



I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you. Psalms 32.8

English Policy

"The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment."

– DfE, 2013, National Curriculum in England p3

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy outlines our whole school approach to the teaching and development of English. English is integral to our curriculum at Shiplake Primary – it is through the acquisition and understanding of language and a child's experience of stories and a variety of texts that enables them to access all areas of the curriculum, to form their own ideas, to ask questions and to make connections. Through literacy, in all its forms, children learn to make sense of the world around them.

2. AIMS

We aim for excellence in English achievement throughout the school. We aim to develop all pupils' abilities within an integrated programme of Speaking & Listening, Reading & Writing. Pupils will be given opportunities to develop their use, knowledge and understanding of spoken and written English within a broad and balanced curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught English skills.

Our aim is that pupils at Shiplake Primary School will leave Year 6:

- reading and writing with confidence, fluency and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to take responsibility for their own learning including self-monitoring and correcting their own errors;
- with a love of reading and a desire to read for enjoyment;
- with an interest in words and their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in relation to grammatical terminology;
- understanding a range of text types, media types and genres; able to write in a variety of purposes and audiences
- using their developing creativity, imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness;
- having a suitable technical vocabulary to respectfully articulate their responses in any discussion.



3. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum in England: English Programmes of Study – Key Stages 1 and 2 (2013) and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (2021).

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception) all children are given opportunities to:

- speak and listen and respond to what they hear during discussions, interactions and exchanges;
- use communication, language and English in every part of the curriculum;
- become immersed in an environment rich in print, language and opportunities to communicate.
- develop a love of reading through a wealth of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems

At Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) children learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They learn to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They are exposed to a classroom that is rich in language. They learn to use language and ask questions to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds. They develop their decoding and comprehension skills together to become more confident and capable readers. Teachers maximise vocabulary learning through well-structured daily reading opportunities.

At Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6) children learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They read a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetic texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works. Children are exposed to new vocabulary through explicit teaching, reading rich texts and maximising reading opportunities in the classroom.

The Governing Body receives regular reports on the progress of English provision and classroom visits may be organised with the English subject leader so Governors can see the policy in action.

4. SUBJECT ORGANISATION

Early Years Foundation Stage

In Reception children receive daily discrete phonics lessons using Little Wandle. Children's learning and development is continued and extended through carefully planned activities. Children have opportunities to develop their communication, language and English skills on a daily basis in both adult led and child initiated activities, play and learning.



Key Stage 1

In Year 1, daily Little Wandle phonics lessons continue and are taught in class groups, while children have daily mixed ability English lessons with an emphasis on real texts. Children take part in both whole class guided and individual reading sessions and have regular story times to develop a love of reading. English skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes, differentiated class teaching and targeted teaching groups in English sessions.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2 children have daily English lessons. Spelling and grammar skills are initially taught discretely before being embedded within English lessons. Additional English sessions include whole class reading, guided reading, spelling, grammar, handwriting and regular reading aloud of a class novel. English skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through targeted teaching; intervention programmes and differentiated class teaching.

5. APPROACHES TO SPEAKING AND LISTENING

We recognise the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum - spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

Opportunities to develop these skills include: class debates, poetry performances, talk partners, individual presentations, PSHE assemblies, drama and our annual productions.

As the National Curriculum says: *'All pupils should be enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils should be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role.'* (Pages 3, 4 and 7, 2013).

All of these speaking and listening skills are taught in English, across the curriculum and during extra-curricular activities too.

We recognise the need for all pupils to speak, read and write Standard English fluently and accurately, while acknowledging that a pupil's own dialect or other language is of prime importance.

6. APPROACHES TO READING

In Reception and KS1, we explicitly teach phonics decoding skills daily, using the Little Wandle synthetic phonics programme with children progressing through each of the phases.

Teachers also model reading strategies during shared reading sessions, whilst children have the opportunity to practise and develop these strategies and to discuss texts in detail during whole class and 1:1 reading sessions. Each year group chooses a variety of quality class texts



together, throughout the year which they read and discuss together maximising daily reading opportunities.

Little Wandle reading books are used to support early readers. Children's reading is listened to regularly by both teachers and teaching assistants to ensure that children have more frequent opportunities to read with adults. As the children move into KS2, opportunities to read independently for a sustained period of time continue to be provided.

In Reception children take home two appropriately levelled books from school, as well as a chosen library book, and parents are encouraged to share the book with their child and record their progress in their yellow reading record. This encourages teacher – parent communication and collaboration. Lower attaining readers in Year 1 become daily readers in school.

In Key Stage 1 children continue to take home a levelled book according to their ability both in decoding and comprehension. In addition to this, those children that have become 'free readers' have the opportunity to choose a book from the class library or bring in a book from home. Children are helped to select books which interest them and that are appropriate. Each child has a reading folder and a home school reading record that teachers and parents use to share information about a child's reading. Parents are encouraged to read with their child daily.

In Key Stage 2 children choose their own books from home or the library to read. Those children who still require a more structured approach to reading have access to a variety of reading schemes which help them to continue to grow in confidence as readers with a text that is appropriate for their age group and reading ability- both fluency and comprehension.

Children continue to be encouraged to share books at home with their grown-ups. We believe that this not only helps to develop inferential skills, but also supports a lifelong love of reading. Throughout the Key Stage children become more independent in discussing what they have read with others.

We also recognise the value of adults (both in school and at home) reading aloud to children, in order to improve their grasp of story language, enthuse them with a love of books and inspire them as writers.

7. APPROACHES TO WRITING

The teaching of writing is effective when children see the use in it; when there is real, authentic purpose and audience. At Shiplake CE Primary we develop and sustain writing skills by providing opportunities for children to write for a range of purposes, such as; to entertain; to inform; to persuade; and to discuss, which are demonstrated through a variety of text types. In Reception children learn that writing is a means of expression and a communication tool.



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 use guided writing sessions to model writing skills such as sentence structure and figurative language and the use of phonics and spelling strategies. They encourage children to become critical readers of their own writing, and teach children to compose, amend and revise their writing.

Whole class guided writing sessions are also used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals, whilst children have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions at the end of each unit.

We aim to share a variety of well-chosen high-quality texts from a range of genres which recognises the link between children's reading experience and their progress in writing. We also want to ensure that children can understand how meaning is conveyed in other forms such as film, illustration, digital texts and performance. Children are also given the opportunity to use ICT for their writing.

We have invested in the Nelson Handwriting scheme to help children develop fluent, clear and legible joined up writing. Children in Reception start by mark making and learn to print individual letters as they meet them. In Year 1 children start to learn the horizontal and diagonal joins needed to join their writing. By the end of Year 1, children are expected to write a sentences which are able to be read by themselves and others. Children follow the Nelson scheme until they are deemed confident and to have developed a clear, legible style.

To support our teaching of writing we use our own school assessment criteria which has been adapted from the NC requirements.

8. APPROACHES TO GRAMMAR AND SPELLING

Grammar and spelling skills are taught discretely and then embedded within English lessons.

To be able to spell correctly is an essential life skill. When spelling becomes automatic, pupils are able to concentrate on the content of their writing and the making of meaning. Confidence in spelling can have a profound effect on the writer's self-image. If they're confident spellers, they're also much more likely to make adventurous vocabulary choices. Obviously, there's a lot more to being a strong writer than spelling, but confidence in spelling can make a big difference. We aim to use explicit, interactive teaching which draws children's attention to the origins, structure and meaning of words and their parts, the shape and sound of words, the letter patterns within them and the various ways they can learn these patterns.

In Reception and Year 1, daily phonics is the key to the children's learning of spelling. This is taught using the Little Wandle programme. Children are taught to blend sounds to read and to segment spoken words into individual sounds in order to spell. At the same time they learn words which are not phonically regular (common exception words).



When actually writing children should be using their phonics skills and concentrate on the spelling patterns they know and should simply 'have a go' at spelling and underline words that they are unsure of. When marking children's work, we focus on high frequency words, topic words and those studied in spelling sessions.

9. ASSESSMENT

Reading age tests are undertaken at the start of the year to identify children who require extra support with their reading and to measure progress.

Phonics assessments are completed half termly in Reception, Y1 (and those in Year 2 undergoing interventions) using Little Wandle tracking and assessment tool (as of Spring 2022). Children in Year 1 complete the statutory phonics screening check in early June.

In Yrs. 1-6 spelling and grammar is assessed termly using the 'Rising Stars' assessments.

In Yrs. 2-6 reading progress is assessed termly using the 'Rising Stars' assessments and in Yr 1 reading progress is assessed termly using the 'Headstart Primary' assessments.

Years 2 and 6 sit Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) in English reading and English grammar, punctuation and spelling in the summer term. The assessment of writing is completed by teacher assessment throughout the academic year.

10. CROSS-CURRICULAR ENGLISH OPPORTUNITIES

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum, with a particular focus in our school of writing through all subject areas where the same standard of writing is expected as seen in English books.

11. ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR READING AND WRITING

We are developing the school library with collections of books aimed at different year groups, with resources to support every aspect of school life. To further highlight the importance of reading with displays promoting books, visiting authors, Henley Literary Festival, World Book Day, readathons, Book at Bedtime for EYFS and KS1 and our biannual Book Fairs.

12. EQUALITY and INCLUSION

At Shiplake C of E Primary school we promote the needs and interests of pupils, irrespective of gender, culture, ability, personal circumstance or religion (etc.) by promoting a 'safe space' policy, respecting the views of others and teaching through our school Values; Friendship, Compassion, Equality, Truthfulness and Wisdom.

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve all they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment in liaison with the SENDCo.



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13. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We aim to involve parents directly in the life of the school, and thus in the development of children's skills, knowledge and understanding in English. Parents are involved in hearing children read, and are encouraged to discuss books with them.

There are opportunities each term when parents can discuss their children's progress with their teacher. Regular curriculum letters provide information about the English curriculum and how parents can support their children. They also emphasise the importance of reading. Parents are encouraged to read both with and to their children at home in order to promote reading. Parents are welcomed into school to support reading in the classroom.

This policy is in compliment to the following policies:

- Curriculum Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Computing Policy
- E-learning Code of Conduct
- Marking Policy
- SEND Policy
- Single Equality Policy

This policy will be reviewed every three years or if changes are required.

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