

# Wheldrake with Thorganby CE Primary School

## English Policy



As with the rest of our curriculum, English is shaped around our Christian vision:

**Love your Neighbour as yourselves *Matthew 22:39***  
**Let us encourage one another. *Hebrews 10:25***

### Aims and Objectives

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.

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. The National Curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

## **Spoken Language**

The National Curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers should therefore ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills. Pupils should develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They must be assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others and teachers should ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils should also be taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

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. They should have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.

## **Reading**

The programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of two dimensions:

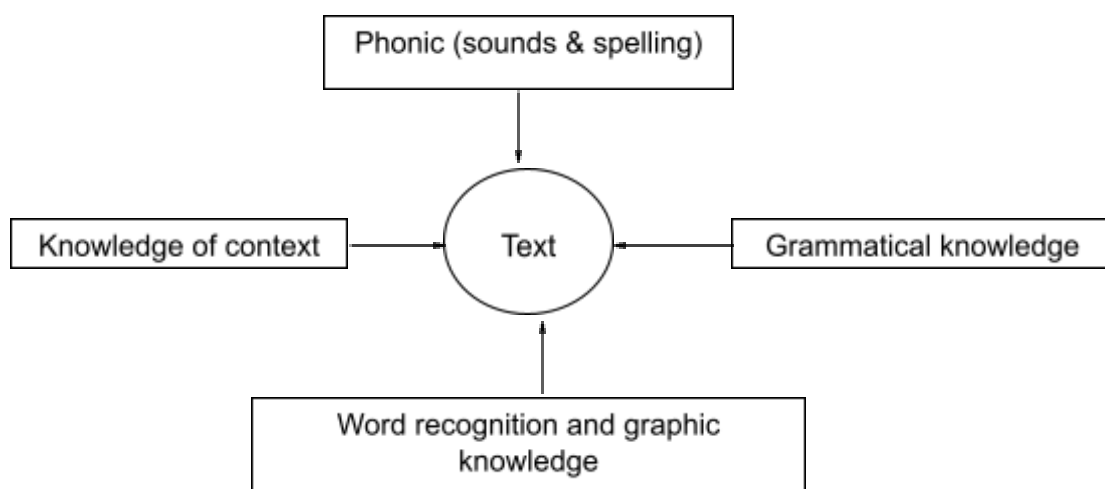
- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading).

It is essential that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each. Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words

(decoding) and the speedy 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 should be emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners (i.e. unskilled readers) 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 discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction. All pupils must be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Reading widely and often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious young minds. It is essential that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education.

Parental involvement in reading for all children is important and valued. Each child is issued with a Reading Diary and at the beginning of each year parents are given advice on how to use it to support their child's reading at home. This individual reading is a core element of our homework policy. It is monitored at home and checked regularly at school. Extra support is given within class for those children who need more help with reading.



## Reading in Key Stage 1

In the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1, there should be a strong and systematic emphasis on the teaching of phonics and other word level skills.

Pupils should be taught to:

- Discriminate between the separate sounds in words.

- Learn the letters and letter combinations most commonly used to spell those sounds.
- Read words by sounding out and blending their separate parts.
- Write words by combining spelling patterns of their sounds.

## **Reading in Key Stage 2**

In Key Stage 2, as the pupils gain fluency, the forms of teaching should emphasise advanced reading and comprehension skills at text level. Reading is taught discretely in English lessons and during guided reading but may also be a focus in other curriculum areas.

Reading resources for SEN children are selected from our general reading scheme or other sets of books as appropriate.

## **The Reading Environment**

As teachers we must be enthusiastic about books ourselves and use a variety of strategies to promote reading, such as:

- Reading aloud to the children.
- Have an attractive book area with a selection of material; fiction, non-fiction, poetry, plays, current topic books etc.
- Invite guest readers into school.
- Display some books 'face out'.
- Whole class reading, texts or big books.
- Shared reading.
- Paired reading.
- Opportunities to visit the school Library to choose reading books and for research.
- Guided reading.
- Individual reading or reading activities when not doing guided reading.
- Use of taped stories following the book.
- Books made by children.
- Reading challenges and prizes to encourage daily reading.

## **Writing (including spelling and handwriting)**

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

It is essential that teaching develops pupils' competence in these two dimensions. In addition, pupils should be taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words.

Effective composition involves forming, articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting.

## **Spelling, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation**

Opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing. As vocabulary increases, teachers should show pupils how to understand the relationships between words, how to understand nuances in meaning, and how to develop their understanding of, and ability to use, figurative language. They should also teach pupils how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than one meaning.

Pupils should be taught to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English. They should be taught to use the elements of spelling, grammar, punctuation and 'language about language'. It is important that pupils learn the correct grammatical terms in English and that these terms are integrated within teaching.

## **Aims For children**

- to enjoy writing and see the value in it.
- to develop a positive self image of themselves as a writer.
- to be creative and imaginative.
- to communicate meaning through a wide range of text types.
- to recognise that writing should be purposeful .
- to be aware of different audiences as they write.
- to be aware that writing is a process which involves thinking, speaking and listening, planning and editing.
- to develop their skills in writing.
- to be proud of what they have written and share it with others.

## **Organisation and teaching of writing**

Teachers will implement the appropriate learning objectives for each year group from the National Curriculum. Teachers need to establish a classroom environment/community which promotes writing. Teachers need to be aware of different learning styles in their planning of writing lessons.

## **Shared Writing**

There are three types of shared writing which will be used in the English lesson.

- *Demonstration* (teacher models)
- *Supported composition* (children have chance to think and write ideas and then can contribute to shared writing)
- *Teacher scribing* (teacher involves children's ideas in the shared writing)

## **Guided Writing**

Guided writing is a focused teaching session with a group of children working on a specific skill. Children are organised into relevant groups and should work with the

teacher on a regular basis. It is important that the groups reflect the children's current needs and therefore should be fluid and flexible.

### **Independent Writing**

During independent writing, children work on a specific learning objective in order to develop their writing skills. This writing can take place in mixed ability groups with opportunities provided for children to talk through their ideas with each other, then further embed discussions with their peers while editing and improving their work.

### **Handwriting – See separate policy.**

### **Spelling**

#### Key Stage 1

Systematic teaching of phonics following the DFE Approved Twinkl Scheme has been embedded throughout Reception and Key Stage 1. The children will also learn to read and spell the common exception words from Key Stage 1.

#### Key Stage 2

Spelling Shed is used to deliver a systematic approach to teaching spellings using a combined approach based on orthography, morphology and etymology.

The children will continue learning the common exception words from Key Stage 1 and the statutory word lists from the National Curriculum English Appendix 1.

### **English Curriculum Planning**

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the National Curriculum Key Stage programmes of study as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the English curriculum. The objectives from the National Curriculum have been mapped across our skills progression maps in English for each year group.

The Programmes of Study give details of the main teaching objectives and suggested activities for each term. These plans define what we teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term.

### **The Foundation Stage**

We teach English in the reception class as an integral part of the school's work. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the English aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out for Literacy in the Early Learning Goals which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their range of vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore, enjoy, learn about, and use words and text in a range of situations.

## **Teaching English to children with special needs and gifted pupils**

English forms part of the school policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Teachers work hard to provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties and gifted pupils. More able children may be set open ended challenges and extension activities both in class and as homework. For children with SEN, work in English takes into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs). In order to include all children, teachers may use a range of strategies such as:

- using differentiated texts that children can read and understand.
- using visual and written materials in different formats.
- using ICT, other technological aids and taped materials.
- using alternative communication such as signs and symbols.
- deploying teaching assistants to support individuals or groups of children.

## **Assessment and recording**

### **Children's reading and writing**

Reading and writing are formally and informally assessed throughout the school:

Non-statutory assessments:

- Teacher assessments in writing across all year groups with regular opportunities for moderation.
- Reading, handwriting and SPAG assessments are a mix of ongoing teacher assessments throughout school with formal assessments also being used in Key Stage 2.
- Statutory assessments for the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and Year 6 SATs.

The English subject leader takes samples of children's work in order to gain an overview of standards throughout the school and to help identify areas for development. Teachers meet regularly to discuss assessment of pupils' work and to review individual examples of work against the National exemplification material.

Monitoring of the standards of the pupil's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English subject leader. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. The subject leader gives the standards and curriculum committee of the governors an annual summary report which evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.

## **Resources**

There is a wide range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. Most classrooms have dictionaries and thesauruses. They have access to a range of big

books for shared reading and may also use online texts and films. Every classroom features a class reading area with a selection of fiction and non-fiction texts and a range of age appropriate books the children can access. Sets of texts for Guided Reading are available or extracts are accessed online and printed or displayed on the classroom interactive whiteboards. The reading schemes for children who are at the earlier stages of reading are Rhino Readers from Twinkl in line with our phonics scheme. These are kept outside the Key Stage 1 classrooms. The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research and a wide range of fiction books for all ages.