

English Policy

Vision statement

At Christ the Sower Ecumenical Primary School we provide the 'good earth' for all our children to flourish; where every child can learn and explore who they are created to be, with the high expectation that we, individually and collectively, will enable every child to be and do the best they can.
A loving place where we all care, learn and grow together.

Members of staff responsible:

- Head Teacher
- English subject leader and early reading leader
- All class teachers

Date of policy: February 2020

Policy Intent

At Christ the Sower Ecumenical Primary School, we have adopted a book-led approach across the curriculum. High quality texts are at the centre of our English provision and stimulate learning across curriculum. Our school is rooted in a story - the Parable of the Sower from the Bible. By providing the good soil of English teaching and a curriculum that engages and nourishes children, we expect children to grow as readers and writers.

Our reasons for taking this approach are as follows:

- books contextualise learning across the curriculum and build connections between subjects.
- books extend experiences beyond children's lives.
- the best books provoke curiosity, inspire and engage children. They feed[s] pupils' imagination and open[s] up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious young minds.
- it promotes reading for enjoyment and purpose, increase 'reading mileage'
- they provide exceptional models for children as writers
- they enrich children's vocabulary.
- They support children's learning opportunities

Children tell us what they think of our book-led approach (Y6 collective worship celebrating books 2020):

In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, I felt like I visited Narnia. In Y4 we actually did by pretending to meet Mr Tumnus in the woods.

The Promise is a story that is set in a mean, ugly world, I felt I was there too – it made me want to have a positive impact on the world like the child in the story..

Alice in Wonderland is an intriguing story that took me to strange, imaginary worlds. Back in Y3, me and classmates had a real tea party inspired by the book.

If you get a really good book it can take you to the place in your imagination, just like the **Arabian Night stories** do.

When we read *Journey to Jo burg*, it helped me to see what life was like for people when they were judged by the colour of skin. It helped me understand how this can affect others. It showed me that we need to be aware of others and not to judge others based on appearance.

It is our intention that every child is empowered to read fluently and with confidence, developing a love of literature through widespread reading for both pleasure and information.

It is our intention that every child is empowered to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences. For this reason, purpose and audience are articulated and placed at the heart of each writing unit.

It is our intention that the English Cultural Curriculum we are developing provides children with a clearly sequenced programme of books, skills and knowledge that supports them to build on previous knowledge and achieve success as readers and writers. Our curriculum is ambitious and designed to give all learners, particularly the disadvantaged, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.

This can be seen through:

- English curriculum overview that identifies writing purposes alongside the best texts.
- The progression papers that clearly identify the key skills and knowledge that children need to become successful readers and writers. These were developed by Christ the Sower school and in line with the National Curriculum and they establish the expected standards.
- The range of high quality of texts opened up and shared together, including classics, old favourites and new treasures.
- Topics that engage, inspire, and provide a context for all our learning, including that as readers and writers.
- A clear focus on writing purpose (to inform, entertain, discuss and persuade) which is the foundation of our approach.

It is our intention that every child is able to access the curriculum and we will ensure this happens by:

- making sure every lesson counts in providing high quality learning as part of the teaching sequence
- providing interventions that meet the needs of children and ensure that no child gets left behind.

It is our intention that every child is empowered to achieve beyond their wildest dreams and this includes challenging our more able readers and writers. We ensure this happens by:

- expecting lessons to include opportunities to deepen and extend skills and knowledge as readers and writers
- having high expectations of reading and writing across the curriculum
- promoting choice and ownership as part of children's development as readers and writers

As things stand, our approach is being **developed and implemented** across the school.

Implementation

a. Implementation: Expert Teaching Team

We ensure that all staff at Christ the Sower Ecumenical Primary School have expert knowledge in English. We do this through:

- Professional development led by English leader and consultant support
- Hub meetings with other schools with English focus
- Staff meetings where good practice is shared
- Planning with teaching teams
- Team teaching
- Support with effective pedagogical approaches for English teaching and learning
- Assistant training weekly.

In addition, all adults delivering phonics are trained regularly in the way of working for the Read Write Inc programme.

We also ensure relevant, regular training for the English leader to ensure she is fully equipped to support development at CtS. We do this through:

- Network meetings with other schools (ODBST; liaison group)
- Support from English consultants

CPD has meant that increasing consistency is being gained across year groups. Where staff have less subject knowledge, they are supported by team teaching, planning support and additional training opportunities.

b. Implementation: Our approach to phonics at CtS

Phonics is taught in Early Years and Key Stage 1. It is used as a catch-up programme in Key Stage 2 as needed. When children first arrive at school, there is a focus on listening and attention and developing sound awareness such as:

- General sound discrimination: environmental, instrumental, body percussion
- Rhythm and Rhyme
- Alliteration
- Voice sounds
- And finally, blending and segmenting

This is continued through our chosen scheme for phonics, which is Read, Write Inc. In the Autumn of Foundation 2, all children begin RWI Inc sessions daily. The *Read Write Inc.* Speed Sounds Lessons follow a careful progression, with sounds being introduced sequentially in a structured and systematic way. Children are grouped in small focus groups linked to the phase of development that the children are at. Groups are fluid and teachers' day-to-day assessment informs any change to provision. Every half-term, the early reading leader assesses every child's phonic skills and knowledge. Children are regrouped accordingly so they can work on their next steps. For any child at risk of falling behind, catch up interventions are quickly put into place to address the barrier to phonics learning. These include: precision training, recap and revisiting sounds already taught and home school links.

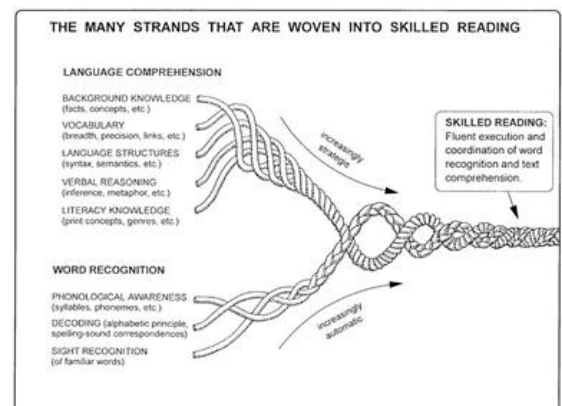
Expectations for this are outlined in the CTS PROGRESSION PAPER FOR PHONICS, SPELLING AND HANDWRITING which is in Appendix....

c. Implementation: Our approach to reading

Across the whole school there is a rich, literate environment where high quality texts are explored and discovered at every opportunity: reading is always seen as an activity which brings pleasure and often has a purpose.

In the EYFS, across the curriculum, children will be exposed to a rich range of vocabulary and language to enable them to communicate effectively. Pupils will develop their knowledge of a range of curriculum areas. There will be purposeful links throughout environment to ensure learners develop, consolidate, revisit/rehearse and deepen their knowledge and understanding. The knowledge and skills gained prepare children for their next stages in learning. There are a range of learning opportunities that allow them to listen, speak and understand language effectively.









Throughout the school, we use a balanced approach that addresses the different strands of good reader behaviour. This ensures that the many strands (Scarborough) that are woven into



skilled reading are clearly taught. This includes the application of phonics, the development of fluency, and the teaching of strategies to enable comprehension. There is a strong focus on developing children's vocabulary through text discussion.

We deliberately and explicitly teach strategies to support children's comprehension and children are expected to apply these in their own reading for pleasure and information, in English and across the curriculum.

The progression for reading is outlined in the CTS PROGRESSION PAPER FOR READING which is in Appendix...

| Strategies for reading comprehension | |
|--|--|
| We explicitly teach these skills so that children are empowered to comprehend not only in guided reading but also when studying texts as a class or reading by themselves; in English and across the curriculum. | |
| strategy | What it means |
| Connect  | Connect to what you know, to other books, to things that interest you. |
| Clarify  | Checking how specific words and phrases have been understood. Opportunity to build vocabulary. Enables readers to monitor their understanding. |
| Predict  | Making a logical plausible guess as to what might happen next, activating prior knowledge and anticipating upcoming text in light of this |
| Question  | Asking questions about the text to expose different layers of meaning. The questions we ask readers and the questions readers ask themselves. These are the jumping off points for dialogue. |
| Think aloud  | Reading a few sentences or a paragraph and verbalising what has been understood. Doing this across a whole text |
| Summarise  | Stating the main events, actions or ideas in a text. Done through dialogue gives opportunities for readers to co-construct meaning |
| Visualise  | Developing a visual image of the text |
| In addition: Read as a writer  | Highlight the main linguistic features of text type and understanding author's intention on reader. |

When do we read?

There are opportunities each week where we

Read with... teachers and adults. This is the explicit teaching of reading.

Read to.... children daily.

Read by... self or with others.

- Reading is embedded in the start of each writing unit.
- The sharing of stories happens every day in class.
- Reading lessons (known as guided reading and timetabled at least 4x weekly) includes the deliberate and explicit teaching of reading strategies that support enjoyment and comprehension of text

Each group has opportunity for:

- A book talk session with the teacher
 - A choice time
 - Preparation and response tasks based on the book being discussed as a group with the teacher at least weekly.
 - In addition, there is some whole class reading and discussion of texts, often as party of the English lesson or in other curriculum subjects.
- Library session weekly: opening poem, story time, final fact are sometimes used to increase access to poetry, fiction and non-fiction. Children are also encouraged to share recommendations with each other.
 - Every classroom has an integrated reading area which children regularly use and interact with. In foundation to year 4, this changes regularly to link with the topic.
 - Reading across the curriculum is a feature of lessons in other subjects and where books support this learning, this is fully embraced. Children are expected to apply their reading for information skills through book selection, scanning, skimming and note taking for example. These skills are modelled clearly and are identified in the progression papers.

Range of books

We use a range of phonetically decodable books in line with the phases children are working at. For children who are still developing decoding skills, the reading book is phonetically decodable in line with their RWInc phase. In addition, every child has a 'reading' book and a choice book alongside the books they are reading with their teacher.

Alongside this, we use books that are banded to further support reading fluently and with understanding across a wider range of text types.

We have a well-stocked library that is regularly supplemented by the Schools Library Service to ensure our stock is up to date. Every class receives a 'topic box' from the SLS to support reading widely across the curriculum.

d. Implementation: our approach to Writing

How is our curriculum for writing designed for progression?

Our writing curriculum has its foundations around four main writing purposes

- To write to entertain
- To write to inform
- To write to persuade
- To write to discuss

Where appropriate, text types are linked to these but it is the main purpose that is the focus of the teaching and learning.

The progression for writing are outlined in the CTS PROGRESSION PAPERS FOR WRITING which are in Appendix... and address the skills and knowledge development in each writing purpose.

The overview of English is found in the English Cultural Curriculum for CtS 2020. Each unit of work is further developed in the termly implementations plans for each year group. This ensures that the following is identified clearly to support focus and progression in learning:

- The big picture, purpose and audience of writing
- The model text and supporting books
- The written outcome of the unit
- The toolkit to be used for this unit. This can be adapted based on each cohorts needs but clearly shows
- Application later on in the year, in other subjects. This ensures that there are planned opportunities to revisit text types to retain previous knowledge yet apply to writing across the curriculum.

Over time, the writing purposes are revisited. The progression papers outline the development in skills and knowledge when writing purposes and text types are revisited to ensure they build on one another. This also ensures that previous knowledge is revisited to support retention.

In addition, the termly implementation plans take into account cases where 'catch-up' is required. These may be adapted as needed to ensure children secure key expectations and learning is consolidated. Children have opportunities to revisit skills throughout the English curriculum and are applied in writing opportunities across the curriculum.

How do we inspire children as writers?

We ensure children are hooked into the book and the writing through:

- Engaging experiences – see step 2 of our writing journey
- Immersion in the book or model text
- Clear identification of purpose and audience for the writing. This includes real opportunities to share writing with wider audiences.

How do we equip children as writers?

- Alongside a book to inspire, we use model texts (often written by teachers) that best exemplify the writing skills and knowledge focus as informed by the progression papers. This should clearly show children what excellent examples look like and give them a clear goal.
- The big picture of the writing is identified by teachers and displayed in class. This is articulated in every writing lesson. Every lesson is expected to empower children to better fulfil the big picture.
- Toolkits based on text structure, vocabulary and grammar are identified and teachers and children co-construct these from the model texts. The toolkits ensure previously introduced skills and knowledge are revisited alongside the introduction of new learning focuses. Checklists are also used to help children. However, success depends on how effectively the tool is used in the writing.
- Story plot structures and graphic organisers support the teaching of the structure of fiction and non-fiction
- Use of a sentence menu to provide a context and hook for talking about sentences
- Use of working walls to map the journey of writing and provide a resource point for children as writers.
- Clear focus on specific aspects of the writer's craft such as: figurative language, suspense, flashbacks etc..

We follow a writing process from prewrite to publish and make full use of the drafting process which includes the use of purple pens to edit to improve or to proof read for accuracy. This is detailed in **Our CtS Writing Journey** in appendix...

How do we give further practice and apply newly developed skills across the curriculum?

Once a writing unit has been taught, it is revisited in another subject as outlined in the termly implementation plan. Teachers adapt these to ensure the needs of the children in their class are met.

How do we ensure every child develops effective transcriptional skills?

A focus on clear oral composition before writing is at the heart of our practice. This ensures children can then turn their mind more specifically to transcriptional skills when they write.

Spelling follows on from Read Write Inc programme. From y3 upwards, children are taught a range of methods to support them to understand the spelling pattern and commit spelling to memory.

In EYFS, there is a strong emphasis on the essential pre writing skills which include: cutting, pegging, construction, painting, colouring, modelling, lacing etc. Children are encouraged to mark-make as they begin to emerge as writers. The right pencil grip is established by end of Foundation 2.

In year 1 children begin to join digraphs and trigraphs as they are learning them.

In year 2 children begin to be taught the main joins and from year 3 there is an expectation that children use a joined script.

Pen is introduced in spring term in y4 and children work towards earning their pen license.

How do we ensure all children keep up?

In lessons, teachers formatively assess to identify who requires intervention and plans are put in place accordingly.

e. Implementation: Inclusion to support children as readers and writers

Every child will be given what they need to empower them as readers and writers. This means we provide additional support for children who need to catch up, children with SEND or children who have English as an additional language.

- *Support* is provided within lessons. This depends on needs of children and includes but is not restricted to: word banks, laptops, writing desks, writing frames, ace dictionaries, bi-lingual books, dual language dictionaries.
- *Participation* is expected from every child. Sometimes encouragement is needed to enable children to participate. This could include but is not restricted to: use of talk time, use of partner or group task, guided work, shared writing, drama tasks, quick writes. Sometimes pre-teaching is used to prepare children for learning in class.
- *Interventions* to support children as readers and writers are utilised and are targeted based on the needs of children. These include but are not restricted to: read write inc phonics interventions in KS2, project x code reading programme, paired reading; precision training; time to talk and socially speaking; beat dyslexia, editing workshops; grammar provision, rainbow writing handwriting support etc.

Challenge for more-able readers and writers is embedded through:

- discussion prompts
- consideration of vocabulary choices
- consideration of sentence types for effect
- choice of writing perspective/style
- impact on the reader
- application in a variety for contexts etc.

f. Implementation through Home - School links

- Events are run to support engagement with reading and writing. Book breakfasts, snuggle ups, book fairs, dressing up days, competitions, visiting authors and poets, theatre groups add to the engaging experiences we offer to promote a love of books. In addition, we offer workshops to parents on a range of topics including phonics/spelling, reading and writing approaches.
- Home learning expectations
 - In the Early Years, Tapestry provides an opportunity to share home and school learning with each other. Storytelling, rhymes, writing, reading experiences are exchanged between home and school and positively support children's development and share expectations and achievements.
 - Reading at home is encouraged at least three times weekly. We support children as needed.
 - Spelling lists are taken home weekly, children are taught a range of strategies to support memory and strategy when learning to spell
 - 'home learning' projects encourage children to use reading and writing across the curriculum for real audiences.

g. Implementation: Assessing children's learning as readers and writers

Children are assessed against how well they have understood a range of key objectives and become secure in a range of skills. These statements are listed on target tracker and within the progression papers. Such assessment links with day-to-day assessment for learning, which informs teachers about the aspects of reading and writing that children need to develop further. In order for us to fulfil our intent, we understand the

particular need for children to achieve key objectives for their current stage of learning. The attainment and progress of children's learning is tracked by class teachers and senior leaders, so that early intervention is in place to ensure no child falls behind.

Phonic assessments take place half termly using the *Read Write inc* programme and groups are re-formed based on learning secured and next steps.

Summative assessments take place termly in October, February and May.

These include the

- NFER Reading test – autumn, spring summer.
- NFER Spelling test – autumn, spring, summer.

In addition, PM benchmarking is used to assess children progressing through the book bands. Teacher also use their notes from book talk sessions and other reading conferences to support their judgements. Children's writing also gives insight into their reading responses and are used to inform judgements.

At these times, teacher also summarise their assessments of children's final writes and other independent evidence of writing across the curriculum. They look for the overall effectiveness of the writing first and then identify the particular writing skills children have now secured and need to develop next. The statements on the progression papers and target tracker support this; the teacher assessment framework is also used at the end of KS1 and KS2.

This data is validated through rigorous internal and external moderation (within liaison group and within ODBST) that happens at least termly.

Assessing Impact

We monitor the impact of provision in phonics and in English through:

- Learning walks
- Observations
- Book reviews
- Planning reviews
- Children's interviews
- Staff feedback

In addition, there is a termly review of whole-school data, which has been validated through rigorous internal and external moderation, and focuses on the progress and attainment of identified pupil groups. The SLT, under the leadership of the Executive Head Teacher, review this information and this informs discussions and decisions around provision for all learners in English.