

# St. Peter's C of E Primary & Nursery School



## English Policy

Policy reviewed: May 2023  
Next review: May 2024

'Unlocking the gates to a lifelong love of learning and faithfulness'

"Start children off in the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it" Proverbs 22:6

### **St. Peter's Mission Statement**

At St Peter's C of E Primary & Nursery School, the growth and development of children and adults is central to everything we do. We aim to provide an education which inspires every child to be the best they can be. As a Church school, our ethos is rooted in distinctive Christian beliefs and values whilst embracing diversity, respecting other faiths and worshipping together.

At St. Peter's we work together to provide an inspiring, inclusive and creative learning experience for all of our children. Our welcoming and safe environment, encourages everyone to be happy, resilient and enthusiastic learners. This enables all of our children to take risks and experience life in all its fullness. We aim to nurture the whole child and celebrate them as unique individuals. Our hope for our children is to leave St. Peter's with confidence, prepared for their future and to go 'beyond expectation'.

We value our excellent relationship with parents, carers, governors, the Church and the wider community. We encourage everyone to take an active role in all aspects of school life, promoting a sense of pride and living together well. Together we develop a community of love and dignity in which everyone feels valued, cared for and supported, celebrating the uniqueness of each individual because they are made in the image of God.

We support all our school community to have the positivity, courage and perseverance, to become independent learners who thrive on challenge. We help all our pupils to appreciate that the best successes in life often have the foundations of failed attempts.

We believe in taking care of the development of the whole child: educationally, culturally, socially, emotionally, physically, morally and spiritually.

We promote the highest standards of achievement by all pupils regardless of ability, religion, ethnic origin or gender.

*As a community, we are unlocking the gates to a lifelong love of learning which will always remain open.*

### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion statement**

St Peter's C of E Primary & Nursery School is committed to valuing diversity by providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children and families. We also value our staff and are committed to good employment practice.

St Peter's C of E Primary & Nursery School seeks to ensure that no member of the school community, or any person through their contact with the school, will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of a protected characteristic. These include: race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, marital status, responsibility for children or other dependents, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, trade union or political activities, socio-economic background, living situation, or spent convictions.

In this we include all members of the extended school community – pupils, staff, Governors, Parents / carers and others from our local community. Partners, contractors and other visitors to the school are also expected to adhere to this policy.

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## 1 Aims

1.1 The primary aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and 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 enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

*(National Curriculum 2014)*

## 1.2 Principles of the Teaching and Learning of English

**English** is important because:

- it is the basic language of communication in our society
- it is the foundation for almost all the learning which takes place in our school
- its mastery empowers the learner and is essential for independent learning, the world of work and most other aspects of everyday life

**English** is a core subject in the National Curriculum. The fundamental skills, knowledge and concepts of the subject are set out in the three programmes of study:

- spoken language
- reading (inc. word reading & comprehension)
- writing (inc. transcription, composition, and vocabulary, grammar & punctuation)
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## 2 Teaching and Learning

2.1 We use a variety of teaching styles in order to teach English effectively. The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework is followed to ensure continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage into the National Curriculum in Key Stage One and through into Key Stage Two. The aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding in English.

In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One, the children are taught to read and write using Ruth Miskin's 'Read, Write Inc.' programme. The nursery children (FS1) and the Reception (FS2) children are taught Read, Write Inc in separate groups as the nursery scheme of work is obviously very different to the Reception scheme. After Easter, those children who demonstrate a good phonic knowledge, and an emerging ability to write independently, will move into the Green Read, Write Inc group which is taught outside the Foundation Stage Unit. This also acts as a useful transition for the children's move to Key Stage One. Read, Write Inc is taught for one hour each morning in Key Stage One as well as an English lesson.

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Aspects of English are also taught throughout the school day in most curriculum areas.

## 2.2 Teaching children to read, write and spell using 'Read, Write Inc'

At St. Peter's, we teach 'Read, Write Inc' lessons every day for one hour.

The children are taught according to ability and assessments are carried out approximately every six weeks by Yvonne Reeson (Reading Leader) and Anita Turner. Performance in these assessments determines the group that the child will work in. Most children in Key Stage Two will be taught English by their own class teacher although a small number of pupils may still need 'Read, Write Inc' lessons in Year 3 between September and Christmas.

**2.3** The English National Curriculum and the 'Read, Write Inc' programme are supplemented by handwriting, Oxford spelling and group/class reading activities.

We look for opportunities to promote English skills through all areas of the curriculum.

**2.4** Computing is implemented throughout the school to enhance learning, e.g. interactive TVs for delivery, ICT for presentation of work such as PowerPoint and Word and the videoing of work. Visualisers are widely used to look at published texts, images and children's work.

## 3 Speaking & Listening

### 3.1 Objectives

To ensure that children are able to:

- formulate, clarify and express their ideas
- express themselves in a variety of situations using language which is appropriate to their needs and the intended audience
- listen, understand and respond appropriately to others
- use, with increasing confidence, the vocabulary and grammar of standard English

### 3.2 Strategies

- All pupils have a Talk Partner that changes on a weekly basis. Children are encouraged to discuss their ideas with their Talk Partner before they answer a question. This allows them to verbalise their ideas before they answer in front of the class and gives them the chance to listen to the ideas of others, giving the children support and confidence.
- **We have a 'no hands up' policy!**
- We use a lolly stick system to select children to answer questions so that **all** children have the same opportunities to contribute to class discussions and question & answer sessions. Children may also be selected by their number in the register or a number on their chair. Using multiple methods of selecting children means that once their lolly stick has been drawn out, they will continue to pay attention as other methods of selection are employed.
- Pupils will be encouraged to ask and answer questions and to express and justify their opinions
- Pupils will have the opportunity to speak to a range of audiences and for a range of purposes
- Pupils will be able to listen and respond appropriately to varied stimuli (e.g. television, visitors, group discussions)
- Opportunities will be established for role play, oral composition, retelling of stories, drama, presentations and discussion and debate (for older pupils) as appropriate

**3.3** Children will be given every opportunity to verbalise their thoughts and ideas before being expected to commit them to a permanent record.

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### 3.4 Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a strong indicator of reading success (National Literacy Trust, 2017). We know from research that the size of a child's vocabulary is the best predictor of success on future tests. Children with a poor vocabulary at five are four times more likely to struggle with reading in adulthood (Why Closing the Word Gap Matters: Oxford Language Report, 2018). At St. Peter's, we also know that a good understanding of a wide range of vocabulary supports success across the whole national curriculum. Therefore, pupils are regularly taught new vocabulary in all areas of the curriculum.

Developing vocabulary occurs in two ways:

- Through indirect instruction; using rich reading experiences to grow vocabulary 'naturally.' Paying attention to context to work out meaning and using background knowledge.
- AND Through direct 'robust' instruction. Good vocabulary instruction involves...
  1. Decisions about which words to teach
  2. Decisions and expertise around how to teach these words

Vocabulary learning is taught in a fun and active way across the curriculum and innovative ideas such as the use of digital technology used.

Teachers carefully select vocabulary they want to directly teach. Teachers plan direct instruction for tier two words, as they can have a powerful impact on verbal functioning and be applied to a range of different situations (Beck et al, 2013).

**Tier 3: words either limited to specific domains (think science and maths vocabulary for example) or extremely rare words.**

Tier 2: words that tend to be used in written language and that are versatile/have high utility (e.g. occurrence, tended, haunting, fortune)

Tier 1: words typically found in oral language (likely to be known, used, or encountered without design)

Beck et al 2002.

**3.5** Drama, 'Talk for Writing' and the use of Talk Partners are key elements in the acquisition of spoken language skills.

## 4 Reading

### 4.1 Objectives

To ensure that children are able to:

- master their initial reading skills so that they become independent and enthusiastic readers
- read a range of texts fluently, accurately and with understanding
- find out the information they need in order to research and answer the questions of others
- understand the variety of written language and the differences between fiction and non-fiction
- understand and respond to a wide range of books and media texts
- improve their abilities to analyse, evaluate and criticise texts which they have read

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## 4.2 Strategies

- Shared reading including listening to high quality fiction selected by the class teacher, as a class, on a daily basis.
- Independent reading
- Paired reading (with a fellow pupil or a volunteer in school)
- In Key Stage Two, the children's reading skills are developed, in part, by the use of 'Reading Plus' which is an adaptive literacy program that improves fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, stamina, and motivation.
- Home reading with parents/carers or other readers
- Reading in Read, Write Inc lessons – predominantly EYFS and Key Stage One pupils although a small number of lower ability pupils may still need this programme beyond Key Stage One.

When using RWI to read the children will:

- learn 44 sounds and the corresponding letter/letter groups using simple picture prompts
- learn to read words using Fred Talk
- read lively stories featuring words they have learned to sound out
- show that they comprehend the stories by answering questions.
- learn to read effortlessly so that they can put all their energy into comprehending what they read

Reading is encouraged across a wide range of fiction and poetry and non-fiction in most areas of the curriculum

## 4.3 Reading books

**The allocation of reading books is the responsibility of the class teacher. Books should be changed on a regular basis, according to the criteria below.**

All children who are working on the 'Read, Write Inc' programme will be given reading books as follows:

1. Read, Write Inc 'Book Bag Books' according to the 'Read Write Inc' Stage that the child is working at  
The child will not have read this book before but will have the phonic knowledge to sound out and read the words.
2. The Read, Write Inc teacher will send the group reading book home at the end of the week. The child will be familiar with this book and should read it with confidence and fluency. This book will include a list of green and red words along with Speedy Green words (found on the back page of the book) which should be read with fluency and accuracy. These books must only be sent home with the child, once he/she has 'experienced' the book at part of the Read, Write Inc group lessons.
3. A 'real' book or Book Banded book to be read by the parent/carer alongside the child. This book will include words that are probably beyond the reading ability of the child but should be 'read' for pleasure. The child may also develop word shape recognition through this.

Once children are able to read the 'Read Write Inc' Set Three sounds (Yellow group), and can apply these to the decoding of a word, home reading books will include Book Banded books. The appropriate colour reading band will be identified using the Big Cat Reading Assessment tool. The Big Cat program also assesses the child's understanding of what he/she has read. The vocabulary in the Book Banded books (the ones with the coloured stickers) will include vocabulary that the child should be able to decode because of secure phonetic knowledge alongside 'red' words that are not phonetically decodeable. For example:

1. 'Read, Write Inc' Book Bag Book – orange, yellow or blue according to group
2. 'Read, Write Inc' group book at the end of the week – yellow or blue
3. Book Banded book selected using the Two Eskimos Assessment tool

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Beyond 'Read, Write Inc', children should be given Book Banded Books to read until they have sufficient fluency and competent comprehension and inference skills to become a 'free' reader. 'Free' readers should be monitored to ensure that children are reading appropriately challenging texts.

It is very important to recognise a child 'barking at print' without an understanding of the book. A child may be very efficient at decoding words and/or be familiar with 'red' words, but without understanding, reading is pointless.

Hearing children read on a 1:1 basis is extremely time consuming. In the EYFS and at Key Stage One, all children should be heard to read once a week in school, by an adult, as a minimum. However, unless a child is working below Age Related Expectations, it is not an effective use of time to hear children on a more regular basis.

At the EYFS and Key Stage One, home reading books should be read several times to ensure fluency and understanding. This should be indicated by the parent/carer in the child's reading record.

Once the child's reading ability is beyond a 'Read, Write Inc' level, books may be read once through at the teacher's discretion.

The lower 20% of pupils in KS2 are heard to read more regularly to improve fluency and understanding through questioning about the text.

**All children are expected to read at least three times each week at home and this should be monitored by the class teacher.** The Reading Record should be signed by the parent/ carer, not the child. The following details should be included: title of book, pages read. A comment is preferable but not essential. In Class 3, the children are expected to write a brief comment about their thoughts about the text in the Reading Record. If parents/carers are not reading three times each week with their child(ren), a letter reminding them about the Home/School Agreement relating to reading should be sent home. If this has no effect, the Head Teacher should be informed.

Books should only be changed by the class teacher. This ensures that she has a good understanding of what the child has read and is reading and the quality of this. Books should not be changed if a parent/ carer has not signed the Reading Record. If a child is really not enjoying a book, following discussion with the parent/carer, a book may be changed. However, this should not be done on a regular basis.

## 5 Writing

### 5.1 Objectives

To ensure that children are able to:

- express themselves clearly and precisely for enjoyment
- demonstrate their understanding of how writing enables them to remember, communicate, organise and develop their ideas and information
- write for an increasing range of purposes matching their language to the needs of the appropriate audiences
- understand the appropriate use and purpose of an increasing range of written forms
- write neatly and with accurate spelling and expression

### 5.2 Strategies

Children will be encouraged to develop a joy in writing by:

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- writing for a range of purposes and audiences
- being shown good models of writing by their teachers
- self & peer-assessing their writing

## 5.2 Read, Write Inc

When using Read, Write Inc to write, the children will:

- learn to write the letters/letter groups which represent 44 sounds using recognised Read, Write Inc phrases e.g. a = round the apple and down the leaf.
- learn to write words by saying the sounds in Fred Talk
- write simple sentences

## 5.3 Approaches to writing

- Writing skills are also developed through the use of a 'Talk for Writing' approach in the Foundation Stage. This approach involves becoming 'immersed' in a text, creating story maps and re-telling the story using standard actions; producing examples of shared writing through modelling by the class teacher and class discussions, and independent writing using the familiar structure of the story to provide a framework.
- Read, Write Inc takes place throughout Key Stage One. The children also have a daily English lesson that uses the Talk for Writing approach for fiction themes, alongside grammar and vocabulary lessons.
- At Key Stage Two, English is taught through a daily English lesson. In lower Key Stage Two, the Talk for Writing approach is used for fiction themes. Any child who is working significantly below the Age Related Expectations in English, may return to the Yellow Stage Read, Write Inc group in order to develop basic reading and writing skills until Christmas.
- In the upper Key Stage Two class, English lessons are based upon high quality texts for both fiction and non-fiction learning.

## 5.4 Handwriting

Handwriting writing will initially be taught through the Read, Write Inc scheme of work, as outlined in 5.2. During Key Stage One, the children will be taught how to join their letters in a cursive style by the class teacher. Joined up letter formation is based on the 'Beat Dyslexia' scheme of work.

## 6 Spelling

**6.1** Frequently misspelt words are practised in order to encourage the spelling to become firmly embedded.

**6.2** We use Ruth Miskin's 'Read, Write Inc' programme to teach spelling primarily in the Foundation Stage and for much of Key Stage One. This is a method of learning focused upon letter sounds and phonics, and it is used to aid children in their reading and writing.

When learning to spell using the 'Read, Write Inc' programme, children:

- learn to write the letters/letter groups which represent 44 sounds.
- learn to write words by saying the sounds using 'Fred Talk', 'special friends' and the learning of red words.

'Read, Write Inc' allows children to spell effortlessly so that they can put all their energy into composing what they write.

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**6.3** Those pupils who do not take part in a Read, Write Inc group, most Key Stage Two pupils and some Key Stage One, will be taught spelling using the Ruth Miskin 'Spelling' resource. Children in Key Stage Two are taught spelling rules using the Ruth Miskin Spelling scheme of work.

**6.4** Children will also be encouraged to take part in spelling investigations and spelling tests on a regular basis.

## **7 Resources**

A range of commercially produced texts and schemes are used as appropriate, including:

- Read, Write Inc
- Ruth Miskin's 'Spelling' at Key Stage Two
- Colour-banded (Book Bands), fiction and non-fiction reading books
- Pie Corbett's 'Talk for Writing' books
- Newspapers, magazines, comics, websites, blogs and pamphlets

## **7 English Curriculum Planning**

**7.1** We use the English Programme of Study in the National Curriculum as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements for the subject at Key Stages One and Two and the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework for pupils in the Foundation Stage.

**7.2** We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). Our yearly teaching programme identifies the key objectives we teach to in each year. There is a broad focus on different types of genre throughout the year.

**7.3** Our medium-term English plans give details of the main teaching objectives for each term and define what we teach. They ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. These plans are kept and reviewed by the subject leader.

**7.5** The class teacher completes the weekly plans for the teaching of English. These weekly plans identify the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson, and give details of how the lessons are to be taught.

**7.6** All planning for 'Read, Write Inc' is produced as part of the scheme.

**7.7** English 'lessons/ activities may also include school visits (e.g. to the theatre or library) and visits to the school from authors, puppeteers and/or poets.

## **8 The Foundation Stage**

**8.1** In the Foundation Stage, we relate the English aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, which underpins the planning for children aged three to five. We give all the children ample opportunity to develop their understanding of speaking & listening, reading and writing through varied activities that allow them to enjoy, explore, practise and talk confidently about English.

**8.2** All children in the Foundation Stage are introduced to the initial sounds (alphabet) as soon as they start school, using the 'Read, Write Inc' approach.

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When FS children can recognise all of their initial sounds and can make the 'pure' sound that the letter represents, they will be moved up into the 'Ditty' book group where they will be taught to blend and will also be introduced to the first set of 'special friends'.

## **9 Contribution of teaching English in other curriculum areas**

### **9.1 Maths**

The teaching of English contributes significantly to children's understanding of maths in our school by actively promoting the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. For example, we expect children to read and interpret problems in order to identify the maths involved. They are also improving their command of English when they explain and present their work to others during plenary sessions. Younger children enjoy stories and rhyme that rely on counting and sequencing while older children encounter mathematical vocabulary, graphs and charts when reading non-fiction texts.

### **9.2 Personal, social and health education (PSHE)**

English contributes to the teaching of PSHE. The work that children do outside their normal lessons encourages independent study and helps them to become increasingly responsible for their own learning. The planned activities that children do within the classroom encourage them to work together and respect each other's views. We present older children with real-life situations in their English work; e.g. on the spending of money.

### **9.3 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

The teaching of English supports the social development of our children through the way we expect them to work with each other in lessons. We group children so that they can work together and we give them the chance to discuss their ideas and results.

## **10 English and Computing**

**10.1** Computing enhances the teaching of English significantly because it is particularly useful for language tasks. It also offers ways of impacting on learning which are not possible with conventional methods. Teachers can use software to present information visually, dynamically and interactively so that children understand concepts more quickly.

## **11 English and inclusion**

**11.1** At our school, we teach English to all children, whatever their ability and individual needs. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our English teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details see separate policies: Special Educational Needs; Single Equality; Gifted and Talented; English as an Additional Language (EAL).

**11.2** When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs – the child may either have learning difficulties or be gifted and talented. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against expected levels. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

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**11.3** Intervention will lead to the creation of a provision map for children with special educational needs. This provision map may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to English.

**11.4** We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning English. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

## **12 Assessment for learning**

**12.1** Teachers will assess children's work in English from three aspects (long-term, medium-term and short-term). We use short-term, formative assessments to help adjust planning on a day-to-day basis. These short-term assessments are closely matched to the learning objectives.

**12.2** Assessments are carried out to measure progress in reading and writing against the key objectives and to help plan the next unit of work. Formative teacher assessments take place continuously although they are recorded on the EAZMAG tracking program half termly in October, February and July.

**12.3** More formal, summative assessments take place at the end of November, March and May – to coincide with the National End of Key Stage SATs. These are used to assess progress against school and national targets, and National Curriculum expectations.

**12.4** Following assessments in the summer term, targets are set for the next school year and a summary of progress for each child is made, before reporting this to parents in the end of year report. We pass this information on to the next teacher at the end of the year, as relevant, so that s/he can plan for the new school year. Year 6 test data and reports are sent to the pupils' secondary schools.

**12.5** We make the long-term assessments using a variety of assessment information. We use the national tests for children in Year 6. End of Key Stage 1 assessments are completed on the basis of the class teacher's ongoing assessments which can be supported by the published test materials. Results of non-statutory tests in Years 1, 3, 4 and 5 along with teacher assessments, are used in those year groups.

**12.6** Samples of children's work will be kept as part of our ongoing development in English moderation. Individual examples of work can be reviewed against the National Curriculum programmes of study.

**12.7** Writing is moderated termly with other local schools.

## **13 Home-School Links**

**13.1** We encourage parents and carers to support their children's English learning at home by encouraging them to:

- Talk to their children in order to help ensure the development of good vocabulary over time.
- Hear their children read regularly at home, and to talk about what they have read; three or four times a week is recommended.
- Help with the learning of spelling rules.
- Monitor, and assist with as required, the English homework they are given.
- Maintain an interest in the child's individual targets in English.

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**13.2** Parents and carers are always welcome to speak to their child's class teacher (in the first instance) or the head teacher, about any aspect of English provision in school.

#### **14 Links to Key Stage 3**

**14.1** Links are encouraged with the secondary schools that we send children to, particularly Retford Oaks Academy, South Axholme Academy at Epworth and Queen Elizabeth High School, Gainsborough.

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#### **15 Resources**

**15.1** All classrooms have an interactive TV and learning displays. Dictionaries and thesauruses are available in all classrooms. A range of support resources is available from Anita's room. The library contains books to support children's individual research.

#### **16 Monitoring and Review**

**16.1** Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the subject leader. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in their teaching, being informed about current developments in the subject and providing a strategic lead and direction for English in the school. The subject leader gives the headteacher an annual summary in which s/he evaluates strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and indicates areas for further improvement. Where appropriate, the head teacher allocates regular management time to the subject leader so that s/he can review samples of children's work, undertake pupil interviews and lesson observations of English teaching across the school. A named member of the school's governing body is briefed to oversee the teaching of English.

**16.2** This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

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