



Policy Statement for Vocabulary, Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (VGPS)

Statement of Policy

To ensure that all children are taught vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and spelling in a systematic, methodical and accumulative manner. It will be reviewed every two years.

Curriculum Intent

At Holy Name we are determined that every pupil will have the ability to read fluently, with understanding and to write legibly, with meaning. We do not see background, needs or abilities as insurmountable barriers to learning. We want them to have no limits to what their ambitions are and grow up with the skills to be authors, script writers, researchers and editors. We believe that all of our children are **STARS** with the potential to shine. The English curriculum has been structured so that our children develop their reading and writing skills and knowledge (in line with National Curriculum milestones) by building upon prior learning. We want our children to remember their English lessons in our school, reaching learning milestones at key points in their school life. We want them to build upon previous knowledge, year upon year, so that they have a foundation for their continued school life and life beyond school.

Aims

The teaching of VGPS at Holy Name aims to develop pupil's abilities to:

- speak, read and write with confidence, fluency, understanding and control;
- use the rules of language and punctuation to learn and communicate;
- understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately;
- expand their knowledge of language so that they can understand increasingly more challenging texts, recognise synonyms and



- antonyms of familiar words and confidently use a wide variety of vocabulary to alter shades of meaning to express their ideas;
- use their knowledge and understanding of VGPS to edit and correct their own (and each other's) spoken and written language.

Curriculum Implementation

Vocabulary

Acquiring and being able to command vocabulary should not be left to chance. Vocabulary (across the curriculum) should be developed actively and systematically, building on pupils' current knowledge. Pupils' store of words should be built up and pupils should be encouraged to investigate links between known and unfamiliar words. Pupils should also be allowed time to investigate the shades of meaning in similar words. **It is particularly important that pupils become aware of subject specific vocabulary in relation to mathematics and science (and the other curriculum subjects).**

An extensive use of vocabulary should be demonstrated and promoted by all staff on an ongoing and continuous basis.

Grammar and Punctuation

There should be a focus on grammar within the teaching of reading, writing and speaking. All opportunities should be grasped to reinforce the correct use of grammar in all subjects and settings (formal and informal). All opportunities should be taken by **all** staff to promote and reinforce the correct use of Standard English.

Once pupils are familiar with a particular grammatical concept (for example suffix) they should be encouraged to apply this knowledge in their spoken and written language. They should also be encouraged to explore the concept in their reading and noting when it is used by others.

Be aware that spoken language tends to be more complex than written language and teachers should build on this to aim for a smooth transition to mature, sophisticated written language.



It is essential that the content of previous year groups be revisited by teachers in subsequent years to consolidate previous learning. It is equally important that teachers go beyond the content set out for their year group if they feel that individual pupils are capable of tackling more challenging grammar.

There is to be a “zero tolerance” attitude towards use of incorrect grammar amongst pupils and staff. It is expected that staff will tactfully correct pupils, and indeed, each other if incorrect grammar is used in written or spoken language.

The promotion of good use of grammar and punctuation is ongoing and continuous; it should be promoted in all lessons and school situations. **Every** opportunity should be taken to reinforce correct use of grammatical rules and conventions, and use of punctuation.

There should also be discrete teaching of (age appropriate) punctuation and grammar as specified in the framework document and Grammar Guide within English lessons. Teachers should plan for and facilitate opportunities for pupils to encounter, practise and apply new punctuation and grammatical features in their English units. This should then be extended to speaking & listening and writing opportunities in other curriculum areas.

Pupils must be taught the correct terminology for grammatical terms and must come to recognise and use such terminology themselves.

Spelling

Spelling is developed through a strong and systematic emphasis on the teaching of phonics and other word skills including: discrimination between the separate sounds in words; learning the letters and letter combinations most commonly used to spell sounds; reading words by sounding out and blending their separate parts; and writing words by combining the spelling patterns of their sounds.

Phonics is to be taught four days per week across EYFS and key stage 1, those in lower key stage 2 who are working towards PSC



will receive intervention lessons to help them achieve expected standard.

Spelling is to be taught daily in key stage 2 as part of daily English lessons. In Friday's lesson the spelling pattern will be applied in a mixture of familiar and unfamiliar words.

Spelling is also developed through:

- weekly learning of spelling rules and conventions according to year and ability groups (spelling is best approached by teaching pupils **about** words and rules – for example by adding suffixes to root words- rather than simply learning lists of words by rote);
- the encouragement of dictionary and thesaurus use;
- activities around autonomous strategies for spelling;
- regular learning of high and medium frequency words;
- Use of spelling logs, word banks and spell checks.

Phonic knowledge and its application should continue to underpin pupils' approach to spelling in Key Stage 2. However, in Key Stage 2 other aids to spelling should be increasingly used (for example morphology, etymology and word families)

Feedback to Pupils

Pupils should be given regular feedback about their progress in VGPS verbally and in writing (in accordance with the school's Feedback Policy).

Homework

English homework is issued regularly and can be used to support VGPS.

Special Educational Needs

Pupils who are identified as having S.E.N.D are given support through a range of strategies in line with the current S.E.N.D policy including differentiated work during English lessons and additional support as identified in their One Page Pupil Profile.



Account is taken of the range of abilities, including the Gifted and Talented.

Curriculum Impact

Formative Assessment

This is used to guide the progress of individual pupils in English. It involves identifying each pupil's progress in each aspect of the subject, determining what each pupil has learned and what therefore, should be the next stage in his/her learning. Formative assessment is mostly carried out informally by teachers in the course of their teaching via:

- hearing children's use of grammar in one to one context;
- individual/group discussion and observation;
- responses to a range of tasks;
- individual discussions with the teacher in which children are encouraged to appraise their own work and progress;
- the process of self-assessment by pupils, guided by the teacher who makes clear the success criteria by which the pupils will judge their work.

Summative Assessment

This takes place at the end of each Key Stage, through SATs and teacher assessment. There are also termly assessments for Years 1 up to 6. Each pupil is tracked from Year 1 onwards to ensure progression. Baseline assessment is carried out during the first half of the Autumn Term for children entering Reception. Pupils are assessed in both reading and writing.

Reporting to Parents/Carers

Reporting to parents/carers is done three times a year through interviews and annually through a written report. Reporting English focuses on each child's progress in all of the strands.



Parents are informed of the topics that their child will cover during that term through the school website.

Equal Opportunities

As required in the general statement of inclusion, all pupils, regardless of gender, race or disability, have full access to the English Programme of Study as set out in the National Curriculum.

Health and Safety

All lessons and activities are undertaken within the precautions set out in the school Health and Safety policy.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

When teaching VGPS, staff contribute to the children's spiritual and moral development where possible.