

# English Policy



Date of Amendment: November 2022  
Review Date: November 2025

## **English**

*"Realising the potential of every child within a caring, Christian community"*

### **Introduction**

English is a vital way of communicating in school, in life and throughout the world.

Literature in English is rich and influential, reflecting the experience of people from many countries and times. Pupils develop skills in speaking & listening, reading and writing when they study English. This enables them to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, whilst also improving their ability to communicate with others effectively. The study of English helps pupils to understand how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins.

Within the school, we are concerned with becoming a more literate community and aim to provide and sustain learning experiences and teaching contexts, which enable children to share the power and enjoyment of literacy, its scope and application.

### **Curriculum**

We at St Thomas' agree to follow the Curriculum as stated in the *National curriculum in England: English programmes of study (July 2014)* and support its aims that all pupils will:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing, and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- be competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

The curriculum will be broken down into three key areas:

1. Spoken language
2. Reading (word reading and comprehension)
3. Writing (transcription and composition)

All of these areas will be in the context of a unit of work focused around a particular genre of text, lasting between two to four weeks. These units are mapped out so that each term pupils will study narrative, poetry and non-fiction texts (see appendix I – New Curriculum 2014 English Yearly Overview).

### **Spoken Language:**

Spoken language opportunities are explicitly covered in the National Curriculum 2014. Teachers need to give pupils confidence in themselves as speakers and listeners by showing them that they value their talk. Within classroom activities teachers encourage children to participate in speaking and listening activities to enhance their oral skills and creativity. We believe that these skills are essential for children to be able to formulate their own ideas. Spoken language skills are developed through explicit lessons in addition to use in cross-curricular contexts. Planned activities may include: the language of discussion; the development of ideas for writing and drama activities to develop comprehension of reading. Teachers and non-teaching staff should be aware that all adults in the school provide models of speaking and listening in interactions with the pupils.

### **Aims**

Pupils will be taught to:

- speak clearly, fluently and confidently in a range of situations and settings, articulating with appropriate vocabulary
- listen sensitively to the views of others
- participate in group discussions
- use the main features of spoken Standard English
- think clearly about the needs of the audience through content and vocabulary
- learn to use language in an imaginative way and express feelings through drama and role play
- transfer skills learnt in English to all areas of the curriculum

### **Reading:**

Our aim is to encourage all our children to have a love of reading, and to read confidently and independently in a range of contexts with a wide range of texts. To be worldly literate, fluent, and for them to comprehend and love reading with a passion. Reading is beyond just reading the book – it gives them a greater knowledge of the world. We support opportunities to read for pleasure and for information from a wide range of materials including: written texts, picture books, images and film. We use a wide variety of teaching strategies and opportunities across the curriculum to deliver the National Curriculum. Teachers acknowledge the diversity of pupils' learning styles and provide a balance in the approaches used to teach reading that will ensure pupils are Secondary ready. Different methods are used according to the focus of the learning objective, they include:

- Independent read and respond
- Fluency reading
- Individual reading
- Class Comprehension
- Group reading and comprehension

### **Aims**

At St Thomas' we aim to consolidate the skills that pupils have developed at KS1 and move their learning forwards: increasing their ability to read challenging and lengthy written texts, analysing and discussing them with others; enhancing their semiotic reading skills to make them more worldly.

However, children working below their chronological age are supported appropriately. The former helps to develop a deeper understanding of the structure, purpose and meaning of the increasingly complex texts they are encountering, and, ultimately, support the development of the children's writing skills.

Consequently, as the children move through the school and their reading accuracy improves, the focus on individual reading lessens. Teachers seek to develop higher order reading skills through discussions and questioning during group and class reading, and through evidence in their written work.

We use the four key strands of reading comprehension: literal understanding, skills of inference, deduction and evaluation. Children are additionally taught:

- to retrieve, record, summarise, compare, justify and predict information from a wide variety of texts;
- knowledge of grammatical structures;
- contextual understanding;
- to use their knowledge of other texts they have read;

- to scan and skim text for information and overall impression;
- to use organisational features and systems to find information;
- to critically distinguish between fact and opinion;
- to distinguish between different fiction and non-fiction genres;
- to identify/explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words;
- to consider poetic forms and their effect.

Whole class comprehension sessions take place three times a week in Upper School, with the addition of Book Club sessions and four times a week in Lower School, in which children read and discuss appropriately challenging texts linked to the genre of writing being studied.

Pupils are encouraged to develop a love of reading throughout their time at school. Class novels are read at least three times a week and are a highlight of the school day. All pupils have a school reading scheme levelled book and make regular weekly visits to our well-resourced school library, where they can choose an additional title for reading or sharing at home. An annual incentive challenge is adopted by all of the children to encourage them to read across genres (E.g. The St Thomas' Reading Tree). Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum awards are worked towards and awarded, in celebration, during Worship each Friday. Entries in the homework diary are recorded by adults in school and parents/children at home, where discussion about books read (e.g. plot, characters, vocabulary choices, interpretation of themes, predictions etc.) is encouraged.

### **Writing:**

The teaching of writing is a major focus at St Thomas'. We aim for children to be excited about expressing themselves and to become eloquent writers who are secondary ready; understanding the importance of grammar and articulation. The National Curriculum 2014 ensures that pupils cover: fiction, non-fiction and poetry writing styles. Writing skills and techniques are taught both in their own right and also in relation to other aspects of English, such as spoken language and reading. While these skills are taught through dedicated English sessions, cross curricular links provide vital opportunities to apply them in planned, purposeful and realistic situations. We encourage each child to have a positive self-image as a writer, to show enjoyment, commitment and confidence. Good writing is praised, valued and displayed in a variety of ways throughout the school.

The use of good quality texts provides structures, themes and purposes for their writing. An awareness of audience is encouraged by all teachers and opportunities to write for a real purpose are used whenever possible. We provide a number of different teaching strategies for developing writing skills;

- Modelled writing
- Shared writing
- Guided writing
- Independent writing

Lessons will include the direct teaching of English grammar and punctuation with regular opportunities for sentence structuring and text analysis highlighting the grammatical conventions of the English language. As a school we will follow the statutory appendix from the New National Curriculum 2014 to teach, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation in order to prepare pupils for the end of the Key Stage assessments and their secondary education.

## **Aims**

Pupils will be taught to:

- write to suit a particular purpose and in doing so broaden their vocabulary and use language and style appropriate to the reader
- use features of layout, presentation and organisation effectively
- develop their writing on paper and on screen. They will be taught to: plan, draft, revise, proof-read, present and evaluate their own work
- punctuate their written work correctly, using punctuation carefully for effect
- apply knowledge of spelling conventions, common letter strings and visual patterns
- spell the statutory spelling words for Year 3 & 4 and Year 5 & 6 accurately
- check their spellings using word banks, dictionaries and spell checkers; to know the word families, roots and origins of words to aid correct spelling; to know some of the differences between Standard and Non- Standard English usage
- understand word classes - nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, prepositions, articles and conjunctions
- understand the features of different types of sentences including statements, questions and commands; use the grammar of complex sentences, including clauses, phrases and conjunctions and use organisational features of paragraphs

## **Spellings:**

Pupils learn spellings weekly focusing on targeted spelling rules and key lists of words that they should know how to read and spell. These spellings are taken from the statutory appendix from the New National Curriculum 2014: Programmes of Study for English. In addition to these set spellings, teachers will indicate to pupils when they have spelling errors in their work and encourage pupils to practise these words for future use. The use of SpellingFrame supports their knowledge of spelling rules and further broadens the children's vocabulary.

## **Assessment and accountability**

Short-term assessments will be an informal part of every lesson to check understanding and give the teacher information, which will help to adjust day-to-day lesson plans. Ongoing medium term assessment will take place throughout the course of the year, through using the Target Tracker Assessment Statements. Long-term assessments will take place mid-year and towards the end of the school year to assess and review pupils' progress and attainment. These will be made through compulsory National Curriculum English tests for pupils in Years 6 and supplemented by relevant end of year tests for years 3 - 5. Just before each half term (October, February and May), staff input pupils' data onto Target Tracker in a Professional Development Meeting. Staff are also given the opportunity to update data on Target Tracker at the end of each term (December, March/April and July).

## **Computing**

A weekly sign up system allows all classes access to the Computing Suite. Frequent use is also made of extra PCs, iPads and laptops in the classroom, in addition to the interactive white board for whole class teaching. The school holds subscriptions to SPaG Ninja, SpellingFrame, Espresso, Purple Mash and Lexia, which enables teachers to choose activities to directly support the children within their class.

## **Recording and expectations**

Yellow A4 exercise books are used in English lessons. Children may use a pencil or a handwriting pen, at the teachers' discretion, for writing. It is expected that by Year 6 most pupils are able to write in pen. SMART, skills-based and child friendly learning objectives (in the form of 'Can I ...?') and success criteria are articulated at the start of each lesson, recorded in pupil books, and reviewed at the end of lessons with opportunities for self-review by pupils. Pupils may record their work in other ways as a result of paired/group activities, use class PCs and other current technologies.

In addition to the daily exercise books, each child will have a green assessed writing journal. This will be handed out at the start of Year 3 and retained throughout their time at the school, providing a portfolio of unaided writing throughout each child's KS2 education.

## **Marking**

Marking should always reflect the objective from the beginning of the lesson and be positive. At least once a week, detailed marking should be carried out; this will include a NS (Next Step), showing specifically what the pupil needs to do in order to progress further. Time should then be built into the next lesson for pupils to respond to this marking. On other occasions, work will be marked to the learning objective (double tick for fully achieved, single tick for partially achieved, dot for not achieved). Please refer to marking policy for full details and other codes used. In some lessons a comment may not be necessary, but pupils should always know what the next steps are in their learning. If a piece of work is marked together, members of staff should still check this work.

## **English across the curriculum**

We recognise the importance of English skills and techniques being applied to other curriculum subjects. We value chances for the pupils to make connections between subjects and to put into practice in one subject the skills base that they are learning in another subject. "Learning (should be) seen as a seamless whole and links (should be) made explicit in all (pupils) do" (NCSL Research Associate Summary Report, Spring 2007). Opportunities for this arise in a variety of subjects such as History (e.g. analysing historical sources), RE (e.g. writing prayers, speeches, retelling stories), Science. (e.g. explaining and presenting about different processes and concepts) and computing (e.g. typing and communication skills).

Individual subject leaders have a responsibility to ensure that English is planned for within specific areas of the curriculum (e.g. English links in art, geography and PE etc).

## **Display**

English work and resources should be displayed to inform children and celebrate their achievements. Each classroom must have a working wall, which should be current and evolving constantly using models; key features of the text type being taught; vocabulary and pupils' work. They are used to directly support the children's learning and should be referred to and developed with the pupils.

## **Planning**

English planning operates at three levels; whole school planning (long-term); year group planning (medium-term); individual teacher's planning (short-term). Planning follows the New National Curriculum 2014: Programmes of Study for English and the Primary Framework for English. Teachers make use of the yearly overview to plan their units and map them on unit overview templates.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The English Subject Leader, Headteacher and SLT members monitor and evaluate the English curriculum throughout the year.

Marking should be monitored to ensure that the policy is being carried out in each class/English group across the school. This should particularly focus upon the use of next steps in marking, and that there is evidence that the children have an opportunity to respond to these and then repeat the skills learnt later in the pupils work. The English Subject Leader will carry out these monitoring exercises at least once a term.

Various areas are monitored including: the quality of teaching; the learning environment; the implementation of the English curriculum policy; planning, recording and reporting; analysis of assessment; progression in learning; continuity; perceptions of children; the standards of achievement and the use of resources; up to date areas of focus from the School Development Plan (SDP).

## **Partnership with Parents**

At St. Thomas' we believe in the importance of working together with parents in all aspects of school life. In English, one important way parents can help their children is by supporting the completion of the weekly set homework. It is expected that pupils will read a minimum of 3 times per week to an adult at home and practise their spelling rules for weekly tests. There will be regular communication with parents through the use of the homework diary and Google Classrooms regular slips from teachers will keep parents informed of work in class, ideas for other practice at home or other specific tasks that could be completed. Teachers, parents and other adults at home and school will record reading completed each week in the homework diary. (See additional details in the diary). In the upper school children will also be set one compulsory additional piece of English homework per week. This helps children prepare for expectations at secondary school.

Parents are updated on their child's progress in English as well as the other curricular areas in the form of written reports in July of each year. The written report contains details of a child's efforts and attainment in English over the year. Parent-teacher consultations take place twice in the academic year, in addition to 'Open Door' events twice a year, whereby the children tour their parents around the school and share their work with them.

The School expects parents to:-

Be actively involved in their children's English learning both in school and at home; understand and support the school's English and Homework policy and scheme of work.

## **Disability Equality Scheme**

At St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Junior School we recognise our duties and responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act as outlined in our Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan. (December 2007)

It is our aim that through specific and accurate planning, resource allocation, differentiated teaching and use of adult intervention and support (where necessary), that every child, irrespective of disability, will have full access to the curriculum and feel and be enabled to participate actively in developing to their full potential their skills, knowledge and understanding. We will ensure that all 'reasonable adjustments' are made to help both children and adults with identified special needs and disabilities to participate in the English curriculum.

### **Role of the governing body**

The named governor for English should support the subject leader and keep up to date with policies, strategies, procedures, etc. through regular visits. These visits are used to become familiar with and monitor English teaching, observe lessons first hand and to promote levels of accountability, challenge and support. Following a governor visit, a written report is submitted to the English Subject Leader and Headteacher and discussed at a full governing body meeting.

### **Review**

The policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years, or as new guidance becomes available to schools from the Local Authority (LA) or Department of Education (DfE).

*Policy reviewed: November 2022*

*Next policy review date: November 2025*



# Appendix



Date of Amendment: November 2022  
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| Term            | Year 3  | Year 4  | Year 5   | Year 6  |
|-----------------|---|---|--|---|
| <b>Autumn 1</b> | <p><b>Sentence Structure – Colourful Semantics – Nursery Rhymes Five Little Monkeys</b><br/>(3 weeks)<br/>CC: PSHE<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Share developed sentence structures with peers.</p> <p><b>Information texts: Dictionaries</b><br/>(3 weeks)<br/>CC: Emperor Penguins<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Film/record and share</p> | <p><b>Traditional Tales</b><br/>(4 weeks)<br/>Little Red Riding Hood/Red Snapper<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Create traditional tale story book through Innovation door for other children to visit and read</p> <p><b>Persuasive Speech</b><br/>(3 weeks)<br/>CC: History (Egyptians – Moses/Romans – Boudicca) Battle Cry<br/><u>Purpose:</u> To film on Green Screen and show to parents</p>   | <p><b>Biographies</b><br/>(3 weeks)<br/>Coming to England - Floella Benjamin<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Lead in to next unit.</p> <p><b>Novels and stories by significant children’s authors</b><br/>(4 weeks)<br/>Coming to England - Floella Benjamin</p> <p><b>LETTON HALL WEEK</b></p> <p><b>Letter Writing</b><br/>(1 week)<br/>Letton Hall Thank you<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Assembly</p>                                 | <p><b>Extending Narrative: Suspense and Mystery</b><br/>(4 weeks)<br/>Stormbreaker – Anthony Horowitz<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Create a speech and a new chapter to share with Year 5 (to inspire Love of reading)</p> <p><b>SATs Review Week Residential WEEK</b></p>   |
| <b>Autumn 2</b> | <p><b>Shape poems</b><br/>(2 weeks)<br/>Apes-Zebras Shape poems Roger Stevens et al.<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Display</p> <p><b>Plays and dialogue</b><br/>(4 weeks)<br/>CC: Christmas Play<br/>Create own Nativity Script<br/><u>Purpose:</u> To perform</p>  | <p><b>Stories with historical settings</b><br/>(4 weeks)<br/>CC: History – Ancient Egypt/Romans/Celts<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Time capsule to include story and other relevant items (share with other year 4 class)</p> <p><b>Creating Images - Figurative poetry</b><br/>(2 weeks)<br/>CC: Winter descriptions/Christmas<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Publish in card frame to go home for Xmas.</p> | <p><b>Recounts</b><br/>(3 weeks)<br/>Letton Hall (Cold Task)<br/>Recount of an Evacuee WW When We Were Warriors – Emma Carroll (Assessed – refugees coming to UK)<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Share with Year 4s</p> <p><b>Myths and Legends</b><br/>(3 weeks)<br/>Beowulf – Michael Morpurgo<br/>CC: History (Early Settlements)<br/><u>Purpose:</u> create their own mythical beast and myth. Share with other classes</p> | <p><b>Non-chronological reports</b><br/>(3 weeks)<br/>A Christmas Carol<br/>CC: RE/history traditions of Christmas/Rock UK<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Report back to year 5s.</p> <p><b>Classic fiction and Author Study – Charles Dickens</b><br/>(4 weeks)<br/>Extended stories – Text and Film from Oliver/Great Expectations<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Miss Havisham screen to page project to display</p> <p><b>SATS Review Week</b></p> <p><b>Figurative Poetry</b><br/>(1-2 weeks)<br/>Rivers<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Revision of simile/metaphor/personification etc for descriptive writing</p> |
| <b>Spring 1</b> | <p><b>Myths and Legends</b><br/>(3 weeks)<br/>CC: History – Hercules The Hero - Tony Bradman and Theseus and the Minotaur<br/><a href="https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/t2-h-4299-theseus-and-the-minotaur-ebook">https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/t2-h-4299-theseus-and-the-minotaur-ebook</a><br/><u>Purpose:</u></p> | <p><b>Reference books and text books</b><br/>(2 weeks)<br/>Dragons<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Make a class reference book, publish these to the library for others to borrow</p> <p><b>Poetry – exploring form Haikus and Cinquins</b></p>   | <p><b>Research and Information Text</b><br/>(3 weeks)<br/>CC: Geography (Earthquakes and Volcanoes/Japan),<br/><u>Purpose:</u> To create an information booklet<br/>Stimulus: A Variety of information texts</p>   | <p><b>Journalistic Report</b><br/>(3 weeks ) CC: Romeo and Juliet<br/><u>Purpose:</u> For Display.</p> <p><b>Stories from our Literary Heritage Shakespeare: Writing in the style of an author, 60 sec sketch</b><br/>(4 weeks)</p>   |

**St Thomas of Canterbury C of E Junior School**

|                 |   |   |   |  |
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|                 | <p>To make a class book of Legends and publish in the Library</p> <p><b>Instructions</b><br/>(2 weeks)<br/>Revolting Recipes – Roald Dahl<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Class Recipe Book</p>   | <p>(2 weeks)<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Showcase to parents at open classrooms</p>   | <p><b>Traditional Stories and fables</b><br/>(3 weeks)<br/>Just So Stories - Rudyard Kipling and fables combined<br/><u>Purpose:</u> To write a traditional Tale to share with Lower School.</p>  | <p><u>Purpose:</u> Film of Romeo and Juliet to share with the rest of the school.</p> <p><b>SATs Review Week</b></p>   |
| <b>Spring 2</b> | <p><b>Author Study &amp; Greetings in letters to find out more</b><br/>(3 weeks)<br/>Tony Bradman<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Write to depict the style of Tony Bradman.</p> <p><b>Letters for different purposes</b><br/>(2 weeks)<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Letters to Tont Bradman, friend</p> <p><b>Poems to perform</b><br/>(1 week)<br/>CC: Music – Alligator – Grace Nichols<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Perform to Yr 3 in the hall</p> | <p><b>Fantasy and Science Fiction Stories</b><br/>(4 weeks)<br/>Pandora<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Make individual books and publish into the Library.</p> <p><b>Discussion Texts</b><br/>(2 weeks)<br/>CC: Current affairs<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Set up a whole school vote on a topical issue.</p> | <p><b>Narrative Poetry and Older Literature</b><br/>(4 weeks)<br/>The Highwayman/Highway Rat<br/><u>Purpose:</u> To write a modern version of the story with detailed description of the characters</p> <p><b>Instructions (2 weeks)</b><br/>CC: Art – Modroc Sculptures<br/><u>Purpose:</u> to make a book for following year groups</p> | <p><b>Persuasive Writing</b><br/>(3 weeks)<br/>[persuasive arguments and speeches]<br/>CC: Geography - Plastics<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Persuasive letter to head teacher. Formal debate in style of Greek orators</p> <p><b>Narrative techniques</b><br/>(3 weeks)<br/>The Piano<br/>[flashbacks, multiple narrators etc]<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Audio recordings to play over their stories.</p> <p><b>SATS Review Week</b></p> |
| <b>Summer 1</b> | <p><b>Adventure and mystery stories</b><br/>(4 weeks)<br/>CC: History (Stone Age) Ice Age Film Narrative<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Share stories with year 4 children.</p> <p><b>Non-chronological reports</b><br/>(3 weeks)<br/>CC: Geography – Continents of the World<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Create a podcast.</p>  | <p><b>Recount Newspapers and Diaries</b><br/><b>Flotsam – David Wiesner?</b><br/>(3 weeks)<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Display</p> <p><b>Stories with Issues and Dilemmas</b><br/>(3 weeks)<br/>Dragon Slayer<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Share stories with Year 3.</p>                                    | <p><b>Stories from other cultures</b><br/>(4 weeks)<br/>Journey to Jo'burg<br/>CC: PSHE (Political Literacy)</p> <p><b>Choral Poetry</b><br/>(2 weeks)<br/>Carnivals<br/><u>Purpose:</u> write a poem to perform and film</p>   | <p><b>SATS prep and Revision</b></p> <p><b>SATS Week</b></p> <p><b>Portfolio Builder</b><br/>(3 weeks)<br/>The Lighthouse (Diary, flashback, letter, report)</p>   |
| <b>Summer 2</b> | <p><b>Recounts</b><br/>(4 weeks)<br/>CC: Tuesday – David Wiesner<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Fantasy book about the journey</p> <p><b>Poems – Language play</b><br/>(2 weeks)<br/>CC: Riddles/Pie Corbett<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Share with another class.</p>   | <p><b>Explanation Texts</b><br/>(4 weeks)<br/>CC: Shirt Machine – Cracking Contraptions<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Create explanation narratives of Wallace and Gromit cracking contraptions</p> <p><b>Poetry – Poetic Style</b><br/>(2 weeks)<br/>Edward Lear<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Display</p>     | <p><b>Film Narrative</b><br/>(4 weeks)<br/>Alma – Literacy Shed<br/><u>Purpose:</u> To narrate a short film using imagery and suspense.</p> <p><b>Explanation Text</b><br/>(2 weeks)<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Create books for Year 2 children coming up to give to them and share</p>   | <p><b>Speaking and Listening Playscripts and Production</b><br/>(5 weeks)<br/><u>Purpose:</u> Perform to school and parents – end of year farewell</p>   |