



The Crescent Primary School English Policy

The vision:

At The Crescent Primary, English teaching is a core foundation across all areas of our curriculum, with rich opportunities for reading and writing embedded in a range of contexts. In doing so, our pupils are offered a wide and varied curriculum in which they can master the skills of communication needed to support them in the wider world. Diversity within our curriculum is a fundamental aspect of our core beliefs and values. Our text drivers are chosen to provide an inclusive approach for all pupils, where they feel represented, valued and celebrated through writers, characters and settings that reflect cultural diversity.

Our English curriculum supports and promotes the school's core values of Love, Aspire, Belong and Curious.

- Love: We foster a love of reading, writing and communication through engaging texts, meaningful learning experiences and opportunities for pupils to express themselves creatively.
- Aspire: We encourage pupils to take pride in their work, challenge themselves as readers and writers, and strive to achieve their personal best.
- Belong: We create an inclusive environment where all pupils feel valued and confident to share their ideas, opinions and experiences through discussion, reading and writing.
- Curious: We inspire curiosity through high-quality texts, rich vocabulary, purposeful questioning and opportunities to explore a range of authors, themes and perspectives.

Through the teaching of English, pupils develop the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to become successful communicators, thoughtful readers and effective writers, both within school and beyond.

Our learning journeys are used across the school to provide pupils with a clear understanding of the purpose, form and audience for whom they are writing. Our children are encouraged to think in role as a particular writer, adopting a particular voice, including when writing as poets. Through the use of apprentice writes, children are able to frequently apply prior learning in new contexts. Our showcase writes come at the end of our learning journeys and encompass the skills taught to date. We endeavour to develop a shared love of writing by exposing children to a wide, diverse and engaging, text-led curriculum, whereby books are at the heart of writing.

Phonics and early reading:

In phonics, children follow the Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) programme from the beginning of Reception. It uses a simple, consistent approach to teaching and aims to enable all children to read well, quickly. It uses mnemonics and rhymes to support learning and recall. The programme teaches four new sounds each week, with a fifth day dedicated to revisiting and reviewing previously taught sounds and applying reading skills through the use of decodable books in class.

This Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) programme teaches children the links between the sounds of our language (phonemes) and the written representations of these sounds (graphemes), or the spellings of the sounds contained within the English language. Essential Letters and Sounds is a complete Systematic Synthetic Phonics Programme (SSP) and is our chosen phonics programme.

Children will follow this programme throughout the EYFS and Key Stage 1 and will use it as the basis for spelling throughout their school journey.

Although English is taught through the four strands of writing, reading, spelling and grammar, our ethos is to ensure that learning encompasses all of these skills. Children are given regular and purposeful opportunities to apply these skills across the curriculum.

Aims of phonics

Through phonics, children will:

- learn the 44 sounds and the corresponding letters and letter groups using simple picture prompts;
- learn to read words using sound blending;
- read lively stories featuring words they have learned to sound out.

Children will also:

- learn to write the letters and letter groups that represent the 44 sounds;
- learn to write words by saying the sounds and corresponding graphemes;
- write simple sentences.

How do we teach Essential Letters and Sounds?

With ELS, phonics is taught daily from the beginning of Reception, throughout Year 1 and into Year 2. Phase 2, Phase 3, Phase 4 and most of Phase 5 are taught in Reception. Phase 5 and the 'beyond' phase are taught in Year 1.

In each lesson, the teacher introduces a new sound or reviews sounds taught earlier in the week. Children learn the letter or group of letters that represents each sound. A picture and rhyme accompany each sound to help children remember it.

sh



the shabby ship shook

Teach

These words all have the /sh/ sound in.

sh





sh ... sh ... ship
sh ... sh ... fish
sh ... sh ... shed

Children are asked to read words and sentences with the new sounds in. This is practiced with the whole class on the whiteboard.

Practise Quit activity ✕

Read the word. Click on the icon to reveal the picture.

pie





Apply Quit activity ✕

Read the sentence. Click on the icon to reveal the picture.

She dried her long hair.





Children then have a go reading words and sentences with the new grapheme in their work book.

Read the words. Match the words to the pictures.

star



harp



market



Read the sentences.

The dog barks.

They went to see the harvest at the farm.

Teaching of Phonics:

Year R and Year 1 children complete a daily 20 minute session learning the first set of sounds in preparation for reading. Pupils in Year R learn phases 1-4 and most pupils will secure phase 5. In Year 1, pupils learn phase 5 and beyond. If pupils need additional catch up intervention, this will be tailored to previous phases. Interventions are held at different times to daily phonics teaching so that pupils do not continue to fall behind.

Year 2 children should already have a good knowledge of phonics and will be consolidating this work through applying it to their reading and writing. There is likely to be some children who will need to continue this in Year 3 in tailored intervention. Phonics intervention happens a minimum of three times per week with an intervention. When children are in Year 2, they will begin to learn spelling rules in addition to their phonics learning.

In Years 3 – 6, some children will need revision of the phonics programme for 20 minutes 3 or 4 x per week. Pupils who did not pass the Phonics screening test in KS1, are a key focus for the class teacher and within intervention teaching for small group phonics. As some children will require further catch up with phonics, additional

intervention will continue for small groups teaching into the spring term and beyond. Children will be assessed throughout the year inline with the ELS benchmarking, in addition to reading age tests. Once pupils have secured the appropriate phases, pupils will continue with the *Sounds and Syllables* programme solely. All other children in KS2 will solely follow the *Sounds and Syllables* programme progressively from Years 3-6.

Reading:

Reading is taught daily across the school. In EYFS, pupils study a whole-class text each week alongside daily story times. In Reception and Year 1, pupils learn and take home a decodable phonics book matched to their phonics knowledge to read with their families. In Years 1 to 6, pupils study high-quality whole-class texts as part of their English learning journeys and during dedicated reading lessons.

The school follows a five-step approach to reading which enables pupils to develop vocabulary, fluency, comprehension and a love of reading through high-quality texts. This approach ensures that all pupils have access to rich and challenging texts, while providing opportunities for discussion, modelling and independent application of reading skills.

The Five-Step Reading Model

Step 1: Clarify and Respond

Pupils are introduced to key vocabulary and background knowledge needed to access the text. Teachers model reading while pupils follow along, pausing when appropriate to clarify meaning and deepen understanding. Lessons provide opportunities for pupils to respond authentically to the text through discussion and reflection.

Step 2: Build Fluency

Pupils develop reading fluency through repeated reading and teacher modelling of expressive, fluent reading. Strategies such as echo reading, paired reading and reader's theatre are used to improve accuracy, pace, expression and prosody. Fluency lessons help pupils become more confident and automatic readers.

Step 3: Develop Comprehension Through Talk

Pupils engage in rich discussion about the text through a range of carefully planned questions. These include literal, inferential and evaluative questions which encourage pupils to think deeply about what they have read. Teachers model comprehension strategies and facilitate meaningful dialogue to strengthen understanding.

Step 4: Rich Task

Pupils independently apply the skills explored during previous reading discussions through a high-quality reading task. This may take the form of written responses, graphic organisers, evidence-based activities or comprehension questions. Teachers provide modelling and scaffolding as appropriate to ensure all pupils can access the learning.

Step 5: Retrieve and Review

Pupils revisit previously taught vocabulary, key events and reading skills through retrieval activities and discussion. Teachers review pupils' understanding, address misconceptions and provide further modelling where necessary. This session may also include additional opportunities for reading, fluency practice or comprehension development.

Throughout all five steps, there is a strong emphasis on regular reading opportunities, high-quality texts, discussion and sustained engagement with reading, ensuring that pupils develop both reading proficiency and enjoyment.

Assessment of reading:

During guided reading lessons, teachers make informal assessments of groups of children and use these to plan what needs to be taught next to enable children to make progress. Reading folders are used to support the assessment and monitoring of individual pupils' reading development. These provide opportunities for teachers to

monitor children's reading fluency, comprehension, vocabulary and application of reading skills over time, as well as to identify areas for further development.

At the end of each term, summative assessments are completed using NFER Reading tests, enabling each child to be given a scaled score for reading. This helps to validate teacher judgements and identify areas for whole-class focus when planning future teaching.

- Each half term, children in Year 1 complete a phonics screening assessment, and their scores are recorded on INSIGHT.
- Once a term, children in Years 2–6 complete an NFER Reading Comprehension assessment. This is administered as a test appropriate to the age and needs of the children. Year 2 pupils complete the assessment in small groups.
- Reading scores are recorded termly on INSIGHT as scaled scores.

Reading for pleasure:

Reading for pleasure is fundamental at The Crescent. All teachers ensure that they read a story to their class at the end of each day. Class reading books are aspirational and carefully chosen to provide children with a range of high-quality texts. Where possible, these are books that children have not previously read, encouraging them to discover new authors, genres and themes. These texts should inspire children to seek out other books by the same author or explore similar genres.

A Reading Café is held once per term to encourage parental engagement in reading. Parents and carers are invited to attend and read with their child in an informal and supportive environment. The event is free of charge and is held either in the school hall or in classrooms. This initiative supports the development of positive reading habits and fosters a love of reading across the school community.

School Library:

Our school library plays a key role in promoting a love of reading and developing pupils' reading skills. It provides a welcoming environment where children can explore a wide range of high-quality fiction, non-fiction and picture books.

Each class visits the library every week, giving pupils regular opportunities to browse and select books that match their interests. During these visits, children are encouraged to borrow books to take home, helping to foster independent reading and a lifelong enjoyment of literature.

Reading Ambassadors:

Reading Ambassadors play an important role in promoting reading across the school. Children opt into the role by applying to the Reading Leader. They meet half-termly and support the Reading Leader with a range of reading initiatives and events, including Reading Café, Reading Week, book events and the Reading Barn.

Reading Ambassadors also support the organisation of the library, help to choose 'Class Dates with a Book', and contribute to decisions about purchasing new books for the school.

Book Corners:

Every classroom has a book corner and a dedicated display. The area should be clearly defined, welcoming and well maintained. There should be approximately 30 books in each book corner, which children have helped to select from the school library.

The collection should be refreshed each term, with classes visiting the library to choose a new selection of books. This ensures that children have access to a varied and engaging range of texts throughout the year.

Reading Books:

At The Crescent, we have a progressive reading scheme linked to book bands. Children select a book from the reading scheme to read alongside their library book. Teachers complete a PM Benchmark assessment for children in Key Stage 1 each term, or when they feel that a child is ready to move up to the next book band.

Reading scheme books are taken home to be shared with parents and carers, allowing children to practise and develop their reading skills regularly at home.

Each teacher listens to every child read at least once each week. Pupil Premium children are provided with three additional opportunities each week to read with a dedicated adult, in addition to reading with their class teacher.

The lowest 20% of readers in each class are identified by the class teacher as priority readers. These children are identified as focus pupils in class, discussed during half-termly pupil progress meetings, prioritised when changing their library books each week, and heard reading by subject leaders as part of the school's monitoring processes.

Reading Logs:

The design of the Reading Log enables teachers and parents to monitor how much reading each child is completing at home. Children across the school are expected to read at home five times each week.

Pupils in EYFS and Year 1 also have a Key Words Booklet, which they take home to practise and learn with their parents or carers. It is important that teachers encourage children to read regularly at home five times a week. This should include a mixture of independent reading, reading with an adult and being read to by an adult.

- Teachers monitor parents' comments and the range of books being read at home.
- Teachers, LSAs or children's parents/carers can write in the comment box.
- Each time a child reads at home, the Reading Log must be updated by a parent or carer. In Years 5 and 6, children can complete the Reading Log themselves, but a parent or carer must sign it to confirm that they have seen it.

Book Week:

Each year, there will be a week dedicated to celebrating books. This week will normally be based on a whole-school theme, decided by the reading lead with help from the reading ambassadors. Teachers are responsible for adapting planning ideas into a suitable unit of work for their class. A whole-school display showcasing work from the week is then created to celebrate the children's learning.

Children will normally come to school dressed as a favourite character from a book on World Book Day.

The intended curriculum outcomes from Book Week are:

- To continue to enhance a positive reading culture.
- To provide opportunities for our parent community to engage with reading in school.
- To provide pupils with opportunities to write for specific purposes and audiences.

- To ensure pupils have access to a wide range of genres.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to hear texts read by a variety of members of the community.
- To provide pupils with additional opportunities to express their opinions and views and hear those of others, for example, when discussing their favourite book.
- To bring together the skills learned in English lessons.
- To promote awareness, enjoyment and communication through books.
- To encourage pupil-led independent fundraising to develop the school's book resources.

Teaching Time Allocations:

Generally, each class in Years 1–6 will spend one hour a day on English writing, 30 minutes a day on reading, and 20 minutes a day on spelling and grammar or phonics.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), children have a daily allocated time for literacy, in addition to their daily phonics lesson, which includes a short, planned literacy lesson each day. These sessions focus on developing children's early reading, writing, comprehension, vocabulary and communication skills.

Literacy learning is not limited to the allocated literacy session. Reading, writing, communication and language skills are developed and reinforced throughout the day through high-quality interactions, stories, rhymes, role play, continuous provision, child-initiated learning and experiences across all areas of the EYFS curriculum.

The balance of adult-led teaching, guided learning and child-initiated learning is adapted according to children's developmental needs, interests and next steps, ensuring that literacy provision is purposeful, engaging and appropriate to the principles and practice of the EYFS.

Resources:

- Library time is allocated to every class each week.
- The Crescent Reading Scheme, comprising a combination of texts, is stored centrally and organised by book band colours for children to access independently. This incorporates a mixture of 'real' books as well as books specifically written for the scheme.
- Guided reading books.
- A range of materials to support pupils with SEND.
- All classes, where appropriate, will have access to sets of dictionaries and thesauruses.

Video and media clips will be used to engage children in multimodal approaches to English.

Working Walls:

Each class has an English working wall. The working wall displays will demonstrate:

- Current flipcharts that have been used as part of the teaching sequence in reading and writing journeys.
- Key vocabulary that is useful for the current unit. In KS1, this should also include key vocabulary that has ongoing relevance for children in the class, such as HFW and sight words.
- Spelling patterns being investigated.
- Examples of modelled and shared writing.

In EYFS and KS1, there is a separate phonics display, which is interactive and offers children opportunities to access resources independently, for example, by using sound buttons.

Writing:

In Key Stage 1, pupils follow carefully structured learning journeys which develop their skills as writers through high-quality texts, meaningful talk and purposeful writing opportunities. Learning is carefully sequenced to build upon prior knowledge, enabling pupils to practise, apply and secure key transcriptional and compositional skills. Writing outcomes are linked to authentic purposes and audiences wherever possible, helping children to understand themselves as real writers.

Writing units are driven by high-quality texts and are structured around a three-phase learning journey. Through discussion, reading and practical experiences, pupils generate ideas before explicitly learning and practising the skills required for their final written outcome. Learning journeys provide regular opportunities for pupils to revisit previously taught knowledge through Sites of Application, supporting retention and mastery over time.

Stimulate and Generate

Pupils are immersed in a high-quality text through shared reading, discussion and spoken language activities. They respond to characters, events and themes, developing ideas, vocabulary and understanding of the text. During this phase, pupils complete activities linked to reading comprehension, speaking and listening, handwriting, spelling and sentence construction. They are also given opportunities to revisit previously taught writing skills through a Site of Application, where they apply their learning in a short piece of independent writing.

Capture, Sift and Sort:

Pupils explicitly learn and practise the grammatical and compositional skills needed for their final piece of writing. Teachers model new learning before pupils apply it through shared, guided and independent activities. Children explore sentence structures, vocabulary and language choices, developing the knowledge and confidence required for successful independent writing.

Create, Refine and Evaluate:

Pupils independently apply the knowledge and skills developed throughout the learning journey to produce their final written outcome. Through a supported plan, write and edit process, children compose their own texts, revisit success criteria and make improvements to their writing. Opportunities are provided for pupils to share, evaluate and celebrate their work, helping them to develop increasing independence and confidence as writers.

In Key Stage 2, children follow carefully sequenced learning journeys which lead to a specific written outcome known as a Showcase Write. It is important for pupils' development and consolidation that learning journeys embed clear links between lessons, units and year groups to ensure learning is progressive, sequential and builds upon prior knowledge. Learning journeys are purposeful, with authentic audiences and a range of publication forms, and are often applied across the wider curriculum to provide meaningful contexts for writing. Writing units begin with the exploration and immersion of audience, purpose and form through high-quality text drivers. Pupils then learn, practise and apply the grammatical and compositional skills required to achieve the final written outcome before evaluating and refining their work. Throughout each learning journey, opportunities are provided for pupils to revisit and retrieve previously taught skills through Sites of Application, supporting long-term retention and mastery.

In Key Stage 2, we follow the HIAS text-driven curriculum through three-week learning journeys structured around three phases:

Stimulate and Generate:

Pupils are immersed in the text driver and engage in rich discussion and oracy activities to develop ideas and understanding. They explore vocabulary, authorial choices and reading domains whilst generating language and

content for future writing. During this phase, pupils also complete a Site of Application, revisiting a previously taught written outcome to demonstrate retention and application of prior learning.

Capture, Sift and Sort:

Pupils explicitly learn the grammatical, compositional and authorial skills required for the final outcome. Through shared, guided and independent practice, children experiment with and apply these skills in shorter apprentice pieces of writing, developing confidence and accuracy before their final composition.

Create, Refine and Evaluate:

Pupils independently apply the knowledge and skills developed throughout the learning journey to produce their Showcase Write. Following a plan, write and edit approach, pupils draft, revise and improve their work, evaluating its effectiveness in meeting the intended audience, purpose and form. Each learning journey consists of five writing lessons per week, providing frequent opportunities for pupils to practise, apply and refine their writing skills whilst developing increasing independence and confidence as writers.

Assessment of writing:

Teachers will use assessment for learning throughout the learning journey to adapt and intervene support and challenge for pupils. Finally, opportunities to draft, produce and evaluate their writing, with editing and evaluation forming an on-going part of our craft as writers. As part of the schools' Showcase Writes, children are always provided with an exciting way to publish and celebrate their final pieces as authors, which supports their understanding of the purpose of writing.

- Children will complete a whole school writing assessment piece at the end of each unit called a Showcase Write. Within the unit, pupils will be given opportunities to practise their taught skills in shorter apprentice writes. Staff will use this to help identify progression throughout the school and to support judgements for whether children are: Below, working towards, at ARE, or at Greater Depth.
- Teachers will make periodic judgements throughout the year and will plan support to prevent children from falling behind.
- Writing is formally assessed using the Hampshire Assessment Model for year groups 1-6 and the DfE End of Key stage writing standards for Year 6.
- writing in EYFS is assessed against the objectives for Literacy from the EYFS framework. Objectives from Literacy – writing, Literacy – comprehension, Literacy – word reading will be assessed.

Grammar:

Grammar is taught progressively throughout the school using the Hampshire teaching scheme. In KS1, grammar is taught within the English lessons and is applied in the learning journey. In KS2, grammar is taught both throughout the learning journey and in the context of the text driver and explicitly in three daily starters before the English lesson.

Grammar assessment:

Children will complete termly Grammar tests – NFER. Year 6 pupils will complete mock SPAG papers termly in preparation for the End of Key stage SPAG SATS paper.

These scores will be tracked on Insight and used to inform planning and interventions.

Spelling:

Spelling is taught systematically across the school through a progressive approach that develops children's phonological, morphological and etymological understanding of words. In Key Stage 1, pupils follow the Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) phonics programme, applying their phonic knowledge to both reading and spelling. As pupils become secure readers and spellers, they transition to daily spelling lessons using Jason Wade's *Sounds and Syllables* programme.

In Key Stage 2, all pupils participate in daily spelling lessons through the *Sounds and Syllables* programme. Lessons focus on teaching spelling through sound patterns, syllable structures, morphology and common spelling conventions, enabling pupils to understand how words are constructed and spelled. Children are encouraged to apply taught spelling knowledge across all writing opportunities and to use appropriate resources, including dictionaries and thesauruses, to support increasingly independent writing.

Homework is set across the school and is regularly linked to phonics in Key Stage 1 and spelling in Key Stage 2, providing opportunities for practice and reinforcement of taught knowledge. Regular retrieval and application activities ensure that previously taught spelling patterns and conventions are retained and embedded over time.

Speaking and listening:

Throughout the year, children have opportunities to take part in rich speaking and listening activities through drama, poetry, play scripts, storytelling and commentating.

Within English lessons, children are taught to listen carefully, build on the ideas of others and think deeply about the stimuli being shared. Within each unit, opportunities for drama, debate, discussion and other speaking and listening activities are planned to develop pupils' communication and oracy skills.

Oracy is embedded throughout each English learning journey, providing children with regular opportunities to develop their vocabulary, articulate their ideas clearly, express their opinions, respond thoughtfully to others and communicate effectively for a range of purposes and audiences.

Handwriting:

Handwriting is taught systematically from EYFS to Year 6 using the Letter-join scheme. The programme provides a clear progression of skills, ensuring that pupils develop accurate letter formation, fluency, presentation and writing stamina over time.

In the Early Years, children develop the foundations for handwriting through mark-making, fine motor activities and the formation of individual letters. As pupils progress through Key Stage 1, they learn the correct formation of letters and begin to develop cursive handwriting. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils build upon these skills, developing a fluent, legible and increasingly automatic joined handwriting style.

We aim for handwriting to become an automatic process that does not interfere with creative and cognitive thinking, allowing pupils to focus on the composition and content of their writing. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils should be able to produce fluent, legible and efficient joined handwriting and understand how presentation may vary according to purpose and audience.

Children regularly practise handwriting using handwriting books with printed guidelines to support the correct size, orientation and proportion of letters. Teachers model the school's cursive handwriting style consistently across all year groups.

The Crescent Writing Routine is followed across the school to provide children with a consistent approach to handwriting and written presentation. The routine ensures that children develop and maintain the correct pencil grip, adopt an appropriate sitting position and position their paper correctly before writing. It also supports pupils in developing accurate letter formation, consistent joins, appropriate spacing and increasingly fluent handwriting.

Pupils who demonstrate neatly joined, fluent cursive handwriting may be permitted to write in pen from Year 3 onwards. Published pieces of writing in Key Stage 2 may be completed in blue or black ink pen at the teacher's discretion. By the end of Year 6, all pupils are expected to write in pen as their standard method of presentation.

If children make a mistake in their books, they should neatly cross it out with a single line. On final or published pieces, pupils may use a sticky label to correct errors and maintain presentation standards.

Where pupils require additional support with handwriting or fine motor development, appropriate interventions and tailored activities will be provided to enable them to make progress and access the curriculum successfully.

Role of the English team:

The English Team is responsible for leading the strategic development of English across the school. The team monitors standards of teaching and learning, supports staff in curriculum implementation, oversees assessment and moderation practices, and ensures that the English curriculum remains ambitious, progressive and responsive to pupils' needs.

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