



English at Cheapside School

'Language shapes the way we think and determines what we can think about.'

Benjamin Lee Whorf

Phonics

Phonics is introduced to children in the Reception Class and is then built on throughout Year 1, culminating in the Phonics Screening Test in the summer of Year 1. This learning is then consolidated and expanded on in Year 2.

The phonics phases are taught in order across the year groups and any children who have not secured the phases additionally work in supported groups to repeat and secure those sounds.

Phase 1 – Nursery/Reception

Phase 2 – Reception

Phase 3 – Reception

Phase 4 – Reception/Year 1

Phase 5 – Year 1/Year 2

Phase 6 – Year 2

Phonics underpins all learning and ensuring that it is taught rigorously and consistently is key to each child's success. Phonics is the first step to early reading and writing and as such we ensure that the books that the children read follow our SSP (Systematic Synthetic Phonics) Programme and that children are only being asked to read and decode sounds and words that they have already been taught with the exception of 'tricky words' like the, he, she etc.

Children also have the opportunity to read books that have been selected specifically for the sounds that they include in a small group, led by an adult. This way they are able to listen to, hear and repeat words with the appropriate inflection, fluency and understanding.

We follow *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* – one of the government's approved SSP programmes.

Phonics catch-up

Those children who don't achieve the expected requirement in their phonic screening in Year 1, have additional support for phonics in Year 2 and then repeat the test in the summer term. If they continue to struggle with phonics, they have further support when they move into Key Stage 2 often for phonics, spelling and/or reading. This support might be through an intervention group or working on an online platform like *Literacy Gold*.

Reading

At Cheapside, encouraging and ensuring that a love of reading is flourishing in all children is at the heart of all engagement with texts. Alongside the mechanics of learning to read, we develop a reading for pleasure culture at school. Staff ensure that children are read to each day and children actively look forward to ending the day with their class story. All pupils have access to our school library and are able to take books of their choice home to share with their families. Individual readers are listened to as often as is appropriate according to their needs and year group. In addition to this, every classroom has a well-stocked and up-to-date selection of books which is frequently refreshed.

From Year 2 (once reading is secure) to Year 6, we deliver a whole class reading approach to the formal teaching of reading and this is taught 3-4 times a week in every class. We follow the acronym VIPERS, linked to the reading domains, in order to help children to understand and articulate what area of reading they are learning and also why they are doing it:

V – Vocabulary

I – Infer

P – Predict

E – Explain

R – Retrieve

S – Summarise (Sequence in Year 2)

We use quality fiction texts in every class to teach reading and also ensure that non-fiction and poetry is included. The aim is to give the children as great an exposure to as rich and broad a selection of genres and text types as possible.

Reading is a gateway to every subject and all learning, and we aim to equip every child at Cheapside with this skill.

Writing

Children begin their writing from a variety of starting points, some are able to write and recognise their names when they join us and others have never held a pen or pencil. As soon as they join Reception, children are encouraged to mark make and begin their writing journey. Throughout Reception, as they develop their phonic knowledge, they are given the opportunity to put this knowledge into practice and develop their writing skills both technically and creatively. We build on handwriting skills systematically across EYFS and Key Stage 1, initially developing their individual letter formation without cursive links and then building on these across Years 1 and 2.

Using the books and poems we read, as well as our topics as the impetus and model, children begin to produce different types of writing that are designed for a variety of purposes:

We have a bespoke, tailored approach to writing which is supported by *'I Am A Clever Writer'*. Children learn to become 'Clever Writers' through a consistent approach to their writing across all year groups, building on their skills and knowledge year-on-year. All the writing is supported by high quality texts that are read together in class, often linked to the topics that they are learning.

Writing is modelled and children learn to secure their writing initially through retelling and rewriting familiar stories and then expanding on this into other genres as they develop their skills.

By the time children reach Year 6, the aim is that they are fluent and confident writers for pleasure who are able to write for a variety of purposes and audiences, expertly using the skills and knowledge that they have honed over the preceding years.

Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar

Within their writing children cover the government objectives for each year group for spelling, punctuation and grammar and this is clearly mapped out for each class. In Year 1, common exception words are tested half termly and spellings are taught daily as part of their phonics lessons. In Year 2 children have daily spelling lessons with a weekly spelling test as part of the Little Wandle Spelling Scheme. In Key Stage 2, spellings are taught and tested weekly as a stand-alone lesson in each class, often as part of dictation to help the children contextualise and understand the words they are learning. Whilst spelling, punctuation and grammar are often taught discretely, they are also embedded within the writing being taught as an essential part of a particular purpose, for example using imperative verbs when writing instructions.

We hope that the children will leave Cheapside as lifelong readers and writers who are ready and equipped for the learning which awaits them in secondary school, both in English and the wider curriculum.