



Castlecroft Primary School



English Policy

Head Teacher: Mr A. Dyall

English leader: R.Russell

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(This policy cannot be seen in isolation but must be read in relation to the school's Curriculum policy, Assessment policy and Marking policy.)

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How this policy was developed:

This policy was developed by the English subject leader supported by the EYFS co-ordinator. Staff and governors were consulted on the policy before it was adopted by the full governing body. The policy will be reviewed and put before governors at least every two years but more regularly where key changes are made.

Key roles in English:

The English subject leader is responsible for:

- ✓ this policy and its implementation including supporting staff in the delivery of English.
- ✓ ensuring that the governing body is kept up to date with any actions and initiatives that are relevant to the subject.
- ✓ writing the relevant part of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and providing the headteacher and governing body with regular reviews of the SIP.
- ✓ Monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.
- ✓ identifying staff training needs and arranging or delivering CPD.
- ✓ annual standardisation and moderation activities in school.

The Governing body are responsible for:

- ✓ ensuring the effective delivery of the National Curriculum in English.
- ✓ identifying a core curriculum link governor to liaise with the English subject leader and update the governing body with regular link governor reports annually.

Intent:

At Castlecroft Primary School, we see English as the foundation of our school curriculum and we recognise how important it is for our children's future academic success to become masters of all aspects of the English language.

Promoting a love of the English language is paramount to us. We want our children to leave us as independent learners- articulate young people with wide vocabularies, able to express their ideas, thoughts and emotions confidently and clearly and who are able to listen to and discuss issues skillfully. We want them to be passionate readers with the comprehension

skills to understand challenging texts and enthusiastic writers with the ability to write with grammatical accuracy for a variety of purposes and audiences with their own individual writing flair.

These skills will enable pupils to express themselves fluently and accurately not just in English lessons but across the whole curriculum with confidence. We know that this is key for our children's success both now and in their futures including later in the world of work.

We encourage all our children to reach their full potential and be aspirational. Through an exciting and challenging, carefully planned curriculum our pupils will:

- ✓ develop the phonics skills necessary to access age appropriate texts and apply these skills when spelling and writing.
- ✓ experience a wide range of quality texts and books which engage, excite and inform them throughout the whole curriculum.
- ✓ read with good understanding.
- ✓ build a broad and rich vocabulary.
- ✓ develop a lifelong love of reading.
- ✓ learn to appreciate quality literature and develop an understanding of different text types, features of different genres and author's techniques which they will use in their own writing, through a range of stimulating writing opportunities.
- ✓ develop a good understanding of grammar, punctuation and sentence construction and apply these skills when writing for different purposes.
- ✓ develop correctly formed letters leading to a fluent, joined legible handwriting style.
- ✓ communicate effectively orally and in writing
- ✓ develop a genuine enthusiasm for writing.
- ✓ develop personal qualities such as perseverance, independent thinking, co-operation and self-confidence.

Implementation:

Throughout school, we build upon children's knowledge by first embedding key phonic skills taught through the Read Write Inc. Programme, which teaches children to decode words and develop skills to enable them to read fluently with good comprehension. Alongside this, children also develop key writing skills such as correct letter formation, the encoding skills necessary for accurate spelling and an understanding of sentence construction and punctuation.

High quality reading materials are used throughout the curriculum at Castlecroft and each lesson, in all subject areas, has a focus on developing subject specific vocabulary.

EYFS: Communication and Language

At Castlecroft, communication and language is a core part of our early years curriculum as we acknowledge that children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We understand that the number and quality of the conversations our youngest children have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. In each setting our early years staff listen carefully to children's conversations and echo back what they have heard with additional new vocabulary to build their language effectively.

We strongly believe that children become confident readers and writers if they can first develop their listening and language skills and articulate ideas through speech within their early years of learning. Therefore, we ensure children are given extensive opportunities to talk, imagine and re-tell stories through uninterrupted play as well as adult led activities.

In our early years settings children are read to regularly at different times throughout the day. We use engaging, quality texts to enrich children's vocabulary and promote a love for reading by planning a range of activities which allow our youngest children to demonstrate a deeper understanding of our chosen stories, non-fiction books, poems and rhymes. We encourage children to use and embed new words in a range of contexts by scaffolding, questioning and modelling talk during story-telling and role play.

Reading development

The children at Castlecroft have a wide range of reading opportunities including:

Read Write Inc phonics and reading lessons

Shared reading

Guided reading

A carefully planned reading canon

Independent reading to an adult

Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) known as 'ERIC' - **E**veryone **R**ead **I**n **C**lass

Paired reading and discussion

Comprehension lessons

Reading cross curricular texts

Independent reading books to take home and additional ebooks from the RWInc scheme

Year 3 'Reading Club' run by our librarian

Library time where they can choose library books to take home
'Fiction Fortnight' - our annual whole school reading/writing project which is based on a chosen text. Each class explores or studies a book in depth exploring the characters, themes, vocabulary and messages of the book using drama, reading, writing and art activities to fully understand and enjoy it.

Individual Reading:

Children in Reception and KS1 take home a Read Write Inc 'Book Bag Book' to read which is matched to their developing phonic knowledge and builds as they progress through the various levels of the synthetic phonics programme. Teachers will also assign to each child an 'ebook' version of the RWInc text children have read in school once it has been completed so that they can share their successes with their family at home.

In addition to this we use the Oxford Reading Tree (ORT) scheme for the majority of reading books throughout school so children in Reception and KS1 will also have an extra book which they can enjoy at home with their family. As their reading skills develop they will begin to be able to read these ORT books more independently and eventually, when children no longer require the RWInc books, the ORT reading scheme books will be each child's main reading book as they progress through school until they become 'free readers'.

Children are encouraged to read regularly and change their books either by placing them in the red book box for staff to change in KS1 or by changing them independently, where appropriate, in KS2.

Staff should check, where possible, that children have read and understood their book before allowing them to change it and there will be times when children will be asked to re-read a book or at least part of a text. This is to discourage children racing through the scheme and reaching a stage that they can read but don't fully understand and therefore to encourage reading for meaning. As a general rule, children will only be allowed to change their book once a day, as there is insufficient time to check every child's understanding after silent reading for instance. Staff may give children an additional reading book during school holidays to encourage continued reading.

Reading Frequency

To ensure that staff hear every child read regularly, and that our most vulnerable, lowest attaining pupils are supported accordingly, a reading timetable is drawn up by each class teacher. Depending on ability, children will be heard a minimum of once, twice or three times per week by adults in school. Each class reading folder has a colour-coded weekly reading

record in the front clearly identifying reading expectations for each child in the class. The outcomes of termly phonic assessments, reading age tests, LA baseline and midline assessments along with teacher knowledge are used to inform this reading record.

In addition to school staff hearing children read, we are supported by volunteers from the 'SchoolReaders' charity who visit school each week to listen to children read. Parents are also invited into school to hear children read and we have 'peer readers' from Year 6 to hear some of our younger children read, to provide extra opportunities to practice their developing reading skills.

We encourage children to read regularly as part of our Castlecroft homework expectations. To reward their hard work, children receive certificates when they move up a level in the reading scheme and can also choose a small prize each time they complete three reading challenges, which are set by school staff when hearing children read individually.

We also reward children who make good use of our well-stocked library throughout the year. Every child has a library record card maintained by our dedicated librarian. Each time children take home a new book they receive a stamp on their card. When a line on their card is full, children choose a small prize and a book-related fun activity. At the end of the year all children who have filled their card entirely are invited to a 'VIP Readers' outdoor activity afternoon - a very popular reward!

Writing development:

In English lessons we evaluate model texts, drawing out author's techniques, and the features of the text. Children also explore the authorial vocabulary choices made.

Teachers set purposeful extended tasks inspired by exciting stimuli.

Through speaking and listening, drama and collaborative shorter writing activities, children begin to use and practice the key skills they will need to be successful. They are taught to plan their own work before applying everything they have learnt to their own extended writing.

The skills of editing and improving work are built up in an age-appropriate way through school, beginning with correcting letter reversals in Year 1 to editing and re-drafting whole pieces in Year 6.

We believe that the reading to writing model we use allows children to practice and consolidate skills at each stage, enabling them to understand the full writing process.

To ensure quality of teaching and learning, Medium term plans have been collaboratively written and planning support and guidance is offered by the English subject leader and deputy headteacher. However, teachers retain responsibility for adapting and amending planning to meet the needs of their class and for all short-term planning, including identifying cross curricular links and opportunities for reading and writing with a real purpose.

Writing opportunities:

- ✓ Our 'Fiction Fortnight' project always results in high quality writing activities and outcomes in school but in addition to this all children are invited to take part in a writing competition at home as part of this annual event.
- ✓ Other exciting opportunities, to promote a love of writing, include each class within Key Stage 2 taking part in our 'BoomWriter' project. This involves the whole class writing short chapters for their chosen book. Each child will see their own ending for the collaborative text published in a book which is purchased for them by the school.
- ✓ Children, including those in some of our younger year groups, are also encouraged to write for a real purpose and have recently written letters to children in Ukraine and sent letters to King Charles at the time of his coronation, for example.

Other ways in which we promote and celebrate English at Castlecroft:

- ✓ We take part in an annual poetry recital competition with other schools in our network. This competition is open to all children within school.
- ✓ We hold an annual class poetry recital assembly in November, in which all children work with their classmates to learn and recite a poem in front of the whole school.
- ✓ Selected children in Year 4 take part in a 'Spelling Bee' competition with pupils from other local schools
- ✓ Year 2 children are taken on a visit to a local library, which is within walking distance of the school.
- ✓ We celebrate 'World Book Day' in March each year
- ✓ A pen license is awarded in assembly for those children whose writing is neat enough to use a pen in Year 3 or 4 and all children in Years 5 and 6 use a pen for all of their recorded work.

At Castlecroft we have high expectations of our children and all of our children access the National Curriculum, wherever possible. Children who are 'rapid learners', gifted and talented or who are capable of achieving the 'higher standard' at the end of Key Stage 2 are identified as 'Purple Group' so that teachers can ensure they stay on track to achieve their full potential. In Reading and Writing lessons, 'greater depth' answers and examples of writing are modelled to those children who are ready for this challenge from 'Purple Group' and beyond.

A group of children on the SEND register, who are significantly below their age-related expectations are identified as 'Silver Group'. This ensures that teachers make the reasonable adjustments necessary to allow them to access their age-related curriculum. For some of these children, their curriculum will include learning objectives from other year groups to allow them to plug gaps in their learning.

Some children in school are unable to access a subject specific curriculum and in this case their learning is guided, and progress tracked, by the engagement model in line with government guidelines. Children within this group who have a diagnosis of ASD will have their small steps of progress tracked using SCERTS.

Impact:

As a result of our quality curriculum and good teaching:

(PUPIL VOICE):

- ✓ children talk enthusiastically about reading and writing and understand the importance of the subject. They can discuss and recommend books which they have enjoyed and can explain their reasoning when answering questions about what they have read.
- ✓ in English, children use appropriate vocabulary when discussing their learning

(ATTAINMENT):

- ✓ children achieve their age related expectations and where there are gaps in their knowledge they receive carefully planned support and intervention to accelerate their progress and narrow the gap.

- ✓ more able children who are identified (using Fischer Family Trust and school data) as having the potential to achieve Mastery level are challenged with carefully differentiated work and supported where necessary to ensure that they too fully achieve.

(OUTCOMES):

- ✓ worktrawls evidence a broad and balanced curriculum and demonstrate children's acquisition of age related knowledge and skills. Children make good progress in their recorded work.
- ✓ children are fluent readers and worktrawls evidence that they have good understanding of challenging texts.
- ✓ writing evidences that children are developing a rich vocabulary.

(CROSS CURRICULUM):

- ✓ children confidently apply the skills that they have developed in English to their written work in other subjects
- ✓ children use appropriate subject related technical words in cross-curricular work.

Assessment:

Assessment for learning is continuous throughout our planning, teaching and learning cycle. Assessment data is collected in the following ways:

FORMATIVE:

- ✓ observing children at work individually, in pairs and in groups
- ✓ using a range of carefully planned, differentiated, open ended questions that require children to explain their understanding and using supplementary questions to deepen their thinking further
- ✓ self assessment and peer marking encourages the children to understand where they have been successful and where they need further help
- ✓ marking: Teachers use a developmental feedback system to mark the children's work. The ABC system, as it is known in school, ensures that children quickly know whether they need additional support (A), have achieved all of the LO and success criteria, (B) or whether they have corrections to do (C) Where children receive an A, teachers plan targeted intervention and re-teach activities to address the pupils' misconceptions in a smaller group. Marking comments are used to encourage children to correct, edit and improve their own work.
- ✓ The WellComm speech and language toolkit is being used in Nursery and Reception to "easily and quickly identify children needing support" with their language development. The programme uses an

extensive range of age-appropriate play-based activities, empowering staff to take rapid action to support children effectively.

SUMMATIVE:

Teachers make summative end of term age-related judgements based on their formative data. These are recorded on the data trackers. To assist teachers in making these data judgements, gathering records are completed against the objectives for each child in reading (using the VIPERS acronym), writing and maths.

Summative assessment judgements are monitored by SMT and books are monitored in worktrawls regularly.

The following assessments and activities as well as the formative assessments listed above, are used to make accurate end of term/year teacher assessments.

- ✓ Weekly Spelling tests are carried out from Year 1
- ✓ Termly phonics assessments are carried out in Reception, Yr1 and 2 and appropriate individual or small group intervention is planned and delivered where necessary
- ✓ Suffolk reading age tests are used to give each child a reading age and those children reading below their chronological age are targeted with appropriate intervention from Year 2
- ✓ KS2 teachers use miscue analysis termly as part of their reading assessments, to identify where targeted support is necessary.
- ✓ Local authority annual baseline, midline and endline tests are completed by Years One-Six to identify individual children falling behind their peers and school areas for development. They also benchmark us against other schools
- ✓ Writing standardisation and moderation exercises are carried out in school and with our network of schools annually. End of key stage Moderation training is attended by Yr2 and 6 teachers.
- ✓ SMT hold data meetings with teachers to analyse the data, look for barriers to learning and identify children requiring intervention.
- ✓ School participate in all national tests: Yr. 1 phonics and Yr. 6 SATs but will also continue to access Year Two assessment materials too.

Children's attainment in English is reported to parents in termly parents' evenings and in the end of year report which also includes end of Key stage results.

SMSC Development:

At Castlecroft, we recognise that social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is central to the education of all pupils and permeates the whole curriculum and ethos of the school. It is reflected in the behaviours of individuals and in their interactions and also in the provision of teaching resources and learning environments.

SMSC is taught through and is reflected in our English curriculum in many ways. Alongside texts taught in lessons, children are read to on a regular basis; this could be a class novel from our reading canon or other age-appropriate text. Our reading canon aims to expose our children to a range of classic and celebrated children's authors alongside stories which were chosen by staff to broaden our children's literary experiences. These include traditional tales and folk tales, which reflect the rich heritage of British and worldwide culture. In addition to this there are religious stories and myths and legends included. This also ensures that our children have a shared knowledge of stories to draw on.

Spiritual: Many of the stories and books we study have an element of Good vs evil and these are used as an opportunity to discuss conscience and the consequences of right and wrong behaviour, encouraging our children to apply this to their own choices.

Moral: We have selected stories which contain morals and encourage moral thinking through recognition of values such as good will, humility, kindness. The stories also teach the danger of power, ambition and greed. As the children get older they look at moral issues in Literature such as refugees, homelessness and racism. Children study the actions of others, consider different perspectives and learn to empathise.

Social: English lessons promote co-operation and teamwork through collaboration - from talk partners and peer assessment, to small group work. Older children who volunteer in Year 5 or 6 are selected to be 'peer readers' and support children in Year 2 by hearing them read regularly each week. Children learn to debate-taking on roles, arguing their points with respect, rationality and thoughtfulness. This develops tolerance and respect for people with different opinions. Students are given the opportunity to be independent, self-reliant and responsible for their own learning.

Cultural: Children learn to respect others through studying poems and stories from other cultures; our children use these quality texts to gain an appreciation of life in different societies and develop a sense of others' cultures. Texts chosen in lessons also allow children to develop an

understanding of British History and culture. Theatre trips and visits allow children to access cultural experiences that many of them would otherwise not experience.

Equal opportunities:

At Castlecroft Primary School we are committed to providing a teaching and learning environment which ensures equal access to our English curriculum regardless of social class, gender, ethnicity, culture, home background, special need or disability. We are committed to enabling all pupils to reach their full potential.

To support staff each class has a set of books which address some of the themes of the nine 'Protected Characteristics' appropriate to their year group. All of the characteristics are catered for across the school as a whole.

Inclusion:

All pupils are entitled to access the English curriculum at a level appropriate to their needs and abilities. Teachers plan carefully and use a range of strategies to ensure full accessibility and sufficient challenge for all. The school makes efficient use of additional adults, deployed effectively to ensure that our curriculum is accessible for all.

To ensure inclusion for all:

- ✓ As a school with a VI base we are committed to ensure full inclusion for our VI pupils who are taught in class alongside their peers. These pupils are only withdrawn for specific needs such as mobility lessons. One-to-one specialist support in lessons as appropriate, alongside quality modified resources ensures that these pupils make good progress and attain well.
- ✓ Pupils or groups of pupils with additional needs or those who are under-achieving are identified through our assessment system and appropriate intervention is carefully planned and monitored for impact.
- ✓ Data is analysed and action taken to ensure that any gaps between the performance of girls and boys is narrowed.

- ✓ Data is analysed and action taken to ensure that ethnicity does not affect attainment.
- ✓ Teachers and teaching assistants are all aware of disadvantaged pupils ensuring that they are targeted for support in lessons ensuring that they perform in line with non-disadvantaged pupils in the same ability band.
- ✓ More able pupils are identified early to ensure that sufficient learning challenge is provided. Where pupils are not achieving their full potential then careful intervention accelerates their progress.
- ✓ Children with identified SEND (including pupils with an EHCP) who have English targets receive support and intervention as appropriate to their needs.
- ✓ Our number of EAL children is below the national average however advice is sought and support and intervention used where necessary to ensure good progress and attainment for these pupils.

Parental involvement:

Parents play a vital role in the development of English skills. We aim to foster a strong home-school partnership and offer support for parents. At key points in their children's development, meetings are offered to support parents in helping their child's English development at home-for example in Reception with phonics and early reading, in Yr 1 with Phonics and in Yr.6 about supporting their children with SATs. Reading records are used as a tool for communication regarding reading. Parents support the school Homework policy and parent readers are welcomed into school to support with hearing children read regularly.