English, literacy and reading policy

St Peter's CEVC Primary School

September 2026

Our Christian Vision

As part of a church school family that grows together in compassion and kindness, we aspire to be the best that we can be.

We flourish through the connections and relationships we nurture, guided by our Christian values.

Our uniqueness is embraced; our faith and beliefs guide us to be courageous enough to stand up for what is right; and bold enough to evoke change in our world, just as Jesus did.

As James 2:18 reminds us, 'I will show you my faith by my actions'

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1. Aims

This policy is for teaching and non-teaching staff (as well as other interested parties) and aims to set out:

- Our approach to teaching, monitoring and assessing English, literacy and reading knowledge and skills
- How we will make sure our provision for the teaching of English, literacy and reading is of consistently high quality

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements and expectations set out in the:

- National Curriculum programmes of study for English
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Reading framework 2023
- National Curriculum programmes of study for English

3. Our vision for English and literacy in our school

Our school aims to develop pupils' skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening. By the time that pupils move on from our school, our aim is for them to:

- Be fluent readers and writers
- Have a positive attitude towards books and reading, reading widely for pleasure and information
- Enjoy writing in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting language and style accordingly
- Be curious and creative when it comes to reading and writing – for example, by being interested in learning the meaning of new words

- Have a wide vocabulary and understanding of grammar
- Feel confident speaking in class and be able to clearly explain their understanding and ideas
- Listen carefully and sensitively to adults and their peers

4. Our guiding principles for the teaching of English and literacy

We teach English and literacy best when:

- There is a joyful culture around reading and reading for pleasure in school
- All staff feel they have the knowledge, skills, understanding and professional support they need to teach English and literacy effectively
- There's sufficiently detailed and frequent ongoing assessment of pupil progress
- We expose pupils to different types of reading material, including through our choice of shared class novels and picture books, whole school focus weeks (eg Take One Book week), cross-curricular texts used in English and Foundation subjects and the class reading corners and school library etc
- We involve families in supporting their child's reading and writing
- The English curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced
- We identify where pupils have learning gaps or aren't making the expected progress, and put in place interventions to target these
- Teaching resources are available, up to date, varied and diverse, and match pupil and curriculum needs
- We engage pupils in high-quality back-and-forth interactions
- We model new language and accurate grammar to pupils
- We support pupils with speech, language and communication needs – for example, by putting on extra small-group story time and organising structured debate and discussion eg in creating persuasive or balanced arguments

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Building a team of expert teachers who know and understand the processes that underpin learning to read and write
- Providing teachers with the appropriate training and resources so that they can competently deliver the English curriculum
- Creating a stimulating school environment where pupils are exposed to different types of reading material, such as through displays, books and other classroom resources
- Promoting a culture of reading for pleasure at the core of the curriculum
- Developing links with organisations such as school and public library services, reading charities and others
- Involving parents/carers and families in supporting their children's reading and writing

5.2 The English and literacy lead

Our English and literacy subject lead is Mrs Vanessa Sullivan They're responsible for providing leadership and management for English and literacy to secure:

- High-quality teaching and subject knowledge of staff

- Teaching and learning that is evidence-based
- A coherently planned and sequenced English curriculum where pupils are taught to read from the beginning in reception
- A rigorous programme that includes well-conceived and structured resources for teaching phonics
- A programme of reading aloud to all pupils from reception to year 6
- Consistent assessment and accurate teacher judgements within English and literacy
- Effective use of resources

5.3 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Planning effective English and literacy lessons according to our medium and long term plans
- Providing opportunities for pupils to apply their English and literacy skills in a variety of ways
- Completing relevant marking and assessment as per our assessment and Learning and Teaching policies
- Demonstrating their understanding of systematic synthetic phonics in their teaching so Early Career teachers, teacher trainees and support staff can learn from them how to teach reading effectively
- Making sure that support staff have:
    - Access to planning materials and resources
    - The knowledge and skills they need to support and challenge pupils

6. Curriculum

What pupils will learn at Key Stages (KS) 1 and 2 (and, if your school has one, at the Early Years Foundation Stage):

- Our chosen phonics scheme is Little Wandle. All teachers are trained in using this appropriate to their pupil ages
- Children have many opportunities to practise their individual reading skills. In EYFS and KS1, support staff, teachers and highly-trained volunteers use the Little Wandle scheme for group guided reading on Mondays and Fridays.
- We are passionate about helping pupils develop a “reading identity” and a life-long love of books and reading. We do this in a number of ways such as: giving children independent choice time to read books they have bought from home or chosen themselves from the book corner or school library, having themed whole school or year group weeks centred about bringing an engaging book to life in a number of ways, have guest authors and story tellers to share their own love of texts and reading with children,
- We use a Reading in to Writing approach to teaching writing skills, utilising the techniques of Pie Corbett’s Talk For Writing where appropriate. We believe grounding the development of writing in the context of high-quality texts we have read and structured speaking and listening opportunities is very important in giving the children meaningful purpose and audiences for their witing
- We use a number of resources for teaching Vocabulary and believe it is very important to teach discrete vocabulary lessons. This may be visible in various forms eg: using the Vocabulary Ninja scheme to introduced tiered vocabulary, as part of the pre-teaching or introduction to specific English topics and texts and as part of cross-curricular/Foundation subject teaching
- Oracy skills are incredibly important. We have a “language rich environment in our school (please see website statement for further details) and look to weave opprortunities for oracy development across our whole curriculum and as part of our Enrichment Framework

6.1 Timetabling

Outline your timetable for English and literacy here – for example, saying how often each pupil will receive sessions in:

- Phonics is taught daily in EYFS and KS1 and frequently twice daily with additional support and interventions where necessary. KS2 teachers also recap on phonics where relevant, especially in the period of transition between KS1 and KS2 to ensure good phonic knowledge is consolidated and applied
- Whole class reading occurs in KS2 using the Ashley Booth resource at least three times a week (utilising Reading Fluency techniques alongside comprehension) and we try to read extracts of the class novel daily where possible. Younger children frequently also have a daily whole class reading of a picture book
- Children experience and engage with poetry as part of their "reading diet" in school, through English lessons and Whole Class Reading. Children in KS1 also have weekly targeted poems they practise and learn as part of their morning settling work
- Independent writing follows part of the reading in to writing cycle of English teaching with some half-termly opportunities for timed, independent writing scenarios.
- Spelling is taught as part of weekly structured lessons with a focus on rules and patterns: children are given many opportunities to practice the understanding and application of such rules and patterns for example, as part of daily morning settling tasks on entry to school. We currently use the Babcock "No Nonsense Spelling" scheme from the end of Year 2 onwards to structure our teaching.
- Grammar and punctuation is taught both as discrete lessons and within the context of text types in English sequences of work (as part of text analysis in reading, identifying genre features, observed modelled examples of grammatical structures by teachers and practicing applying these structures in their own writing to develop schemas)
- Teachers in KS2 teach English daily and KS1 teach discrete English lessons at least 4 times a week alongside their phonics and reading lessons
- EYFS English teaching and Pre-school
- English sessions are taught daily and are linked to topics and key texts. Lessons are planned alongside the Early Years Framework and key skills are taught in reading and writing. Teachers plan engaging and exciting activities to develop a love of reading and writing. Daily phonic lessons, from the Little Wandle take place to ensure a firm understanding of phonic skills, both in reading and writing. The phonic Catch Up programme is used to support children with identified gaps in phonics. In pre-school, adults utilise the phonological awareness elements of the Little Wandle programme, specifically adapted for nursery, childminder and pre-school settings. Early writing and handwriting is taught through mark making activities, fine motor activities and explicit handwriting practice.
- Oracy is incredibly important and we recognize the need to ensure children have strong foundations in Speaking and Listening skills from entry in the Foundation Stage. Through drama, themed continuous provision activities linked to learning themes, structured debate and discussion, performances and class assemblies. Children with identified needs in this area are supported to develop their skills and confidence in accordance with age-related expectations through structured interventions such as Talk Boost (further information can be found in our SEN and Inclusion policies) Reception use the Word Aware Teaching vocabulary in Early Years Programme to support the development of new vocabulary. Words are selected from key text or topic and taught each week. The children will learn actions and stories linked to the key word. Words will be displayed on a 'Word Wall' and/or within the physical environment and are referred to throughout their learning and play. In EYFS, we use the 'Making it Real' programme, to support targeted children and families in Literacy skills using interventions such as Welkomm and Talk Boost.
- (For reception and KS1) daily story time
- Children in Early Years, are exposed to a variety of reading experiences. A love of books is taught and the children have access to a book corner, story props, puppets, and small world to ignite a passion of reading. Teachers read different text types of books throughout the week, either linked to the topic, interest or purely for enjoyment. Children have the opportunity to become 'storytellers' and tell well known stories or stories from their imagination.

6.2 Cross-curricular links

We will facilitate cross-curricular learning of English and literacy skills, making sure that the links with other curriculums are natural and not forced. This will be achieved through activities in other subjects such as:

- Annotating sources
- Group discussions
- Comprehension
- Topic research

7. Inclusion

We set high expectations for all pupils, and will support all pupils to develop their skills in English, literacy and reading – including:

- Pupils learning English as an additional language (EAL)
- Pupils with SEND
- Disadvantaged pupils
- Those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care
- Pupils who may face other barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing

For more details on how we provide support, see our Inclusion policy

7.1 Adaptation

We will provide suitable adaptation to make sure that every pupil makes maximum progress in English and literacy, by:

- Recognising where some pupils need specific help with their English skills – for example, if they have specific learning difficulties, are learning English as an additional language, or lack phonic confidence in writing – and providing appropriate support
- Providing resources such as phonics mats, spelling and vocabulary banks and writing frames to scaffold pupils' learning
- Identifying pupils who would benefit from more support in an area of their English learning, and running small intervention groups for targeted support each week to aid their progress and attainment. We will monitor these closely to move pupils in and out of these groups as needed
- Making sure pupils who need it are challenged using additional, more demanding and open-ended tasks and planned challenges within each lesson
- Utilising Quality First Teaching techniques such as meta-cognitive strategies, whole-class and group modelling and retrieval practice

8. Marking and feedback

Feedback will clearly explain to pupils what they're doing well, and what they need to do next to continue to improve their work.

It will be given using the most appropriate technique for the lesson context. It may include:

- Verbal comments
- Written comments of work highlighting where learning objectives have been achieved or notable successes
- Suggestions/directions to areas which could be improved or where editing is required
- Peer feedback

- Self-evaluation
- Use of Success Criteria by peers/children/supporting adults

Specific details can be found in our Learning and Teaching policy but it is an expectation, that all work children complete is valued by being acknowledged by the teaching adults.

9. Monitoring, assessment and moderation

9.1 Monitoring

We will monitor the teaching and learning of English, literacy and reading in our school to make sure that all of our pupils make the best possible progress from their starting points. We will also monitor to identify gaps in pupils' learning.

SLT and the English lead will monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning through:

Explain how you'll do this – for example, through:

- Conducting learning walks
- Reviewing marking and feedback
- Termly pupil progress meetings
- Governor monitoring and pupil perception
- Gathering input from the school council
- Planning scrutinies
- Book scrutinies

9.2 Assessment

We will track pupils' progress using a combination of formative and summative assessment

Our pupils will sit the following formal assessments:

- The phonics screening check at the end of year 1
- Little Wandle phonics assessments
- Use of Cornerstones Standardised Assessments in Reading, Writing and Grammar in years 2-6
- Timed independent "Big Writes" in test conditions at least once a term but preferably each half-term
- National Curriculum tests in the summer terms at the end of KS1 and KS2
- Use of past Year 6 SATS papers
- KS2 grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS) tests

We will provide regular targets for pupils, and provide termly verbal reports against these at parents' evenings. Pupils will receive a written report yearly as well as a termly target setting report.

9.3 Moderation

We will standardise writing samples to:

- Demonstrate how pupils' work meets National Curriculum attainment targets for KS1 and KS2, to help with assessment
- Make sure staff have a consistent approach to marking pupils' work

We will refer to the exemplification materials for KS1 and KS2 from the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) to support with this.

We will moderate teacher assessments writing at least half-termly,

For each National Curriculum statement, we will:

- Explain how the evidence was collected – for example, by observation, written work or drawing, test/timed independent conditions
- Indicate how much support was given to the pupil during the activity
- Record the outcome of the activity – for example:
    - The marks awarded in our marking criteria (Oxford Owl Writing Criteria and standardized scores for reading and GAPS in tests)
    - Information from the curriculum we're using to judge success

We will moderate each other's judgements (especially writing) at least half-termly through:

- Attending the local NFOS schools' cluster group moderations
- Whole staff moderation
- Withing year group team moderation

10. Learning environment

Pupils will learn English and literacy in spaces that:

- Are well-organised
- Contain appropriate and good-quality resources for pupils to refer to (in a space where they can find or see them easily)
- Have minimal distractions
- Display letter cards and posters showing grapheme-phoneme correspondences that match our school's phonics teaching programme and make use of HFW/Statutory Spelling banks

11. Resources

11.1 Books

We will select and use books that meet the recommendations in the 2023 reading framework, including that they:

- Cover a wide range of subjects and vocabulary
- Elicit a strong emotional response
- Have a strong narrative
- Have illustrations that are engaging and reflect children from all backgrounds and cultures
- Include fiction, non-fiction, modern and traditional stories

Once we have chosen our books, we will:

- Identify a core set of stories for each year group
- Refresh the list regularly, as new books are published and as our school welcomes new teachers
- Share the list with parents and carers, and explain its purpose, so they can buy or borrow the books

Use texts from the Lemov "Plagues of Reading" spines to make use of challenging texts **(**Archaic Language, Non-Linear Time Sequences**,** Narrative Complexity**,** Complexity of Plot and Symbolic/Figurative Text, Resistant Texts)

- 11.2 Book corners and the School Library

When visiting their book corner, pupils will be able to:

- Browse the books
- Revisit the ones the teacher has read to them
- Borrow books to read or re-tell at home
- Spend time there or select books for Reading for Pleasure in the classroom/outdoor learning spaces

When arranging the book corner, teachers will display books clearly and in an engaging way.

The school also has strong links with the local Coggeshall library and will participate in class/group visits throughout the school year and work on joint projects or events such as the Summer and Winter Reading Challenges and welcome library staff in to school.

11.3 Rhymes and poems

We will choose rhymes and poems that will develop pupils' language skills. The English lead and SLT leads will identify a core set of poems for each year group, based on the criteria on page 30 of the reading framework.

11.4 Dictionaries and thesauruses

To support with writing and spelling, we will make sure that pupils have access to dictionaries and thesauruses by

- Having at least 1 dictionary and thesaurus available in each classroom and make use of the large bank of Vocabulary Ninja books
- Allowing pupils to use the computer/iPads during lessons where appropriate to look up word meanings and synonyms

12. Review

This policy will be reviewed every 4 years. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

13. Links with other policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- Curriculum policy
- SEN/SEND policy and information report
- Marking and feedback policy
- Assessment policy
- Non-examination assessment policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Behaviour policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy