

# Promoting, Valuing and Celebrating Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling Achievements in a Christian Setting.

*'I am the Good Shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me.'* John 10:14

*"Grammar is ... the pole you grab to get your thoughts up on their feet and walking" Stephen King*  
*"Let grammar, punctuation and spelling into your life. Even the most energetic and wonderful mess needs to be turned into sentences." Terry Pratchett*

## St Paul's Church of England Junior School Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar (SPAG) Policy Statement

Grammar, punctuation and spelling play an important part in spoken language, reading and writing. The purpose of grammar teaching is to enable pupils to become conscious of patterns of language which they can apply in their own work to enhance meaning. The purpose of punctuation is to clarify the meaning of texts. Readers use punctuation to help make sense of written texts, while writers use punctuation to help communicate intended meaning to the reader. Grammar and punctuation are taught as part of English, following the guidelines of the 2014 Primary Curriculum and the teaching overview for Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation.

The table within the curriculum sets out when concepts should first be introduced, not necessarily when they should be completely understood. It is important to recognise that having been "exposed" to a concept, children may still not understand that concept by the end of the academic year. It is therefore paramount that content in earlier years be revisited in subsequent years to consolidate knowledge and build on pupils' understanding.

### Our Spelling Aims

At St Paul's CofE VC Junior School, we aim to:

- ✓ ensure phonic knowledge continues to underpin spelling after key stage 1
- ✓ understand the role of morphology and etymology (teachers can help pupils to understand relationships between meaning and spelling where these are relevant);
- ✓ re-visit what pupils have been taught about spelling in earlier years to ensure clear progression.
- ✓ help children to learn the rules and spell the words as part of the statutory National Curriculum.

Spelling is to be taught regularly and the words taught need to follow a spelling rule. Alongside this, the key words for each year group need to be taught. All spellings should be applied within written work. In Year 3, the children will continue to learn phonics where necessary, and then will follow spelling rules recommended in the National Curriculum, that supports children to learn and apply spelling patterns required for their age.

Spelling homework will be set and will be linked to the spelling rule and key words that have been taught that week. Children will be assessed on a regular basis. Spelling is differentiated and this can be done as follows:

- ✓ Bronze, silver and gold words on the spelling homework sheets
- ✓ By number of words, up to a maximum of 13 words.
- ✓ By length of word (e.g. past tense -ed ending is the rule, give higher ability child the word 'exclaimed' and a lower ability child the word 'asked').
- ✓ By task set (e.g. give higher ability children a dictation to fill in the blanks or they could practice using a dictionary or a thesaurus to find other words, whereas lower ability children just give the spelling list).

Once a spelling rule has been taught, teachers will use the marking key outlined in the Marking Policy to ensure that previously taught skills and knowledge are applied in writing across all subjects.

If there are children working below age-related expectations and they are unable to read the words being taught, then assessment of these children should take place and the objectives tracked back to previous year groups. If children are found to be particularly struggling with spelling, then intervention needs to be planned, for example, spelling detectives or precision teaching of High Frequency words.

Dictionaries are available in all classrooms for the children to use as well as High-Frequency word lists for children with greater need. Key vocabulary is available either on working walls, help boxes, on interactive whiteboard charts or handouts. Children are always reminded to write these words correctly. Children will attempt unknown words and write mis-spelt words in their individual spelling log at the back of their English book.

By the end of Y6, the majority of children are expected to correct any words they are unsure of independently.

### **Grammar and Punctuation**

Grammar is the body of rules that describes the structure of words and their derivations, phrases, clauses and sentences and underpins all activities based on language. Therefore, the use of correct grammar and punctuation applies to all subjects. There is an absolute expectation that all staff will model correct grammar to children in their speech and writing.

Grammar and punctuation will be taught within English lessons with SPAG starters featuring regularly.

During Guided Reading sessions, children will be asked to identify techniques that an author has used to convey meanings. Those techniques can be directly linked to punctuation, clauses and other grammatical structures. Furthermore, children will also be expected to read text passages aloud with correct pace and intonation based on both context and punctuation.

Speaking and listening activities in all subjects enable pupils to practise correct grammar in the form of recounting stories and information. This in turn will impact on children's ability to write using correct punctuation and grammar and is intended to develop the 'writing voice' of all children throughout school.

In addition to class-based activities, there will be opportunities for children to practise their speaking and listening skills to an audience (the Christmas production, The Easter Service, Class Worship, etc).

The marking policy will be applied to ensure that correct punctuation and grammar are applied in all writing tasks across all subjects.

### **Additional Provision and SEN:**

Some children will need extra support for spelling difficulties and these can be addressed through smaller focused intervention groups with a Teaching Assistant or teacher, or by using extra programmes such as Nessy to practise specific words. In addition to this, extra sessions to assist children in their understanding and use of SPAG may be given before SATs in smaller school groups in afternoon sessions. In order to challenge more-able writers, opportunities for writing are available through competitions and being given more challenging topic-related spellings and homework projects.

### **Equal Opportunity**

We are committed to providing a teaching environment conducive to learning where each child is valued, respected and challenged regardless of ability, race, gender, religion, social background, culture or disability.

### **Our Resources**

*At St Paul's CE Junior School, we have:*

- ✓ dictionaries
- ✓ Thesaurus
- ✓ SPAG dictionaries
- ✓ books for staff to provide support in the delivery of GAPS
- ✓ Spelling Shed
- ✓ Doodle Spelling

### **Our SPAG Leaders**

*The members of staff responsible for the management and development of SPAG throughout the school are Karin Kennedy and Karen Francis. They will:*

- ✓ seek to enthuse pupils and staff about SPAG and promote high standards of achievement and high quality provision
- ✓ advise and support staff in the planning, delivery and assessment of SPAG
- ✓ manage and develop all resources for SPAG
- ✓ monitor and evaluate SPAG throughout the school
- ✓ keep up to date with current developments by attending courses, liaising with colleagues from other schools, and use this as a basis for staff development activities
- ✓ provide opportunities for our gifted and talented pupils to participate in appropriate activities

- ✓ continue to promote and raise the profile of SPAG throughout the school
- ✓ Organise the Annual Spelling Bee Tournament and Whole School Spelling Investigation week.

#### **Assessment, Record Keeping and Reporting**

***In order to ensure continuity, progression and high standards of achievement in SPAG, assessment for every child will include:***

- ✓ ongoing formative assessment through observations and dialogue with children
- ✓ a summative assessment of each child's progress in SPAG over the year will be recorded on Educater (termly)
- ✓ pupil conferences and work sampling with a selection of pupils across the year groups.

#### **Parental Involvement:**

***At St Paul's CE Junior School, we will encourage parental involvement by:***

- ✓ encouraging parents to attend the meet the teacher evenings
- ✓ parent and carers will also be expected to assist their children with spelling homework
- ✓ suitable links and resources for use in SPAG lessons on the school website
- ✓ providing information for parents on the expected outcomes at the SATs parent meeting

#### **Our Success Criteria**

***We expect our children to attain standards in line with or above those stated in the National Curriculum age related expectations.***