes each day to promote reading for pleasure. We encourage our children to visit the library and take children to our school library so they can borrow a book to read at home. Parents are given reading guidance and clear expectations about the importance of reading at home.

Writing is taught through the Power of Reading which is an approach that uses high quality books and creative teaching approaches. Children are exposed to a wide variety of quality core texts that span a plethora of genres. Nonfiction writing is taught in discrete blocks using our non-fiction writing guides which are used throughout the school from Nursery to Year 6.

We develop writing skills so our children have the stamina and ability to write at the age expected standard.

Poetry will be taught in distinct blocks throughout the year (one per term). The children will be subjected to a range of classic and modern poetry covering a range of genres. Poetry genres will be revisited through the school and children will have the opportunity to explore and analyse poems as well as writing their own.

We know the value of excellent vocabulary and this is practiced and developed across our curriculum. Where necessary pupils in the lowest 20% of attainers will receive targeted and structured intervention such as 'keep up' sessions in KS1, rapid catchup sessions and precision teaching in KS2.

Pupils with SEND will require an emphasis on small steps with scaffolding and modelling to enable them to achieve the expected objectives within the lesson.

We celebrate World Book Day and National Poetry Day and our parent association organise regular book fairs.

### **Impact**

Through the teaching of systematic phonics, our aim is for children to become fluent readers by the end of key stage one. Attainment in reading is measured by using the statutory assessments at the end of key stage one and two. These results are compared against the reading attainment of children nationally. During three formative assessment periods **children's reading fluency and comprehensions are assessed** and children are assessed summative in reading lessons throughout the week.

In year 3, children who have not met the national expectation for reading in KS1 and/or have not yet passed the phonics screening check will undertake a 'rapid catch-up' phonics intervention to ensure that they can access the KS2 reading curriculum.

In Key Stage 2, the whole class reading approach gives the children the opportunity to improve their fluency by reading aloud or in pairs or echoing the teacher. The focus on the questions is primarily developing the children's retrieval and inference skills and children have the chance to work individually and in pairs to discuss answers.

Identified children, who are working below the national expectation in reading, will still partake in Guided Reading sessions with the Learning Support Officer and some children will still read one to one daily to aide their progress in fluency and comprehension.

Phonics is measured in half termly checks to ensure that pupils are placed in the correct reading groups and to identify children who may need further support to 'keep up'.

Teachers use the feedback policy when marking and assessing children's writing in order to identify gaps that need to be taught and next steps for learning. Spelling mistakes are corrected by the children in their English books and added to their spelling logs to ensure that these mistakes are not repeated. Spelling rules are taught in discrete spelling lessons (3 per week). Spelling is high profile in the school and every class has a spelling and vocabulary wall in order to display spelling rules and to maintain high standards of spelling across all subjects.

Regular book looks are undertaken by the subject leaders and senior management team to identify good practice and whether the curriculum is having the impact we intend.