



**Hackbridge Primary School**

**English Policy**

**March 2018**

## Purpose of study

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English teaches pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.

## Aims

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- **read easily, fluently and with good understanding**
- **develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information**
- **acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language**
- **appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage**
- **write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences**
- **use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas**
- **are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.**

## Spoken language

The National Curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers therefore ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills. Pupils are supported to develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They are assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others and teachers ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils are also taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

All pupils are enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils are supported to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.

The statutory requirements which underpin all aspects of spoken language across key stage 1 and key stage 2 are also reflected and contextualised within the reading and writing domains which follow.

## Reading

The National Curriculum programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of two dimensions:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading).

The teaching at Hackbridge Primary School teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each. Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. Phonics is therefore emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners (i.e. unskilled readers) when they start school.

Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high- quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction. All pupils are encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Reading widely and often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious young minds.

It is our aim that, by the end of their primary education, where appropriate, all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education.

## Writing

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

The teaching at Hackbridge Primary School develops pupils' competence in these two dimensions. In addition, pupils are taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing are incorporated into the National Curriculum programmes of study for composition. Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words. Effective composition involves forming, articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting.

### Spelling, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and glossary

The two statutory appendices in the National Curriculum – on spelling and on vocabulary, grammar and punctuation – which an overview of the specific features that should be included in teaching the programmes of study inform our teaching at Hackbridge Primary School. Opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing. As vocabulary increases, teachers show pupils how to understand the relationships between words, how to understand nuances in meaning, and how to develop their understanding of, and ability to use, figurative language. They also teach pupils how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than one meaning. Pupils are taught to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English. They are taught to use the elements of spelling, grammar, punctuation and 'language about language' listed in the statutory appendices. These do not constrain or restrict teachers' creativity, but simply to provide the structure on which they can construct exciting lessons. The school follows the definitions provided in the non-statutory glossary in the national curriculum. Throughout the programmes of study, teachers teach pupils the vocabulary they need to discuss their reading, writing and spoken language. Pupils therefore learn the correct grammatical terms in English and these terms are integrated within teaching.

### The Approach to the Teaching of English at Hackbridge Primary School.

Hackbridge Primary School has adopted the National Curriculum programmes of study for English as a basis for our English curriculum supported by Cornerstones Curriculum. Every class in key stages 1 and 2 have a daily hour of literacy. Discrete phonics and spelling is taught across a week. Additional time is also given to handwriting, individual reading, and listening to and reading stories and poems together as a class. Reception and Nursery follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and Cornerstones.

When planning and teaching the English curriculum the following elements are considered:

- Differentiation to meet the needs of all pupils including careful planning of work to include a range of teaching strategies with a balance between audio, visual, and kinesthetic techniques.
- ICT and cross-curricular links are made where appropriate
- Fast feedback in accordance with the Feedback and Assessment policy
- Using reading and writing targets with the children to ensure progress is made

### Equal Opportunities

All children have an entitlement to participate fully in English, regardless of gender, race, age or ability, in accordance with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy. Children for whom English is an additional language will receive additional support as appropriate.

### School curriculum

The programmes of study for English are set out year-by-year for key stage 1 and two-yearly for key stage 2. At Hackbridge Primary School the programmes of study are taught through fiction, non-fiction and poetry units linked to a specific Cornerstones Topic. These are identified on our long term plans for literacy.

Additional elements of the English curriculum are taught discretely:

- daily phonics in FS and KS1 (Letters and Sounds/ Read Write Inc. Spell in Year2)
- weekly spelling focus in KS2 (Read Write Inc. Spell)

Our school curriculum for English on a year-by-year basis is available online at our school website.

### Planning

Long term planning identifies the blocks of Literacy that will be taught across the year groups aligned to the National Curriculum orders for English (2014). Medium term planning is undertaken on a unit plan basis following the assess-plan-teach-review sequence. Carefully chosen texts stimulate and enthuse the children to read and write. The audience and purpose for any writing outcomes are clearly identified. A weekly plan exemplifies the objectives for the week taken from the medium term plans. These plans show differentiation where appropriate and progression across the week. Additional plans outline the discrete areas of English that are taught in addition to the daily literacy lesson, e.g. reading and phonics and spelling. At the end of each week the class teacher records daily assessments onto Pupil Asset.

### Assessment and Recording

Assessment is crucial to the learning process. Children's work is regularly assessed through observation, discussion, scrutiny of work and evaluating outcomes.

- End of year targets are set for each year group
- Termly Pupil Progress Meetings are used to track the progress of each child in reading and writing across the year.

### Formative Assessment

Teacher assessment is an integral part of good practice. Assessment is carried out on a daily and weekly basis. It involves identifying children's progress against teaching objectives and targets, determining which children have achieved and moving them on to the next stage of learning. Where appropriate, additional support and interventions are identified for children not making the expected progress. Teachers record the progress of pupils onto Pupil Asset.

### Summative Assessment:

- Baseline in the Foundation year
- End of year screening in Foundation year and Year 1
- Phonics screen in Year 1
- Year 2 NC tests
- Years 3, 4 and 5 optional tests (PiXL/Twinkl)
- Year 6 NC tests

### Attainment targets

The school recognises that the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

### Recording

- Tracking in reading and writing against NC levels using Pupil Asset
- Assessment Question Level Analysis
- Phonics check through Letters and Sounds word checklist – spelling and reading
- Reading records

## Fast Feedback

Marking in English is part of the assessment process. Please refer to the Feedback and Assessment Policy.

## The Role of the Subject Lead

The role of the Literacy Subject Lead is defined in the job description.

## Resourcing

The Literacy Subject Leader is responsible for the ordering, costing and allocation of resources to support the teaching of English. A review of resources is carried out periodically which leads to a prioritised list of requirements. This is funded within the school's budget plan for the financial year.

## Reporting to Parents

Parents receive regular informal or verbal feedback as to their children's progress in literacy. Each child has a reading link book to record progress in reading at home and school. Spelling rules/patterns are also given in accordance with the Homework Policy. In addition, parents also have the opportunity each term to meet with the staff to discuss progress and to see work.

Parents receive an annual written report at the end of the school year. This includes details of their children's progress and areas for development. Where appropriate the national test results are reported.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to monitor standards and progress the following systems are in place:

- Each teacher meets with the Assessment Lead and Literacy Lead three times a year to discuss progress in reading and writing. Particular attention is paid to children working below age related expectations, high prior attainers, children with SEN and children eligible for Pupil Premium.
- SLT and the Literacy Lead is given time to monitor literacy through a range of activities which includes: analysis of tracking data for reading and writing (including RAISE online), lesson observations, learning walks, scrutiny of work, review of planning and interviews with stakeholders.
- Staff meet at least twice a year to scrutinise and level writing across the school
- SEN pupils will be assessed regularly by the class teacher and the SENCO. Steps are taken to provide additional support where appropriate. The SENCO and Literacy Lead meet regularly to discuss identified pupils.
- The school's literacy action plan is part of the whole school development plan and is reviewed termly and updated annually by the Literacy Lead and SLT.

## Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

Review date: March 2021