

AVENUE PRIMARY SCHOOL



ENGLISH POLICY

Spring Term 2016



Mission Statement

‘Expect the Best ...To be the Best’

School Aims:

- To ensure that all pupils whatever their race, gender, age or ability feel valued and supported to achieve their best
- To promote positive learning attitudes and behaviour and create safe and effective learning environments where all children and staff show mutual respect for one another
- To provide effective and strategic leadership at all levels
- To deliver high standards of teaching that enable children to make progress and reach high standards of attainment.



ENGLISH POLICY

In accordance with the National Curriculum, our overarching aim is to promote high standards of language and literacy within a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of English across the curriculum. Pupils should be equipped with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use the English programmes of study for key stages 1 and 2 from the National Curriculum as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements. The Early Years Framework is followed to ensure continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage through to the National Curriculum.

TEACHING AND LEARNING / PLANNING

Teachers plan units towards an overall objective; this is generally a writing outcome that may be linked to the wider curriculum. The length of a unit will depend upon the overall aim although they are usually for no more than two to three weeks. Over this period teachers will plan to cover a balance of spoken language, reading and writing including grammar, spelling and punctuation. Other additional writing opportunities should be planned through cross curricular work (see later section.) The school uses agreed pro formas for short term plans, group reading and phonics.

Teaching and learning takes place within a whole class setting (shared/modelled reading of whole texts and writing) and within ability led group reading and writing groups. Good practice is shared and modelled by the teacher. Children work in groups, independently or with a partner on set tasks. Use of interactive teaching methods should be used to deliver the curriculum and achieve set learning objectives.

In all classes children have a wide range of abilities, and we provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons we do it through differentiated group work, while in others we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use learning support assistants, where available, to support children as well as the teacher doing this.

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)

In the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) children should be given opportunities to:

- speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities;
- use communication and language, and literacy in every part of provision;
- become immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

We believe that communication and language coupled with opportunities to explore reading and writing underpins children's future learning. Communication and Language is recognised as a Prime area of learning in the EYFS.

The practice in Foundation Stage will follow the EYFS curriculum guidance and will work towards the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage aiming to meet the 'expected' standard by the end of Reception year. Prior to this, the Development Matters statements are used to assess the children's attainment and progress.

TIME ALLOCATION

In Key stage one and two, children receive a daily English lesson, lasting at least 45 minutes. In addition to this, children have a daily group reading session for approximately 20-30 minutes. Additional daily opportunities for pupils to use and apply spelling and grammar skills across the curriculum are planned for and delivered. Handwriting is taught for 30 minutes per week. (See English and Maths Protocols for time allocation.)

In Reception there is a daily focused planned phonics session for 20-30 minutes. Reading and Writing are present in other whole class taught sessions as well as during focus group sessions. Group reading sessions take place with groups of children from the Spring term.

In the Nursery, one of the whole group times is allocated to Literacy and Mathematics. Focus group activities will take place with specified children throughout the week.

SPOKEN LANGUAGE

In spoken language, pupils' development permeates across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. This underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak is vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing.

Statutory requirements from the National Curriculum include:

- **Re-telling, role-play, drama - including improvising and rehearsing for productions, assemblies.**
- **Listening to and participating** in stories, poems, rhymes and songs.
- **Reciting poems by heart**
- **Dictation**
- **Talking the text** – lots of opportunities for children to talk about and discuss their reading and writing.
- **Debate** – within classrooms related to topical issues and or current class focus.
- **Collaborative work** – organising and actively listening to one another to further the aims of the group.
- **Reporting back** following group work.
- **Presentations** – Planning and carrying out presentations in range groupings and contexts with various audiences.
- **Questioning and justifying-** Children are actively encouraged to raise and answer questions, use *talk partners and to express their views and opinions.*

See statutory requirements for Spoken Language.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-english-programmes-of-study>

READING

Reading is taught through:

1. Whole class reading that develops listening skills, a love of stories and reading for pleasure.

This is teacher led reading with children listening and responding to questions, predictions and vocabulary choices as appropriate to the level of ability of the children.

2. Shared reading that immerses children in the pattern of story and features of text types.

This happens in lessons when introducing text and prior to writing. The teacher models as an expert reader and draws out the key elements of the content. They also model the thought processes of reading as a writer and link this to their current English unit. Texts and questioning should be rich and challenging - stretching and engaging children. Shared reading needs to incorporate talk at paired, group and whole class level and is an opportunity to develop speaking and listening skills. It will build children's confidence in expressing their opinions.

3. Group reading that targets children's reading skills.

Group reading takes place in large or small groups with teacher input using a focus text. Texts are chosen to match the ability of the group and provide an element of challenge. Group Reading sessions are flexible and creative to meet the needs of the children and may link with work in English or other curriculum areas.

Group Reading is timetabled for 20-30 minutes each day so that all children have the opportunity for reading either with a teacher or a learning support assistant at least once a week. During this time all children have focused and tightly planned reading sessions containing clear objectives and opportunities for assessment with the opportunities for mixed ability paired reading, independent quiet reading and also familiar reading taking place. A wide range of text types/genres are available. Each teacher needs to establish a routine for children to complete reading related activities during Group Reading time – these could include reading ahead in preparation for the next day's Group Reading session, independent spelling investigations or language activities, independent reading, reciprocal reading, paired or buddy reading, reading gym activities e.g. writing book reviews and filling in reading diaries etc.

Group Reading Records should be completed during or at the end of each session by the teacher or LSA who lead the focus group.

Books for group reading are kept in the reading resource room and are levelled according to book bands.

Reading environment

All classrooms have a **designated book area** in the classroom to create an atmosphere that is conducive to the sharing of ideas, thoughts and enjoyment of books. The classroom itself is a rich **language rich environment** with well-presented displays and word banks that reflect cultural diversity, bring language to life and record children's developing vocabulary for later use.

Accelerated reader

At the beginning of each school year children in Years 2-6 undertake a Star Reading Assessment whereby the level of complexity and their understanding of what has been read is identified. Children choose a book to read within their ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development) that has been identified in the assessment. When they have completed the book they take an online quiz within 24 hours of completing the book. There are several types of quiz - reading practice, vocabulary practice and reading skills. Children and teachers are then provided with information to help children make

progress with their reading skills. A child should have a pass rate of 85% or higher. Ideally, depending the length of the book, they should be taking a quiz at least every week.

Assessing reading

Alongside Star Reading assessments there are statutory end of year expectations that children work towards. The teacher monitors progress each term and identifies children who require additional reading provision and ensures the necessary support is given.

See statutory requirements for reading.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-english-programmes-of-study>

Home reading

Each class from Reception to Year 6 is allocated a time slot every week in the school library. During this time children choose an appropriate instructional level text (within the ZPD range) for a child to take home. Books read are recorded in the yellow reading diary, which also provides opportunities to communicate with parents about progress made in reading. Reading should be for pleasure, meaning and for information gathering. Younger readers do need opportunities for very regular reading and for revisiting books so they can build a wide range of strategies and read with pace and fluency from the start. Group reading books therefore can go home if they are very carefully monitored so none of the group sets are lost.

Monitoring home reading

Systems are set up in each class to monitor comments in the yellow reading book, the regularity of reading at home and suitability of books going home. This could be done by another adult in the classroom. Monitoring of books for each child is done at least once a week.

Read aloud

Story time is planned for the last 15 minutes of each day for all classes from Nursery to Year 6. It is the school's policy that teachers to read aloud to children on a daily basis. This time is used to model reading strategies such as predicting and asking questions, developing comprehension skills and vocabulary.

See statutory requirements for reading.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-english-programmes-of-study>

Phonics

(see Appendix 1 Phonics Protocols)

Phonics is taught daily in EYFS and KS1 and when necessary in KS2. Ruth Miskin's RWI Inc. programme is used as the schools adopted method for teaching synthetic phonics. It is recognized that this is one of many strategies needed to learn to be a reader.

WRITING

Writing is taught through:

1. **Shared writing** that is modelled by the teacher as the expert writer with contributions from the children. This is teacher led writing with children watching and contributing ideas. Shared writing is not exclusive to English sessions and can be taught within other curriculum areas. The emphasis may be on the generation of ideas, sentence, word or text level or other key strategies needed in writing. Not all of these can be modelled in one session, but there should be a clear focus and the teacher as the expert leads this.

2. **Group writing** that targets children to address gaps in their writing. Group writing takes place in small groups with a clear objective that comes from ongoing teacher assessment. It can take place at any point during a unit and aims to help children achieve their next steps in writing. The groups for Group Writing are fluid and groups can have any number of sessions to address a particular weakness. Guided writing is frequent, flexible, focused and fun.
3. Opportunities for **developmental writing**. In Early Years Foundation Stage, children must experience writing in a range of settings. Opportunities for developmental writing are available through all areas of learning and throughout the learning environment. Children's own attempts at early writing should be celebrated and promoted, alongside the direct teaching of the key skills that will enable the children to progress through the stages of writing development.
4. **Independent writing** Throughout the school children need opportunities to develop their confidence and practice their writing skills. All writing activities must have a purpose and quality and be promoted through book making, publication or presentation to another audience. Writing is modelled and supported from immersion to quality writing.
5. **Writing** opportunities are planned every week to allow children to develop and consolidate skills learnt in writing lessons, and the objectives for these sessions are based around the unit objectives. Writing could be cross-curricular and linked to the Learning Challenge Curriculum or related directly to the English unit. (This should be distinguished on English plans.) Pupils draft, edit and redraft this work.

Writing environment

All classes have a working wall and this is developed and used by the teacher and children throughout a unit. A working wall shows how a unit of work is built up and how it progresses. The audience and purpose for the writing is made clear as are the stages of research, plan, draft, edit and publish. There is usually an example of the writing the children are aiming for and 'success criterion' to show them how to achieve it. In addition, there should be space for key vocabulary and ideas that are collected throughout a unit are displayed so that children can use to put in their writing. The aim is for a working wall to be interactive with children allowed to go up to get ideas for their writing and to stick their work on. It should be planned for and consistently referred to during a unit.

Handwriting

Handwriting requires frequent and direct teaching. The school uses Nelson Handwriting style. At the Foundation Stage, pupils practice manipulative skills in order to prepare them for writing, they are taught to hold a pencil correctly and to form recognisable letters. Children are given extensive practice in letter formation through varied and enjoyable activities.

At Key Stages 1 and 2 regular handwriting sessions are taught in total for 30 minutes per week. In Key Stage 1 pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. They are taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation. In Key Stage 2 handwriting are taught with the aim of increasing speed and fluency. Pupils are taught when diagonal and horizontal strokes are needed to join letters and that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that ascenders and descenders do not touch. By the end of Key Stage 2 children must be writing legibly, fluently and with increasing speed and they must know what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task.

In addition to taught handwriting sessions, accurate clear and legible letter formation is reinforced across the whole curriculum.

(Refer to handwriting policy.)

Spelling

Dedicated time is allocated for teaching and investigating spelling. The teaching of spelling in KS1 and KS2 follows the spelling guidance in the red curriculum folder. It is vital that everyone ensures children are taught age-related spellings through:

- Discrete teaching (timetabled each week)
- Practise and embedding spelling patterns (e.g. in Group Reading time through a range of interactive and investigative activities.)
- Ongoing work in writing / across the curriculum.

Pupils are taught:

- Homophones
- Common exception words
- Phonics
- Spelling patterns and rules

Pupils are taught the ‘look, cover, write, check’ method as an aid to learning their spellings. Spellings should be regularly assessed.

Access is given to word banks, word cards and dictionaries as early as thought necessary for the children.

See statutory requirements for writing.

Marking

All marking is carried out using the marking code (see Marking and Feedback policy). The quality of marking is crucial. Marking is both diagnostic and summative and school policy believes that it is best done through conversation with the child but acknowledges that constraints of time do not always allow this. To encourage peer and self-assessment the children themselves can mark work using the marking code, which involves routine practice with support and guidance from the teacher.

ASSESSMENT AND TARGET SETTING

Effective practice in assessment, target setting and pupil tracking are integral to good teaching and effective management. Teachers make regular assessments of each child’s progress towards end of year expectations and record these systematically in line with the Assessment Policy. Year groups meet regularly to moderate writing across the year group. The class teacher sets all children individually challenging targets. These targets are available to the children whenever they write and should be reviewed in accordance with the assessment timetable.

INCLUSION

All children receive quality first English teaching on a daily basis and activities are differentiated accordingly. In addition, where identified pupils are considered to require targeted support to enable them to work towards age appropriate objectives, intervention programmes will be implemented.

All pupils’ needs, including more-able pupils, are planned for in line with our Inclusion Policy.

The needs of children with English as an additional language are met through planning and support from supported group work.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity, EAL status, special needs or home background.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

English is monitored by teachers, English Lead, Deputy Head Teachers, Head Teacher and the link Governor for English. Having identified priorities based on previous monitoring and evaluation, the English leader constructs an action plan that forms part of the School Development Plan. This forms the basis for any monitoring activities and will clearly identify when, who and what is to be monitored and how this will take place e.g. classroom observation, planning scrutiny, work sampling etc.

THE GOVERNING BODY

Termly reports are made to governors on the progress of English provision. This policy is reviewed every three years or earlier if needed in line with Government policy.

CONCLUSION

This policy is in line with other school policies and therefore should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Teaching and learning policy
- English and Maths Protocols
- Assessment policy
- Marking and Feedback policy
- SEN policy
- Inclusion policy
- Handwriting policy
- Equal opportunities policy
- Health and Safety policy
- Home learning policy

Date approved by the full Governing body:

Date to be reviewed:

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Phonics protocols

Appendix 2

Planning proforma

Appendix 3

Marking and Feedback Protocols

Appendix 4

Handwriting policy

Appendix 5

List of resources