

# St. George's Catholic Voluntary Academy



## Writing Policy

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<i>Date Reviewed:</i>	<i>March 2026</i>
<i>Next Review:</i>	<i>March 2028</i>

## **Writing Policy**

St George's Catholic Voluntary Academy

### **Mission Statement**

**“Grow in faith; have faith in growing”**

At St George's Catholic Voluntary Academy, we believe that the ability to communicate clearly through writing is a fundamental life skill. As a Catholic school, we aim to nurture confident communicators who are able to express their ideas thoughtfully, creatively and with clarity. Through our English curriculum, we promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of spoken and written language.

We strive to develop pupils who enjoy writing and understand its power as a tool for communication, creativity and reflection.

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### **Curriculum Intent**

Through our English curriculum, St George's Catholic Voluntary Academy promotes high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language.

Pupils are supported to develop their love of writing through our Talk for Writing approach.

Our curriculum ensures that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- 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 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
- become competent in the arts of speaking and listening, including presenting ideas and participating in discussion and debate

We aim for all pupils to leave St George's as confident, independent writers who can write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences.

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## **Strong Foundations in Writing**

At St George's, we recognise that secure early foundations are essential for later success in writing. Through our whole-school Strong Foundations work, we have carefully reviewed and refined our writing curriculum to prioritise the most important knowledge and skills in the early years of school.

As a result:

- In EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2, the curriculum has been deliberately stripped back to allow greater time for pupils to develop the fundamental building blocks of writing.
- Greater emphasis is placed on:
  - oral language development
  - sentence construction
  - vocabulary development
  - transcription skills (handwriting, spelling and punctuation)
  - composition at sentence level

During these early stages, pupils primarily explore writing through the broad categories of:

- fiction
- non-fiction

Rather than introducing a large number of specific text types early on, we prioritise fluency, sentence control and confidence in writing.

It is towards the end of Year 2 that pupils begin to explore a wider range of text types in greater depth.

This approach ensures that pupils develop secure foundations which allow them to write with increasing independence, accuracy and creativity as they move through Key Stage 2.

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## **Talk for Writing**

Writing at St George's is taught through the Talk for Writing approach developed by Pie Corbett and Julia Strong.

Talk for Writing is powerful because it is grounded in the principles of how people learn, including:

- repetition
- rehearsal
- scaffolding
- careful management of cognitive load
- oral rehearsal prior to writing

These principles closely align with the way we structure our curriculum at St George's.

The Talk for Writing process follows three key stages:

### **1. Imitation**

Pupils learn and internalise a high-quality model text through storytelling, drama, actions and oral rehearsal. This stage allows pupils to absorb the language patterns, vocabulary and structures needed for writing.

### **2. Innovation**

Pupils adapt and manipulate the model text, making changes while still working within a familiar structure. This provides a scaffold for pupils to experiment with new ideas and vocabulary.

### **3. Independent Application**

Pupils apply their learning independently by writing their own text for a similar purpose and audience.

Through this process, pupils develop:

- a strong sense of how texts are structured
- an expanding vocabulary
- increasing independence as writers

At St George's, we have worked alongside a Talk for Writing consultant to refine and adapt this approach to meet the needs of our pupils.

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## **Curriculum Implementation**

### **The Writing Curriculum**

Writing teaching at St George's focuses on the two key components identified in the National Curriculum:

#### **Transcription**

This includes:

- spelling
- handwriting
- punctuation

### **Composition**

This includes:

- planning writing
- drafting and editing
- developing ideas
- structuring texts
- writing for purpose and audience

These areas are taught both discretely and within the wider writing curriculum.

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### **Spoken Language**

We recognise that talk is fundamental to writing. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to:

- orally rehearse sentences
- discuss ideas
- explain their thinking
- rehearse vocabulary
- perform and retell stories

This supports pupils in developing the language structures needed for successful writing.

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### **Vocabulary Development**

Developing pupils' vocabulary is a key priority. Teachers explicitly teach:

- ambitious vocabulary
- subject-specific vocabulary
- language patterns within texts

Pupils are encouraged to apply new vocabulary in their speaking and writing.

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### **Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling**

Grammar, punctuation and spelling are taught:

- explicitly through focused teaching
- within the context of writing lessons
- through editing and improving writing

Across the school, additional curriculum time has been allocated to the teaching of spelling in order to strengthen pupils' transcription skills and ensure secure progression.

Spelling is taught using the Ruth Miskin Spelling programme, which provides a clear and structured progression in spelling knowledge and strategies. This programme builds directly upon the phonics knowledge pupils develop through Read Write Inc., ensuring continuity in pupils' understanding of phoneme-grapheme correspondences and spelling patterns as they move beyond the phonics programme.

The progression of spelling and punctuation across the school is outlined in the Spelling and Punctuation Progression Document (Appendix).

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## **Handwriting**

Handwriting planned progressively and is taught explicitly and regularly across the school using the Martin Harvey Handwriting scheme. This structured programme supports pupils in developing correct letter formation, consistent sizing and spacing, and increasingly fluent and legible handwriting.

Through the programme, pupils are taught:

- correct letter formation
- joins and letter families
- consistent size and spacing
- fluency and stamina in writing

As pupils progress through the school, they are expected to develop increasingly fluent and automatic handwriting so that transcription becomes efficient and supports the quality and quantity of their written work.

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## **Assessment**

Writing is assessed using the Teacher Assessment Framework (TAF) model.

The TAF was originally developed for Year 2 and Year 6 national assessment, but alongside a working party of schools across Derby and Derbyshire, we have developed TAF-style frameworks for all year groups.

These frameworks:

- support teachers in identifying key writing objectives
- guide planning and teaching
- ensure consistency in assessment across the school

Teachers use a range of evidence to make assessment judgements, including:

- independent writing
- writing completed across the curriculum
- hot tasks and cold tasks
- day-to-day classwork

Assessment is used to:

- identify gaps in learning
  - inform future teaching
  - support pupils in making progress as writers.
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## **Moderation**

Moderation is an important part of ensuring consistency in writing assessment.

Moderation takes place:

- within year groups
- across the school
- with other schools within our network
- through local authority moderation where appropriate

This ensures that assessment judgements remain accurate and consistent.

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## **Inclusion**

At St George's, we believe that all pupils should have access to a high-quality writing curriculum.

Teachers support pupils by:

- adapting tasks
- providing scaffolding where necessary
- using oral rehearsal
- modelling writing
- providing targeted support

This ensures that all pupils, including those with SEND or additional needs, are able to make progress in writing.

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## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The quality of writing across the school is monitored by the Talk for Writing subject leader and the senior leadership team.

Monitoring includes:

- lesson observations
- book scrutiny
- pupil voice
- planning reviews
- moderation meetings
- assessment analysis

This ensures that the writing curriculum continues to develop and improve.

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## **Impact**

The impact of our writing curriculum is that pupils:

- develop confidence as writers
  - write clearly and accurately
  - use a growing and ambitious vocabulary
  - understand how writing changes depending on purpose and audience
  - demonstrate secure transcription skills
  - leave St George's prepared for the next stage of their education.
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## **Supporting documents**

The following documents support this policy and are available on the school website:

- Writing Progression Document
- Spelling and Punctuation Progression Document
- Teacher Assessment Frameworks for each year group

This policy was ratified by the LGB on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026