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English Curriculum - KS1

Dear Parents/Carers,

At **St. Paul's CE Primary School**, every decision we make is guided by one key principle: putting children at the centre of their learning journey. We continually review our curriculum and teaching approaches to ensure that every child receives the support, challenge and opportunities they need to flourish.

I am writing to share an update regarding the provision and teaching of English across Early Years and Key Stage 1.
Phonics remains at the heart of early reading.

We continue to use **Read Write Inc.** as our approved phonics programme. This is a highly structured, evidence-informed approach that supports children in developing the knowledge and skills they need to become successful readers and writers.

At the beginning of this academic year, all children in Early Years and Key Stage 1 completed a thorough phonics assessment using an online assessment platform. Following this assessment, children have been carefully grouped according to their current phonic knowledge and stage of development.

While some parents may notice that their child's current reading colour band is lower than it was at the end of the previous academic year, I would like to reassure you that this is completely normal. Research and experience show that many children experience a slight dip in fluency, confidence and retention following the summer holiday. This is something we observe nationally and within school each year.

For this reason, alongside the assessment information, we ensure that children revisit sounds and phonic knowledge systematically, even when they may have encountered them previously. This enables us to accurately identify any gaps and ensure that learning is secure before moving forward.

Our curriculum is carefully designed using a **spiral approach**. This means that important knowledge and skills are continually revisited, retrieved and strengthened over time. Rather than viewing repetition as moving backwards, we see it as an essential part of learning. Children learn best when they have multiple opportunities to practise, apply and remember what they have been taught. By revisiting prior learning regularly, we help knowledge become embedded in long-term memory, making future learning more successful and secure.

This approach reflects our belief that learning should be built on strong foundations. We are not focused on moving children through content as quickly as possible. Instead, we are committed to ensuring children develop a deep and secure understanding of the knowledge and skills they need for future success.

As part of our ongoing curriculum development, we are also introducing more of the **Read Write Inc. writing elements** across Key Stage 1. This decision has been made very carefully and is rooted in what we know works best for young learners. By aligning our writing curriculum more closely with our phonics programme, children can make clearer links between what they are learning to read and what they are learning to write.

This greater consistency helps children to:

- Apply their phonic knowledge confidently within their writing.
- Develop accurate spelling habits.
- Build sentence structure and composition skills progressively.
- Experience a coherent journey between reading and writing.
- Gain confidence as independent writers.

Above all, we want to reassure you that our approach is centred on the individual needs of **each child**.

We recognise that children develop at different rates, and we are committed to identifying and addressing any gaps in learning as early as possible. Our aim is not simply for children to reach the next colour band, complete the next assessment or move to the next stage. Our aim is for every child to develop the confidence, knowledge and understanding that allows them to achieve their maximum potential.

We believe that taking the time to secure concepts thoroughly, revisit learning when needed and build strong foundations ultimately leads to greater success in the long term.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. The partnership between home and school plays a vital role in children's success, and we value the trust you place in us to support your child's education.

Should you have any questions about our English curriculum or your child's learning journey, please do not hesitate to speak with your child's class teacher or continue to speak to myself on the front gate, mornings and afternoons.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'S Emmett'.

Mr Stephen Emmett
Head of School