



English Policy

**Wadsworth Fields
Primary School**

2022

Introduction

English is a core subject. This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the learning and teaching of English (Communication, Language and Literacy) within our school. Children's language abilities are developed within an integrated programme of speaking and listening, reading and writing. These three attainment targets permeate all our activities but are particularly covered by English teaching sessions. Other elements, namely spelling, handwriting, punctuation, grammar and drama are also included.

Overall Aims

Wadsworth Fields Primary School follows national initiatives. We aim for children to develop their ability to communicate effectively in speech and writing, to listen with understanding and to become enthusiastic, responsive and knowledgeable readers. Within our school aims we acknowledge the importance of literacy, as we encourage children to develop the essential skills for life and learning. We aim for every child to achieve their potential.

In addition to English sessions we aim to provide a curriculum that is balanced, challenging, creative and enjoyable through which children have every opportunity to practise their English skills.

Equal Opportunities Statement

Each child will receive every encouragement to fulfil their potential in English activities, whatever their colour, origin, sex or ability. One of our aims is to prepare all children for their integral part in society. We encourage children to express their own ideas and discuss their experiences in order to avoid cultural bias. However, all pupils benefit from a full range of opportunities necessary to enable them to develop competence in standard English. The richness of dialects and other languages is fully recognised and all children will benefit from the study of a wide range of literature from different cultures and traditions.

Approach

Though specific skills are taught within discrete sessions, English is embedded throughout all areas of the curriculum.

Scheme Of Work

KS1 and 2 follow the 2014 English Curriculum supplemented with Rainbow Grammar, elements of Talk for Writing, handwriting scheme and Sounds and Syllable spelling scheme. These are organised into units of learning based on year groups. Teachers of parallel classes plan together, differentiating learning as appropriate. The deputy head teacher and English subject leaders monitor plans.

Organisation varies between the differing year groups, depending on the needs of differing cohorts and the staffing complement. In some year groups target groups are the preferred option. Where possible, children are taught writing within their normal classes to enable continuity and ensure standards are consistent throughout the curriculum.

Children within the EYFS follow the Developmental Matters framework with its high emphasis on developing communication skills through child led and adult led activities and high-quality play.

Speaking and listening

Children are given opportunities to talk for a range of purposes. In EYFS this is particularly important as good communication skills in the Early Years are a good indicator of success later on in school.

Children learn the importance of standard English and interesting vocabulary choices from the EYFS onwards. Teachers model standard English in all their communications.

Children are taught listening skills and are encouraged to work with a response partner from F2 upwards.

We encourage children to take part in role play and drama activities from Nursery onwards. Organised performances in front of an adult audience occur at least once a year.

Reading

Reading is an integral part of most areas of the curriculum. Encouraging enjoyment of books and reading is of paramount importance in school. We greatly value regular Book Fairs, Book Weeks, visits by authors etc, all of which serve to inspire greater interest in reading.

Teaching of reading comprehension uses a mixture of VIPERS: vocabulary, infer, predict, explain, retrieve, summarise and sequencing, and The 7 Steps to Reading and Understanding: visualisation, making connections, prediction, questioning, monitor and clarify, summarise, spot structure. Parents are given a booklet outlining ways in which they can help their children to develop these skills.

We have well stocked library available. Books are organised in phonic stages and then later in age appropriate recommended reads. This allows children to select texts which are varied and interesting. Non-fiction books are currently organised by the Dewey system and colour coded to aid identification of subject areas. This is currently being updated to reflect the changing nature of non-fiction texts available.

Children have an individual reading book from older F2 upwards. In Nursery children are encouraged to choose a book to take home every week. We have a reading reward system whereby children earn bronze, silver and gold stickers, certificates and small prizes.

Reading books in main school are organised in different ways across school depending on their purpose (phonic stage, recommended reads etc). Class teachers have a wide range of reading books available in their classrooms. Guided reading books are kept centrally and labelled in number bands.

As a school we make full use of termly book collections from the central library – these are generally topic linked.

Phonics teaching

Nursery children are initially introduced to phonics using the Super Sounds Phase 1 Pre Phonics Scheme by Emma Spiers. In Rec and KS1, children follow the Rocket Phonics scheme, which is a DfE validated SSP programme by Rising Stars. This is linked to the Rising Stars reading scheme used by the school, as recommended by
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the new Reading Framework published by the DfE in July 2021. Differentiated phonics sessions take place five times a week. Phonics sessions begin in Reception as short 20 minutes sessions, building up to a total of an hour by the end of the Reception year. A simple assessment is carried out to assess the progress of the children and which sounds in a Phase they need to work on at the end of each term, sometimes half terms, depending on the cohort. Children who are working below ARE in phonics take part in intervention groups. Children who do not pass the Year 1 phonics screening check, retake it in Year 2. Children who are still struggling on entry to KS2 are included in phonics sessions to help them catch up. The rest of the teaching in KS2 focuses on the teaching of spelling rules, patterns and conventions as well as morphology, and is taught through Sounds and Syllables scheme. All children have online access to a reading book that is matched to the phonics sessions that are being taught that week.

Guided reading

As a general rule, children are heard read individually in FS2 and Key Stage 1, where the focus is on decoding, moving towards guided reading throughout year 2. Guided reading is generally preferred in the Key Stage 2 as less focus is needed on decoding and more is needed on developing comprehension skills. Guided reading generally takes the form of whole-class tuition, but may also utilise small group work where a special need arises. VIPERS is used during whole class reading lessons in KS2.

Shared reading

Shared reading takes place throughout the school. Children in FS2 focus on a book every half term and are read a story at least once every day. In Key Stage 1 and 2, teachers may share and read texts as a class. We recognise the importance and impact of sharing stories together. We therefore aim to “ring-fence” class reading time.

Recording Progress

Each year every child is given a pupil personal organiser containing a structured diary page for comments about reading and a record of name of book; page number reached. Parents, carers, staff and children can fill this in. Children in FS2 also have a list of books they have read in their classroom, to ensure their reading level matches with their phonics ability. Children in Rainbow Wing use a “Book List” on which books are recorded and monitored.

Writing

Writing may begin with the Talk for Writing process. This three stage approach:

- Stage 1- Imitation - children imitate a text. In the early years children use a variety of methods including story maps, picture prompts, actions and photograph prompts to retell the text. In later years, text maps are used to help children to learn and embed a variety of texts.
- Stage 2 - innovate on the text through shared writing. This is crucial to modelling the writing process to the children
- Stage 3 – Invent – children have the opportunity to invent a new text using the original as a framework. This can also be used as an assessment opportunity. In KS2 this is also the hot task.

Where appropriate, units of learning begin with a “cold task” in which children write a text without any prior input. This allows the teacher to assess their writing, establishing the writing ability of the class as a whole and each child individually. Targets for that unit of writing can then be set.

An assessment of learning follows each unit of work: children complete a “hot task” which is based on the genre of writing being taught. This allows the teacher to assess the progress that has been made.

Teachers plan their writing units using year group Planning for Progression documents

Writing techniques are taught through English lessons and cross-curricular subjects. Every effort is made to ensure that writing activities are varied, purposeful and for a variety of audiences. Activities are differentiated for different levels of ability.

In the Foundation Stage each classroom has a ‘writing zone/area’ where children are encouraged to practise writing independently. The importance of writing is also emphasised in play situations and resources are always available to extend this. This is also continued in KS1 to ensure progression and smooth transition at the start of Year 1.

Shared writing

We acknowledge that shared writing is an essential element of the teaching process and provides opportunities for pupils to learn, apply and reinforce skills in the context of a larger group with ‘scaffolding’ from the teacher. It is a vital part of any writing unit, and one in which the teacher can model the writing process.

In Nursery children begin with the early stages of mark and pattern making and eventually move on to writing their name by the end of F1. In Reception children experience shared writing once every week and carry out at least one piece of written work every week, which is very much guided in the first term. In Key Stage 1 and 2 teachers use texts to provide ideas and structures for the writing and in collaboration with the class compose texts, teaching how they are planned and how ideas are sequenced, clarified and structured. Shared writing is also used to teach grammar and spelling skills, to demonstrate features of layout and presentation, to consolidate phonics and to focus on editing and drafting work. It is regularly used as a starting point for independent writing.

Grammar

The school teaches grammar and sentence structuring through the Rainbow Grammar approach. One discrete session of grammar will be taught per week. This will be followed by smaller, short-burst sessions to reinforce and embed concepts.

Extended writing

Extended writing is a session in which children are given more time to produce a longer, more detailed piece of writing and may be cross curricular. These sessions are generally more appropriate for Yr 2 upwards. In Key Stage 2, extended writing is the culmination of a wide range of Talk for Writing activities. We aim to ensure that one piece of extended writing is planned in at least one foundation subject every half term.

Spellings

In Foundation Stage and early KS1 children are encouraged to use their knowledge of phonics to sound words out when writing. Alongside their phonics learning, children are taught the spelling of key words and common exception spellings.

In Years 2 to 6 the school follows Sounds and Syllables approach to spelling which encourages children to use a phonetic approach as well as building on knowledge of the conventions of spelling, morphology and rules.

Dictionaries, alphabet charts and word banks are used as a way of encouraging independent approaches to solving spelling problems.

Handwriting

The school use the Pen Pals handwriting scheme.

In Foundation 1 to Y1 children work on correct letter formation. In Y2, and onwards children start to learn a cursive style, focussing on specific joins. From Y3 onwards, children are taught a full cursive style. This is frequently taught parallel to spelling. We recognise that this is particularly beneficial for children with dyslexia. There is generally one discrete handwriting session a week, not necessarily in the English lesson. Pens are used in the main school - children are awarded pen licences as and when appropriate.

Homework

Reading and spelling are key parts of homework throughout school. For further details see the homework policy.

Target Setting

Children from Yr1 upwards are set targets on a termly basis. In Years 1 and 2, these are individualised targets which are stuck into writing books and into organisers. In KS2, teachers may set targets based on assessment from the cold task. In Year 3 onwards, these are displayed in each classroom and stuck into organisers. They may be discussed on Open Evenings as appropriate. Further targets may be set, specific to a child, following hot task writing assessments.

Special Needs Statement

At Wadsworth Fields Primary we are strongly committed to supporting all children with a special educational need. We are aware of the many complex and different needs of individuals (Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, ADHD and ASD) and aim to make provision for these in all lessons. Through training and resources children are supported by all adults within and out of the classroom.

Each child will be taught in ways appropriate to their abilities and needs. This may include the usage of technological aids for children with physical problems, or it could include more specific help within a small group for children who learn more slowly. We feel that every child, whatever their ability should be helped to achieve their potential and we will endeavour to provide appropriate provision. Wherever possible children with special needs will be taught within the classroom, though on occasions they will benefit from small group work in a more spacious or possibly quieter environment and we have provision for this on both school sites. We ensure that we have appropriate resources for children with differentiated abilities, including children who are dyslexic or gifted and talented.

We use specific special needs intervention programmes for individuals and small groups throughout school. (See special needs provision grid for further details).

These either link with children's IEPs or target children who are working below age related expectations.

Typical interventions may include:

- Better Words
- Better Reading Partners
- 5 Minute Box
- Reading volunteers
- 1 to 1 in KS2
- Fresh Start in KS2
- Toe by Toe
- Target grouping and targeted support.

Assessment and Record keeping

- On-going teacher assessment throughout. (see Assessment Calendar)
- Teachers of all age groups assess reading and writing continually through formative assessment of class work in general and hot tasks in particular.
- Comparison between Cold and Hot tasks for each genre of writing.
- Visual mapping grids which help to identify cohorts or individuals who need to improve their progress. This leads to Narrowing the Gap in which individuals who appear not to be making sufficient progress are identified and targeted for extra support.
- Termly moderation allows teachers to verify judgements. External moderation within the family of schools allows for further verification of judgements made by Year 2 and Year 6 staff.
- KS 1 and 2 SATS.
- Termly or half term phonics assessments
- Termly grammar test ensures that learning is embedded and allows teachers to plan effectively.
- Half-termly Pupil Progress meetings, which provide the opportunity to review and assess individuals as well as specific groups of children.

Reviewed March 2022 by Bev Talkes and Claire Porter
This policy will be reviewed in 2024