

## **English Policy**

### **Language Principles**

#### **Beliefs**

This policy has been written taking into account the requirements of the National Curriculum 2014.

At Highworth we recognise that English is a core subject within the National Curriculum and that a central concern of all our teaching is to develop pupils' abilities to use language to think, explore, organise and communicate significant meanings to enable every pupil to achieve their potential and develop self-esteem.

#### **Aims**

In this school, pupils will be given opportunities to interrelate the requirements of English within a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of English across the curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and practise taught Literacy skills. We aim to:

- enable pupils to read accurately, with understanding and for pleasure
- provide pupils with learning opportunities which integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening activities
- encourage pupils to have an interest in words, their meaning, and a growing vocabulary. This interest extends to the technical and specialist vocabulary of all subjects
- develop the thinking skills of pupils to help them become reflective independent learners
- provide real contexts for language learning in English and across the curriculum
- enable pupils to be taught in all subjects to express themselves correctly and appropriately
- enable pupils to recognise the close relationship between reading and writing
- provide opportunities for pupils to use ICT to facilitate and extend their learning in speaking, listening, reading and writing
- recognise the importance of having a consistent view of language learning across the wider curriculum
- cover the National Curriculum in a systematic and logical progression in each key stage.

### **Speaking and Listening**

#### **Beliefs**

Children's ability to speak and listen is fundamental to their language development, learning in school and social development. Talk underpins learning and thinking. Richness and variety of talk is important for all children.

Direct teaching of oracy skills needs to be fostered to enable the children to develop confidence and a repertoire of talk for different purposes and audiences. Links between oral and written language need to be encouraged and built on. At our school, we develop children's speaking and listening skills daily through our 'Talk for Writing' approach to teaching Literacy. One of the fundamental beliefs of 'Talk for Writing' is *'If you can't say it, then you can't write it'*.

Children for whom English is an additional language need to have opportunities to work with good language models and will be given support where appropriate, by teachers and support staff.

## Aims

We aim to enable pupils to:

- communicate effectively by speaking and listening with increasing confidence clarity and fluency
- listen, repeat and internalise language taught to extend pupils' vocabulary
- speak appropriately in a variety of settings for a range of audiences
- develop a wide range of speaking skills on increasingly complex subjects
- think carefully and organise thinking before speaking
- respond sensitively and reflectively to what has been heard
- reflect on their talk

During each key stage, pupils should be taught knowledge, skills and understanding through the following range of activities contacts and purposes.

- Speaking and Listening, both in face-to-face situations and to broadcast or taped material.
- Discussion and group interaction, in settings with different numbers of participants and different levels of formality.
- Drama activities, including improvisation and working in role, as well as writing and performing scripted drama.

## Planning talk across the curriculum

Speaking and listening skills need to be planned for and applied across the curriculum. This may include:

Speaking and listening as a focus for teaching where particular oral skills are being taught at the beginning of each new unit of Literacy. Our 'Talk for Writing' approach to teaching English firmly embeds the importance of speaking and listening to enthuse, extend and enrich children's repertoire of language.

Curricular areas other than English may be the teaching focus, but may be organised to help children reinforce literacy skills, e.g. investigating, evaluating and reporting work.

As a school with an integrated Hearing Impaired Department, we recognise the rights of all children to be able to listen and to hear in the best acoustic conditions possible. We will use radio and conference microphones appropriately and sensitively, in collaboration with the specialist staff from the department.

## **Writing**

### Beliefs

This school believes that:

- writing is closely linked to reading; pupils draw upon their range of reading experiences and use them as models for writing
- talk is a necessary prerequisite for young pupils who need to put into word what they are thinking of writing
- the process of planning, interaction, collaboration, mutual support and feedback helps a writer to move forward through the process of writing
- an extensive range of purposes, forms and audiences for writing need to be created so that pupils understand the choices facing a writer and how to make appropriate choices
- the teacher plays a crucial role in the development of writing through modeling the writing process and teaching at the point of writing (e.g. guided writing).

## Aims

In this school, we aim to enable pupils to:

- know, understand, and be able to write in a range of genres and text types
- write for real or imagined purposes
- plan, draft, discuss, revise and edit their own writing, and develop into reflective writers
- know that writing is different from speaking
- recognise that writing should have a clear purpose and audience
- develop understanding that writing is both essential to thinking, investigating, organising and learning, and enjoyable in its own right
- make connections between pupils' reading and writing so that they have clear models for writing
- develop powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness
- have fluent and legible handwriting
- use punctuation correctly
- use a range of spelling strategies.

During each key stage, pupils should be taught knowledge, skills and understanding through the 'Talk for Writing' model developed by Pie Corbett and supported by Julia Strong. The core principles of 'Talk for Writing' are taught in three stages; Imitate, Innovate and Invent.

### Imitate stage

Each new genre or unit of English begins with an elicitation task to establish what skills and knowledge children already have before beginning the new unit. This enables the class teacher to plan for an engaging creative start to the unit. All new units begin with children learning a new text by heart through a text map (pictorial representations of words). By imitating the language from a text, children 'magpie' the language needed for a particular topic orally, before developing this knowledge later on through the stages of the 'Talk for Writing' process.

### Innovate stage

Once the children have internalised the text, they then begin to innovate. At this stage, children begin to use the structure from the imitate text to work collaboratively to create a class planned piece of writing. This requires children substituting elements of the original text, for example, adding, altering or changing the point of view. Children learn and develop features of the genre of writing and create 'writer's toolkits'. These include; genre specific vocabulary, sentence structure and punctuation.

### Invent Stage

This is the final stage of the 'Talk for Writing' process, whereby children are expected to plan and write independently applying all that they have learnt through the first two stages utilising the 'writer's toolkits'.

## Handwriting

Handwriting lessons at Highworth are discretely taught to children in Reception to Year 3. Children are taught handwriting skills rhythmically and systematically in handwriting lessons, with focus upon posture and pencil grip. Children are taught:

- The correct letter formation of both lower and upper case letters (see appendix 1)
- To write from the top to bottom and left to right
- To write letters with a lead in and lead out stroke (pre-cursive)
- To join letters once they can write quickly and legibly. This usually begins from Year 2, term 1.

In Reception children are:

- Encouraged to develop fine motor skills through activities which develop children's recognition of patterns
- Learn letter formation through Phonics using Read Write Inc. mnemonics
- Taught how to use a pencil correctly and are encouraged to create recognisable pre-cursive letters

In Year 1 children are:

- Taught pre-cursive letter formation until the summer term where they will be encouraged to join 'special friends' (digraph and trigraphs – 2/3 letters together that make one sound)
- To correctly form, orientate and write the digits 0 – 9
- Write with 'finger' spaces between letters, sounds and words

In Year 2 children are:

- Taught to join upper and lowercase letters legibly with correct spacing between words from the autumn term
- Practise writing with accuracy and speed

In Year 3 children are:

- Taught to continue developing their handwriting focusing on writing speed, stamina and produce writing which sit on the line most of the time.

Children who are not meeting the standard outlined by Year 3 will participate in handwriting intervention groups from Year 4 to 6. In Upper School discretely handwriting lessons are not timetabled, although handwriting expectations will be monitored through English lessons.

## **Spelling**

We allow children time to investigate words and spelling patterns. The National Literacy 2014 word lists and year spelling expectations are used as a basis for teaching spelling and to ensure progression between year groups. Children from Year 3 to 6 receive daily spelling, punctuation and grammar lessons at the start of each English lesson linked to 'Talk for Writing'.

Children in Years 1 and 2 have 30 minutes of direct phonic teaching every day. The children are organised into groups according to their stage of phonic acquisition. We use 'Read, Write Inc.' as the scheme of work for phonics. This is supplemented by resources from Ruth Miskin's Read Write Inc. reading books and Oxford Reading Tree: 'Floppy's Phonics'. There is a Phonics and Reading Leader who oversees the teaching and learning of Phonics in the school. Phonics teaching continues into KS2 for those children who require further support to develop their phonic acquisition.

## **Reading**

### **Beliefs**

Reading is a complex accomplishment, dependent on a range of different factors to do with reading readiness, cultural attitudes, and a variety of teaching methods.

- a reader knows that reading is a complex, intellectual endeavor, requiring him/her to draw on a range of active meaning - making skills

- a reader deploys previous knowledge of other texts to enable the effective reading and further meaning-making of the text being read
- a reader knows how to interact appropriately with a variety of text types/genres for particular purposes
- a reader is aware that learning to read is a life-long continuous process.

### Aims

In this school, we aim to enable pupils to:

- develop confidence in themselves as readers
- make progress as readers
- develop knowledge of and familiarity with a wide range of children's literature both narrative and non-narrative
- develop the ability to talk about characters, events and language in texts
- respond to the texts they read in a thoughtful and imaginative way, using all forms of language
- develop the ability to use information texts and locate, extract and use relevant information
- develop a range of strategies to enable them to read with increasing accuracy, fluency, understanding and enjoyment
- become increasingly reflective about their reading development.

Reading experiences should include:

- Reading to pupils
- Modelled reading
- Shared reading
- Guided reading
- Performance reading
- Independent reading (extended reading)
- Cross curricular links
- Classroom displays

### Reading Resources

- Independent reading books - GINN 360, All Aboard, Oxford Reading Tree and a range of real books. These books are colour banded.
- Read, Write Inc. Phonics Reading Books
- Accelerated Reader computer programme, and Accelerated Reader catalogued books to support home reading from Years 4 to 6
- Big Books
- Sets of books for Guided Reading
- Story Sacks

### **Foundation Stage**

English in Nursery and Reception is provided by the Foundation Stage curriculum. For details please see the Foundation Stage policy.

### **Planning**

There are five allocated English lessons per week in each Key Stage. For details of the timings for the provision of the English wider curriculum see the curriculum timings policy.

Teachers work together to plan the overall English programme, ensuring balance and progression across the Key Stages, using the National Curriculum and 'Babcock's Talk for Writing' as the core scheme of work.

#### Progression and continuity

- English planning scrutiny, lesson observations and staff meetings are used to discuss the English curriculum and to ensure consistency of approach, standards and expectations
- Medium term planning is undertaken by class teachers and is overseen by the English Co-ordinator every term
- All class teachers are responsible for weekly plans, based on the agreed medium term plans. They will adopt the 'Talk for Writing' approach to teaching and learning ensuring that the National Curriculum objectives are adhered to in an inclusive and organised way

#### Assessment informing planning

At the 'Imitate' stage of writing, children will complete an elicitation task to determine what the children already know, therefore influencing the planning of the unit being taught.

Pupils are taught as individuals, pairs, in groups, and as a class throughout the school. We do not set children by ability for English. We recognise that pupils have a wide range of preferred learning styles and we provide teaching which is challenging, interactive and develops thinking skills in pupils.

#### Inclusion/S.E.N./Equal Opportunities

All pupils will cover the content made statutory by the National Curriculum 2014, and pupils will access the curriculum at the appropriate level, thus ensuring progress and differentiation. All reading resources are checked for race, class, gender and ability stereotypes in terms of illustration or text. We ensure that girls and boys have equal access to the curriculum, and dual story books are included in classroom collections as a way of valuing other languages and encouraging family involvement in reading.

In line with the school policy on S.E.N. the S.E.N. Co-ordinator, the English Co-ordinator, the class teacher and, where relevant, the Teacher Of The Deaf, will be involved in ensuring that pupils will have work planned to their individual needs. Teaching assistants will also provide support. Pupils with significant literacy weaknesses will have specific English targets on their provision maps. Suitable resources and learning environments will be available to enable pupils to access the curriculum and be included in lessons.

Hearing Impaired children who have access to the Additionally Resourced Provision for Hearing Impairment will have specific programmes which may deviate from those stated in the policy above depending on their hearing ability, language used by children and severity of need. This may include using a Sign Bilingual Approach to teaching English for BSL users taught by the TOD and amendments made to or alternatives programmes provided in relation to Speaking and Listening and Phonics. Changes to programmes or resources used are fully discussed with class teachers.

#### Cross-Curricular Opportunities

English is linked to other subjects in an integral way as it is the medium through which pupils learn. Therefore, we also recognise, that the principles of teaching English can be applied to the teaching of other subjects across the curriculum. e.g. in group discussion, using writing frames across the curriculum, reading for understanding strategies, communication and using ICT.

#### Resources

The English Co-ordinator controls the budget for resourcing the subject. The amount allocated to each subject is decided on a yearly basis and is dependent on the priorities in the school improvement plan.

- Books for guided reading and big books are kept in year groups
- Individual reading books are stored in the library
- Each classroom has a supply of dictionaries and appropriate books for quiet reading.

### **Assessment and Recording**

We recognise the importance of day to day formative assessment as a reflection of the extent to which pupils are achieving the objectives set out in lesson plans.

At the 'Imitate' stage of writing, children will complete an elicitation task to determine what the children already know. These tasks enable teachers to plan appropriately for the progression of English skills and knowledge of every pupil. At the 'Innovate' stage of writing, children's work will be quality marked detailing two successful elements of the children's writing and an achievable target to be worked upon during the 'Invent' stage of writing.

With regard to Guided Reading progress, all class teachers keep a written record. We also recognise that marking is an important feature of ongoing formative assessment. Marking is carried out in line with the Marking policy.

Hearing Impaired children who have access to the Additionally Resourced Provision for Hearing Impairment will have specific additional and/or alternative assessments carried out by the Speech and Language Therapist and Teacher of the Deaf where appropriate.

The school assessment, recording and reporting policy defines specific standardised assessment tasks to be carried out in each year group or Key Stage.

Formal, summative assessments are carried out at the end of the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in line with National Curriculum assessment requirements.

Parents are provided with annual written reports so that all parents are not only well informed of progress, including strengths and weaknesses, but also to enable them to be partners in the child's education. Parents' evenings are held three times throughout the academic year.

### **Homework**

Homework is set as appropriate in line with the Home Learning Policy.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Development.**

We believe that school self-evaluation is a necessary prerequisite for school improvement, and we place high importance on our monitoring and evaluation procedures.

The class teacher, the English Co-ordinator and the Headteacher will monitor the approaches outlined in this document, in line with school policy. Monitoring will include lesson observation, work sampling, planner sampling and data analysis.

### **Equal Opportunities**

This policy has been written in accordance with and meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Updated by

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## Appendix 1

In the first instance in Year 1, the children will be taught to form their letters in the following order:

Letter classification	Letters
'Around'	c, a, o, d, g, q
'Down'	l, t, b, p, k, h, i, j, m, n, r, u, y
'Curly'	e, f, s
'Zig-zag'	v, w, z, x

Later in Year 1, the children will be taught the relative size of the letters in the following order:

Letter classification	Letters
Ascenders	b, d, f, h, k, l, t
Baseline	a, c, e, i, m, n, o, r, s, u, v, w, x, z
Descenders	g, j, p, q, y