

Hurstbourne Tarrant Church of England Primary School

'Love of Learning, Love of Life, Love of Christ!'



Our School Christian Values = REACH

R=espect E=ffort A=im High C=are and love H=onesty

English Policy

Headteacher Signature:	Date: May 2026
Chair of Governors Signature:	Date: May 2026
Date for renewal: May 2029	

Our School's Christian Vision

Through our Christian values of Respect, Honesty, Care and Love, we aim to ensure that our school is a place which enables children to fulfil their journey together in mutual respect within an environment that enables children to have a positive purpose in life being true to themselves and others.

Our School Values

Respect – valuing each other and celebrating differences.

Effort – always trying our best.

Aim High – setting ourselves new challenges.

Care and Love – selfless service to others, putting others before ourselves.

Honesty – living with integrity, saying what we mean and mean what we're saying.

English Policy

RATIONALE

At Hurstbourne Tarrant Primary School we believe that speaking, listening, reading and writing are extremely powerful tools for learning, as well as vital skills for life. English underpins the rest of our curriculum.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

As a school we aim:

- To provide a rich and stimulating language environment, where speaking and listening, reading and writing are central to all learning
- To build a community of readers and writers
- To provide real audiences and compelling purposes for reading, writing and speaking
- To enrich our curriculum through the use of drama and IT
- To provide carefully planned and skilful teaching which guides children towards their next steps in learning and secures high levels of progress
- To have high expectations of children's presentation and spelling

We hope that pupils will:

- Be able to participate in a conversation, listening to others, responding appropriately and take turns to speak.
- Express views, justify opinions and listen to those of others.
- Develop the confidence and ability to speak appropriately and perform in front of varying sizes of audience.
- Be able to sustain concentration in a range of listening situations
- Know, understand and be able to write in a range of genres in fiction and poetry, and understand and be familiar with some of the ways in which narratives are structured through basic literary ideas of setting, character and plot;
- Know, understand and be able to write in a range of non-fiction genres and structure text in a style suited to its purpose
- Use grammar and punctuation with increasing accuracy
- Have an interest in words and their meanings and a growing vocabulary
- Plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing
- Understand the phonic system and spelling conventions and use them to read and spell with growing accuracy;
- Be able to orchestrate a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual) to monitor their reading and correct their own mistakes
- Have a suitable technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their reading and writing;
- Express opinions, articulate feelings and formulate responses to a range of texts
- Be interested in books, read for enjoyment, research and evaluate and justify their preferences;
- Be able to work confidently and increasingly independently in all areas.
- Write for enjoyment.

ENGLISH TEACHING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The EYFS children will experience Communication, Language and Literacy as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teachers observe children carefully and plan for their next steps in learning. Planning is based on knowing individual children well as learners and on having a clear understanding of child development, supported by documents such as Development Matters. Children's learning needs are met through a play based curriculum with a careful balance of child initiated and adult led activities.

Speaking and Listening skills are vitally important as they underpin all learning at this early stage. The Communication, Language and Literacy programme of the Foundation Stage builds on the language skills that children bring to school from home. Development of these skills is encouraged through activities such as listening to stories and poems, joining in with rhymes and songs, participating in drama and imaginative play, responding to simple instructions, talking to accompany play etc.

Knowledge about books is developed through activities such as retelling stories, reading a book with the teacher, re-reading favourite stories and listening to taped stories. When a child is ready to begin more formal reading activities he/she will embark upon the school's reading system. This will involve a Read and Write Inc book (linked to the phonics sounds being taught) as well as a challenge book that the child has chosen.

Teachers model purposeful writing for children and emergent writing is encouraged through role play, drama and 'real life' scenarios. As children become more aware of phonics and letter formation they begin to take part in guided 1:1 and small adult led groups.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

We believe that speaking and listening is of paramount importance to children's learning which in turn will help develop their writing.

We aim to provide a rich environment for speaking and listening within which children share their thoughts and ideas, give opinions and explanations, debate and discuss, retell stories and speak for many other purposes drawing on personal experiences where appropriate.

Children are encouraged to listen to others, to respect turn taking within conversations and to ask appropriate questions.

Role play and drama activities are used as major tools in the development of speaking, listening and thinking skills. Children will be involved in larger presentations and performances at Christmas and throughout the year. Spring Class perform a Nativity play at Christmas, Summer Class also perform a play at Christmas. Autumn Class perform a play in the church at Easter and Winter Class perform a play at the end of the academic year.

The school regularly engages in a variety of speaking and listening activities which encourage deep thinking around a subject and that having an opinion is good and how to communicate this is the best possible way. It also encourages children to understand that you may have an opinion on a subject but after listening to others it is ok to change that opinion. This is a feature of our whole school curriculum.

READING

We believe all children should have access to a wide range of high quality reading material. All children are encouraged to love books and adults in school share their own love of reading.

- Children are introduced to a full range of genres.
- Children in Foundation Stage/ Key Stage 1 are introduced to **phonics** through the Read and Write Inc programme.
- Children are taught to blend sounds to read words
- Children are taught to recognise **key words** and word patterns
- Children are also encouraged to read for **meaning** and through **context**.
- Children each follow an individual **independent reading** programme monitored by class teachers and teaching assistants.
- **Guided Reading** will be taught as a whole class session where children are encouraged to develop reading skills and to interpret and discuss texts in more depth. In KS1, Guided Reading is taught to those children who have completed the Read and Write Inc phonics scheme.
- Children are encouraged to make free choices of books based on their own interests from the library to supplement their instructional **independent reading** thus developing reading for pleasure.
- Reading skills are further developed across the curriculum.
- Children are taught to develop their understanding of words/vocabulary by undertaking 'shades of meaning' work.
- Children are expected to read regularly at home with home reads recorded and counted every week.

We also run a reading reward scheme which values and celebrates children's home reading with certificates and badges.

WRITING

We believe writing should be enjoyable and where possible for a 'real' or compelling purpose and for a real audience.

- Children's progress in writing is underpinned by rich opportunities for speaking and listening and by our hands on 'real life' approach.
- We see drama and other speaking and listening work as a particularly powerful tool for both supporting and stimulating children's writing
- Use of IT/Video clips can be use as a stimulus for children's writing.
- In Early Years, fine motor skills for writing are developed through planned activities to strengthen fingers and hands.
- A good pencil grip is modelled in Early Years and KS1 through daily handwriting practise.
- Teachers model writing of all genres through **shared writing** activities.
- Writing skills are further developed in group **guided writing** sessions.
- Next steps may be generic as well as genre specific
- Children have opportunities for **child initiated writing and writing in other curriculum areas** through which they can apply their skills (**Sight of Application**).
- Children are given opportunities to plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing as appropriate.
- Children use their writing skills to communicate across the curriculum.

- Children are encouraged to be readers of their own writing and to consider the effect of their writing on their audience.
- Children are given some choices in their writing for example they may decide the audience their report is aimed at.

SPELLING

Spelling skills are introduced through direct teaching, investigations and studies of spelling patterns and conventions. Early Years and Key Stage 1 children are introduced to spelling through our phonics programme, Read and Write Inc. Older children learn about spelling patterns and collect lists of words, using an investigative approach and then are given a list of these words to learn.

All children are encouraged to

- attempt words for themselves using a range of strategies.
- write an increasingly wide range of words from memory.
- use a variety of resources to help with spelling e.g. dictionaries, word banks, classroom environment, computer spell-check etc.

The spelling of necessary technical vocabulary is introduced throughout the curriculum.

Marking supports self-correction and awareness of correct spelling. Commonly misspelt words are placed in a class 'hospital bed' until they recover (Word being spelt correctly).

GRAMMAR AND PUNCTUATION

Knowledge of the use of correct grammar and punctuation is taught through reading and writing activities, often at the point of composition. Children are encouraged to be aware of the effect of their grammar and punctuation on their listener/reader. Some discrete teaching of grammar is evident across the school where a cohort is identified as needing direct teaching on a specific area.

HANDWRITING AND PRESENTATION

Children are taught and encouraged to form lower and upper case letters correctly from their first days in school and, as they develop, to write in a cursive style. They are taught to use a comfortable and correct pencil/pen grip and can choose whether to use a pen in KS2. A high standard in the presentation of written work is expected across the curriculum. Effort in presentation is recognised and rewarded. Children are also given opportunities to write and present their work on word processors.

PLANNING

The National Curriculum for English (2014) makes clear what children need to know, understand and be able to do by the end of each school year. The Writing Framework (2025) also supports teachers in the planning and task design of writing. English may be taught through specific English lessons (for example phonics lessons and guided reading lessons) or through or in conjunction with other areas of the curriculum, as part of our integrated topic approach.

Units of work in English are often linked to the topics being taught and often support, learning in all other subjects. The high standards for children's speaking, listening, reading and writing expected in discrete English lessons are expected equally in all lessons throughout the curriculum.

We aim for high levels of engagement in all our lessons and we try to use contexts and scenarios which feel 'real' and compelling to our children.

Clear objectives are set for lessons and are shared with children. Teachers differentiate according to the needs of the children and set targets, based on next steps in learning, for children to work to on a regular basis.

IT is used where it enhances, extends and complements English teaching and learning.

Additional adults are used to support the teaching of English. They work under the guidance of the teacher with groups of children or individuals.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

Marking is in line with the school's policy. Assessments are made in line with the school assessment policy. Children are formally assessed at the end of the Foundation Stage and at the end of each Key Stage. Assessment for Learning is an on-going process which is embedded in our teaching. It enables teachers to identify children's progress and their next steps and to modify their teaching to best meet children's needs. Quality Marking is central to this planning process. It enables teachers to reflect on children's progress and to plan to address children's next steps in learning. When making assessments, teachers are careful to distinguish between children's performance at the sight of instruction and at the sight of assessment. From the earliest stages children are involved in reflecting on their progress and on their next steps. Parents are invited to parent consultation meetings twice a year and receive an annual report. The class teacher will keep individual records as appropriate. These include any information that enables the teacher to deliver an effective, relevant curriculum which addresses children's next steps in learning.

EXPECTATIONS

The head teacher sets individual and challenging expectations for all children working in years one to six in the form of predicted attainment. These expectations are shared with parents during parent teacher consultations and parents are kept informed about children's progress towards them.

INCLUSION

All children receive quality English teaching on a daily basis and activities are differentiated accordingly. Where children are considered to require targeted support, to enable them to work to age appropriate objectives, a variety of interventions are available. These include the use of IEPs, LSA support, and specific support programmes. .

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Pupils with special needs have equal access to the English curriculum through the use of differentiated learning strategies and tasks. These are based on individual needs.
- Specific teaching strategies are used to maximise access to the curriculum for pupils learning EAL.
- Respect for cultural and linguistic diversity is promoted through the use of resources on multi-cultural themes. These often link to the topics being taught.
- An awareness of dialects and Standard English is encouraged through a range of texts.

- Gender equality is promoted by ensuring that both boys and girls have access to all aspects of the English curriculum. A wide range of texts and stimuli are used.
- Opportunities to address issues of gender, race etc. are provided through discussion, texts and resources.

PARENTAL/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

We value parental involvement in children's literacy development and promote a home school partnership in the following ways;

- Shared reading at home. We ask parents to support and monitor home reading and to discuss books and preferences with their children. Parents are encouraged to maintain a written dialogue with teachers in the reading diary.
- Teachers share information about children's learning through topic newsletters and by inviting parents into school half termly to share work
- Parents and DBS checked community volunteers are welcomed into the school to support children in English
- Homework tasks are often spelling investigations, learning spellings as well as topic home learning tasks that include non-fiction writing.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Training needs are identified as a result of whole school monitoring and evaluation, performance management and the needs of children. These will be reflected in the School Development Plan which includes the English Action Plans.

The English Lead will arrange for relevant advice and information, such as feedback from courses and newsletters, to be disseminated. Where necessary, the English Lead organises or leads school based training.

Additional adults who are involved with intervention programmes will receive appropriate training which may be part of LA or school based training.

RESOURCES

Each class has easy access to basic resources for English such as reading books at Key Stage 1, and dictionaries and thesauri. The school library contains a range of fiction and non-fiction books. Sets of guided reading books are stored centrally. Enrichment events are organised including, whole school writing days, visiting drama specialists and theatre groups.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

English is monitored by the English manager, working at different times with the headteacher. The focus is on triangulating pupil conferences, monitoring of planning and learning in lessons and the regular moderation of work.

Having identified priorities, the English Manager constructs an action plan which forms part of the School Development Plan.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEADTEACHER

For ensuring that the legal requirements are met and that time and resources are available, enabling the implementation of this policy.