



Cherry Tree Hill Primary School

ENGLISH AND HANDWRITING POLICY

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SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

At Cherry Tree Hill Primary School, we are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all our pupils. We believe that every child has the right to learn and thrive in a safe and secure environment. Our school policies and procedures are designed to promote the welfare of our pupils and protect them from harm.

We follow the statutory guidance outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2023, as well as any other relevant legislation and local safeguarding arrangements. Our staff receive regular training on safeguarding practises and are aware of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting any concerns.

Our school has designated safeguarding leads who are responsible for coordinating safeguarding efforts, providing support and advice to staff, and liaising with external agencies when necessary. They are the first point of contact for any safeguarding concerns.

We have robust procedures in place for handling safeguarding concerns or allegations made about staff, including supply teachers, volunteers, and contractors. All allegations are taken seriously and thoroughly investigated in accordance with our safeguarding policies and procedures.

We promote a culture of openness and encourage pupils and parents to speak up if they have any concerns about their safety or the well-being of others. We have clear reporting systems in place to ensure that all concerns are addressed promptly and appropriately.

Our safeguarding policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changes in legislation and emerging safeguarding issues. They are easily accessible to all staff, pupils, parents, and carers, and are available on our school website.

We work under the guidance of Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and liaise closely with a range of specialist and locality services to ensure the best and safest outcomes for our families.

We work in partnership with parents, carers, and external agencies to create a safe and supportive learning environment for all our pupils. Together, we strive to protect our pupils and families from harm and provide them with the best possible opportunities to succeed.

If you have any safeguarding concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact our designated safeguarding leads or any member of our staff. Together, we can ensure the well-being and safety of all our pupils.

CHERRY TREE HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

ENGLISH AND HANDWRITING POLICY

This policy should be referred to in conjunction with the with the following policies: Teaching and Learning, Assessment and Marking, our Handwriting Programme as well as the Programmes of Study as set out in the National Curriculum. Policies for all other core and foundation subjects should also be referred to in order to ensure cross-curricular links to English are made whenever possible.

RATIONALE

We aim to develop an enthusiasm for English in all forms and the confidence to express themselves both orally and through the written word. In studying English, our children develop skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening and drama, enabling them to express themselves creatively and imaginatively and to communicate with others effectively. Reading is at the core of what we do and by developing a comprehensive range of reading skills, we aim to foster a love and appreciation of a variety of literature. These skills will enable the children to access all aspects of the curriculum.

EQUALITY

At Cherry Tree Hill Primary School, we have due regard for our duties under the Equality Act 2010. Through the delivery of the English curriculum, we will ensure that we eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. We promote the British Values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

PLANNING

Teachers plan together in year groups using the new National Curriculum framework and the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. All aspects of English are covered within the lessons including (reading, writing, grammar, poetry, speaking and listening, drama and role play). All teachers consistently plan using medium-term planning to devise unit plans with challenge for all. Planning units are based on:

- EYFS Framework
- National Curriculum
- Supersonic Phonic Friends
- A range of other resources, including 'purchased' web sites such as Grammarsaurus.

SPOKEN LANGUAGE AND DRAMA

Communication is central to our curriculum at Cherry Tree Hill Primary and is developed from EYFS throughout our school, across the curriculum. We believe spoken language to be fundamental to the achievement of our pupils and our aim is to enable the children to improve their levels of oracy so that all pupils are able to communicate effectively and confidently in front of a range of audiences.

We nurture children's speaking, listening and drama skills through a variety of approaches: exploratory play, story time and hot-seating. We develop these skills so that our children are capable of expressing their own ideas clearly and confidently, in a safe and supportive environment, in all aspects and areas of their school life and into their future.

We aim:

- To help children understand how to adapt their use of language, varying use in relation to purpose and audience.
- Participate with varying groups to present ideas with confidence whilst valuing the views of others.
- Speak audibly and confidently before an audience of differing size.
- To encourage children to develop proficiency in Standard English as well as promote a respect for other language and dialects.
- To develop the mechanical skills required for effective oral communication, e.g. voice projection, intonation, tone, clarity, pace of speech.
- To plan opportunities to speak in a variety of situations and to a range of audiences, as well as, to rehearsing, refining, sharing and responding thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.
- To recite and perform a range of age appropriate poetry.
- To learn nursery rhymes and sing songs.

In line with the National Curriculum Programmes of Study, we teach speaking, listening and drama using our Quality Text based curriculum. Our staff understand the importance of quality and varied language that the pupils hear and speak, knowing these are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing.

In Foundation Stage, speaking, listening and drama are the drivers of the curriculum. Spoken language is modelled to the children often and key vocabulary is added during child-initiated play. Opportunities to orally rehearse ideas, share thoughts and ideas and develop critical thinking are facilitated by practitioners.

In Key Stage One and Two, although all lessons provide opportunities to develop the pupils' spoken language, one week every term is dedicated specifically for developing oracy and drama skills, called our 'Pens Down' week. These lessons build specifically on oracy skills and are documented in our Learning Journey books. Our Oracy skills are developed from the Oracy Framework and consist of Physical, Linguistic, Cognitive and Social and Emotional objectives which allow pupils to develop key skills over the year. Each year group have three oral outcomes over the year, including performing poetry, taking part in debates and retelling stories.

READING

Creating a love of reading is at the centre of our reading approach at Cherry Tree Hill. Each classroom has an inviting reading area with a wide variety of reading materials from story books and information texts to newspapers and magazines.

In Early Years and Key Stage One, the practice of phonics is implemented and continued and as the children progress throughout school where necessary, specific support is used to develop children's phonological awareness. For more information on our phonics approach please see the next section.

Across the school, we value reading as a core subject. In the Foundation Stage, five quality texts are selected for the half term. These texts are read to the children frequently to aid oral retelling. Key vocabulary is selected from each text and is displayed around the room and practitioners actively encourage the use of the vocabulary in the environment. At the end of the half term, the key texts are placed into the reading areas for children to orally rehearse themselves. Core skills (linked to our VIPERS), vocabulary, prediction and sequencing, are introduced to children during story times and in 1:1 reading with adults.

In Key Stage One and Key Stage Two, children take part in regular, thematic, whole class reading sessions. We teach reading through a mastery whole class shared reading approach. We take the two main strands of reading, word recognition and language comprehension and aim to intertwine them as our children learn to co-ordinate the different components of reading. Within our reading lessons, all children are involved in book talk, modelled reading, echo reading, shared reading, speed reading and phonetic decoding as well as stimulating and meaningful activities linked to each of the reading skills. We use the reading VIPERS to explore texts, develop high order thinking skills and teach the six core skills needed for reading comprehension: **V**ocabulary, **I**nference, **P**redict, **E**xplain, **R**etrieve, **S**equence/ **S**ummarise. These six skills are taught within the whole class reading sessions for a minimum of 2 and ½ hours a week.

We ensure that our early readers have access to phonetically decodable texts from schemes such as Rigby Star and Phonics Bug which are in line with their phonics set, as well as recommended, language-rich texts, picture books, information texts to help nurture and develop vocabulary and spark an interest in reading. From Year 2, we use the Accelerated Reader scheme where the children are encouraged to read a wide variety of books within their zone of proximal development to broaden their reading range and develop a love for reading. Using online software children take an online quiz within 24 hours of completing a book to monitor comprehension and the children receive immediate feedback. Teachers in turn receive the information that helps to monitor and personalise the children's reading practice, ensuring that their reading books are aligned to the progress which they have made through the year.

As well as the above, all children are provided with the opportunity to borrow books from the school library and mini libraries throughout school. Children are encouraged to choose books which they are interested in and this helps to promote reading for pleasure. Children are regularly given the opportunity to read independently for pleasure in school and have daily stories shared with them by an adult.

PHONICS AND SPELLING

At Cherry Tree Hill Primary, we have embedded the Supersonic Phonic Friends programme in all Early Years and Key Stage One classes. Our phonics programme also ensures that children are taught to encode unfamiliar words for reading spelling. In addition, teachers ensure that children in Key Stage One (and Key Stage Two if not yet achieved) can spell the first three hundred high frequency words.

In Foundation Stage, teachers introduce concepts of print and teach synthetic phonic skills using the Supersonic Phonic Friends scheme with the whole class, split into ability groups, at least once daily. Initially, children take home books with no words to share with their parents which strengthen knowledge of story structure, handling books and sparks enjoyment. When the first set of phonemes have been taught in Basics 2, the pupils will take a scheme book home. The school has a variety of reading schemes; for those in Early Years and Key Stage One, all books are linked to the phonic sets and are handed out when the set of sounds have been mastered by the child. The teachers and teaching assistants hear each child read individually, with some guided reading being undertaken, when the children are ready.

In Reception and Year 1, Phonics is taught daily in small, streamed groups. In the Summer term of Year 1, children complete a statutory Phonics Screening Assessment. Children who do not meet the expected standard at the end of Year 1, continue to join in Phonics lessons in Year 2. During Phonics lessons, children have the opportunity to apply taught sounds through rhyming, group games, reading and writing activities. Children are encouraged to use sound buttons to show their understanding of phoneme-grapheme correspondence.

In Year 1 though to Year 6, the children practise spellings on a weekly basis, which are linked to phonics. Within each spelling session, National Curriculum spelling patterns are unpicked and rules for spelling are discussed. All children are encouraged to learn common exception words and by Year 6, these are progressively woven into model texts and weekly spellings. Children are tested on these words weekly, children receive 10-12 words which follow the chosen phoneme/ rule from their year group expectations.

WRITING

The National Curriculum states that pupils should:

- Develop the stamina and skills to write at length
- Use accurate spelling and punctuation
- Be grammatically correct
- Write in a range of ways and purposes including narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations
- Write to support their understanding and consolidation of what they have heard or read

In line with the National Curriculum English Programme of Study, we teach children to understand a range of genres, building on children's understanding year after year, ensuring continuity and progression in the teaching of English. Children are taught how to effectively plan and monitor their own writing through various strategies depending on the current skills of the writer, children will learn how, when and why to use each strategy.

We teach children to write following a three-phase approach: Familiarise, Innovate and Create. We want to provide our children with a clear purpose and audience for writing. Every unit of writing throughout school has a custom made, age appropriate 'WAGOLL' (What A Good One

Looks Like) matched to their topic with linked quality texts/ films to provide a relevant stimulus for reading and writing. We encourage, where possible for a thematic approach, linking to the current topic, this means that the children can apply knowledge and are equipped with the skills and tools needed to write fluently for a range of meaningful purposes throughout the years.

As children progress, children learn how to write in a variety of styles, for a variety of audiences. Whilst children begin their writing journey, children learn about the different purposes of writing by seeing teachers model writing in a variety of contexts. The approach throughout a unit allows the children to become familiar with a text type, develop their oracy skills, capturing ideas for their own writing. This is followed by scaffolding writing experiences and explicit grammar instruction linked to the genre outcome resulting in independent writing. Children are taught more complex rules of grammar and syntax and they are encouraged to use a more sophisticated range of vocabulary and imagery by accessing dictionaries, thesauruses, word mats, using the working wall and reading more challenging texts. Children are encouraged to take an active part in revising their own and others' work before the teacher marks it.

Throughout the school:

- We have a systematic approach; we revisit key learning and build upon it in all areas from phonics, through to grammar and spelling.
- We aim to teach sentence level grammar during English lessons through the approach of Grammarsaurus. Year group specific grammar, as identified in the National Curriculum, is also taught discretely at the beginning of our writing lessons and referenced as and when needed throughout our writing and wider curriculum lessons.
- We support children in identifying and correcting errors orally, or in written format following the Marking Policy.
- We use high quality texts, modelling and shared/collaborative writing to demonstrate good practice.
- We develop speaking, listening and oracy skills through drama and various termly challenges such as; 'Deliver a speech', 'Perform a poem' and 'Join a debate'.
- We encourage a range of modelled, shared and guided writing.
 - Modelled writing – Where the teacher models and highlights the strategies used by successful writers
 - Shared writing – a teacher led, whole class or group led activity which draws pupils into the writing process
 - Guided writing – where pupils use their new skills to complete an activity in pairs or in groups, focusing on particular targets and analysing their progress through teacher guidance
- We provide writing frames to support the children

- We provide time for planning, editing and revising
- We use 'writing toolkits' throughout each unit, so that children are able to identify, apply and assess against age appropriate writing features.
- We encourage pupils to self-assess or peer-assess when appropriate, to evaluate their work effectively.
- We encourage joined handwriting to support spelling and speed.

HANDWRITING

We want all of our children to take pride in their presentation and we advocate a cursive/ joined-up handwriting style throughout school. We follow a Handwriting Programme, which is taught and reinforced throughout the curriculum. We begin to teach cursive/ joined-up handwriting from Year 1 onwards. As per the National Curriculum requirements, we aim for children to:

1. Know the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively
2. Write legibly with increasing fluency and speed by:
 - Sitting correctly at the table
 - Having a correct pencil grip
 - Forming all lower-case, capital letters and digits correctly
 - Knowing the size and orientation of letters and understanding which letters belong to which handwriting 'family'

Getting ready to write

In the Early Years, children are provided with high quality mark making activities which strengthen the shoulder, elbow, wrist and fingers in turn. Practitioners are aware of where the child is developmentally within their fine and gross motor movements and provision is adapted to accommodate all pupils. Activities include, finger gym, playdough, writing lying on their stomachs, squiggle while you wiggle and dough disco.

In Key Stage 1 and 2, children get ready to write in frequent and discrete handwriting sessions using our good habits. Please see the Handwriting Programme (Appendix 1) for our good habits, levels of presentation and additional information on individual letter formations, joins and teaching sequences.

All teaching staff model the correct handwriting formation and skills needed for the children throughout the school, on displays, during all lessons and in all written feedback to the children. The Nelson Thornes Handwriting font will also be visible on electronic teaching slides, printed display labels and on any word-processed work.

RESOURCES

There are a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school: all classrooms have dictionaries, thesauri, writing support packs, access to fiction and non-fiction texts, reading scheme books and a variety of age-appropriate resources such as 'Talking Tins' and pencil grips. The Nelson Thornes Handwriting software is installed on all staff computers.

SEND

Through on-going formative and summative assessments, the class teacher identifies children who need support with English skills at the earliest possible stage. Within the classroom, the teacher targets children with difficulties and attempts to address them by providing quality first teaching and scaffolded activities providing extra support where needed. Where a child has a greater need, the school's SEND policy is implemented. The class teacher and the SEND Coordinator work closely together to formulate targeted action plans, which will support the child's acquisition of English skills. Intervention groups, which will be informed from half termly data, will focus on the specific needs of groups within the cohort.

ASSESSMENT, RECORD KEEPING AND TARGET SETTING

There are a variety of teacher and standardised assessments in use. These provide a summative record of what each child has achieved as well as informing ongoing planning.

In the Early Years, a foundation profile is built up and recorded on an online program called 'Tapestry'. Using this programme, alongside the 'Cherry Tree', staff make termly judgements and these are placed onto Sonar (our assessment tracker).

In Key Stage One and Two, assessment data is submitted onto Sonar by the deadlines advised on the school calendar. Teachers are expected to use 'The Best Fit Stage Suggestion' statements to support their judgement alongside year group and whole school moderation.

Writing

In Key Stage One and Two, an independent piece of writing is carried out at the end of each writing unit and assessed against the year group writing toolkits or statutory TAF (Teacher Assessment Framework), which are based on the National Curriculum and relevant to each year group's end of year expectations.

Reading

PIRA Reading Tests are to be carried out at the end of each term in Key Stage 1 and 2 and they inform teacher judgements which are inputted onto Sonar. Teachers must use a range of sources in addition, to inform their decisions.

Throughout Reception and Year One, children are assessed each half term on their phonics knowledge. This assessment identifies gaps in learning and informs phonics teaching moving forward. At the end of Year One, the children sit a National Phonics Screening test which assesses children on their decoding skills of real and nonsense words. Those children that do not pass the phonics screening or complete the phonics assessment sheet, will continue with their phonics teaching and assessments through Year Two and Key Stage Two where necessary. At the end of Key Stage One and Key Stage Two, the children take the SATs tests as set out by the government. Each of these results are reported to parents.

HOMEWORK

See our Homework Policy.

THE ROLE OF THE SUBJECT LEADER

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the subject leader, who will report regularly to the Senior Leadership team. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in their teaching, being informed about current developments in the subject and providing a strategic lead for English in the school. The named governor meets at least annually with the subject leader in order to review progress.

THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

To ensure the implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and the National Curriculum and to review the policy bi-annually.

CONCLUSION

It is our aim that through careful implementation of the guidelines set out in this policy, that the children at Cherry Tree Hill Primary School should have the opportunity to develop confidence and competence in their use of all aspects of the English language, a genuine love of literature and the ability to communicate successfully in many different ways.