

St. Chad's Catholic Primary School



English Policy

*May 2026
Review date: May 2027*



English Policy

INTENT

1. Mission Statement

'Be who you were created to be...'

St. Catherine of Siena.

At St. Chad's this means that, with Christ in our hearts, we:

- **Nurture** our faith
- **Grow** as a family
- **Flourish** in all we do

2. Aims

At St. Chad's Catholic Primary School we aim for all our pupils to be avid readers, children who read fluently and widely and are able to express preferences and opinions about the texts that they read. We want them to read for pleasure, having had access to a wide range of text types, genres and authors in order for them to make informed opinions about their favourites. We believe that oracy is a vital skill for language and self-expression and for children to be effective independent learners. We want our children to write with confidence and accuracy for a variety of purposes and audiences whilst developing their own individual flair. We want our children to be able to write with grammatical accuracy and be able to apply spelling patterns correctly using a neat handwriting style. We aim to expose our children to a wide range of vocabulary so that they are able to decipher new words and then use them when speaking both informally and formally. We also aim for our children to apply all of these English skills to all areas of the curriculum. Above all, we aim for our children to achieve the very best they can and believe that English, through oracy reading and writing, is a foundation to achieving this success.

We aim:

- To provide a language rich environment that promotes a culture of reading and writing.
- To develop in pupils a love of books and high-quality literature that will not only support their learning across the curriculum, but also extend beyond the classroom environment and enrich their lives.
- To explicitly teach reading skills throughout the school that continually develop children's understanding and enjoyment of texts.
- To inspire children to write through exciting and meaningful starters to new units that hook children into the next genre.
- To teach children the craft of writing, including drafting and editing skills, in order to develop the confidence and skills to write well for a range of purposes and audiences.
- To teach the foundational skills – phonics, spelling, grammar, handwriting and punctuation – well so children have all the necessary tools.
- To plan for opportunities for talk when writing to further develop vocabulary and accuracy in writing sentences.
- To foster in pupils the confidence, desire and ability to express their views and opinions both orally and in writing.
- To provide children with a purpose to write so that they write for a real-life audience and ensure a high standard of work.

3. Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum for English Document 2014:

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

IMPLEMENTATION

4. Subject Organisation

The National Curriculum prescribes that:

The programmes of study for English are set out year-by-year for key stage 1 and two-yearly for key stage 2. The single year blocks at key stage 1 reflect the rapid pace of development in word reading during these 2 years. Schools are, however, only required to teach the relevant programme of study by the end of the key stage. Within each key stage, schools therefore have the flexibility to introduce content earlier or later than set out in the programme of study. In addition, schools can introduce key stage content during an earlier key stage if appropriate. All schools are also required to set out their school curriculum for English on a year-by-year basis and make this information available online.

Throughout our school the children are taught in mixed-aged classes for English, with the exception of phonics, which is taught in year groups. We use Lancashire planning documents as a basis for all of our English work, but adapt the planning to suit the needs of our children. The teaching and learning of English at St. Chad's is as follows:

Approaches to Speaking and Listening

Speaking and listening are fundamental to good communication for us all and are independent of ability in reading and writing. We recognise the importance of being aware of skills children have already acquired in order to build on this foundation. From entry in EYFS, children are given opportunities to develop and learn new skills in formal and informal settings, both in and outside of the classroom. Children are encouraged to speak clearly and listen carefully and both speaking and listening are stimulated in a range of ways, including;

- Listening to and responding to stories, rhymes, poems, songs and games from various cultures
- Responding to visual and aural stimuli, such as pictures, paintings, radio or film clips
- Teaching specific vocabulary linked to units of learning
- Discussing and expressing opinions
- Giving and receiving instructions or information

- Using talk partners in all curriculum areas
- Describing/recounting events
- Storytelling and reading aloud
- Reciting lines, songs or poems learned by heart in school plays or presentations
- Imaginative play (not just in EYFS) for example, role play, use of puppets or drama
- Circle time
- Assemblies
- Debates (KS2)

Because we have a strong focus on speaking and listening, the infant department plan together to ensure that the children are given the opportunities to hone these skills. This means that the foundation stage aims continue throughout the whole of the infants. These are:

- Speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities.
- Use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum.
- Become immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

We use the *Key Learning in Spoken Language* document as a tool to support the planning of all of our units of work and build on these skills as the children move through school.

When planning any unit of work, all staff plan for opportunities to use *Talk for Writing* strategies to embed the importance of talking sentences before writing sentences.

Specific units are planned to encourage the children to speak publicly, through performance poetry or drama activities appropriate to the genre. Children are also encouraged to develop their speaking skills through assemblies, reading at Masses, school plays and when presenting work to parents e.g. when directing parents around the school art gallery.

Approaches to Reading

Phonics

We use *Lancashire Red Rose Letters and Sounds* to teach phonics throughout the Early Years and Key Stage 1. The children are taught phonics for 20-30 minutes on a daily basis. Initially this is as a whole class, but following regular assessment, children may be taught phonics in smaller groups or may have booster sessions as necessary.

During year 1, our teachers build on work from the Early Years Foundation Stage, making sure that pupils can sound and blend unfamiliar printed words quickly and accurately using the phonic knowledge and skills that they have already learnt. Teachers also ensure that pupils continue to learn new grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and revise and consolidate those learnt earlier. Alongside this knowledge of GPCs, pupils need to develop the skill of blending the sounds into words for reading and establish the habit of applying this skill whenever they encounter new words.

In year 2, pupils build upon their skills to read all common graphemes. They are able to read unfamiliar words containing these graphemes, accurately and without undue hesitation, by sounding them out in books that are matched closely to each pupil's level of word-reading knowledge. Teachers ensure children are able to read many common words containing GPCs without needing to blend the sounds out loud first. Pupils are able to discuss and retell some familiar stories, poems and plays.

For the whole of the juniors, our teachers use a carousel approach to guided reading. This ensures that the children work on specific reading skills with the class teacher and are also given the opportunity to share some one-to-one reading time with the class support assistant. Guided reading is timetabled carefully to provide a variety of reading challenges that may be linked to either the novel being studied or the text genre the class are focusing on at the time.

Our Lower Key Stage Two children are able to read books written at an age-appropriate interest level and read them accurately at a speed, focusing on understanding what they read rather than on decoding individual words. They should be able to decode most new words outside their spoken vocabulary, making a good approximation to the word's pronunciation. Teachers ensure all children are independent, fluent and enthusiastic readers who develop their

understanding and enjoyment of stories, poetry, plays and non-fiction, and learn to read silently. Our children develop their knowledge and skills in reading non-fiction across the curriculum in a wide range of subjects. They can justify their views about what they have read with increasing independence.

Our children are able to read aloud a wider range of poetry and books written at an age-appropriate interest level with accuracy and pace. They read most words and work out how to pronounce unfamiliar written words with increasing accuracy.

Our children prepare readings, with appropriate intonation showing understanding and summarise and present a familiar story in their own words. Our children read widely and frequently, for pleasure and information. They read silently, with good understanding, inferring the meanings of unfamiliar words and discuss what they have read.

Shared Reading

Every class throughout school has a focus novel for each term to which all of their English work is based around. This novel can be supplemented by other texts to help support the understanding of the novel or genre the class is studying. Every class is read to on a daily basis. In the infant department, this may be a short book chosen by the children, and in the juniors, this is the class novel. (See Appendix 1: Novel and Genre Plan).

Guided Reading

In the infants, guided reading time is planned with books that are linked to the children's stage of phonological awareness. Children are grouped by ability and all staff are deployed to work with small groups to develop both word reading and comprehension skills.

In the juniors, children are placed in groups and genre specific texts are chosen to develop both the understanding of words but also genre specific vocabulary and text features. The children undertake a carousel of activities to encourage all children to undertake reading activities at the same time.

The *Key Learning in Reading* document is used to plan focused tasks that are age and stage appropriate.

Independent Reading

Every class has a class library. These are regularly monitored and updated to ensure that engaging texts are provided for all of our children so that they can read independently. As part of guided reading time, children are invited to read independently to develop their love of reading. In Key Stage 2, children may be given a task to undertake during their independent reading time. These are usually linked to comprehension activities and children are also given time to use Reading Plus to develop their comprehension skills and reading speed.

Home Reading

Home readers are sent home within the first term of our children starting in reception class. The books in our reading scheme do not belong to one individual scheme, but rather have been hand-picked by our staff and children to ensure that they are interesting and engaging reads that also develop the children's reading ability. Home readers are sent home on a weekly basis for the children to read with an adult at home (if the children are in the early stages of the reading scheme) or the children read independently when they are at a stage appropriate to do so. Children are given the opportunity to change their home reader on a weekly basis, but this may be less frequent as the children read larger books. All children have the opportunity to read weekly with a member of staff on a one-to-one basis. A record of their reading is kept in their home/school reading record which is signed by both parents and staff.

Approaches to Writing

Our aim at St. Chad's Primary School is to develop children's ability to produce well-structured writing with appropriate detail, in which the meaning is clear and the interest of the reader is engaged. Our approach to writing aims to instil

the importance of transcription and composition, as required in the National Curriculum. We take account of the recommendations from 'The Writing Framework' (July 2025).

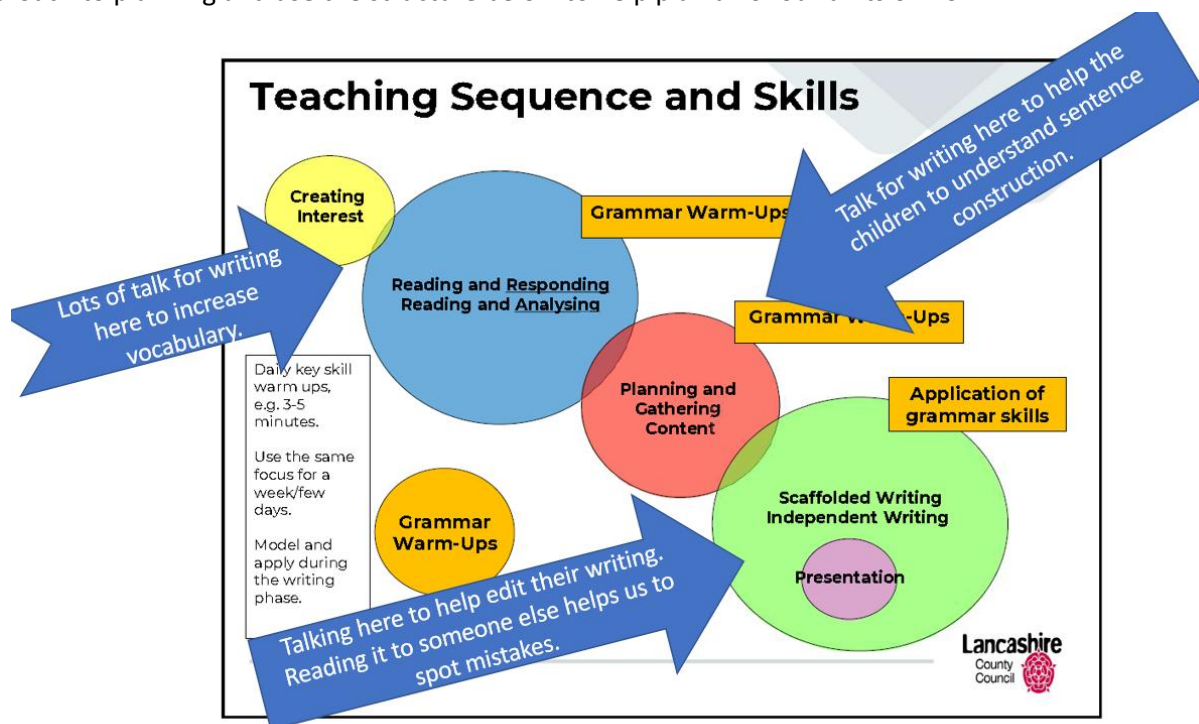
Throughout the school, teachers are flexible in their selection of teaching models for English. We develop writing skills so that our pupils have the stamina and ability to write at the age expected standard. To support children in moving towards independent writing we provide a wide range of activities including use of film and imagery, modelled, shared and guided writing, peer editing and discussion. We use talk for writing to encourage pupils to express their ideas, exchange ideas and to develop more sophisticated vocabulary.

Strategies for planning and monitoring writing composition are taught explicitly. Fluent written transcription skills are promoted by encouraging extensive and effective practice, and by explicitly teaching spelling. We provide opportunities for writing for purpose and we encourage pupils to see themselves as authors. We promote the status of written work by providing opportunities for children's writing to be published and read by real audiences. Any work where we feel a child has gone above and beyond, is placed on Mr. Riley's Writing Wonderwall for the whole school to see. All these pieces of work are then gathered together at the end of the year and, as a staff, we gather to decide who will win the Sue Dean Writing Award at the final assembly of the year.

Children in all Key Stages are given daily opportunities to write in a range of contexts, for a variety of purposes, and have regular opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions. Our long-term planning for English covers the range of text types set out in the National Curriculum (2014), ensuring a breadth of coverage.

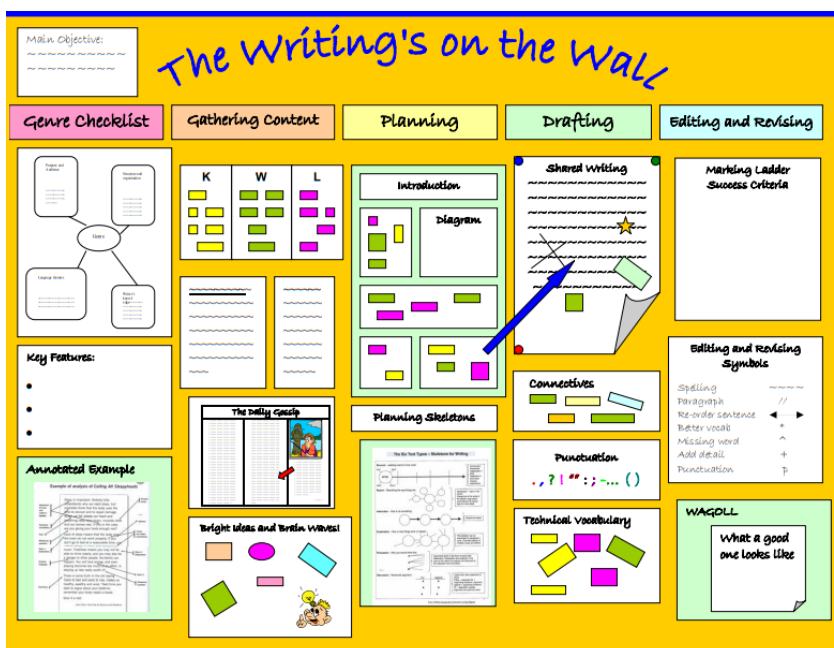
Writing is planned across the year for each class ensuring that a wide range of genres are covered (see long-term plans and writing progressions documents on website). Each unit begins with a WOW starter to ensure that children are hooked on their novel. Writing is planned using the novel as a theme and each novel is used for a full term. Grammar is planned and mapped carefully throughout each year group. This is revisited and added to as the children move through the school.

When planning a unit of work, teachers look for lots of opportunities to use talk to encourage children to develop their speaking and listening skills but also to allow the children to be more creative with their language. We use a phased approach to planning and use the structure below to help plan all of our units of work.



We always ensure that our writing has a purpose. This encourages all children to take extra care with their presentation and take extra care when drafting and editing their work.

In all year groups, short writing opportunities are planned throughout each unit of work to develop a vocabulary bank and to ensure all children accomplish some independent writing. All work done throughout the unit is placed on the Working Wall to help the children to use appropriate vocabulary and key features to complete their final larger piece of writing.



In English lessons, children explore a variety of themes such as 'Stories in Familiar Settings', 'Instructions', 'Fantasy Stories' or 'Funny Poems'. They study fiction and non-fiction and begin to compare characteristic features of writing. Children learn how to apply these features in their own writing and begin to increasingly write at length. In Key Stage 1, children will write for a range of purposes, including (but not limited to):

- Stories
- Diaries
- Newspaper reports
- Instructions – recipes, 'how to' guides
- Explanation texts
- Poems
- Letters & postcards
- Labels, lists and captions
- Recounts
- Non-chronological reports

Children in Key Stage 1 will focus on the Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar objectives from the National Curriculum and learn how to use these taught rules in their own writing within the unit of work being studied. Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar lessons are integrated into the English unit as well as being taught through discrete lessons. This enables the children to develop spelling, punctuation and grammar knowledge and skills through reading example texts and through developing these skills during daily writing opportunities. Writing skills are developed across the curriculum and children are given lots of opportunities for cross curricular writing. This may be linked to Topic or other curriculum areas such as R.E or Science.

During Key Stage 2, children can expect to tackle a range of writing tasks, including (but not limited to):

- Stories (including a variety of genres such as myths & legends, adventure, mystery & suspense)
- Letters
- Play scripts
- Biographies
- Recounts

- Instructions
- Glossaries
- Explanations
- Debates
- Haikus
- Poems

Children will also learn to write in a range of styles, including;

- Writing persuasively
- Writing in a journalistic style
- Writing formally/informally
- Writing arguments

English, Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar is taught discreetly and is reinforced during writing-based lessons. In Key Stage 2, children continue to have a range of opportunities for cross curricular writing. English skills are developed across the curriculum so children can apply what they know in a variety of contexts.

Handwriting

As a school, we use the Letter Join scheme to help children develop fluent, clear and legible handwriting. In Year 1 children will begin to join their writing. Children are given extensive opportunities to practise their handwriting. (See Handwriting Policy).

In addition, daily phonics/spelling sessions are fundamental in developing children's spelling. Children are taught to segment to spell. From EYFS, children learn words which are not phonetically regular (common exception words). From Phase 5 (Red Rose Letters and Sounds), there is more focus on choosing the 'right' sound for spelling, and children learn alternative representations of graphemes and spelling rules. We use 'Red Rose Spelling' in years 2 – 4 with a view to using the resources in later years as they are published.

Inclusion in English

The needs of all children are considered carefully when planning and teaching English at St. Chad's. We want children to reach their full potential. Where necessary, teachers identify which children are not making progress and take steps to improve their progress and attainment in English, usually in liaison with the SENCO. Formal assessments are undertaken on a termly basis and any children who are making little or no progress may be placed in an intervention group for their particular need. Any children who did not pass their Phonics' Screening Check in Y1, are highlighted and given intervention. These children are then assessed to ensure that they have reached this milestone.

For any child who may find writing difficult, staff have been trained in using assistive technology to help these children. Children in older year groups are proficient in using particular features of an I-Pad to take away any barriers to their learning in English lessons e.g. changing the colour of the screen, using a dyslexia friendly keyboard, using the talk function to read instructions to children who may need it.

Coloured overlays and coloured paper is used for any child who has been identified as having visual stress difficulties. Staff ensure that coloured paper is used in all subjects to support these children in every lesson.

Any children who have speech and language difficulties are quickly identified at St. Chad's. These children are then assessed, with the support of parents, and given targets to help develop these skills.

Equal Opportunities

At St. Chad's Primary School we have high expectations for every child, whatever their background, ability or circumstances. We know that children learn best when they are healthy, safe and engaged. In order to engage all children, cultural diversity is celebrated. Our English curriculum includes a wide range of texts and other resources which represent a variety of cultures and backgrounds. We value what each individual child brings to our school.

Role of the Subject Leader

Our subject leaders for English are Mrs Topp and Mrs Muldoon. The subject leaders are responsible for maintaining/improving the standards of teaching and learning in English by:

- Monitoring and evaluating English; pupil progress, planning, marking & feedback, curriculum coverage, teaching, role of teaching assistants, English provision.
- Taking the lead in policy development
- Auditing and supporting colleagues in CPD
- Purchasing/organising resources
- Keeping up to date with developments in English

Parental Involvement

We hope to involve parents as much as possible in school life, and thus in the development of children's skills, knowledge and understanding in English. Throughout school, parents have access to 'Seesaw' and this gives the adults the opportunity to share the children's learning with them.

In October, parents are invited to a session in which they meet their child's new teacher and find out about expectations in English for the upcoming year. Through the class newsletters, parents are provided with information about the English curriculum, how it will be taught in school and what they can do to support their child. The importance of regular reading and writing is highlighted on these.

We also hold parent workshops where and when relevant e.g. Infant Phonics' Workshop. Parents are welcomed into school on various occasions over the course of the year to see presentations of their children's writing. This is usually linked to a class assembly, or to the outcomes of a unit of work or topic.

There are parent's meetings twice a year in which the child's progress is discussed with the class teacher. Additionally, parents receive a full school report annually, detailing their child's achievements in English alongside other core curriculum subjects. The results of statutory assessments are reported to parents in accordance with government legislation.

IMPACT

Assessment and Target Setting

Formative assessments are carried out regularly to ensure that the teaching of Reading, Writing and S.P.a.G. is focused on children's needs.

On entry to our Reception class, the teacher uses their professional judgement, based on observations of individuals, to record the starting points for the children's level of development.

In the final term of the year the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is completed for each child.

Teachers indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development (ELG), or if they are not yet reaching expected levels (emerging) across the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage including the areas of Communication and Language, and Literacy.

From Year 3, children are assessed termly by their class teachers in Reading and S.P.a.G. using NFER tests. Summative data is entered into the school's Assessment Tracker.

There are six planned opportunities to formally assess writing throughout the year for each year group. These are planned by the subject leader at the beginning of the year. These formally assessed pieces of writing require children to complete an independent write, in a genre of a previously taught unit. There is always a few weeks in between the unit that was taught and the independent write to assess if the skills taught have been fully embedded. The sixth independent write can be a cross-curricular piece of writing. These pieces of writing are undertaken in separate assessment books which are then passed on to the next class teacher. Staff meet termly to moderate pieces of written work to ensure that judgements made are accurate. EYFS and Y6 teachers also attend cluster moderation meetings with other schools to solidify these judgements.

In Y1, children take a statutory Phonics Test to test their decoding skills. Any children who did not pass the phonic screening in Y1 are expected to retake the test in Year 2.

Year 2 undertake the non-statutory optional SATs. This data is used internally and placed on our school tracker.

In Year 6, children take statutory assessments in Reading, Spelling and Punctuation and Grammar.

NFER assessments take place towards the end of each term in KS2. The results are used to inform teacher's summative assessments at the end of each term.

Review Framework

The policy will be reviewed annually (or sooner in the event of revised legislation or guidance)

Next Review Date: May 2027