

English Policy

1. INTENT

Considering Springfields First School's core values, we aim for **excellence** in English achievement throughout the school. We aim to develop pupils' abilities within an integrated programme of Speaking & Listening, Reading & Writing. Pupils will be given opportunities to develop their use, knowledge and understanding of spoken and written English within a broad and balanced curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught literacy skills.

Pupils at Springfields First School will leave Year 4:

- reading and writing with **confidence**, fluency and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to take **responsibility** for their own learning such as, correcting their own errors;
- with a love of reading and a desire to read for enjoyment;
- with an interest in words and their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in relation to grammatical terminology;
- with experience of reading and writing from a range of text types and genres;
- able to write in a variety of styles appropriate to the situation;
- using their developing **creativity**, imagination and inventiveness;
- having a growing technical vocabulary to articulate their views and ideas in discussions across different subjects.

2. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum in England: English Programmes of Study - Key Stages 1 and 2 (2014) and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012).

In the Foundation Stage (Early Years Hub classes/ Reception) children are given opportunities to:

- experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations
- link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write
- access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

At Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) children learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They learn to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They learn to use language to explore their own experiences, imaginary worlds and non-narrative genres.

At Key Stage 2 (Years 3-4) children learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They read a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetic texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works (using grammatical terminology).

3. SUBJECT ORGANISATION

Foundation Stage

In Nursery and Reception, children have daily discrete phonics lessons. Children have opportunities to develop their communication, language and literacy skills on a daily basis in both adult led and child initiated activities. Writing opportunities are developed through creative topics and often text-led. Continuous provision targets enriching children's experience of communication, language and literacy which include differentiated challenges.

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1 daily discrete phonics lessons continue and children engage in Literacy lessons with an emphasis on real texts and cross-curricular themes relating to the term's topic. Children take part in guided reading sessions, one to one reading and whole class reading lessons and have regular story times to develop a love of reading. Literacy skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes, quality first class teaching and targeted teaching groups in Literacy and reading comprehension sessions. Children read independently at the start of the school day to build up reading stamina as well as develop their enjoyment of reading and provide opportunity for supported one-to-one reading with an adult.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2 children have daily English lessons. Spelling skills are taught discretely using 'Babcock Support for Spelling' programme and elements of the 'No Nonsense Spelling' scheme which builds upon their phonic development from K.S.1. The teaching of handwriting is embedded into these discrete spelling lessons. Each week, English lesson foci include guided or whole class reading, grammar and punctuation with application through sustained writing. Literacy skills are developed across the curriculum through a creative curriculum approach. Provision is made for children who require extra support through targeted teaching; intervention programmes and quality first class teaching.

4. APPROACHES TO SPEAKING AND LISTENING

We recognise the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum - spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. Opportunities to develop these skills include: class assemblies, use of talk partners, drama activities and role-play, Christmas performances and discussion topics within the PSHE curriculum. As the National Curriculum says:

'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.' (pages 3, 4 and 7, 2014)

All of these speaking and listening skills are taught in Literacy embedded through Pie Corbett's 'Talk for Writing' approach, across the curriculum and during extra-curricular activities too.

5. APPROACHES TO READING - See separate policy for early reading and phonics

Teachers model reading strategies during shared and group reading sessions. Children have the opportunity to develop reading strategies and to discuss texts in detail during guided reading sessions. Throughout the school, as children arrive, opportunities to read independently for a sustained period of time are afforded to them each morning.

A range of text types and genres are used within guided reading lessons. The school uses several book banded schemes such as 'Rigby Star Discovery World, and Oxford Reading Tree. Teachers also have access to an array of e-books through the Oxford Owl website.

In K.S.2, children have guided reading in ability based group lessons. Whole class reading lessons are also implemented with a focus on key skills such as enriching use and understanding of vocabulary, reading for meaning and the development of comprehension. The text used may be the same for every group, but the teacher differentiates the way in which it is used according to objectives and outcomes appropriate to the ability of the children. It may be linked to a current topic or the class story. Reading lessons incorporate pre-reading and follow-up tasks to enrich and develop independent learning. As in K.S.1, the reading lesson may be delivered by the teacher or teaching assistant.

Exciting and rewarding activities are arranged in school to promote the pleasure and knowledge that can be gained from books, i.e. each class has a library time session each week, 'Book Fair Week', participation in 'World Book Day', a whole-school author focus (e.g. 'Roald Dahl' week), a visit from the local librarian to

promote 'Summer Reading Challenge', EYFS Book Trust day and family reading club sessions before school. We encourage buddy reading with older children reading to, or with, their younger peers in a lunch-time reading club each week.

In all year groups, each child has a home school reading record that teachers and parents can use to share information about a child's reading. Parents are encouraged to read with their child frequently and also write a comment or sign their child's diary to show that they have read at home at least once each week. Information is given on how to support their child in reading through workshops, phase meetings, induction meetings, expectation meetings, and via curriculum letters as well as on the school's website.

As children progress in their reading, children choose banded or 'free-reader' books to take home and read. Children are encouraged to read a range of material as well as their own personal book collections from home or a local library. For children still needing to use decodable books, we use a selection of age-appropriate texts.

In K.S.2, we still encourage all readers to share a book at home with their grown-ups. We believe that this not only helps to develop inferential skills, but also supports a lifelong love of reading. Throughout Year 4, children become more independent in recording what they have read in their reading journal, which helps to support their next step in the transition to Middle-School.

We recognise the value of adults (both in school and at home) reading aloud to children, in order to improve their grasp of story language, enthuse them with a love of books and inspire them as writers. We actively encourage parents or other members from the community to share in reading with our children. In order to develop an enjoyment of reading, every class has discrete story time sessions to devote to listening to reading modelled by the teacher and to engage in a shared love of books. The school has a selection of Pie Corbett's 'Reading Spines' books (both poetry and fictional stories) for each year group to use for these sessions which may also be supplemented by other books of interest.

6. APPROACHES TO WRITING: We aim to develop the children's ability to produce well structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the reader. Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. Our approach to teaching writing covers the 'transcription' and 'composition' requirements of The National Curriculum (2014). To support our teaching of writing, teachers follow Pie Corbett's 'Talk for Writing' approach. Teachers are flexible in their selection of other Literacy experts' strategies to suit the needs of the children and text type being taught. Teachers model writing strategies and the use of phonics and spelling strategies in shared writing sessions. Guided writing sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals. Children have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions across the curriculum. In reception, the teacher plans phonics-based writing activities linked to the application skills as well as directed writing tasks based on class story books or non-fiction texts as a stimulus. The children are given frequent opportunities in school to write in different contexts using quality texts as a model and for a variety of purposes and audiences. They may be asked to produce their writing individually or as part of group. All classes have a 'working wall' area to display key vocabulary, text models, prompts, shared pieces and end products of written work.

The school follows a 'journey to cursive' scheme from the Twinkl website for the teaching of handwriting. It is started formally in reception at Step 1. The scheme provides uniformity, continuity and progression with a recognised handwriting pattern, visual resources, guides and activities. Other fonts are also displayed around the school and classrooms, including hand written signs so that children become familiar and able to read a variety of letter styles.

We recognise the important role that computing has to play in our school in the development of Literacy skills. There are many opportunities for children to enhance their writing inspired by drama techniques and film clips. Children are also be given the opportunity to produce multimodal texts and develop their understanding of visual literacy, particularly through the Computing scheme used in K.S1 and K.S.2. Interactive technology is used on a daily basis to enhance the teaching of literacy with the use of C-touch boards, i-pads and laptops. Teachers and children have access to a range of programmes to support enhanced visual literacy skills and the use of technology such as using Launchpad 365.

7. APPROACHES TO GRAMMAR, PUNCTUATION AND SPELLING

The teaching of Grammar and Spelling is in line with the requirements of The National Curriculum (2014). Grammar is timetabled to be taught discretely for at least one lesson each week in KS2 and K.S.1. Of course, the application of grammar skills is also embedded within English lessons and most often taught through a text-based approach. Stand-alone grammar lessons are supported by the 'Classroom Secrets' model across K.S 1 and K.S.2.

To be able to spell correctly is an essential life skill. When spelling becomes automatic, pupils are able to concentrate on the content of their writing and the making of meaning. Whilst we note that spelling is not the most important aspect of writing, confidence in spelling can have a profound effect on the writer's self-image. We aim to use explicit, interactive teaching which draws children's attention to the origins, structure and meaning of words and their parts, the shape and sound of words, the letter patterns within them and the various ways they can learn these patterns. Phonics teaching is the basis for beginning to spell words in Early Years and Year 1 as children are taught to blend letter sounds to read and then segment them to spell words.

From year two onwards, the children move towards using their phonic knowledge to help them to understand spelling rules and patterns. Research suggests that weekly spelling tests are an ineffective way of learning and retaining the spelling of words. Therefore, we teach children to use their growing understanding of the morphology and etymology of words to support their spelling. Helping the children to understand how to use and apply known spelling patterns (and to develop strategies to tackle tricky words) is the key to helping them to become successful spellers. Spelling skills are taught each week during three twenty minute sessions in K.S.2 and within daily phonics lessons in year 2. They are also embedded in English lessons so strategies and rules can be taught in the context of writing (e.g. mnemonics, word shapes and teaching the use of dictionary skills from year 2 onwards).

When actually writing, children should be concentrating on higher order thinking skills and should simply 'have a go' at spelling and underline words that they are unsure of. When encouraging children to edit their work, they can move onto applying spelling strategies to self-correct mistakes. When marking children's work, we do not correct all spelling errors; instead we focus on high frequency words, topic words and those studied in spelling sessions. Spelling errors are underlined or written in green pen for the child to practise in response-marking sessions. We ask parents to help their children to practise spelling common exception words and engage in word spelling activities which relate to the specific patterns or phonemes that have been taught in the week.

8. CROSS-CURRICULAR LITERACY OPPORTUNITIES

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links through the school's approach to a creative, knowledge-based curriculum. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through literacy lessons to other areas of the curriculum. One piece of extended writing is expected to be produced for other subjects such as history, geography and science each term.

9. ASSESSMENT AND TARGET SETTING

Work will be assessed in line with EYFS Development Matters, EYFS profile and the school's Assessment Policy using Target Tracker. Opportunities to moderate reading and writing are shared within Cluster schools INSET each year. In-house moderation takes place between subject leaders and SMT.

Individual targets for reading and writing are shared with parents at parents' consultation meetings and assessments are reported to parents at the end of each term for all year groups. In early years, observations are shared with parents to show development of skills on a half-termly basis.

10. INCLUSION

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment in liaison with the SENDCo. More able and talented children will be identified following assessments and challenges set accordingly.

11. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Springfields has universal ambitions for every child, whatever their background or circumstances. Children learn and thrive when they are healthy, safe and engaged. In order to engage all children, cultural diversity, home languages, gender and religious beliefs are all celebrated. Our curriculum includes a wide range of texts and other resources which represent the diversity and backgrounds of all our children.

We believe in 'valuing what the child brings to school' and recognise the importance of supporting a child's first language, not only to foster self-esteem, but to assist in the learning of English.

12. ROLE OF SUBJECT LEADER

The Subject Leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

monitoring and evaluating English:-

- pupil progress
- analysing data and implementing change to make improvements to teaching and learning of all pupils
- marking and planning
- curriculum coverage
- provision of English
- the quality of the Learning Environment,
- taking the lead in policy development,
- auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD,
- purchasing and organising resources,

- keeping up to date with recent English developments.

13. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We aim to involve parents directly in the life of the school, and thus in the development of children's skills, knowledge and understanding in English. Parents are involved in helping children to spell words, hearing children read, and are encouraged to discuss books with them.

All parents are invited in to take part in 'early morning family reading club' sessions which involve parents coming into to share reading to support their children.

There are opportunities each term when parents can discuss their children's progress with their teacher. Curriculum letters provide information about the English curriculum and how parents can support their children. Parents are encouraged to read both with and to their children at home in order to promote reading and teachers strive to use home-school diaries to develop this communication with parents. Parents are welcomed into school to support reading and spelling work in the classroom.

Strategies for supporting children are shared at phase meetings and reading workshops as well as information published on the school's website.

SATs results and year 1 phonics check results are published in accordance with Government legislation.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage
- Assessment and Record Keeping
- Marking policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- ICT Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Continuing Professional Development Policy

This policy will be reviewed every three years or if changes are required.

Developed by: Mrs Lindsey Scott- English Subject Leader

September 2020

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*Please note Springfields First School follows all Covid-19 government guidelines so visitors to school and usual parental face-to-face contacts have been reduced significantly.