

WOODFALL PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

ENGLISH POLICY

OVERVIEW

The use of English is the foundation of all learning. It is the medium of communication; the successful understanding and use of English is a prerequisite for educational progress. It empowers the learner and is essential for independent learning and many aspects of everyday life. English development must be planned, for within its own framework and also within that of a broad and balanced curriculum where the children have a wider context for their work.

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum and our aim is that all children will develop the necessary skills to use the English language confidently, appropriately and accurately to the best of their ability.

Aims

- To read, write, speak and listen with confidence, competency and understanding.
- To use language effectively in order to communicate ideas and feelings.
- To have an interest in words; their meanings, origins and evolution.
- To become readers through choice, reading for enjoyment and investigation.
- To become writers for different audiences and purposes.
- To be effective communicators using a constantly growing vocabulary, with accuracy.
- To take account of the views and ideas of others by developing active listening skills.

Foundation Stage

English is taught through the Literacy aspect of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, broken down into learning in the specific areas of:

- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Expressive Arts and Design

Key Stage 1 and 2

The National Curriculum for English is implemented across both Key Stages and is delivered through daily English lessons.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

The development of Speaking and Listening skills is fundamental to accessing the whole curriculum and as such is now an integral part of all English teaching; developed through a variety of activities and experiences. Opportunities are provided for children to speak and listen in both formal and informal settings. It is a skill for life, which must be taught systematically and not left to chance.

Aims

- To help children to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose.
- To encourage children to listen and to respond to literature.
- To enable children to: give, receive and follow instructions.
- To help children communicate thoughts, ideas and feelings.

Implementation

Speaking and Listening opportunities are specifically planned across the curriculum in accordance with the National Curriculum English objectives.

The development and progression of Speaking and Listening is ensured from the Foundation Stage onwards through activities such as:

- Structured play
- Role play
- Hot seating
- Class debates
- Year group assemblies and performances
- Drama activities
- Recitals and performance poetry
- Reading

DRAMA

Drama is a creative art form in its own right and an important tool in the development of speaking and listening skills. Drama can be intellectually, socially, emotionally and morally challenging and demanding. It involves working and interacting with others, both in and out of role and exploring various issues and problems from different points of view. Drama provides an opportunity for children to respond aesthetically as they reflect upon their own dramatic work and the work of others.

Aims

- To develop imaginative thinking and self-expression.
- To develop speaking and listening skills.
- To value the contributions made by all the children.
- To enable children to explore moral, social and emotional issues.
- To allow children to use their reasoning skills and to make decisions.
- To develop confidence and self-esteem.
- To provide opportunities for children to participate in performances of varying kinds.
- To recognise and value the cross-curricular potential and importance of drama.

Implementation

Drama will be taught through activities and techniques such as:

- Role play
- Improvisation
- Circle time
- Hot seating
- Freeze framing
- Teacher in role
- Drama productions

READING

At Woodfall Primary and Nursery School, we aim to support and enable all pupils to read a range of texts fluently and with understanding, to have confidence in their capacity as readers, to find pleasure in and be voluntary users of reading for information, interest, entertainment and purpose. Children need to be aware that reading is necessary for their personal lives, for learning throughout the curriculum and for working and living in our society.

Reading consists of two dimensions:

- Word reading
- Comprehension (both listening and reading)

It is essential that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions.

Skilled word reading, involves both the rapid working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the rapid recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words.

This is why phonics is emphasised in the early teaching of reading to children when they start school.

Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality conversation with the teacher and their peers, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction texts.

Aims

- To inspire children to become lifelong readers for both information and enjoyment.
- To introduce children to a wide range of texts, both fiction and non-fiction.
- To involve parents in their child's reading.

Implementation

Teaching of reading is in accordance with the National Curriculum and features the following elements:

- Phonics, which is taught systematically from Foundation 2 to Year 2 using Read Write Inc, and the National Curriculum.

Daily reading aloud sessions for pleasure and for children to hear excellent modelling of reading by adults

- Whole Class Reading, guided group reading and individual guided reading for extra support where necessary.

- A system of graded reading materials linked to Phonics in KS1 and to ZPD level in KS2.
- Reading aloud for different audiences.
- Well stocked and regularly changed Key Stage and Class Libraries.
- Meetings for parents to learn how reading is taught and how they can support their child's reading.
- A reading record book and, for children in Key Stage 2, a reading journal.
- Book bingo system to encourage independent reading for Upper Key Stage 2.

In selecting books for school, we take into consideration equal opportunities and topical issues. Children are encouraged to take home books from school on a regular basis and, where appropriate, record all their reading in their reading record. Parents are expected to hear their children read regularly, to speak to them about what they are reading and to make comments in the reading record to indicate this has taken place.

WRITING

Writing is the medium through which thoughts, ideas and understanding are recorded and therefore competence in writing is a necessary life skill. Success in writing has a direct effect upon progress in most other areas of the curriculum.

Aims

- To enable all children to reach their full potential as writers.
- To teach children to write for a wide range of audiences, in varied forms and for different purposes.
- To become independent writers.
- To use the process of writing through practise, scaffolding, planning, drafting, revising, editing, publishing and discussing content.
- To use structure, coherency, spelling, punctuation, grammar and well-formed handwriting in order that meaning is made clear to the reader.
- To develop as wide a vocabulary as possible and a sound knowledge of phonics, which will assist the development of the writing process.

Implementation

Teaching of writing is in accordance with the National Curriculum for English and based on the principles and methodologies of The Write Stuff and features the following elements:

- Creating an ethos where children feel confident to take risks with their writing
- Carefully scaffolding and supporting children in the early stages of writing.
- A print rich environment which encourages children to operate independently.
- Word banks, dictionaries and thesauri.
- Displays of children's writing from the earliest stages of emergent writing to fluent, cursive script.
- A wide range of opportunities for writing outside the classroom, such as letter writing and corresponding with other schools through letters and email.
- Word processing and multimedia presentation.
- Teacher modelling and use of scaffolding regularly to allow high levels of success
- Providing opportunities for writers to come into school to talk about and demonstrate their craft.
- 'Authors at Work' books allow for free choice writing every half term.

HANDWRITING

Handwriting is a vehicle through which children present their work and as such it is important that they develop fluency and legibility.

Aims

- To enable pupils to communicate information legibly.
- To encourage pupils to develop a flowing, cursive and legible style of handwriting.
- To enable pupils to take pride in the presentation of their work.

Implementation

Handwriting skills are taught and practised in school. Handwriting practice is always an observed activity to ensure correct formation and pencil grip. The children are taught:

- Good sitting posture, positioning of book and a tripod pencil grip.
- Left to right movements to build up continuity and flow.
- How to draw basic handwriting patterns.
- Correct letter formation in stroke-related families

- How to form letters with entry and exit strokes to ease the transition to 'joined-up' writing.
- To begin to use pre-cursive and cursive writing from Year 1.
- All work is completed in pencil up to and including Year 3 and from Year 4 onwards children may choose to write in pen.

The particular needs of left-handed children are taken into consideration and where possible, these children are seated without anybody to their left. They are taught to tilt their paper clockwise so as not to obscure with their hand, or smudge what they are writing.

SPELLING, GRAMMAR AND PUNCTUATION

Spelling, grammar and punctuation form an important part of the English lessons and is taught both through the context of reading and writing and, as a separate skill within phonics and/or grammar sessions. Teachers and teaching assistants will follow the National Curriculum, and will choose elements of grammar and punctuation to teach depending on what is relevant for the particular text they are studying or the genre of writing being covered. We aim for children to be able to understand a range of punctuation and grammatical features, and to use these confidently in their own writing. The children will explore the grammar and punctuation used by a range of authors, and the ways these features can enhance their own writing. Children will be encouraged to use the correct terminology for grammatical features and punctuation. We expect them to be able to use the terms for their year group (as set out by the National Curriculum) with confidence, by the end of the year.

Aims

- To enable children to develop as confident spellers.
- To encourage children to write independently from the time they enter school.
- To develop children's interest in words through an investigative approach.

Implementation

The teaching of spelling is in accordance with the National Curriculum and the following resources and strategies are used:

- Read Write Inc and Letters and Sounds
- Dictionaries/ thesauri / word banks/ word books
- The 'look - cover - write – say - check' 'words in words', anagrams etc
- Editing and redrafting
- The identification of spelling rules and patterns.

Daily discrete Phonics lessons are taught in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Phonics and SPaG form part of lessons in year 3 and 4. SPaG is taught both in and out of context in Year 5 and 6. Weekly spelling tests and/or spelling challenges are conducted in Key Stage 2 and are introduced in Year 2 when the children are ready.

ASSESSMENT, MONITORING, RECORDING AND REPORTING

Teachers assess children's work in English in different ways.

The short-term formative assessments that teachers make as part of every lesson help them to adjust their daily plans. They match these short-term assessments closely to the teaching objectives. Written or verbal feedback is given to help guide children's progress. All children are encouraged to self-assess against given objectives. Target Tracker is used to measure progress against the year group expectations and to help teachers plan for progression. Teachers make long-term summative assessments towards the end of the school year, and they use these to assess progress against school and national targets.

Children's progress is reported 3 times a year to parents via written reports. These reports form the basis for Parent/Teacher Interviews and also have personalised targets for Reading, Writing and Maths.

Foundation Stage

In the Foundation Stage children, are assessed by systematic observation using the Early Learning Goals. Progress is recorded in children's Learning Journey Files.

KS1 and KS2

- End of Key Stage SATS, Headstart, CGP and Rising Stars Reading Assessments, Renaissance Stars online assessments and teacher assessment of all aspects of the English curriculum.
- Y1 Phonics Check in the Summer term.
- Target / objective-led marking.

- Children are given targets and are made aware of how to improve their work through the use of constructive marking (Next Steps).
- Verbal and whole class feedback.

In order to monitor standards and progress the following systems are in place:

- At Pupil Progress meetings, twice a year, the class teacher and English Subject Leader/Headteacher/Senior Management Team/SIP monitor and evaluate the progress of children in English.
- The English Subject Leader is given time to observe lessons and give verbal and written feedback, and also to see children's work.
- Staff meet regularly to engage in whole school and cluster moderation.
- The progress of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) is reviewed with the Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCO) in Pupil Progress Meetings.
- The school's English Action Plan is part of the School Improvement Plan – this is reviewed and updated annually by the English Subject Leader.

RESOURCES

Central resources are the responsibility of the English Subject Leaders. These include:

- Whole class reading sets
- Fiction libraries
- Non-fiction libraries
- Guided reading books
- Class libraries
- Range of Big Books
- Word processing and multimedia presentation packages
- A variety of ICT equipment
- A wide range of writing materials

Resources are continually reviewed and updated.

INCLUSION

We seek:

- To enable all children regardless of gender, race or ability, to reach their full potential in English.
- To incorporate aspects of English into a wide range of cross curricular subjects and take advantage of the multicultural aspects of this subject e.g. literature from other cultures.

Provision for Special Educational Needs (SEND)

The needs of all children are met through Quality First Teaching. Where necessary, intervention programmes are used to boost literacy skills or address specific difficulty. Eg, spelling, handwriting, reading and booster phonics sessions.

Provision for Gifted and Talented Pupils

- Differentiated and extension work
- Challenging targets
- Cluster group Gifted and Talented days

RACIAL EQUALITY

The curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of racial equality where teachers take account of pupils' cultural backgrounds, linguistic needs and different learning styles. The school environment is one where all pupils can contribute fully and feel valued. Through a variety of teaching styles and strategies pupils appreciate the value of working together.

HEALTH & SAFETY

The relevant section of the document Safety in Primary School Curriculum Activities needs to be taken into account in planning activities for pupils.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Staff attend courses relevant to the teaching of English, to keep up to date with new initiatives and teaching styles. The subject leader will advise staff on appropriate courses to attend.

In addition, the need for whole school INSET is monitored and arrangements for the provision of this are made when necessary.

THE ROLE OF THE SUBJECT LEADER

- Teach demonstration lessons;
- Ensure teachers are familiar with the content of the English curriculum and help them to plan lessons;
- Lead by example in the way they teach in their own classroom;
- Prepare, organise and lead INSET
- Observe colleagues from time to time with a view to identifying the support they need;
- Attend INSET provided by outside agencies;
- Inform parents and governors

EVALUATION AND REVIEW STRATEGY

This policy was written by the English subject leader in conjunction with the revised orders of the National Curriculum 2014. It has the approval of staff and governors. It will be reviewed initially by the subject leader and ultimately by the whole staff every two years or as appropriate in the event of major changes to national guidelines.

Written: January 2022 (V Hassall)

Approved by staff: February 2022

Date for review: January 2024