Chesham Bois CE School

English Policy

Our Core Christian Vision

We place the child at the centre of all we do. We welcome all children and families. Our work is driven and inspired by our Christian Values which are lived out on a daily basis by children and adults. Our caring, nurturing learning environment enables all children to achieve together.

Matthew 19.14

"Let the little children come to me. Don't stop them, because this kingdom of heaven belongs to children like these."

Together we believe, achieve and care.

Members of staff responsible:

Headteacher
Writing Lead
Reading/Phonics Lead

Date of policy: Autumn 2023
Review Date: Spring 2026
Review Date: Autumn 2026
Review Due: Autumn 2027

Description of policy formation and consultation process:

We believe that policies should reflect the ethos and beliefs held by the whole school community, therefore a wide range of representatives were actively involved in the compilation of this policy. The people involved in this process are:

- SMT
- Teaching staff
- Governors

Aims and objectives

The study of English develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes. The use of written and verbal language in the classroom enables children to communicate ideas, views and feelings creatively and imaginatively. As they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry, playscripts, non-fiction and media texts, children gain an understanding of how language works. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

The aims of English are:

- to enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their audience;
- to encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard, and respond appropriately;
- to enable children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- to develop children's abilities to reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used;
- to enable children to explore and evaluate their own and others' thoughts, feelings and beliefs, through a range of drama activities;
- to develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge;
- to encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers through immersion in challenging, texts and discussions;
- to help children enjoy writing and recognise its value;
- to enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction;
- to increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.

Organisation and management

Time allocation

In the Foundation Stage children have at least four phonics sessions per week and at least two adult focused Communication, Language and Literacy sessions per week. Children have opportunities to develop their Communication, Language and Literacy skills daily through a wide range of child-initiated activities. Year 1 children have at least four phonics sessions per week, whilst Year 2 have at least three. Years 3-6 have five shorter spelling lessons per week.
Years 1-6 have four allocated English sessions each week which incorporate activities based on reading, grammar, spelling and writing. Cross curricular links are made whenever appropriate across the school.

Planning

The school uses objectives from the National Curriculum for English in their planning across Key Stage One and Two and covers objectives from the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum for EYFS.

Long-term plans reflect the different units and objectives from the National Curriculum and are used by teachers as a basis for unit planning. Each Year's overview defines text types taught to ensure there is an appropriate balance and distribution of text types across each Year group and term.
The English subject leaders are responsible for reviewing curriculum documents. Year groups create unit plans for each text type. These list the specific learning objectives for each lesson and provide details of the content and structure of the lesson. The class teacher is responsible for these individual plans and adapts as required for their class.
There is a clear purpose for writing developed in each unit of work which is shared with pupils so they understand what outcome they are building towards. Each unit of work focuses on specific features of

writing which are shared with pupils in the form of unit targets. Each feature is paired with a 'so that my reader can…' explanation to help pupils understand the purpose of including each feature in their writing.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

All teachers are responsible for using appropriate teaching and learning strategies which are engaging and interactive, to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met in an efficient and meaningful way. The National Curriculum emphasises the importance of and places greater emphasis on speaking and listening activities, grammar and phonics. At Chesham Bois CE School pupils learn through individual, paired, group and class activities.

Appropriate strategies include:

- Role play and performance, e.g. to explore the relationships between characters, or to present a performance to an audience.
- Discussion and argument, e.g. to share points of view.
- Structured play, e.g. materials available to encourage oral development, reading and emergent writing in the role play area.
- Dictation, e.g. to practise spelling and grammar rules and to support sentence development.
- Listening and responding, e.g. to stimulate and extend pupil's contributions.
- Oracy skills to develop vocabulary and ability to respond in different contexts.
- Questioning, e.g. to cause pupils to reflect on and refine their work.
- Direction, e.g. to develop key strategies in reading and writing.
- Demonstration, e.g. how to use a dictionary.
- Modelling, e.g. discussing the features of written texts through shared reading of texts.
- Scaffolding, e.g. providing planning frames for shared and individual composition.
- Explanation, e.g. to discuss reasons in relation to the events of a story.
- Investigation and exploration, e.g. to develop aspects of grammar or to expand upon themes and structures in fiction and nonfiction.
- Visits by authors and theatre groups and visits to venues outside school, e.g. theatres.

Reading and Writing for Pleasure

- Annual Book Week / World Book Day
- Book character Balloon Debate
- ERIC
- Secret Reader
- Reading Bingo
- Super Six Reading Spines for individual classes
- Reading Displays in each class
- Travelling Book Fair
- Reading Champion & Star Writer certificates
- Book themed bake sales
- Library Club run by Year 6 for KS1/EYFS.
- Shared reading between classes including children's own writing
- Weekly library visits for each class
- Writing competitions (within school and locally)
- Reading competitions (within school and locally)
- Come & Read sessions with parents
- Author visits
- Connection to the local library including library visits

Phonics

The systematic teaching of phonics has a high priority throughout Early Years and Key Stage 1, ensuring that children secure letter sounds and the key skills of segmenting and blending. Phonics is taught following the Super Sonic Phonics Friends scheme which provides a planned and sequenced phonics curriculum that is consistent across classes. In EYFS and Year 1, children have at least four phonics sessions per week, whilst Year 2 have at least three, which focus on spelling skills. Phonics is usually taught in groups, allowing the needs of different children to be met, however whole class teaching is used when appropriate. Additional interventions are put in place where additional support is beneficial for children, including those who may need to retake the National Phonics Screening in Year 2.

In addition to the main phonics teaching, pupils have regular reading sessions with an adult, using fully decodable books. This ensures pupils are regularly practicing and applying their phonics knowledge. Those in need of extra support are 1:1 readers, who are our priority readers each day. Each week, children take home up to 2 fully decodable reading books to further practice their phonics skills at home, as well as a parent information leaflet with further details on what has been taught in class.

Teachers regularly assess pupil's phonics knowledge including sound recognition and ability to blend/segment. This is done after completing a phase and/or half termly. In addition, half termly mock phonics screenings take place in Year 1 and Year 2 if necessary. These regular assessments inform planning and allow teachers to identify any gaps in learning and put support into place.

Reading - Super Six

The Super Six Reading Spines are intended to offer our children a core bank of texts to ensure they experience a range of high-quality texts and authors during their time at school. We have identified 6 key high-quality core texts for each year group for each term (12 in EYFS). The texts are made up of a range of text types, including fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Teachers use these in a range of ways, as whole-class texts to share when reading for pleasure, during guided reading or whole-class reading lessons, as part of their literacy lessons and in connection with our topics. We have ensured that the texts we have chosen are engaging and encourage enjoyment of reading. In KS2, the texts can become increasingly longer in length, this is why we developed our Reading Challenge. Pupils are exposed to all texts in KS2 within class with the intention of inspiring the children to finish them independently. Children are rewarded termly if they have read all six of the Super Six texts.

Handwriting

In EYFS staff model letter formation using letter rhymes from Super Sonic Phonics Friends. Adults model a print style, and children should develop accurate letter formation throughout the year.
Pre-cursive is first introduced in Year 1 using letter rhymes from Super Sonic Phonics Friends before cursive handwriting is taught once most of the cohort is ready. This continues throughout school.
Year 1 take part in daily handwriting sessions. Explicit handwriting practice takes place at least weekly in Years 2-6. Dictation activities provide an additional opportunity for pupils to practice specific letter joins. Pen licenses are awarded from Year 4 onwards. Where necessary, handwriting interventions support children to develop clear, legible handwriting. Whilst we encourage all children to apply a cursive style, this is not enforced.

Spellings

Spellings are taught following the Super Sonic Spelling Scheme of work, which leads on from the Supersonic Phonics Scheme taught in EYFS and Key Stage One.
Classes in Key Stage Two focus on a spelling rule for two weeks. Teachers follow an agreed structure to ensure pupils are developing a variety of skills including etymology, definition, synonyms and antonyms, syllables, editing and rapid write.

Weekly spelling homework begins in Year 1 with spellings covering tricky words linked to the Supersonic Phonics Scheme, followed by Year 1 spellings rules in the summer term. Weekly spelling homework continues into Year 2 following Super Sonic Phonics Friends Scheme. Bi-weekly spelling homework starts in Years 3-6, covering words from Super Sonic Scheme of work and some foundation subject key words. All pupils are tested in school either weekly or fortnightly. Results of spelling tests are shared with pupils and parents.
Children in Years 1-6 are tested twice a year using the Schonell spelling assessment, providing spelling ages for the children. The children's progress in spelling is monitored and tracked. Where a child is not making at least expected progress, additional support is provided.

Inclusion

The SENCo and the English Subject Leaders work together with class teachers to ensure that planning meets the needs of all pupils. Teachers plan for the 'first 20%' (pupils with SEND, those who are disadvantaged, pupils who have EAL) so that all pupils benefit from quality first teaching.

Reading resources are specifically selected to reflect life in modern day Britain and our diverse local and school community. Our Super Six Reading Spine has been designed to expose pupils to texts that explore topics such diversity, sustainability and wellbeing.

Resources

The English Subject Leaders are responsible for meeting with staff to discuss the provision of resources.

Classroom resources include:

- Classroom book corners
- Home reading boxes
- Dictionaries, thesauruses and text books where appropriate
- Main Library
- Schools Library Service Topic Boxes
- Super Six texts
- English WWs
- Writing prompts including sound mats, tricky word mats and writing reference folders

Central resources include:

- Reading schemes
- Fully decodable phonics books where appropriate
- A selection of textbooks for teacher use
- Library area for use by children in the whole school
- Guided reading books and whole class novels
- A selection of big books

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

The teaching of English develops skills through which our children can give critical responses to the moral questions raised in a variety of texts and experiences. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts brings them into contact with their own literary heritage and texts from other cultures. The organisation of lessons allows children of differing abilities and backgrounds to work together and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and responses.

We encourage younger children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. Older children research and debate topical issues and events; they discuss lifestyle choices; and meet visitors

who work within the school community. Planned activities within the classroom encourage children to work together and respect each other's views.

Assessment and Reporting

Formative assessment takes place on a daily basis, whilst summative assessment takes place at the end of each term.

For writing, summative assessment takes place at the end of each English unit. Children in Years 2-6 self-assess their final piece of writing for the unit using a unit target grid for the relevant text type. Teachers also complete a summative assessment of the child's writing using the same objectives in the unit target grid. The unit target grid lists the essential objectives to achieve the expected standard of writing in the text type, as well as objectives necessary to achieve greater depth standard. Summative assessment also takes place termly, looking at the overall writing of each individual child against the National Curriculum statements for the relevant year group.

Samples of moderated children's writing are kept in a portfolio by the Writing Lead. This demonstrates what the age-related expectation is in English in each year of the school. However, a child's attainment is determined over several pieces of writing across a range of text types. Teachers meet regularly (in year groups and whole school) to review pupils' work against the CBS writing grids for each year group. This ensures consistency in moderated work across the school.
The school hosts a writing moderation session for schools within our trust hub to provide teachers with the opportunity to moderate writing across schools. Teachers in Year 6 also attend external moderation sessions to inform them of current practice in writing moderation.

For the summative assessment of reading, PIRA assessments are used termly in Years 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. In addition, children are assessed on our school reading scheme half-termly and placed on the appropriate stage/ colour for their reading level.

For the summative assessment of Phonics, sound recognition is completed once a phase has been completed in EYFS & Year 1. In addition, half-termly mock phonics screenings take place in Year 1, leading up to the final summative assessment, the phonics screening which takes place in June each year. Progress in phonics screening results is closely monitored by the Reading Lead and used to inform next steps in provision.

National formal summative assessments are carried out at the end of Key Stage 2 (SATs).

The Foundation Stage profile is used to assess Communication, Language and Literacy in the Reception class.

Parents are provided with both verbal and written reports on their child's progress following our assessment periods, which take place in Autumn 2, Spring 2 and Summer 2.

Homework

Children in Years 2-6 are set weekly homework to strengthen their learning. Tasks alternate between reading comprehension and Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG) activities. Wherever possible, tasks set link to learning in class or offer an opportunity to revisit prior learning.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring is undertaken by The English Leads, SMT and relevant Governors. Monitoring strategies include:

- lesson observations
- learning walks

- work sampling
- pupil voice discussions
- pupil questionnaires
- teacher questionnaires
- evaluation of planning documents
- discussion
- data analysis

Monitoring is used to inform future planning, including lesson plans, staff training opportunities and the English action plan.