



English Policy

Reviewed and Updated:

February 2018

Vision and Mission

Our vision is that every single member of our community will love, learn and grow together. This is achieved by:

- Celebrating what we are good at
- Challenging ourselves and doing our very best in our work
- Loving and respecting ourselves and each other
- Knowing that we are loved for being just how God made us
- Accepting that everyone is special



Introduction

We aim to deliver a high quality English curriculum that gives children the best possible opportunities to become confident, literate, successful members of society with a deep love and understanding of English language and literature. We believe the development of Literacy skills is key to improving a child's life chances. We aim for our teachers to have high expectations for all children to achieve and enjoy English and to be able to use the skills they have acquired in a wide range of contexts and be able to use these in a number of different curricular areas. We strive to ensure all children can communicate clearly in spoken and written form and become confident in their use of language. Quality stories and texts are at the heart of our teaching and a love for reading is promoted throughout the school. Teachers use cross curricular inspirational ideas to engage children in work providing memorable experiences, bringing topics to life through real life contexts. Curriculum coverage is carefully monitored by the English Coordinator and the Senior Leadership Team to ensure all staff are delivering the quality English curriculum in line with our vision statement.

The National Curriculum

The National Curriculum (2014) clearly states that teaching the English language is an essential role of a Primary School.

The new English programme of study is based on four areas;

- ✓ Spoken language
- ✓ Reading
- ✓ Writing
- ✓ Spelling, grammar and punctuation



The National Curriculum is divided into 3 Key stages; Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4) and Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6). By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

The National curriculum, gives detailed guidance of what should be taught at each Key stage under the following headings;

- ✓ Spoken language
- ✓ Reading
 - Word reading
 - Comprehension
- ✓ Writing
 - Transcription
 - Spelling
 - Handwriting and presentation
 - Composition
 - Grammar and punctuation

Spoken Language

Developing strong speaking and listening skills is fundamental to the teaching of English. Teachers place a high emphasis on spoken language and plan for the discreet teaching of skills as well as incidental learning opportunities. Our approach is firmly based on teaching how language changes in different contexts. We believe children need to develop strong speaking skills to enable them to internalise language patterns and understand how language changes in different situations. This enables our children to understand and manipulate language for different purposes and audiences. To do this, teachers provide authentic contexts, giving children opportunities to use a range of spoken language. Teachers provide a range of purposeful opportunities through role play, drama, discussions and debates. Teachers model the use of Standard English masterfully, increasing children's repertoire of vocabulary and sophistication of spoken English.

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be *'taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently in Standard English'* (p10)

They should:

- ✓ Justify ideas with reasons
- ✓ Ask questions to check understanding
- ✓ Develop vocabulary and build knowledge
- ✓ Negotiate
- ✓ Evaluate and build on the ideas of others
- ✓ Select the appropriate register for effective communication
- ✓ Give well-structured descriptions and explanations
- ✓ Speculate, hypothesise and explore ideas
- ✓ Organise their ideas prior to writing



The focus on the spoken word gives children the ability to cope with written language by discovering:

- ✓ How it works;
- ✓ That meanings are shaped by lexical and syntactical choices;
- ✓ That language changes in different contexts;
- ✓ That there are differences between written and spoken English and standard and nonstandard;
- ✓ Rules of spoken language;
- ✓ Creative thinking and self-expression

Writing

The National Curriculum states that children should;

- ✓ develop the stamina and skills to write at length
- ✓ use accurate spelling and punctuation
- ✓ be grammatically correct

We aim to develop children's ability to produce well structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the reader. Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. Teachers model writing strategies and the use of phonics and spelling strategies in shared writing sessions. Guided writing is used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals, whilst children have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions regularly for a range of purposes across the curriculum. The children are given frequent opportunities in school to write in different contexts using high quality texts as a model. There are many opportunities for children to improve their writing inspired by a range of different experiences, objects, drama techniques and film clips. They may be asked to produce their writing on their own or as part of group. We use 'Nelson' Handwriting Scheme in school to help children develop fluent, clear and legible joined up writing.

Spelling

We want our pupils to become fluent and effective writers; and we believe accurate spelling is essential to achieving this. Competent spellers need to spend less time and energy in thinking about spelling to enable them to channel their time and energy into the skills of composition, sentence structure and precise word choice.

A balanced spelling programme includes five main components:

- ✓ understanding the principles underpinning word construction (phonemic, morphemic and etymological);
- ✓ recognising how (and how far) these principles apply to each word, in order to learn to spell words;
- ✓ practising and assessing spelling;
- ✓ applying spelling strategies and proofreading;
- ✓ building pupils' self-images as spellers



A good spelling programme gradually builds pupils' spelling vocabulary by introducing patterns or conventions and continually practising those already introduced. Experience has confirmed that short, lively, focused sessions are more enjoyable and effective than an occasional skills session. Spelling strategies need to be taught explicitly and applied to high-frequency words, cross-curricular words and individual pupils' words. Proofreading should be taught during shared and guided writing sessions and links should be made to the teaching of handwriting. Children are taught spelling discreetly five times a week in spelling lessons.

Reading

When choosing texts, we look for high quality texts written by renowned authors. Reading is one of the most important ways in which children observe and absorb the best language skills. So, while components such as grammar and vocabulary are important in the curriculum, they will be taught in a contextualised way, through the enjoyment of shared reading. Units of work (writing) will include rich texts which will be evidenced on planning. Shared reading comprehension will take place twice weekly using a class text with which a range of comprehension questions are set and answered linked to the expectations set out in the National Curriculum. Every classroom has a reading area that is inviting and may be themed according to the cross-curricular topic.

To promote a love of reading, we:

- ✓ Read aloud to children up to and including Year 6, to introduce them to new authors and styles of writing.
- ✓ Encourage and model reading for pleasure and establish an appreciation and love of reading.
- ✓ Establish and develop a varied range of texts (fiction, non-fiction and poetry) in the classroom.
- ✓ Focus on book corners, displays and the library.

Grammar

Grammar is most effective when taught in the context of reading and writing; either in the context of the linguistic demands of a particular genre or the writing needs of a child. Therefore, there is a grammar element within each session taught to introduce new skills and consolidate existing ones. Giving the children the opportunity to practice what they have learnt in the context of their own writing.

Phonics

We use the Read Write Inc (RWI) programme to teach children phonics and early reading. RWI is a method of learning centred round letter sounds and phonics, and we use it to aid children in their reading and spelling.

We use the Read Write Inc. programme to teach reading and to develop the skills needed for spelling. We link what we learn during these sessions and use these skills to read and write across the whole curriculum.



Reading opens the door to learning. A child who reads a lot will become a good reader. A good reader will be able to read more challenging material. A child who reads challenging material is a child who will learn. The more a child learns, the more he or she will want to find out.

Using RWI, the children learn to read effortlessly so that they can put all their energy into comprehending what they read. It also allows them to spell effortlessly so that they can put all their energy into composing what they write.

When using RWI to read the children will:

- ✓ learn that sounds are represented by written letters
- ✓ learn 44 sounds and the corresponding letter/letter groups using simple picture prompts
- ✓ learn how to blend sounds
- ✓ learn to read words using Fred Talk
- ✓ read lively stories featuring words they have learned to sound out
- ✓ show that they comprehend the stories by answering questions.
- ✓ When using RWI to write the children will:
 - ✓ learn to write the letters/letter groups which represent 44 sounds.
 - ✓ learn to write and spell words by saying the sounds in Fred Talk
 - ✓ write simple sentences

Learning Environment

Our classrooms and displays are used as learning tools. Using the learning environment all skills are transferrable and learning is applied across a range of contexts, ensuring intrinsic links between reading, writing, phonics, grammar, spelling and punctuation are made and children are regularly given time to consolidate learning. Through the learning environment children are empowered and supported to build independence when working.

Role of Subject Leader

The Subject Leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

- ✓ monitoring and evaluating English: -
 - pupil progress and analysis of data four times per year
 - provision of English, ensuring the breadth and balance of the curriculum
 - English across the curriculum
 - the quality of the Learning Environment,
- ✓ taking the lead in policy development,
- ✓ auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD,
- ✓ purchasing and organising resources,
- ✓ reporting to governors and SLT
- ✓ guidance support and training for parents and carers
- ✓ keeping up to date with recent English developments.

Expectations of All Teachers



- ✓ Planning covers all English objectives throughout the year and this will be tracked using EAZ Mag Writer
- ✓ A4 and A3 paper is used for writing in literacy and writing is also evident in topic, RE and science folders
- ✓ An English Skills book is used for grammar, reading and spelling activities
- ✓ A high level of presentation is expected across all subjects
- ✓ Guided group work is planned for and delivered
- ✓ Topics offer children the opportunity to contextualise and apply discrete literacy learning for a wide range of purposes
- ✓ An Extended piece of writing is produced at least every fortnight
- ✓ Learning Objectives and Success Criteria are displayed in all lessons and are evident in books.
- ✓ Marking is directly linked to the Learning Intention and Success Criteria in all lessons. See feedback and Marking policy
- ✓ Success criteria are generated prior to the lesson and with the children.
- ✓ Skills taught in English are reinforced and embedded throughout all other areas of learning; this is evidenced in all work.
- ✓ Weekly plans are based on medium term planning and success criteria based on the most recent assessments.
- ✓ Assessment for Learning is used in classrooms.

Time Allocations for English

- ✓ Literacy to be taught every day for 1 hour and 15 minutes
- ✓ Spelling is evident every day at the beginning of the lesson for between 10 – 15 minutes
- ✓ Every lesson must also include a grammar element
- ✓ There are two Reading Sessions every week
- ✓ Handwriting taught sessions as required.
- ✓ Handwriting practice within phonics/spelling teaching.
- ✓ Extended writing taught across the curriculum.
- ✓ Punctuation and grammar should be embedded in all English teaching and should be evident within planning.
- ✓ Phonics interventions or whole class focus where needed.