



DIOCESE OF CHESTER

**ASTBURY ST MARY'S**  
**CHURCH of ENGLAND PRIMARY**  
**SCHOOL**

English policy

## **Introduction**

At Astbury St. Mary's Primary School, we believe that English and communication are key life skills. High quality teaching and learning in all aspects of English should enable children to read, write and speak fluently, therefore allowing them to communicate their ideas and emotions to others. Through the English and EYFS curriculum, we will help children develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively through spoken and written language. Our aim is to provide high quality teaching and learning experiences so our children become enthusiastic, confident, and independent and can enjoy and appreciate literature and its rich variety.

*"You can make anything by writing." – C.S. Lewis*

### **There are four main purposes to this policy:**

- To establish an entitlement for all pupils.
- To show clear expectations.
- To promote continuity and coherence across the school.
- To show the way we approach this subject as a school.

## **Writing**

### **Our aim in the teaching of English is that all children will:**

- Develop a genuine love of writing, promoting positive attitudes.
- Develop confidence and fluency when writing.
- Attain high standards and achieve in line or higher to their potential.
- Enjoy learning and reflect, improve and grow in confidence.
- Use vocabulary that is more ambitious.
- Be able to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.
- Appreciate the writing of others, including their peers and published authors and writers.
- Enhance planning, drafting, editing and redrafting skills.
- Acquire a wide-ranging and useful vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistics conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.
- Become confident, effective communicators equipped with the life skills necessary for living, learning and achieving in the wider world.
- Recognise that writing is a powerful communication tool.
- Continue to demonstrate high standards of written English across the curriculum and demonstrate a commitment to the development of Basic Skills.

### **Equal opportunities**

We understand that the children have different backgrounds in terms of knowledge, experience, ability and capability. We therefore aim to ensure that English throughout the school is accessible by all pupils, regardless of ability, life experience, gender, race or belief. The teaching and learning is to be made relevant to the pupils' own experience and abilities. Children who have been identified as being more able will be challenged in order to extend their learning.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **The Headteacher will:**

- Set high expectations, monitor and evaluate learning, teaching and progress towards targets.

- Ensure there is a consistent whole school approach to learning and teaching in English in accordance with this policy.
- Keep parents, governors and all staff well informed of developments.
- Monitor and support individual teachers.
- Regularly review the development of English through the monitoring and evaluation of the school development plan.
- Provide rich CPD opportunities for staff, thus aiding the learning opportunities for the children at Astbury St. Mary's C of E Primary School

**Governors will:**

- Support the staff in implementing the school's policy and action plan for English.
- Be well informed about the attainment, achievement and progress of pupils in English, alongside how standards and achievement compare to the national average and schools in similar contexts and locality.
- Be involved in monitoring and reviewing progress on the development of English and planning further improvement.
- Hold the school to account over standards and achievement.

**The English Subject Leaders for writing and reading will:**

- Inspire and motivate colleagues to use the most up-to-date quality texts, teach exciting and innovative lessons.
- Write and update the curriculum policy for English.
- Lead by example, showing a thorough understanding of the subject and programs employed, such as Talk for Writing and Phonics Bug.
- Monitor and review plans for English to ensure progression.
- Aid colleagues with the planning and delivery of lessons when required.
- Work as part of a development team to improve key areas of English.
- Monitor and review standards of English teaching through e.g. lesson observations, team teaching, samples of work, book scrutiny.
- Produce an annual report reflecting on the standards of provision for English and to set targets accordingly
- Offer support to teachers in areas of planning, teaching, learning and assessment.
- Work alongside the Headteacher to monitor and evaluate teaching, learning, attainment, achievement and progress of all groups of pupils.
- Identify training needs, plan and deliver training through staff meetings and during management time.
- Monitor resources, identify areas of need, prioritise and purchase within the allocated budget.
- Management time will be utilised efficiently and with purpose to monitor and positively impact target areas of the development plan.

**Teachers will:**

- Set high expectations of themselves and the children.
- Plan, teach and assess learning through a daily English lesson, additional target times, reading sessions and cross-curricular opportunities.
- Plan provision to meet the learning needs of all children so they make good or better progress and achieve in line with their potential based on their prior attainment.
- Regularly mark work during the session, according to the school's Marking and Presentation Policy and use this to identify individual and more general gaps in learning.
- Allow the opportunity to follow up and edit based on the marking and feedback.
- Monitor and keep a record of pupil progress through the 'have a go', 'innovate' and 'independent application' (show what you know) pieces of writing.
- Work to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and other vulnerable groups such as pupils with EAL, Pupil Premium and Looked After children participate fully in the

English lesson and have access to other provision as is necessary so that they make good progress and achieve well.

- Maintain an up to date washing line with resources that model, support and extend learning linked to the current unit of teaching and display more permanent resources that pupils will need throughout most units of work.
- Display previous narratives on their class' Talk for Writing board.

**Support staff will:**

- Set high expectations of themselves and the children.
- Have good subject knowledge in preparation for sessions.
- Have a clear understanding of their role in lessons, reading sessions and intervention sessions.
- Understand the specific learning before each lesson and intervention session, particularly for the child/children they are focussing on and communicate these to the children clearly.
- Communicate progress the children have made in the session to the class teacher.
- Undertake (where possible) continued professional development for learning and teaching in English.
- Actively support in sessions and where appropriate 'Team Teach' or scribe alongside the class teacher.

**Parent/Carers will:**

- Be encouraged to develop positive attitudes to English and actively support their children.
- Have an understanding of what 'Talk for Writing' is and why the school adopted this.
- Read with their child at least three times a week and record this in their reading diaries.
- Support their child to learn weekly spellings.
- Encourage children to proof read their work and edit accordingly with guidance.
- Be well informed of their children's attainment, progress and achievement through annual reports, termly Parents' evenings and opportunities to come into school.

**Planning, teaching and learning**

**Speaking and listening**

### **At Astbury St. Mary's children are actively encouraged to:**

- Make the most of 'talk for writing' sessions where they have the opportunity to talk through their ideas before they write, discussing vocabulary choices and impact of language.
- Listen and respond with constructive comments, questions or answers in a variety of speaking and listening activities across the curriculum, developing wide ranging and suitable vocabulary.
- Join in drama activities, improving and working in role, scripting and performing, and responding to performances.
- Listen to and follow instructions and to relay messages accurately.
- Develop social skills and good manners, showing courtesy to their peers and visitors.
- Talk to partners to encourage development of ideas.
- Speak confidently and clearly whilst considering the needs of the listener.
- Use language in an imaginative way and express their ideas and feelings, whilst building on what others have said/offered.
- Speak in a range of contexts and be able to adapt what they say and how they say it depending on audience, purpose and type of writing/text read.
- Respond appropriately to others, thinking about what has been said and the language used.

## **Writing**

### **Aims and objectives**

- All children become independent writers.
- All children will be able to write for a variety of purposes and in a variety of genres.
- All children to see writing as interesting, useful, challenging and rewarding.
- All children will understand the importance of writing as a means of communication.
- All children see writing as a purposeful activity.
- All children will write with confidence and derive pleasure from their ability to do so.
- All children to be provided frequent opportunities to write in different contexts across the curriculum and for a variety of meaningful purposes and audiences.
- All children provided with a range of writing activities that creates an appropriate and adequate opportunity for the introduction and practise of handwriting, spelling, grammar, punctuation and composition.
- All children to be provided the opportunities to plan, draft, revise, edit and present their writing with increasing regard for appropriate organisation and structure.
- All children to use and understand the correct terminology in regards to grammar and punctuation through which to understand and discuss their writing.

### **Teaching strategies**

- Each child will study a suitable poem, imitate a fiction and non-fiction text each half term.
- All children are to write daily.
- All imitated texts and story maps are sent home so children have more opportunities to practise.
- All writing is to be marked according to the school marking and presentation policy.
- All children have the opportunity to edit their work based on the marking and feedback.
- Children are provided with frequent opportunities to observe modelled writing by the teacher.
- All children are provided with frequent opportunities to participate in shared writing.
- All children have the opportunity to participate in short burst writing.
- The 'washing line' is used to support children's writing in each classroom.
- Magpie books/walls are to allow children to record vocabulary/synonyms that they have borrowed and will want to use at a further date.
- Writers' tool kits are to record the language and layout features of non-fiction texts plus tool kits for the different fiction genres e.g. suspense.

- Teachers will model writing on a daily basis to show children ‘what a good one looks like’.
- Each lesson is to include a warm up activity and an aspect of imitate, innovate or independent writing.
- Reading/writing texts that are linked to real life contexts and other curricular areas wherever possible e.g. using real information leaflets.
- A wide range of effective questioning to challenge, probe and extend children’s understanding and learning.
- Guided writing sessions to be used to meet specific objectives for individuals or groups.
- Shared writing sessions to be used to scaffold children’s learning and enable children to become more confident with their own ideas.
- Opportunities to reflect and edit their work whilst drafting - teachers gauge when these times are best.
- In years 1 - 6 teaching will take place as a daily lesson but in Foundation Stage elements may be taught throughout the day.
- ‘Invent’ sessions will take place at least once every half term. Children will be provided with a writing prompt and will ‘invent’ their own piece of writing based on this. This piece of writing will be used to inform assessment.

### **Guided writing**

Guided writing takes place within the English lesson; the class teacher or support staff guide a small group. During guided writing the responsibility for writing shifts to the learner. Guided writing takes place with a group of children with similar writing targets/needs. During a guided writing session, the children will write with an adult supporting. It is intended that guided writing provides a forum for children to demonstrate what they have learned about writing and to further develop and extend their writing skills. These children will be identified following assessment from previous writing or a whole class activity; this allows the teacher to adjust their planning and meet the learning needs of specific groups of children. Teachers used guided writing as a way of rapidly responding to formative assessment.

### **Shared writing**

Shared writing takes place within the English lesson; the teacher supports the writing process of the whole class and welcomes their suggestions for ideas and modelling the planning and editing process. Pupils are taught how to assess each other’s writing, giving valuable feedback. Teaching objectives are pre-planned and sessions are characterised by explicit teaching of specific writing strategies, oral response and high levels of collaboration. The children join in individually or through partner work where appropriate.

### **Modelled Writing**

Modelled writing takes place within the English lesson; the teacher models the writing process to the whole class as an expert writer, articulating the process. During these sessions, the teacher also teaches how to plan, draft, edit and assess the writing.

## **Writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

Literacy in the Foundation Stage is split into two areas of learning:

1. Communication and Language (a prime area) which covers 3 strands: listening, understanding and speaking. The aim is to give children the opportunity to experience a rich language environment.

2. Literacy (a specific area) which covers two strands: Reading and Writing

In the Early Years, children are encouraged to attempt their own emergent writing and their efforts are valued and praised. As their phonic knowledge increases, this will be reflected in their writing. At the same time, their knowledge of key words is supported through reading and writing activities, including shared reading and writing - this is achieved through the 'Talk for Writing' framework. A wide variety of opportunities are provided for children to engage in writing activities. Amongst these are:

- Shared writing
- Role-play (e.g. an office or restaurant)
- Labels
- Recipes
- Lists
- Making books
- Writing letters
- Menus

Through engaging in these activities, children become aware that writing is used for a range of purposes. They distinguish it from drawing, and learn the left to right convention of writing in English.

A variety of resources are used to encourage the development of the fine motor control which is essential for good handwriting. These include playdough, cutting, threading and tracing.

### **Spelling, punctuation and grammar**

#### **Aims and objectives**

- To develop high standards in spelling skills throughout the school

- To develop all children's sense of responsibility towards the learning/ acquisition of these spelling skills
- To encourage all children to have a positive and confident attitude to spelling
- To teach all children that writing is for a purpose and that correct spelling makes it accessible to all
- All children develop independent strategies for tackling and assessing their own spelling
- All children learn to use dictionaries, word banks and spell checkers.

At Astbury St. Mary's C of E Primary School, we embed the teaching of SPaG in our daily English lessons.

### **Spelling**

Through spelling/phonics lessons, we teach children how to spell the common exception words for their year group and how to apply rules when spelling words with suffixes. This is built upon during English lessons, through spelling games and shared writing. Each week, children practise key spellings as part of their homework and are tested on these at the end of each week.

In Foundation Stage, Y1, and in some cases in Y2, children are taught spelling through daily Phonics lessons. Through these lessons, children learn how to read and spell common exception words as well as increasing their understanding of phoneme to grapheme correspondence.

### **Punctuation**

Punctuation is taught as part of English lessons in all classes. This covers correct and incorrect usage as well as offering children the opportunity to use this learning across the curriculum. Children will also link this knowledge to reading aloud and will adapt their pace or intonation accordingly when they encounter punctuation devices in a text.

### **Grammar**

Grammar is taught weekly in accordance with the National Curriculum. Writing takes place daily in every classroom, which also encourages children to practise correct grammar in a range of genres. These impacts on children's ability to write using correct punctuation and grammar.

### **What skills and knowledge do children need to succeed?**

As well as being able to spell words correctly, use a wide range of vocabulary and punctuate well, children need to grasp the meaning of grammatical terms. This terminology can be tricky even for children who are otherwise good at reading and writing. Therefore, it is important that children practise these skills.

### **Assessment of writing**

Planning will be created by each individual teacher and will be personalised where necessary. Assessment in English is continuous, to inform planning and diagnose strengths and weaknesses. In speaking and listening, this involves observing children using a variety of spoken language for different purposes. In writing, formative assessment involves effective marking which is positive, instructional and developmental. Feedback to children about their progress in English is thorough verbal comment, discussion and the marking of work

- Writing is continuously assessed by the class teacher and as a result planning and teaching changes to meet the needs of the children and should be edited to enable continuous progression.
- A formal assessment of writing is made at the end of each term based on age related expectations.
- Children are assessed on a wide range of genres (both fiction and non-fiction) throughout the year. It is essential that all children have a balance of both fiction and non-fiction and the genres in these.
- Writing is moderated within and across year groups every term to ensure assessment is accurate.



- Children will complete a ‘have a go’ piece at the start of each unit to provide a baseline and aid the teacher to set initial targets. At the end of each unit children will complete a ‘show what you know’ piece to show progress and help the teachers to address any gaps in children’s learning.
- Targets will be recorded in books and this will be responded to by the children.
- Year 6 will undertake the Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar test as part of their SAT assessments.
- Year 2 SATs will include an optional Spelling Punctuation and Grammar test.
- Writing will be assessed using Target Tracker.
- Children in year 6 will all have a copy of the interim assessment framework in the front of their English books, which will be filled in with the children in order for them to have a clear understanding of their targets.

### **Use of computing in writing**

Computing will be used in English sessions, wherever possible. The Interactive Whiteboard in each classroom enables teachers to use multi-modal texts and resources from the Internet. Computing helps children learn in English by providing stimuli for their work, allowing time for creativity and thinking. Children are taught to:

- Use ICT to develop their ideas and to record their creative work.
- Develop their research skills and decide what information is appropriate for their work.
- Begin to question the plausibility and quality of information.
- Learn how to amend and present their work in different ways.

### **Promoting high expectations**

All teachers should have high expectations with regard to the standard of pupils’ writing, taking due account of the child’s stage of development. All pupils should be encouraged to achieve the highest possible standard of writing according to their stage of development and level of ability. These expectations can be made explicit in a variety of ways:

- Use of positive feedback (oral or written)
- Team points
- Certificates in celebration assembly
- Reading children’s writing to the class / in assembly
- Display children’s writing around the school
- Publish children’s writing in ‘books’ or on the school website

### **Homework**

Children are set weekly English homework with a different focus each week. This is sent out on a Wednesday and is expected in the following Monday.

**Handwriting** – see handwriting policy

Signed:

**Date: May 2020**

Amended : July 2022

**Date of Review:**