



# English Policy

## ***Safeguarding Statement***

*West Heath Primary will continuously strive to ensure that everyone in our school is treated with respect and dignity. Each person in our school will be given fair and equal opportunity to develop their full potential with positive regard to gender, ethnicity, cultural and religious background, sexuality or disability. West Heath Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff to share this commitment. Please also refer to the*

*No Platform, Visiting Speaker Policy.*

## **English Policy**

All Teachers and Teaching Assistants at West Heath Primary School must comply with this policy.

### **Aims**

Our aim in teaching English is that all children will:

- Develop positive attitudes towards books so that reading is a pleasurable activity.
- Use and apply phonological, contextual, grammatical and graphic knowledge in order to gain an increased level of fluency and understanding.
- Use reading as a means of gathering information to support their learning throughout the curriculum.
- Write in different contexts for different purposes and audiences, including themselves.
- Write with increasing awareness of the conventions of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Form letters correctly, leading to a fluent and legible handwriting style.
- Develop listening and comprehension skills through a variety of means, including reciprocal and non-reciprocal situations.
- Express opinions, articulate feelings and formulate appropriate responses to increasingly complex questions and instructions.

### **Procedure**

The structure of English teaching is based upon the English National Curriculum guidelines and covers all of the recommended objectives.

To ensure there is adequate time for developing literacy skills:

- EYFS classes have a daily phonics lesson, with a duration of approximately 30 minutes. In addition, guided reading and guided writing will take place throughout each week.
- Year 1 has a dedicated literacy lesson each day, with a duration of approximately 45 minutes. In addition, a daily Read Write Inc. session takes place for 45 minutes per day.
- Year 2 and KS2 classes have a dedicated Literacy and Language lesson every day with a duration of approximately 70 minutes. In addition, targeted reading takes place 5 x each week for half hour each session.
- Children in Year 2 and Year 6 will read once every week for 10 minutes one-to-one with an adult (teacher or teaching assistant) where they will have the opportunity to read aloud, discuss their home reader as well as answer and ask a range of different types of questions.

### **Planning**

English is planned around the teaching of discrete skills and the planning ensures coverage of the National Curriculum 2015. In Year 1, teachers will follow RWI planning as well as plan schemes of work, in consultation with the English co-ordinator, to be delivered through a class novel. In Years 2 to 6, teachers will follow the relevant Literacy and Language planning for their specific year group. A layered approach will enable children to develop drama and discussion techniques, build comprehension and writing skills and learn appropriate grammar in context. Each unit is split into a two-week fiction unit (comprising of reading for one week and writing for one week) and a one week non-fiction unit. Once the two-week fiction unit has been completed, children in each year group will, over the course of an additional week, be guided in planning, drafting, editing and redrafting an extended piece of creative writing linked to the unit and/or the class topic. The non-fiction part of the unit will then be completed and followed with a further creative writing task, again to be completed

over the course of a week, linked to the non-fiction genre studied. It is envisaged that some of the writing the children redraft will be further redrafted for the purpose of display, either in the classroom or within the school environment. Work is rigorously differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils and to ensure progression within each year group.

In Year 2 to Year 6, it is expected that children will also have 15 minutes at the end of each day dedicated to reading a class novel. It is expected that a range of questions will be asked during these sessions to build on comprehension, word and grammar skills learnt in literacy as well as identify and address misconceptions.

### **Differentiation**

In order to ensure equality of opportunity, it is recognised that some children may need specific help with literacy skills, e.g. if they are dyslexic or sight impaired. Work is appropriately adapted so that it is accessible. This is done by:

- Giving extra support to children who need opportunities for reinforcement.
- Ensuring that pupils, with particular ability and flair for English, are extended through the use of additional, more demanding, open-ended tasks.
- Ensuring that children in receipt of pupil premium funding are given opportunities (*where necessary*) to work in small groups to ensure that the achievement gap is narrowed.
- Making sure that depth of learning is a priority for all pupils regardless of the milestone they are working at.
- Ensuring that EAL children receive additional, specific teaching as well as full exposure to speaking and listening activities.
- Adapting resources so that they are accessible to children with specific educational needs.

### **Speaking and Listening**

Oral language is recognised as the primary mode of language and this is reflected in its focus in all areas of the curriculum.

Pupils are encouraged to listen attentively, and to speak clearly, confidently, fluently, appropriately for a variety of different audiences and purposes. They are encouraged to listen to others and to take turns.

Teachers facilitate speaking and listening by:

- Expecting children to speak in full sentences - both when asking and answering questions.
- Giving children opportunities to talk about decisions they make and to ask and answer questions.
- Giving pupils opportunities to talk about their work and the work of others.
- Giving pupils opportunities to perform their own work.
- Giving pupils opportunities to participate in performances of poetry, presentations, class assemblies, Christmas plays and school productions.
- Promoting talk during shared and guided reading lessons.
- Ensuring that weekly circle times give the children the opportunity to express and justify their views.
- Using strategies, such as hot seating and conscience alley, to develop reasoned speaking and listening.
- Setting up formal discussions and debates to talk about real or imagery issues arising in a range of different contexts.
- Setting up 'The Big Question' as outlined in Literacy and Language planning.

- Speech and language support is offered to all pupils who have difficulty in this area. Speech and language interventions will be undertaken in addition to the literacy lesson.
- Children with English as an additional language (EAL) are given support through emersion of the spoken English language and through direct teaching of English language conventions.

## **Phonics**

Phonics teaching aims to show pupils how to become natural and accurate spellers and fluent readers.

- Children will be taught to look for common letter strings, patterns in words and to apply spelling rules.
- Children will be expected to sound out words phonetically and in syllables.
- Words which pose a particular challenge will be taught using mnemonics, multi-sensory re-enforcement and memorising critical features.
- Children will be taught how to use the quartiles of a dictionary and to find words beyond the initial letter.
- Children will be encouraged to identify their own spelling errors and edit accordingly.
- Children in EYFS will take part in whole class phonics teaching daily.
- KS1 will be taught in ability groups during RWI. Children are regularly tested to ensure that they are in the correct group. Children are moved to the next group as soon as they are ready.

## **Spelling**

Teachers will correct spellings in all pieces of work (*where necessary*). An emphasis will be placed on correcting age specific spellings taken from the National Curriculum.

The school's approach to spelling will be applied across the curriculum although there may be exceptions for SEN and EAL pupils.

All teachers will be responsible for the discreet planning and teaching of spelling, in accordance with the National Curriculum. Weekly spellings, based both on age-specific spelling rules and spelling lists for each year group, will be sent home to learn and pupils will be tested on a weekly basis.

## **Reading**

The school strives to teach all pupils to read with depth and to enjoy a variety of texts so that they will become independent readers.

Reading books are available in class libraries, in guided reading resources and sent home as part of the school's approach to homework. In addition, a range of novels are available to each year group as part of the school's approach to the reading curriculum.

- Comprehension skills are developed during daily RWI sessions in Year 1 and Guided Reading sessions in Years 2 to 6.
- Children are taught the skills needed to answer comprehension questions.
- Strategies such as hot seating, thought tracking, conscience alley and freeze framing are all used to aid comprehension.
- All children experience modelled, shared, ensemble, guided and independent reading in line with medium term planning.
- Book banding is used throughout the school to allow for reading standardisation.
- Reading ages are used to ensure that children are reading books at the appropriate level.

- Recommended texts for each Year group are available in class libraries. These will also be sent home as home readers where appropriate.
- Children come into school at 8.30am each morning to read quietly. Teachers model good reading habits during these sessions.
- In EYFS, parents are invited into school two mornings each week to read with their children.
- Regular book fairs are held to promote reading enjoyment and to contribute to literacy resources.

## Writing

Children write to express their emotions, convey their thoughts and opinions and to present evidence of research. By developing these skills, we aim to equip our children to write fluently across a range of curricular activities:

- Children are encouraged to write independently, gradually developing the range and extent of their writing. Word banks, dictionaries and thesauri are available for children in all key stages.
- Children are encouraged to orally rehearse before planning, drafting and revising texts.
- Classroom displays contain language which supports writing.
- Modelled, shared, guided and independent writing sessions take place across all age groups every week.
- Children are given opportunities to and are encouraged to write in different genres for different purposes and audiences.
- Teachers model good handwriting, accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation at all times.
- Children are shown how to proof-read and edit their own work in order to identify misconceptions, extend their ideas and correct spellings, punctuation and grammar.
- They are given regular opportunities to redraft their edited work into a final piece, which may be displayed in the classroom, made into a class book or added to the website.
- Children are taught to frequently read their writing out loud in order to make sure it makes sense.
- Children are expected to speak and write in full sentences both when asking and answering questions.
- Worksheets are rarely used and only with the permission of the English co-ordinator.
- Writing frames will be used to scaffold children's work but, unless a specific skill is being taught (*i.e. note taking, spelling rules*) children will be expected to write in full sentences.
- At the end of every half-term, children will be expected to write independently in their creative writing progress book. Teachers must prepare the children by sharing the success criteria and key features of the genre prior to the independent writing.
  - ❖ Children in EYFS will be expected to write independently for 10 minutes.
  - ❖ Year 1 children are expected to write independently for 20 minutes.
  - ❖ Years 2 and 3 children are expected to write independently for 30 minutes.
  - ❖ In Years 4, 5 and 6, children are expected to write independently for 45 minutes.
  - ❖ If more than one independent piece is to be produced, the timings relate to each genre.
  - ❖ It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that the timings are adjusted for SEN, EAL pupils; no support, however, is to be given.

## Handwriting

- By the end of EYFS, correct pincer grip is expected.
- By the end of Year 2, cursive handwriting is expected.

- Handwriting is taught discreetly each week.
- The Nelson handwriting scheme is taught and Nelson font is available on all desk tops in school.
- Teachers and teaching assistants model cursive writing in marking from Year 2 onwards.
- Blue handwriting pens are awarded for accurate cursive handwriting which includes accurate letter size, appropriate spacing and accurate use of ascenders and descenders.
- During handwriting lessons children are expected to sit at a table, with their chair tucked in and their feet on the floor. Their non-writing hand should be placed on the page to keep it in place.
- White boards must only be used for quick recall and **not** handwriting practice, in any key stage.
- Sharp pencils must be used for all writing and colouring activities.
- Children must be taught how to colour neatly, using appropriate strokes.

## Presentation

- All pages in work books are expected to have a margin.
- The full date must be written on the top line. The date is expected to be spelling correctly and conform to the handwriting expectations.
- It is expected that a line will be missed between the date and the learning objective. The learning objective must be correctly spelled and underlined, with a ruler and in pencil.
- In KS1 and Early Years, it is acceptable to glue the date and learning objective into the children's books to avoid wasting time at the start of lessons.
- In RWI booklets, the short date must be written.
- A single line is to be left after each complete line of writing: this will enable both the children and the teacher to identify misconceptions and give feedback appropriately.
- Two lines should be missed to identify a paragraph break.
- When labelling diagrams, lines to the label must be drawn in pencil with a ruler.
- Where worksheets have been used (*only with the permission of the English co-ordinator*), they must be trimmed and securely glued into the child's book. Where the sheet is larger than a single page of the book (an A4 sheet to be glued into an A5 book, for example), the sheet must be rotated, glued across a double page and not folded.
- The front cover of every child's book must have a West Heath coloured label attached to it. This will display the child's full name, the child's class and the subject – English. A red circle should be placed in the top right hand corner of the cover to identify that the child is entitled to pupil premium funding. A green triangle should be placed in the top right hand corner to identify that the child is on the SEN register.

It is good practice to encourage the children to finish their work with a handwriting pattern (*which will have been pre-taught*). In all cases, handwriting patterns must be completed using a coloured pencil.

It is widely recognised that colouring encourages good handwriting. If/when appropriate, child must colour pictures in their English book using coloured pencils NOT writing pencils. Children should be encouraged to colour between the lines of the picture; to colour using strokes in one direction and to fill the gaps in colouring. Felt tip pens must **not** be used in the children's work books.

## Homework

All pupils in Years 1 to 6 are expected to learn their spellings ready for their weekly spelling test. Children will be taught the relevant rules during the week and to use their spellings in sentences. The test will take place on a Friday.

In addition, pupils in Years 2 to 6 will be given the relevant page of their Literacy and Language Homework Book to complete. This work will directly relate to work being covered in the classroom and children will have been taught the skills required to complete the activity. In weeks where there isn't a relevant activity to complete, teachers will give out English homework to be completed in homework books. Homework will be distributed on Friday with the expectation it will be returned to school to be marked the following Tuesday.

If homework (including learning spellings) is not completed a strike will be issued in the relevant section of the child's Passport. Completion of homework is expected as part of good learning behaviour.

It is expected that all pupils, EYFS to Year 6, read every night and that their Passports are signed by an adult indicating the name of the book and the pages that they have read (*see Homework Policy*). Children who have not read at home, have not had their Passport signed or have not brought in a note will be given a strike (*see Passport to Success Policy*).

### **Planning expectations**

Long term planning is taken from the National Curriculum 2015. Medium term planning for Years 2 to 6 is covered in detail in the relevant Literacy and Language Handbook. Teachers in Years 2 to 6 are required to submit a short term weekly plan to the English co-ordinator using the agreed format; this plan will summarise the expected weekly outcome, the main teaching points of each lesson and further information regarding differentiation and deployment of additional adults. Medium term planning for Year 1, based on a class book or novel, will be produced in consultation with the English co-ordinator. Class novels for each year group will be distributed by the English co-ordinator at the start of each new topic.

Teachers must seek advice from the English co-ordinator if lessons are not maintaining appropriate pace or pupil progress is not evident. Although it is required that all planning must be followed, it is recognised that teachers must use their professional judgement and add to planning (*where appropriate*). NQTs will meet with the English co-ordinator each week to discuss planning and to moderate coverage and progress.

Any additional resources produced for any unit should be saved on the 'L' drive on the school's intranet (*where appropriate*). Where an additional worksheet is to be used in Years 2 to 6, the resource must be agreed by the English co-ordinator. Worksheets in Year 1 should only be used where the task warrants it and, in all cases, they must be appropriate and challenging enough to encourage deep learning.

During RWI, teachers should follow the exact scrip indicated in the module booklets.

### **Marking**

As outlined in the Marking Policy, **ALL** English work must be marked; this includes RWI books.

Marking must be completed in line with the marking policy.

### **Moderation**

Teachers are expected to take their English books to whole school moderation meetings which will take place at least half-termly. During these meetings, mastery in English will be discussed and progress will also be moderated.

In addition, the English co-ordinator will meet with each year group at least once during each Literacy and Language unit to moderate planning, delivery, marking and outcomes across the ability range in the relevant year group. The frequency of these meetings may be increased at the English co-ordinator's discretion.

Moderation activities will be used to judge accuracy and consistency across the school. Work will also be moderated against national expectations.

## **Assessment**

Assessment in English follows the guidelines as laid down in the Assessment Policy and Marking Policy.

After completing every Language and Literacy unit, pupils in Years 2 to 6 will sit the associated reading, and punctuation and grammar assessments. These tests will be marked by teachers, using the mark scheme provided, and glued in the child's Assessment Book. In addition, a fiction and non-fiction writing assessment, relating to the genres studied, will also be carried out in the Creative Writing Book and assessed against a milestone sheet, which will be glued onto the page following the piece of work.

Pupils in Year 1 will follow the same assessment timetable and complete an independent piece of writing after each unit of work.

In October and May of each year, children will undertake NFER standardised reading tests. Following these tests, reading age and standardised scores will be calculated. These scores will be used to inform groupings for RWI. Interventions will be put into place for all children not making at least expected progress. Gaps in learning will be identified and interventions will be planned in order to ensure progress for all children. Effective use of pupil premium funding will be evaluated following each round of assessment. Provision for SEND pupils, LAC and those with EAL, will be evaluated termly.

## **National Assessment Expectation**

- Every year the EYFS profile will be sent to the LEA. This will include the assessment of each child's reading, writing and communication at either emerging, expected or exceeding standard. Parents will be informed of their child's profile at the end of the academic year.
- In June, Year 1 will undertake Phonics Screening checks, as directed by the DfE (Department of Education). The results of the phonics checks will be reported to parents, the LEA and the DfE. We will use these results to identify children who need extra intervention in order to meet national expectation.
- In line with the DfE directive, Year 2 will undertake SATs each year. These are internally marked. The assessments will be used to inform teacher judgement about whether a child is working above, below or at national expectation. The assessment results will be reported to the child's parents; DfE and the Local Education Authority (LEA). The school will use these results to identify children who need extra intervention in order for them to meet national expectation.
- Year 6 will take part in SATs each year. These generally take place in May. Year 6 SATs are externally marked. Judgements will be made about whether a child is working below, at or



above national expectation. The results of the test, along with the teacher assessment, will be reported to the child's parents, the DfE, the LEA and the secondary school to which the child will be attending in Year 7.

- The results of the SATs will be scrutinised and, in light of the findings, adjustments will be made to the English curriculum so that the school ensures that it is fit for purpose.
- The results will be used to benchmark the schools' performance against other schools locally and nationally.

### **Monitoring**

Through lesson observations, work scrutiny, pupil voice and learning walks; compliance with this policy will be monitored at least every half term. The teaching of all aspects of English is expected to be at least good. Where a teacher's performance falls below this expectation, support through additional coaching or training will be offered in order to bring the teaching to the required standard.

Caroline Hatton  
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