

Subject Area – English

Rationale Overview

At Chancel, we believe whole-heartedly that English is fundamental to educating the citizens of tomorrow. A child's success in the subject both unlocks the world of education and underpins cultural capital. An ability to read and write to the highest of standards enables young people to acquire the skills necessary to become successful citizens who make vital contributions to the local community, wider society and the world. The ability to communicate engenders the spiritual, social and cultural growth of young people. It is pivotal, also, to the development of intellectual and creative independence through underpinning an appreciation of the best of human art, thought and achievement.

Staff at Chancel are unified by the belief in the pre-eminence of English and every adult is ambitious that every child should learn to read, write and speak with fluency and confidence. We are passionate, therefore, that no disadvantage facing a child should affect their access to the quality or quantity of an education in English; nor should it affect a child's own aspirations for their development into confident global citizens.

Chancel's strong relationship with parents, and a shared understanding of the importance of English amongst stakeholders, is central to Chancel's ethos: school works in close partnership with parents who support delivery of the subject in the home.

In line with the National Curriculum, we seek to foster a love of reading in our children who, in turn, become self-motivated and ambitious writers. Our guiding principal is to promote the highest standards of reading, writing, listening and speaking at all times and in all contexts. At school, we therefore acknowledge the role of English in cross-curricular initiatives. However, whilst language and literacy permits access to our broad curriculum, we are conscious that – at Chancel - it does so in ways that both supports and preserves the integrity and uniqueness of those other subjects.

Intent – Reading

The National Curriculum drives the key skills we wish our children to attain and the defined end points of knowledge children need in order to access the next stage of their learning journey.

Chancel aspires that all children are able to demonstrate competence in both word reading and comprehension. We are passionate that our children are equipped with the strategies to decode unfamiliar words and the skills to recognise familiar ones with speed and accuracy.

At Chancel, children understand the importance staff place on Reading from an early age. In EYFS and KS1, Phonics is timetabled, prioritised and taught every day. Children acquire their skills through *RM Read Write Inc.*, which is delivered in small, fluid groups in order to meet specifically the individual's needs and progress. In addition, we believe that the key tenets of good, targeted phonics teaching/interventions (modelling, listening, repetition, games and planned activities) remain vital in assisting any child who needs to consolidate their decoding skills when they enter KS2.

In terms of comprehension, high-quality teacher-led discussion and the quality and quantity of texts the children are exposed to allow them to develop a repertoire of cognitive skills. The inference and deduction skills we equip our children with, also support their acquisition of a love of the subject by unlocking the world of literature (which in turn feeds the child's imagination as writers). Furthermore, Chancel children love Reading because they read and are read to on a daily basis (and in reader-friendly classrooms).

From Year 1, Guided Reading is taught on a whole-class basis. School uses the VIPERS programme in order that children are able to recognise and discuss the key skills of comprehension and apply them when encountering a wide range of both fiction and non-fiction texts. The perseverance skills they build here as readers, also support the stamina they develop as writers.

Intent – Writing

As with Reading, children at Chancel master the writing skills directed by the National Curriculum: transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating and structuring both written and oral pieces). Staff also understand the interconnectedness of our programme of study, recognising that progress in transcription supports progress in composition and vice-versa.

Our sequenced handwriting policy allows all children to make rapid and coherent progress in order to combine writing legibility with speed. The children's phonics skills (their understanding of the relationship between sounds and letters) also support their ability to spell quickly and accurately. Parents are key here, supporting our emphasis on spelling as children practice their words weekly. Additionally, our children are taught explicitly an understanding of the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words, which enhances spelling accuracy further.

An effective education in transcription, and the facilitation of a love of Reading by staff and stakeholders, helps our children produce effective oral and written compositions. At Chancel, children are able to form, articulate and communicate original ideas quickly and accurately. Children are taught a wide-range of fiction and non-fiction text types and display increasing fluency in manipulating words, sentences, genres and conventions of formality for effect. As such, children recognise how to plan and produce texts based upon audience, context and purpose. Daily Grammar Punctuation and Spelling lessons, and Author's Journals in KS2, allow children to build a greater sophistication in recognising the links between audience and genre as they widen their vocabulary and understanding of grammatical structures. Further, the whole-school editing policy ensures also that children develop the skills to plan, revise and evaluate their work underpinned by their knowledge of composition. We have the highest academic ambitions for our writers, who are specifically taught how to be the best (through initiatives like Greater Depth Writing Club).

Intent – Spoken Language

We believe that participation in discussions has a central and continual role in learning, guiding a child's development into becoming articulate and confident young people.

We are ambitious that children at this school leave us as highly competent speakers and listeners who can explain, elaborate and participate. Our sequenced English curriculum contextualises the oral and aural skills that our children acquire: confident children are able to participate in discussions about what they have read and are able to prepare ideas verbally before they write. Our teaching in Reading and Writing consciously places an emphasis on discussion and enquiry, and understands that the quality and variety of language spoken and encountered by children plays a pivotal role in them acquiring vocabulary and grammar.

Performance and participation in the dramatic arts are valued at Chancel. We believe that the cognitive, social and linguistic benefits of the spoken word are supported when children have an opportunity to perform. Self-esteem and social confidence soar when children can devise, improvise and sustain a range of dramatic roles for each other and for other types of audience. Opportunities for children to rehearse, refine and share performances are further supported by other genres taught such as poetry and debating.