Children at St George’s Catholic School are encouraged to express themselves in Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing.

**Speaking and Listening**

Talking is fundamental to a pupil's learning. Pupils are encouraged and helped to talk clearly, confidently and with expression in order to communicate ideas and feelings. Similarly, and just as importantly, is the need to listen carefully and respond appropriately. All children are provided with opportunities in all areas of the curriculum to develop skills in speaking and listening. Teachers model quality speaking and listening. In order to respond to high numbers of EAL pupils, we offer where possible a practical experienced based curriculum which is wide and vocabulary rich.

**Reading**

One of the greatest gifts that we can give a child is the ability to read. We encourage children to read every day at home as reading regularly ensures children become more fluent and confident readers. We believe that reading should be an enjoyable activity, and our approach to reading is based on this. We employ a variety of techniques to ensure children have a 'love' of reading, which include : playtime reading clubs, a school library club, in school time library sessions with a dedicated librarian, curriculum linked whole class readers and shared reading texts, curriculum linked guided reading reading logs comprehension activities, reading buddies, a well-stocked reading scheme a Read Write Inc programme, daily in class reading, a Golden Ticket Scheme, a teacher book club, a poetry step, World Book Day fun, visiting authors, Skype chats with authors and a healthy Twitter account regularly used to promote reading and well followed by the Twitter community. We have an online reading resource called Bug Club to which every child had access. We have a new school library to ensure that children have experience of a real library where they can borrow and return books. At Key Stage 1 there is a greater emphasis on phonics and reading. At Key Stage 2 we extend and develop each child's reading skills. There is a Reading File in each classroom where teaching staff can easily access data and record information about a child’s reading. We have catch up programmes to hear priority readers. We have intervention programmes to ensure children are taught the skills they need on a one to one basis to enable them to close the gap.

**Writing**

Writing is best learned if children are encouraged to do it for real reasons - cards, letters, lists etc. We try to offer as many real reasons to write as possible. Children are encouraged to see marking comments as tips on how to improve their writing. We have an agreed marking scheme. Children are provided Toolkits and Success criteria and these support the writing process avoiding making it too hard too quickly (a response to pupil feedback). Teachers model writing and demonstrate themselves as writers who are ready to reflect upon and edit their work. Children are encouraged to polish their own work. Peer marking is well established across the school.

Children are given 'next steps’ or ‘wishes’ when they write and will improve their work accordingly. Time is given for them to do this. Handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar all play an important part in this process and although are taught as discrete skills we embed the learning in the writing process.

KS 1 use Literacy Shed Plus as a planning tool for writing.

We use Talk for Writing as a basis for our agreed writing sequence. Key Stage 1 focus on learning stories and using these as models for their own writing. We try hard to link oral and written story telling. We use Literacy and Language and Igniting Writing as resources to provide consistency of approach. We use Alan Peat Sentence Types for progression.

Attention is giving to handwriting style. At first children learn to form letters correctly and then they are taught a model joined script, so they are able to develop a neat, flowing style of their own. We use Nelson Handwriting resources.

**Phonics at St George’s**

**Aims: We aim to teach high quality phonics to ensure the children have the best start possible in reading and writing.**

Phonics is the beginning of the children's body of knowledge, skills and understanding that are an essential part of learning to read and write. In order to read and understand texts children must learn to recognise/decode the words on the page. Good quality phonic teaching secures the skills of word recognition and decoding which allow children to read fluently. This will result in children being able to read for pleasure, then move onto children developing comprehension skills. These phonic skills need to be taught systematically.

Our phonics planning is: - Time limited, such that all children should be fluent and confident readers by the end of Key Stage One. Children learn phonic skills best in the first few years of school. We use the Read W rite Inc Programme. - It follows a planned programme, building on previous learning to secure progress. - It is taught daily. It reinforces and applies acquired phonic knowledge and skills as they progress through their phonics.

Expectations within St George’s Primary School

Reception:- Children start by using the Read Write Inc programme in their reception year within the first few weeks of the first term. The actions for sounds are taught to the children. The actions are used to increase the children's confidence and prompt them whilst writing. Set 1 sounds are to be completed by the end of Reception. Children to be secure in these sounds and be having a good go at blending simple C V C words. All of the 45 reception words to be recognised.

Year 1:- During year 1 children will continue the Read W rite Inc programme and compete set 2 sounds. By the end of year one children should be confident with set 2 sounds. Year 2:- Children will complete the set 3 sounds. Children to be using these sounds in their spellings and sentences. We will continuously practise and revisit all sounds to ensure consolidation. The children are encouraged to put sounds into the context of their writing and given opportunities to use their phonic knowledge in their independent writing across all subjects.

KS2:- Children who have not achieved set 3 sounds by the end of year 2 need to be taught this through intervention programmes in year 3.

Assessment: Assessments are updated half termly on each child's phonics tracking sheet. Children will be tested regularly.

What we do if we feel a child is not making progress? - Try something else - we look at the needs of the children and change resources, teachers and groupings as needed.

The Wider Curriculum and Reading:

We fully support and promote both reading for pleasure and to gain knowledge. Everyday each class either reads or is read to: this is to foster the love of reading and its use as a tool for learning. In addition to this, to promote an appreciation of our rich and varied literary heritage, each year group have chosen ‘Books of the Term’, where each teacher commits time to read to their class. This book may be linked to the curriculum or may be an agreed classic text. Occasionally the teacher may take a class vote to foster the love of reading and will read aloud the top vote.

In Reception and Key Stage 1 discrete phonics lessons are taught daily. We follow the ‘Read Write Inc’ programme. We pride ourselves on the children actively participating in lessons and believe we facilitate excellence and enjoyment. In addition to phonics, guided reading sessions are planned to develop basic skills of prediction, sequencing, retrieval, and inference and understanding vocabulary. As the children transition into Key Stage 2, the focus shifts towards reading for meaning. The skills of prediction, retrieval, inference and understanding vocabulary are progressed further. To build on the skills previously mentioned, the children will also learn how to summarise texts, connect ideas, make comparisons and discuss how language choices contribute to the meaning of a given text. All of the above, are taught in discrete reading lessons, which are- where possible- linked to topic themes and English writing units to immerse children in a variety of genre and content. We believe this gives children the opportunity to deepen their understanding of not only the skills required for reading, but also the knowledge of a topic or genre. We use Head Start Materials for comprehension along with Deepening Understanding and the questions on texts in Literacy and language. Teachers create specific questions for chosen guided reading texts according to the skills they want the children to learn. Children are asked to give verbal or written answers on these texts. Lots of time is spent lingering over vocabulary before a text is read. We subscribe to the belief that vocabulary is vital. Children are guided to choose independent reading books from our scheme and have opportunities to read one to one to an adult through the week. Priority readers are heard more frequently. Reading Logs are checked in class weekly and by the Literacy coordinator at intervals through the year. The appropriateness of scheme books are checked on a regular basis and children are moved through the scheme by staff according to need.

In addition to reading lessons, St George’s subscribes to Resources for Learning, where we benefit from a library service. Each class has a plethora of books ranging from non-fiction, fiction and poetry which is linked to topics taught for children to read for pleasure and information. We fully encourage home-school links and for children to read at home. We endeavour to provide additional enrichment opportunities to promote the love of reading and storytelling through celebrating and participating in World Book Day, providing a variety of Reading Gazebos for the children to explore and running an annual book fayre for all children. In addition, we relish opportunities to take part in National Read Aloud Days, and the SLN Poetry Slam. We will be hosting our own Poetry Slam this year. We invite touring authors to inspire our children and have Skype interviews with authors. We have half termly WOW Events designed to inspire our children and often these are linked to writing opportunities. We have pen pals and reading buddies from other schools – we are paired with Lyngford Park. We are part of the Taunton a Reading Town hub group. We invite experts in to give talks to parents on the value of reading. We invite Taunton Library in to encourage the children to sign up to The Summer Reading Challenge. We have extreme reading events and lots of internal reading competitions. We visit the town library.