Christ Church Primary School English Policy

This policy document is a statement of our **intent**, **implementation** and **impact** of the teaching and learning of English at Christ Church Primary School.

Intent

At Christ Church, we recognise the vital importance of studying the English language. Our intent is to ensure good progress in Reading, Writing and Oracy, enabling our pupils to express their thoughts and ideas fluently and accurately. A strong command of the English language is essential in supporting children to deal more successfully with all curriculum subjects, while enriching their lives beyond school.

The teaching and learning of language skills are given a high priority and are promoted through the use of a wide-range of high quality and engaging texts, cross-curricular links to our 'Big Question' curriculum and inspiring and relevant writing opportunities.

Our overarching aim for English is to equip pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading and writing for enjoyment. We aim for our children to achieve and where possible exceed, the expectations set out in the Early Learning Goals and National Curriculum, with clear progression across school.

Implementation

Teaching

All classes in Year 1 to Year 6 have a daily English lesson. English lessons last for around 50 minutes in Year 1 and are around 60 minutes in length in Year 2 – Year 6. Children are taught in mixed ability groups. English lessons are well-structured, engaging and interactive and ensure a balanced coverage of Reading, Writing and Oracy skills.

In Reception, all children will have a daily Literacy input from their class teacher to ensure they are exposed to all elements of the Early Years Framework. The provision in the EYFS environment gives children the opportunities to express themselves through speaking, listening, reading and writing. Activities may take the form of a focused adult-led task or a child initiated activity. Indoor and outdoor provision is carefully planned so that the literacy learning objectives set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage framework are comprehensively addressed, whilst providing engaging and inspiring teaching and learning.

Scaffolding, adaptation and the support of teaching assistants, where appropriate, ensure each child receives high-quality teaching and appropriate support in order for them to reach their full potential. Children may receive additional support from specified teaching staff outside of English lessons in small intervention groups.

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English Leader
September 2026

Planning

At Christ Church we carefully record coverage of the National Curriculum skills to ensure all children receive a comprehensive, broad and balanced English curriculum. Class teachers highlight National Curriculum skills documents for English, that are mapped out across each term to ensure progression and coverage. Our English Medium Term Skills and Phonics Knowledge & Skills documents are fully aligned to the 2014 National Curriculum and to the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

Weekly planning documents each of these skills in more depth, with clear learning objectives and steps to success for each lesson. Teachers ensure that weekly planning, whilst being guided by our curriculum skills documents, is also reactive and adapted to the needs of all children.

Teachers also design their weekly planning to ensure that children can practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum. The English and Phonics leaders will support with planning where necessary.

Inclusion

At Christ Church we are committed to providing an engaging, stimulating and balanced English curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all of our children. Our aim is to provide relevant and adapted teaching and learning, so that all of our children can achieve as highly as they can and reach their full potential.

All pupils are included in daily English lessons, guided reading lessons and phonics sessions. All staff are aware of and take into account the provision for children with special educational needs. We adapt and scaffold learning opportunities to ensure all children, especially our most disadvantaged pupils, know more and remember more. We also adapt learning for higher attaining pupils, providing appropriate levels of challenge.

Computing

Technology is used in various ways to support teaching and learning in English. Technology aspects involve the use of Showbie, iPads, and interactive whiteboards.

Homework

Reading books are sent home weekly in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 and there is an expectation for parents/carers to read with their child every day. In Year 3 – Year 6, we encourage the children to read independently for 20 minutes on a daily basis and there is an expectation that parents/carers read with their child at least three times a week. In Year 3 – Year 6, reading books are changed regularly, after a child has finished their book and taken an AR quiz. Reading at home is recorded in the children's reading records.

- In Year 1 – Year 4, children will have a weekly spelling list.
- In Year 5 children will have a weekly spelling list and either a Reading or a Grammar task on a fortnightly basis.

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- In Year 6 children will have a weekly spelling list and either a Reading or a Grammar task on a weekly basis.

Approaches to Oracy

The four strands of speaking and listening – physical, cognitive, social & emotional and linguistic – are embedded within our curriculum to emphasise the importance of oracy. We aim for children to be able to speak clearly, fluently and coherently, to be able to listen attentively with understanding, pleasure and empathy and contribute to group discussions effectively.

Our children are given opportunities to speak in a variety of contexts and learn to listen to and value the views of others through making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debates. We encourage our children to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

We achieve this by:

- Giving our children confidence in themselves as speakers and listeners by showing them that we value their conversations and opinions. We also encourage a respect for the views of others.
- Encouraging our children to use discussion to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas.
- Helping them to articulate their ideas and provide purposes and audiences for talk within a range of formal and informal situations and in individual, partner, group and class contexts.
- By providing opportunities to perform to a larger audience, in worships and productions, where children's efforts and skills are acknowledged by staff, parents, carers, visitors and peers.
- By providing a range of experiences where children can work collaboratively and participate in opportunities to explore real and imagined situations through role play, hot-seating, drama and discussions.

Approaches to Reading

It is our aspiration for all of our children to be readers. Our intention for all of our children, irrespective of their needs, abilities or backgrounds, is to learn to read fluently and with understanding: we strive to ensure that no one falls behind. We aim to nurture skilled readers who read widely and often, for both pleasure and meaning.

Enjoyment and enthusiasm underpin our approach to reading. Even before our children have command of the alphabetic code, we place great importance on the sharing of books and stories, both in school and at home, from the very start of our children's reading journey.

All children across school are heard read **at least** once a week by their class teacher during Guided Reading lessons. In addition, identified children across school are heard to read **daily** by specified teaching staff to further support their reading progress. Specified teaching staff are deployed throughout school to work with children in order to improve their fluency, intonation, decoding skills and comprehension.

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Phonics and Early Reading

Our teaching of reading begins with a focus on oracy and a structured, government-approved phonics programme. The teaching of phonic skills occurs in daily lessons for children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

Our structured phonics approach is taught through Bug Club Phonics. Lessons are planned to ensure pace and comprehensive coverage and follow the structure of 'Review, Teach, Practise, Apply'. The lessons comprise of learning different graphemes, focussing on oral phonological skills and sight vocabulary. Children are taught to segment and blend words and apply their learning to reading decodable and tricky words. During these lessons, children are also explicitly shown how to apply their developing skills to their writing.

Phonics sessions proceed at a pace that is suitable for learners and activities are chosen carefully to match developmental needs. We use a Whole-Class teaching approach for the first part of our Phonics lessons to ensure that all children are exposed to new sounds to provide them with the building blocks they need. The application part of each session is adapted to ensure that all children can access the learning.

Continuous assessment ensures that all children are stretched and challenged, whilst those who need additional support are identified. We use Phonics Tracker to support our assessments. Phonics intervention continues into Year 3 and beyond for those pupils whose decoding skills are not secure at the end of KS1.

For our children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, we use the Bug Club reading programme to ensure that our children are learning to read with books that are closely matched to their developing phonic knowledge and knowledge of common exception words. Reading books are changed weekly to ensure good progress and appropriate challenge.

Accelerated Reader

During Year 2, most children, when they are ready, move onto Accelerated Reader. We use Accelerated Reader within school from Year 2 to Year 6 to support the children's developing reading skills. Accelerated Reader supports us to ensure all children are appropriately challenged with their reading. It enables the children to choose books that interest them, whilst also ensuring that their chosen texts provide an appropriate level of challenge. Children change their reading book after taking a short online quiz about their reading. Class teachers monitor children's reading books and quizzes carefully to ensure progress is being made and put interventions into place if there is not evidence of progress.

Our extensive library of Accelerated Reader books provides our children with a wide range of high-quality, engaging texts. Accelerated Reader supports the children's motivation and engagement with their reading, whilst also providing them with immediate feedback.

Whole-Class Reading

We take a Whole-Class approach to the teaching of reading within English lessons in Year 1 to Year 6. At least one English lesson per week is dedicated to Whole-Class Reading. Whole-Class Reading lessons allow for purposeful talk, discussion and shared reading experiences. Lessons particularly focus on teaching and

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discussing vocabulary, teachers reading aloud, opportunities for children to read aloud through partner or choral work and the development of reading skills. We strive to immerse our children in a wide range of high-quality texts and extracts: a variety of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, classic texts and picture books are used, in order to further develop our children's vocabulary, contextual knowledge and understanding.

Guided Reading

Guided Reading sessions occur daily in Year 1 to Year 6 and by the Summer Term in Reception.

Guided Reading sessions provide the opportunity for a dedicated focus on fluency and performance voice. Interaction with the words is key: a developing performance voice, which is able to vary voice, punctuation and expression for effect, is vital to the improvement and progression of comprehension skills.

Guided Reading provides the context for teachers to support children to practise and consolidate their developing reading skills, and creates the opportunity for children to read for meaning independently. Daily lessons also allow for the continuous assessment of our children as readers.

Class Text

Daily Class Text time supports our reading culture, as it allows our children to be immersed in high-quality texts, which are read and modelled by their teacher. It is a session which nurtures our children's motivation to read for pleasure, whilst also supporting their developing understanding and knowledge of vocabulary, sentence structure and text types. One Class Text time each week takes the form of a class Book Club. Class Book Club allows for teachers to promote high-quality texts and for the children to make recommendations to each other.

Reading Records

Daily home reading is encouraged and is an integral part of our children's reading development. Strong communication between teachers and parents/carers is encouraged; each child has a reading record where parents/carers can write comments about their child's progress with his/her reading at home. Teachers check reading records and write in them weekly, when they hear a child read in Guided Reading. The children are encouraged to write in their records frequently to document their independent reading.

Each week, a 'Reading Record of the week' is awarded to a child in each class. This is awarded for a variety of reasons including: children reading more frequently and recording this in their records, more detailed comments from the children or, telling their teacher about their reading / discussing books with their teachers more frequently. A 'Reading Record of the week' sticker is put into the child's reading record, along with being awarded 5 Merits.

Developing a love of Reading

- We have strong links with our local library. Visits to the library are arranged for each class throughout the year. Pupils are encouraged to participate in the annual, county library reading challenge, with their achievements celebrated within school.
- A range of reading challenges are organised throughout the year, to further promote engagement and excitement for reading.

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- We partake in world and national celebrations including 'World Book Day' and 'National Poetry Day' to nurture a shared love of reading within our school.
- Each classroom has a dedicated and interactive reading area.
- Within each reading area, each class teacher shares the children's book they are currently reading and encourage the children to ask them about it.
- Every class read, share and enjoy various class texts throughout the year and current reads are displayed on each classroom door.
- We encourage our children to discuss and share their reading and recommend books and authors to their peers and teachers.
- Teachers have a strong knowledge of books and authors and actively recommend books to children that they think they will enjoy.
- Recommended reads are included on our fortnightly newsletter to parents/carers.
- We have chosen a range of Spotlight Authors to celebrate throughout the school. Children will leave Christ Church knowing these authors extremely well, having spent time learning about them and their writing every term.
- Each week, a child in each year group is awarded a 'Golden Ticket' for their super effort with their reading during the week. They are then able to choose a book from our reading vending machine as recognition of their efforts with their reading.
- Daily in Guided Reading or Phonics lessons, class teachers choose a child who has impressed them during the lesson to go and try to 'Crack the Code'. The children are given a 'Crack the Code' sticker for their reading records and then have the chance to 'crack' the code to a box in our entrance hall that has a mystery book and voucher inside.

Approaches to Writing

At Christ Church we recognise that writing is an essential life skill whilst also being integral to all areas of our curriculum. Writing enables children to communicate with themselves and others, whilst allowing them to express and convey their knowledge, thoughts and ideas.

Our teaching of writing at Christ Church is progressive, challenging and carefully planned to meet the needs of all pupils. This is taught through our Christ Church Writing Jourrney. We aim for our children to acquire a wide vocabulary, a strong understanding of grammar and punctuation and a secure knowledge of the linguistic conventions for writing. We aim for our children to be able to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style for a range of contexts, purposes, audiences and effects.

We ensure writing opportunities are varied, wide-ranging and stimulating. High-quality texts, video clips, short animations or images and shared experiences are used as inspiration for writing. High-quality, teacher-written model texts are used to inspire and support the children's own writing. We carefully plan for cross-curricular writing opportunities within our 'Big Question' curriculum to ensure our children can apply their writing skills in different contexts, across the curriculum.

Through our Writing Journey, opportunities for extended writing are planned within each text used as a stimulus. Children write a carefully planned variety of genres; each extended piece of writing has an audience and purpose in KS1, voice is added in LKS2 and finally in UKS2 children also include effect. This

ladder approach ensures that children understand why they are writing, who they are writing for and as and what effect they want to have on the reader.

To develop our children as writers we:

- Treat children as writers, from the earliest stage.
- Recognise that all children have ideas that they will want to communicate.
- Build on writing skills they have acquired and their knowledge of print from their environments.
- Provide experiences and environments where the children can acquire confidence and a positive attitude to writing.
- Ensure there is a clear context, audience, purpose, voice and effect (KS2) for each piece of writing.
- Develop and sustain writing skills by providing opportunities for children to write for a range of purposes and audiences.
- Use high-quality texts to provide text-based writing opportunities and strengthen the link between reading and writing.
- Carefully plan for cross-curricular writing opportunities.
- Continually model writing skills through teaching children how to compose, amend and revise their writing.
- Teach grammar and punctuation in the context of children's own writing, as well as through discrete lessons.
- Approach writing as a cyclical process of planning, writing and editing. In Year 5 and 6, children will also focus on creating first drafts.
- Use English working walls to support the teaching and learning of writing skills.

Spelling

Our teaching of spelling is in line with the National Curriculum expectations and we strive to teach strategies for spelling to enable children to become confident and competent spellers.

Understanding how to spell correctly is important in supporting children to organise their thinking around language. Having a sound understanding of how to apply spelling rules and recognise words is empowering for children.

In Reception and Year 1, spelling is taught within Phonics lessons. In Year 2 – Year 6 we follow the Spelling Shed scheme of learning, with each year group having discrete spelling lessons every week.

Children in Year 1 – Year 6 take home a spelling list to learn, which reflects their current learning in school.

Spellings sent home are adapted for children who are not working at age related expectation in this area to enable them to make progress.

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Handwriting

Handwriting begins in Reception with mark-making and patterns. All pupils are given access to a wide range of writing tools and mediums to practise their early fine motor skills. Children in Reception begin their journey practising to write non-cursively, in line with the Early Years Framework.

From KS1, we use Twinkl Handwriting to support the children's handwriting journey. Each child has their own individual handwriting book and discrete sessions take place three times each week.

Pupils are encouraged to develop fluent lines of correctly orientated letters from an early age and emergent writing is encouraged. Discrete handwriting lessons take place throughout the week in both Key Stage One and Key Stage Two. Correct posture and positioning are emphasised during handwriting lessons.

The needs of left-handed children, or those with physical difficulties are also taken into consideration and where necessary accommodated with resources or specific intervention.

The national expectation at the end of Year 6 is that children will join their handwriting.

To ensure that English lessons are as inclusive as possible, lesson PowerPoints and learning objective stickers are given in printed font. This also applies to lesson resources. Whenever teachers model handwriting in KS2, they use joined cursive handwriting to ensure pupils develop their own consistently joined handwriting style.

Developing a love of writing

- Each half-term the children enjoy an 'Author Hour' where they can choose a genre and write about a topic or area of their choosing. The children then go on to illustrate their writing as they would like it look, if it were to be published. A piece of work is selected to be part of a half-termly 'Author Hour' magazine, which is published, shared and celebrated within school.
- Each week a 'writer of the week' is chosen from each year group; the writing is displayed within a frame around school for a week to be read, enjoyed and celebrated. The 'writers of the week' are further celebrated in worship where they receive a certificate and a prize. This, alongside our Golden Ticket winner is shared on our fortnightly year group newsletters so that their achievements can be celebrated by our wider Christ Church community.
- A range of writing competitions are set and promoted to further encourage a love of writing for pleasure.
- Each classroom has a dedicated, interactive writing area.
- Author visits are organised to provide exciting, engaging and inspiring opportunities for all of our children.

Impact

The impact of our approach to English is measured through learning walks, book monitoring, ongoing assessment - both formative and summative - and through pupil and parent voice. Senior leaders, subject leaders and class teachers meet regularly to evaluate impact and assess our children's learning.

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Assessment

English is assessed in line with the Assessment Policy. Assessments, both formal and informal, are used to inform teaching and learning in a continuous cycle of planning, teaching, assessment and reflection.

- Verbal feedback is given during lessons to support immediate progress.
- Showbie is sometimes also used as a tool to give feedback on writing.
- Pupils are given opportunities to reflect on and revisit their work in order to make edits and improvements.
- Reactive marking takes place in English lessons to formatively assess understanding and address misconceptions.
- Writing assessments take place each half term to assess children's progress against the Writing skills for their year group. The children's progress is tracked to allow for gaps to be identified and addressed within future planning.
- Summative assessment is used termly to assess Reading progress against the National Curriculum skills for each year group. Our assessment tracking system allows for gaps to be identified and addressed within future planning.
- Reading progress is closely monitored throughout the year through continuous informal assessment and through the analysis of Phonics Tracker, Bug Club and Accelerated Reader data.
- Termly pupil progress meetings allow for the progress of individual pupils to be discussed; these discussions inform future intervention, to ensure all children meet or exceed their targets in English. The impact of current interventions is also discussed and reviewed.
- Year 6 pupils undertake KS2 SATs in May and children in Year 1 take a Phonics screening in June.

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