



Chater Infant School

**An exceptionally high performing  
professional and learning culture creating  
excellent achievement for all.**

# English Policy

## ***Rights Respecting School Agenda***

*We have the right to go to school  
We have the right to learn.*

Article 3 - The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all actions concerning children

Article 28 - Every child has the right to an education (from the National Convention on Rights of the Child)

***This policy will be equality impact assessed with regard to disability, gender and race at the time of review and issues arising will be carried forward into the equality action plan.***

Date agreed: May 2022

Date of next review: May 2023

## **Chater Infant School is a Rights Respecting School**

Therefore we adhere to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Articles particularly pertinent to this policy are:

Article 3 - The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all actions concerning children

Article 6 - Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to ensure that children survive and grow up healthy

Article 12 – every child has the right to an opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously

Article 13 – A child has the right to find out things and share what they think with others, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms or offends other people

Article 23 - A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life in conditions that promote dignity, independence and an active role in the community. Governments must do all they can to provide free care and assistance to children with disability

Article 28 - Every child has the right to an education

Chater Infant School is a Rights Respecting School. Each class has its own 'Chater Charter' and the school is now working towards a Whole School Charter that will outline the rights and respect towards and shown by all pupils.

### **Aims of this policy**

We aim to help children to develop a love for the English language; through the spoken and written word. We recognise that English is a core subject within the National Curriculum and a pre-requisite for educational and social progress. Mastery over language empowers children to communicate; creatively and imaginatively, as well as allowing them to engage with the world at large.

By the age of seven, we aim for children to be able to:

- develop an enjoyment of learning through practical activity, exploration and discussion
- speak, read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding
- using a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct
- have an interest in the written word and read for enjoyment
- have an interest in words, their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms
- to develop the range of skills required in reading in order for children to read for meaning, understanding and enjoyment
- understand a range of text types and genres and be able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the purpose
- to develop a range of skills in writing across the whole curriculum
- **To develop joined up handwriting by the end of KS1**

All school staff will:

- identify the appropriate teaching and learning strategies required
- provide a balance and variety within the classroom – of content and learning opportunities for children
- assess and plan for the specific needs of children within their own class whilst adhering to the progression laid down in the curriculum
- aim to provide an English curriculum that is creative and cross curricular in order to enhance the teaching and learning experiences

## **Role of Governors**

Meet with the curriculum Subject Leader to find out about;

- the school's systems for planning work, supporting staff and monitoring progress
- the allocation, use and adequacy of resources and impact on outcomes for pupils
- how the standards of achievement are improving over time
- promote and support the positive involvement of parents in the curriculum area
- attend training and other events relating to the particular curriculum area
- to be understanding and supportive of our aims in learning and teaching English and review the English Policy regularly

Link Governors are invited to visit the school throughout the year and talk to pupils about their experiences of the curriculum area.

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

In Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) the children will work towards the achievement of the early learning goals stipulated in 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012'. This is supported by the use of 'Early Years Outcomes 2013' and 'Development Matters 2012'

Communication, Language and Literacy in the EYFS depends on learning and being competent in a number of key skills, together with having the confidence, opportunity and encouragement to use them. These areas of learning include; communication and listening in different situations and for different purposes. To give all children the best opportunities for effective development and learning in communication, language and literacy, we provide opportunities for children to communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings and build up relationships with adults and each other. It is further developed by the adults in the setting acting as positive role models for children during the writing process, encouraging each child to write for themselves in a variety of forms, e.g. lists, invitations, menus etc. When children become more aware of phonics and letter formation, they are encouraged to attempt a more focused form of writing, using the initial, end and medial sounds in words.

Children experience daily communication and language activities with their peers and adults in a structured play environment and during other directed activities. Children also share a wide range of rhymes, poetry, stories and non-fiction books at home and in school.

Children develop their phonological skills and hear, see and read familiar words. The school follows the "Read, Write Inc' scheme.

Children in Nursery and Reception are taught the seven prime and specific areas of learning based on the EYFS Guidance. English is taught through the 'Communication and Language' and 'Literacy' areas of learning.

In these areas of learning, effective learning involves:

- being familiar with books and how to read them
- being given real experiences and contexts for language and communication development
- holding a pencil correctly, mark making, giving meaning to marks, recognizing their name
- opportunities to speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities

- using Communication and Language and Literacy in every part of the curriculum
- being immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication
- practitioners valuing talk and alternative forms of communication
- practitioners observing and planning for the contexts in which children best develop their speaking and listening and their understanding of reading and writing
- practitioners helping children to develop language for communication through interaction and expression
- practitioners modelling the use of language as a tool for thinking
- practitioners demonstrating the use of language for reading and writing

### **Key Stage 1**

Children in Year 1 and Year 2 are taught Spoken Language, Reading and Writing, as outlined in the National Curriculum.

### **Spoken Language**

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be 'taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently in Standard English'.

We encourage our pupils to speak clearly and confidently and articulate their views and opinions. We teach children to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose, listening and responding to literature, giving and receiving instructions. Children develop the skills of participating effectively in group discussions.

Ways in which we support this include:

- the provision of a language rich environment
- children with specific speech and language and auditory problems will be identified and specialist help sought, where appropriate.
- first hand experiences and visual materials that are taught in literacy
- talk partners
- show and tell
- drama
- hot seating
- performance poetry
- links to other subject areas
- class and group discussions
- circle time
- assemblies
- school council
- David Maytham strategies
- events within the community (e.g. Talent Show, performing plays)
- theatre visits

### **Reading**

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Reading is singled out as of extreme importance since through it 'pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually'. Reading allows pupils to 'acquire knowledge' and to 'build on what they already know'.

The 2014 Curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions:

- Word reading/decoding

- Comprehension

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, writing, grammar and vocabulary. We also understand that reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning and we encourage and praise children at every stage of it.

Reading is developed through:

- Learning phonics (see Phonics Policy)
- Carefully organised texts and planning within the English unit of work
- Reading across the curriculum particularly for topics
- Guided and individual reading
- Whole class reading (teacher reading book to the whole class)
- Providing a wide range of reading material and opportunities for children to select from for information and for entertainment from Nursery to Year 2
- Offering a wide range of texts in our school library, including fiction, non-fiction, picture books and dual language books
- Regular periods of quiet reading
- Use of ICT in reading (Oxford Owl, WordShark, ebooks)
- Encouraging children to take books home to read with their parents or carers
- Reading for pleasure as modelled by a teacher or teacher's assistant
- Paired reading (between pupils)
- Shared reading with teacher
- Promoting reading for pleasure
- After-school reading club
- Reading events throughout the school year (e.g. celebrating World Book Day or famous authors birthdays, author visits, library visits)
- Reading and phonic workshops for parents to support their child
- Using the library on a weekly/fortnightly basis
- Encourage use and visits to the local library
- Reading volunteers supporting reading across the school

At Chater Infant School, the children are taught to read using a variety of skills, including the teaching of phonics using the Read Write Inc scheme of work. We also use picture/word recognition and high frequency words and some strategies from Letters and Sounds (Please refer to the Phonics Policy). Children are then encouraged to develop wider skills for decoding unknown words, including grammatical, syntactical and contextual clues. These skills are taught through the use of published reading schemes, accompanied by a range of group reading materials. These provide continuity and progression, whilst giving children the opportunity to consolidate reading techniques from a range of quality literature.

We continually review our use of these reading schemes and evaluate their effectiveness.

### **Writing**

Writing is a vital life skill. Even though there are ever increasing mediums for written communication, e.g. text, email etc. It is still necessary for children to be able to communicate using a good standard of written English.

The National Curriculum states that pupils should:

- Develop the stamina and skills to write at length

- Use accurate spelling and punctuation
- Be grammatically correct when writing
- 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

The 2014 Curriculum divides writing skills into two dimensions:

- Transcription (spelling and handwriting).
- Composition (articulating ideas in speech and writing).

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, reading, grammar and vocabulary.

Writing is developed through:

- Teaching grammar either linked into the unit of work or topic or as a separate lesson where necessary
- Planned units of work using Herts for Learning (HfL) resources to support the progression of writing
- A weekly or fortnightly 'extended writing' session to build children's writing stamina and to promote independent learning (writing)
- A cross-curricular writing approach through topic based lessons
- We correct grammatical error orally/ in written work (where appropriate)
- We have a systematic approach - we revisit key learning and build upon it in all areas from phonics, through to grammar and spelling
- We use high quality texts, modelling and shared/collaborative writing to demonstrate good practice
- We use a guided writing approach to support some pupils
- We encourage and promote 'talk for writing'
- We celebrate work on our English Working Wall and through displays around the class and school
- We use David Maythem and Pie Corbett strategies
- We provide story maps, story mountains, writing frames and key words
- We provide time for planning, editing and revising
- We use checklists for pupils to self-assess or peer assess, when appropriate so they can evaluate effectively
- We provide children with next step feedback with opportunities to respond so that children can improve the quality of their written English
- We use drama and hot-seating to help pupils to think about another point of view
- Support for pupils with learning and motor difficulties
- We offer parents writing workshops on handwriting, grammar, spelling and punctuation

### **Vocabulary Development**

The National Curriculum makes clear that learning vocabulary is key to 'learning and progress across the whole curriculum' since it allows pupils to access a wider range of words when writing and for them to understand and comprehend texts efficiently.

Vocabulary teaching needs to be:

- Active
- Progressive/systematic
- Making links from known words
- Develop the understanding of the meaning of new words

- Subject specific - accurate English, mathematical and scientific words and terminology shared with children

We encourage our pupils to have a wide and growing vocabulary in a number of ways, these include:

- Spelling lists/key words to take home and learn
- Display of key words linked to topics and subjects
- Working Walls
- Using the correct vocabulary orally
- In-depth word based lessons looking at patterns
- Using dictionaries, thesaurus and similar programmes
- Focused vocabulary in guided reading lessons
- Carrying out systematic testing and providing feedback to pupils
- Targeted one to one/small group support, where appropriate
- Targeted group support for spelling words using WordShark
- Word mats used created by Communication Inprint

### **Handwriting**

(See separate Handwriting Policy)

### **Assessment in English**

Planning, teaching and assessing form a continual cycle. Assessment informs planning. This is evident in:

- **Short Term Plans:**  
Our daily planning formats include a section reflecting how learning might be assessed (e.g. identified learning objective, key questions to be asked, success criteria, description of activity, differentiation of activity and personalised planning for specific children, resources needed).
- **Medium Term Plans:**  
Our planning identifies opportunities for assessment e.g. assessment activity built into the planning towards the end of a unit of work with the outcomes fed into subsequent units of work/planning. The medium term plan with English will provide cross-curricular opportunities to be made with foundation subjects
- **Long Term Plans:**  
The long term planning overview in KS1 shows progression in the difficulty of the English units of work as advised from HfL. The end of year assessments are used to evaluate the effectiveness of the planned teaching programme. The long term planning has been used to link units of English work into the topic led approach used by the school to ensure that English is taught across the curriculum.

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Adults working with the EYFS will use snapshots of learning, formal Learning Journal observations, photos and work to gather evidence of significant achievement during all activities. Adults will use the Development Matters monthly bands as a guide to identify current attainment and future targets.

## **Key Stage 1**

English, reading and writing lessons are assessed on a daily basis when taught with guidance from the 'Teaching and Learning Policy', 'Assessment, Reporting and Recording Policy' and the 'Marking and Next Steps Feedback Policy'.

In KS1, staff use the HfL Assessment Criteria to support assessments and to track progress. As well as using the HfL documents, Year 2 staff will use the Teacher Assessment Framework alongside the statutory End of KS1 Assessments to assess children. This is a national document which Year 2 teachers will use to assess whether a child is working below the Expected Standard, at the Expected Standard or at Greater Depth. These results will be sent to the Department of Education. It may be necessary for some pupils in Year 1 to be 'levelled' using the Development Matters if they are not able to access the Year 1 curriculum. In the summer term of Year 1, any child that is working below ELG will need to be assessed using P-Levels.

In Year 2, children with special education needs (SEND) will be assessed using P-Levels or another assessment tool identified by the Inclusion Leader to track progress. Staff are provided with training, in-house and local infant school moderations to support judgements and assessments throughout the year. To support teachers further, we use the available DfE and HfL exemplification materials to ensure that our assessment is robust and accurate. To support teacher judgements on attainment at the end of KS1, teachers will use the DfE Teacher Assessment Framework.

## **Computing in English**

The use of computing will promote, enhance and support the teaching of English at word, sentence and text levels.

A range of equipment such as school based software, digital cameras, camcorders, walkie-talkies, sound buttons and programmable toys are used to promote speaking and listening and also to prepare the children for writing experiences. The interactive whiteboard is used regularly in class to model writing experiences. This allows the children to interact and engage with the writing process through a different media. A range of software is being used to support writing using computers and/or iPads including In-Print and WordShark.

## **Home Learning**

Home learning is used to support English through:

Weekly homework with at least one English activity linked to writing

Children taking books home to read

The learning of spelling lists, for example, high frequency words

Cross-curricular class projects

Comprehension tasks

Handwriting activities

Grammar focused activities

Focused parent workshops (including Curriculum evening) to provide help for parents to provide support for teaching English at home

Specific curriculum events and competitions

## **Inclusion**

### **High Quality Teaching**

The National Strategies (2008) advised that the key to success with all learners is quality first teaching (QFT). This has been echoed in the SEND New Code of Practice 2014 and has been rephrased as High Quality Teaching (HQT). This has been used as a mantra across the strategy in guidance, tools, resources and the numerous events the

Strategies run across the country. It is surprisingly hard, given their raft of publications, to find positive and useful illustrations of what this universal truth is actually supposed to look like. QFT originates in the then DCSF's guide to personalised learning published in 2008 which summarises its key characteristics as:

- highly focused lesson design with sharp objectives
- high demands of pupil involvement and engagement with their learning
- high levels of interaction for all pupils
- appropriate use of teacher questioning, modelling and explaining
- an emphasis on learning through dialogue, with regular opportunities for pupils to talk both individually and in groups
- an expectation that pupils will accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently
- regular use of encouragement and authentic praise to engage and motivate pupils

(DCSF, 2008) Personalised learning – a practical guide

HQT in The SEND Code of Practice 2014 recommends that whole class lessons are differentiated so that they include all children, regardless of their abilities and planning has been personalised for children with SEND or EAL children at the early stages of the acquisition of the English language. Pupils may work in smaller more focused groups outside of the classroom for extra support or receive support in the classroom. This support may be provided by a teaching assistant or teacher.

Support may include:

Pupils with difficulties in English

Pupils who are at the early stages of speaking English as an additional language

The use of specially designed materials and adapted resources

The use of specific computer packages

Planned SEND intervention support with focused and identified English targets

Pre-teaching of topic vocabulary

Focused support on grammar, punctuation and spelling

Support to challenge high attaining pupils in English or children working in greater depth of the expected standard

Word mats and topic word mats

Sentence starters

English grammar board games

Repetition of English language

### **Equal Opportunities**

Teachers are alert to any gender bias in published materials and try to ensure that all children have equal access to a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum.

Books and other teaching resources are checked to ensure that the content is not offensive in regard to the individual, racial equality or social justice. The illustrations in books reflect a multicultural society. Where appropriate, literature from other cultures should be included in the curriculum and are provided by our school library.

Care is taken that more dominant children do not stifle the opportunities of the less assertive children to participate in discussion or activities. The variation in the levels of performance of boys and girls is taken into account when grouping children for activities.

### **English as an Additional Language**

A majority of the pupils speak English as an additional language. On entering the Early Years Foundation Stage, most EAL pupils are at an early stage of English language development. This has a significant impact on the development of their language and literacy skills.

Bilingual staff are encouraged to teach pupils in their first language (as well as English), particularly if they are at an early stage in their English language development. The rationale for this approach is based on research findings into the language development of bilingual children.

Mother tongue support also helps pupils to feel more confident within the school environment and helps to bridge the gap between home and school, thereby boosting their self-esteem.

### **Implementing, Coordinating and Monitoring of Provision and Practice**

As well as supplementing strategies and HQT, class Teachers will;

- Include different ideas to teach English in their planning, including drama, group discussion and interaction and presentation
- Implement different teaching styles to accommodate the varied ways in which children learn
- Monitor and evaluate progress through on-going assessment tasks and audits each term
- Keep parents informed, for example during Consultation Evenings and in the annual reports, where their child's specific strengths and how their needs can be met are discussed in detail
- Set reading and writing targets on a half termly basis and monitor progress
- Autumn and Spring term brief updates to parents on targets for reading and writing
- Summer term report on English
- Participate actively in termly pupil progress meetings; where pupils' attainment is tracked and monitored against their targets and against national expectations to ensure all pupils are making at least good progress

### **The Headteacher and subject leader will;**

- be accountable for the attainment and progress of pupils in English
- Take the lead in policy development and the development of long term English planning to ensure progression and continuity in English throughout the school
- Keep on up to date subject leader file
- Report to Governors on attainment and progress in English (reading and writing)
- Complete, review and evaluate an English action plan
- Complete an annual subject leader report to be presented to Governors and staff
- Support colleagues in their development of detailed work plans, classroom practice and assessment and record keeping activities
- Support the enrichment of English and to organise curriculum events
- Take responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for English
- Keep up-to-date with developments in English education and disseminate information to colleagues as appropriate
- Identify courses in English for staff
- Monitor the implementation of this policy and its effectiveness in collaboration with the Senior Leadership Team
- Observe lessons
- Complete a work and planning scrutiny
- Evaluate strengths and areas of development
- Analyse data trends