



Chantry Community Primary School

# English Policy

January 2019

## 1. **Aims and objectives**

The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, using language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. It enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations. Inclusion is at the heart of our school development so that we increase the learning and participation of all children. Teaching and support are integrated together to overcome barriers to learning and participation and to provide challenge to all.

### **The aims of English are:**

- to enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners;
- to encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- 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 evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama activities;
- to develop children's knowledge and application of phonics in order to support their development of reading and spelling;
- 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 contact with challenging and lengthy texts;
- 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.

## 2. **Teaching and learning**

At Chantry Community Primary School, we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons. Our principal aim is to develop children's independence through their knowledge, skills, and understanding in English using interactive and inspirational approaches.

We do this through a daily English lesson which includes whole-class and group teaching, whole-class shared reading and writing activities, focused spelling or grammar activities, independent activities and whole-class reviews of the children's progress and learning.

Exploration and discussion are at the heart of the English curriculum and children participate in drama activities, debate and analysis, contributing to shared writing and guided writing. This supports them to plan and write their own independent pieces. We make use of the 'Talk for Writing' strategies where needed, to ensure that when children get to the stage of writing, they are confident in what they want to say.

Regular, discrete reading sessions are also held outside of the English lesson. This may include reading with an adult, whole class skill or comprehension practice and other planned reading activities. Daily phonics and spelling lessons take place outside every morning and punctuation and grammar are taught through high quality texts which are embedded in the each English session. We also teach handwriting outside the English session with an expectation that children will apply their handwriting in all they write.

English underpins the learning in other subjects which make up our Creative Curriculum, meaning that children consistently get the opportunity to use and apply their learning across the curriculum, in a meaningful way. We aim for children to participate in a writing task each day and build up their abilities in regular, sustained writing tasks. Time is also planned for regular opportunities to develop skills in editing and redrafting.

We provide suitable challenges for all children. To support the children with their choice of challenge we provide rich resources, access to talk partners, group work, targeted feedback through verbal and written feedback and additional adults in the classroom who will support, stretch and question the children. There is a consistent approach to high expectations of children's writing and the use of spelling, grammar and punctuation across the curriculum.

### **3. English curriculum planning**

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the National Curriculum (2014) as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English. Every class in the school uses the 'Power of Reading' to support their short term planning. One high-quality text is selected each term and English is taught through this text.

Where possible we use the English curriculum to make meaningful links between other subjects. Cross curricular links are made for every text used. We use a broad range of high-quality texts which are ethnically and culturally diverse.

Class teachers complete a detailed medium term plan for the teaching of English which feeds directly from the Yearly Overview. This medium term plan identifies the specific skills to be taught and embedded over the week. The text chosen is used to drive the specific skills and all teachers use Lynx as an interactive tool to teach, challenge and question the children.

### **4. Reading**

At Chantry we believe the process of learning to read demands a high priority throughout the school. We have high expectations of what all our children can achieve. The school has developed a rigorous, sequential approach to speaking and listening, phonics and reading which involves all teaching staff. Our aim is for all children to develop a life-time love of reading, understanding its importance as a life-skill and how it is the key to unlocking other areas of the curriculum.

## **Principles and Practice**

When they join the school, parents and carers are introduced to our philosophy which stresses the importance of parental involvement in a child's learning journey through school. We emphasise the importance of reading to, and with, children from an early age and our expectation that learning to read will be a partnership between home and school.

All Key Stage One children have a reading record book which is taken home every day along with a reading book. This 'reading record' is a link between home and school which parents, carers and those adults involved in reading with the child in school are asked to comment in. Accelerated Reader is a programme used across the school. Parents can view their child's progress from home and the results from each book quiz taken.

Each child sits a reading test to ascertain their reading age which is known as their ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development). The children then choose a book to read from this ZPD range, once read they then sit a quiz with a target of 80%. Assessments are carried out once a term to track progress. All classroom adults monitor reading data weekly to check books chosen, quizzes taken and frequency of reading. Pupil voice is carried out to ascertain books, genres and key themes that the children are interested in. Training is given to staff in all aspects of Accelerated Reader.

## **Speaking and Listening**

The development of children's spoken language is enriched through play, singing, opportunities for talk, listening to and participating in storytelling, rhymes and jingles and through rich language which is introduced through learning journeys. Where necessary, pre-learning takes place to allow children to develop their speaking and listening through tasks that complement the week's learning. All children have the opportunity to take part in a production during the school year.

## **Phonics**

Throughout the school there is consistent systematic teaching of phonics via daily games and activities following the structured phases of the letters and sounds guidance materials. Children across Foundation Stage, Key Stage One and Year Three and Four are assessed and grouped together to ensure they are taught at their stage of learning. The groups are assessed regularly with changes being made where necessary. These ability groups involve a range of adults to ensure all children are taught in small groups and their learning matches their level of attainment. The children are then given opportunities to apply their phonics learning through daily reading and writing activities.

## **Reading at Key Stage One**

Children read aloud each week to an adult – individually or as part of a guided group. Both individual and guided reading sessions are important opportunities for the teacher to assess which strategies the children are using and/or failing to use when decoding the text. The child's comprehension of what is being read is also observed via careful questioning and discussion during individual, group or class reading sessions. A quiz is taken after the child has read a book twice to assess comprehension and understanding.

## **Reading at Key Stage Two**

Children participate in whole class reading sessions two or three times a week, they are given an opportunity to read a piece of text and to discuss it as a class or in small groups through skilled questioning by the teacher. The text can be drawn from the class's high-quality text or from a carefully selected piece of text or poem.

Opportunities are provided during the week for individual reading of personally chosen books and those needing continued support will read to an adult through planned support with a teaching assistant or a reading volunteer. All children have the opportunity to read for pleasure during the school day

Children self-select their reading books from the classroom and are expected to take responsibility for taking a quiz on their books when they have read them. The expectations on how many books are read during the week vary depending on age and stage. However, it is expected that children read every night at home either with an adult or independently (Year Five & Six).

### **Reading is supported by:**

- Jump Ahead and Write Dance in Reception
- Talk for Writing in Reception and Key Stage One
- Volunteer Reading Partners who give their time to support children by reading or playing reading games with them.
- Pupil Reading Partners – a paired reading session every Friday between year groups across key stage one and two.

## **Reading Recovery**

We have a Reading Recovery Teaching Assistant works primarily with Year One children who have had a delayed start to reading. Through a program of daily half hour lessons these children make accelerated progress. The aim is for children to reach the average reading level for the year group in a time period of twelve to twenty weeks of instruction.

## **5. Writing**

Writing consists of a range of different elements, including writing for a purpose, the structure of different genres, spelling, punctuations and grammar and handwriting.

English is at the heart of all learning journeys, the reason for this is to provide opportunities for children to write for a purpose and to write across a range of genres. There will be opportunities to write on a daily basis, either discreetly during the English session or during a learning journey session. Strategies like 'Talk for Writing' can be used to teach a variety of structures in Key Stage One. There will be opportunities for extended writing each week. Following extended writing and quality marking children need to be given opportunities to redraft, edit and improve their work.

At Chantry we will:

- Teach children the writing process;
- Teach children to write for a variety of purposes;

- Set specific goals and foster inquiry skills;
- Teach children to become fluent with handwriting, spelling, sentence construction, typing and word processing;
- Provide daily writing opportunities;
- Teach children the skills of editing and redrafting
- Create an engaged and creative community of writers.

## 6. **SPAG – Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar**

We follow the expectations as set out in The National Curriculum (2014) see appendix, which identifies three key features of grammar:

- Text cohesion (Key Stage One - coherent sequence of ideas; Key Stage Two - cohesive chronological and non-chronological texts to suit a variety of audiences and purposes, including by using verbs and pronouns consistently and by selection from range of connective words and phrases)
- Sentence construction and punctuation Key Stage One -representation of ideas in sentences and understanding that this is different in spoken/written; Key Stage Two- ability to structure and connect ideas in a wide variety of way by combining and sequencing clauses to make writing precise, varied, engaging and fit for purpose)
- Word choice and modification Key Stage One - increasingly rich vocabulary to enable them to select words and phrases that add colour and precision and refine meaning; Key Stage Two - enhancing meaning through word choice and modifying nouns and verbs to add focus, variety and interest)

Grammar, sentence structure and punctuation are taught through English lessons and at times consolidated in discrete sessions. Spelling lessons are taught daily throughout the school. Foundation Stage, Key Stage One and Year Three and Four children participate in daily 'age not stage' phonics teaching in small groups. They are closely tracked to measure progress. Key Stage Two children participate in daily spelling lessons focusing on spelling patterns and rules, including exceptions to the rules, investigation activities and the development of a rich range of vocabulary through the introduction of new words on a daily basis.

### **Teaching and Learning**

Children learn grammar as an integral part of learning to speak from the earliest ages. As they develop, they will encounter and understand increasingly more complex and sophisticated grammatical constructions in the speech and writing of others. At Chantry, we aim to build upon this intuitive understanding of grammar to extend and make explicit the understanding children need to create and control their own texts.

Correct modelling by the teacher and all teaching staff is very important. Teachers and teaching assistants should model the use of Standard English in their work with the children, and where a more informal style is more appropriate, this can lead to the discussion about the differences in spoken English for different audiences and purposes.

Following from the modelling of spoken English, teachers and teaching assistants also model their choices as a writer. Through teacher demonstration, shared and

guided writing, effective questioning and marking the children will develop an awareness of the choices available to them and the ability to consider the most effective option for the audience and purpose they are writing for as they move through the school.

## **7. Handwriting**

Handwriting is taught discretely though regular lesson e.g. at least weekly in upper key Stage Two and several times a week in Key Stage One. Teaching generally occurs outside English lessons, although shared and guided writing provides many opportunities for the modelling and monitoring of handwriting.

Handwriting is a skill which will be taught explicitly and then embedded during English lessons. Consistency in the attitudes displayed, the methods employed and the models provided is the key to effective learning. All staff are provided with appropriate handwriting models and are expected to promote the agreed handwriting style. Reception, Key Stage One and Year Three use handwriting books in their English lessons to consolidate and practise their letter formation.

### **Continuity and Progression**

#### **The Foundation Stage**

The emphasis at this stage is with movement rather than neatness. Letter formation (starting at the right entry point and then moving in the right direction) learned at this early stage becomes automatic and has a profound influence on later fluency and legibility. To aid movement, close attention is given to pencil grip, correct posture, the positioning of the paper and the organisation of the writing space. Teachers are vigilant to ensure that bad habits do not become ingrained.

In the pre-communicative stage children's play with writing and these experiments are recognised and praised as an important stage in the child's understanding that marks on paper convey meaning. Children are given the opportunity to experiment with a range of writing materials and implements; a multi-sensory approach is used to help children feel the movement in the hand.

#### **Key Stage One**

Building on the foundation stage, children at Key Stage One develop a legible style. This is achieved by developing a comfortable and efficient pencil grip and by practising handwriting in conjunction with spelling and independent writing. Correct letter orientation, formation and proportion are taught in line with the school's agreed handwriting style. The four basic handwriting joins (diagonal and horizontal joins to letters with and without ascenders) are introduced.

#### **Lower Key Stage Two**

In Year Three, the children consolidate their use of the four basic handwriting joins, ensuring consistency in size, proportion and spacing of letters. Handwriting speed, fluency and legibility are built up through practice. By Year Four, joined handwriting is to be used at all times unless other specific forms are required, e.g. printing on a map, a fast script for notes. Children are encouraged to meet the necessary criteria to be eligible for a pen licence.

## **Upper Key Stage Two**

Years Five and Six are used to consolidate learning for those children who have not yet achieved a fluent and legible script. Those who have will develop an individual style based on the principles of good handwriting taught in previous years. Children are encouraged to increase speed whilst maintaining legibility.

## **8. Inclusion**

English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Teachers provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties with the support from the SEND co-ordinator. Work in English takes into account the individualised targets set for these children. Teachers provide help with communication and English through:

- using texts that children can read and understand;
- using visual and written materials in different formats;
- using Computing, other technological aids and taped materials;
- using alternative communication such as signs and symbols;
- using translators and amanuenses.

We ensure children who may struggle with reading because of a specific learning difficulty e.g. dyslexia, have access to visually supported texts e.g. using Communicate in Print symbols, coloured paper and coloured backgrounds on interactive board resources to reduce glare. We make use of additional specialised resources as appropriate to each child's particular need.

Additional Support Groups run to support children who benefit from individual or small group work to develop their understanding. Keep Up afternoon sessions are held during the week for those who need to consolidate and embed the morning's learning. For children who need more support a specific individual or group programme is drawn up in consultation with the SEND co-ordinator and implemented by a Teaching Assistant.

Through teaching 'age not stage' phonics, we are able to accommodate the needs of all children in this area up to Year Four, at which point individual support is put in place.

## **9. Assessment and Moderation**

English work is assessed across a range of writing styles and genres in line with the Marking and Feedback policy. The child's work is annotated to show the level of support given and independent pieces can then be assessed as needed. Teachers quality mark at least one piece of extended writing a week. Children are given the opportunity in daily 'Feedback for Learning' to respond to the marking, editing and improving where necessary. Children's work is monitored and teachers identify children who may require specific intervention or extra support.

As a school we undertake regular moderation and standardisation in English across phases, as a whole school, within the Alliance of local schools and across East Sussex. The purpose of moderation is to ensure all teachers understand the expected standards for their year group, collate standardised portfolios of work and to build an

understanding across year groups. More details can be found in the assessment policy.

## **10. British Values**

At Chantry, we want children to develop a sense of the wider community in which they live and develop into effective members of society. The fundamental British values of: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and acceptance of those with different faiths and beliefs are interwoven both into our creative curriculum and collective worship.

Our teaching includes social and moral responsibility, community involvement and political awareness. It promote ideas of becoming an active member of their local neighbourhood and community. Through acquiring skills and knowledge, children learn about democracy, law, human rights, environmental issues, democratic communities and how they function; preparing them for the responsibilities of adult life.

## **11. The Role of Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers are kept informed of our high expectations through written information, parents meetings, the Pre-Reception Visit, Open Learning weeks, Open afternoons and evenings. We ensure that parents are informed and encouraged to offer good models and support to their children. Spelling rules and patterns are sent home in order that parents can continue working on these with their children and parents are kept informed of progress at parent consultations reports and through the annual written report.

## **12. Monitoring and Review**

Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality and effectiveness of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English subject leader and senior leadership team. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, overseeing the planning of English and ensuring its full coverage in each Year group whilst being informed about current developments in the subject. The English lead has a deep, accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness which is informed by the views of children, parents and staff. They use this to keep the school improving by focusing on the impact of their actions in key areas of English. The subject leader gives the headteacher regular reports, both formally and informally in which they evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and indicates areas for further improvement. The leader has specially-allocated regular management time in order to enable them to review samples of the children's work and undertake lesson observations of English teaching across the school.

Signed..... Headteacher

Signed..... Chair of Governors

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