



## ENGLISH POLICY

### Vision:

At Willaston Church of England Primary School we believe in the importance of a high quality education in English in which we develop children's ability to listen, speak, read and write fluently for a foundation for life. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use and apply their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking, listening and writing across a range of different situations.

### Values

To create and develop learners who demonstrate:

Respect – by listening carefully to the views of others and being open to reading about topics to develop an open mind.

Compassion – through learning about diverse and complex topics and understanding different viewpoints in reading, writing and debate.

Creation – by understanding that we are all unique and that we are able to be creative in our communication and use our knowledge and skills for good.

Perseverance – to reflect on our efforts and not give up even when things seem difficult, so we can improve ourselves and our work.

Service – by thinking about how we can use our knowledge and understanding to help others in our local community and beyond.

### Our Aims:

- To inspire children to read widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- To develop enthusiastic and reflective readers and writers, through contact with classic and contemporary authors.
- To enable children to speak clearly and audibly, taking account of their listeners.
- To show children how to adapt their speech for a wide range of purposes and audiences.

- To teach children effective communication of their ideas and views, both verbal and non-verbal, through a variety of drama activities, discussion and debate.
- To enable children to become confident, independent readers and writers, through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text level knowledge.
- To provide regular opportunities for children to plan, draft and edit their written work, with emphasis on spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- To encourage children to listen to all forms of communication.

### **Statutory Requirements**

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the 2014 Primary National Curriculum document.

In the Foundation Stage children should be given opportunities to:

- Use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum;
- Speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities;
- Become immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2), children should learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They should begin to read and write independently with enjoyment and understanding. They should use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds. They should learn key English skills focusing on spelling, punctuation and grammar.

At Key Stage Two (Years 3-6), children should learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They should read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them through discussion and debate. They should explore the use of language, progressing their key skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar.

### **Subject Organisation**

The English Curriculum is delivered through the 'Read to Write' programme and a cross-curricular approach using objectives from the 2014 Primary National Curriculum documentation. The Early Learning Goals are followed to ensure continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage through to the National Curriculum. For the most part, pupils will tackle English work as individuals, as a whole class and in small groups. The groups are arranged by ability where appropriate to enable differentiation to be addressed more effectively. Intervention programmes are followed where children have been identified as needing more support. These are delivered by teaching assistants assigned to particular children or classes.

## **Approaches to Spoken Language**

Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to develop their confidence in the use of vocabulary and grammar, raising reading and writing standards. Role play, hot seating activities, presentations and recitals, 'talk for writing', discussion and debate are key features of teaching and learning in our school. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

We have an Ampitheatre and a 'Story Telling chair' for the children to use during curriculum time as well as in their own free time in the playground.

Children regularly have the opportunity to take part; we have a weekly 'sharing assembly' and we take every opportunity to work with outside agencies such as the Children's Shakespeare Company and the Storyhouse, Chester to broaden pupils' experience of performing to an audience.

## **Approaches to Reading**

We aim to ensure that all children have the chance to follow an enriching curriculum by encouraging reading from an early age. All children from Reception to Year 1 have daily, Little Wandle phonics lessons. Most children complete Phase 4 by the end of their Reception year and Phase 5 by the end of Year 1. In addition to this, 1-1 and small group interventions are in place in other year groups.

### **Phonics and Spelling – Interim Phase**

We are currently in an interim phase while we embed the Little Wandle phonics scheme. Children from Year 1 upwards may still be using some resources referring to the mnemonics from our previous scheme. This will be phased out as the children progress through school and as we build up our bank of resources

Key Stage 1 guided reading lessons will also be developed and when they are fully embedded, will run alongside phonics teaching. When the books and resources are in place, this will also feed into the children's home reading. Books that the children have previously read in school, will be taken home to be re-read in order to develop fluency. Children will also have the opportunity to choose books from our Literacy Mill. These books can be shared with a grown-up with the aim to develop a love of reading.

From Year 2 onwards, the children will continue to develop their knowledge of phonics and apply phonics to spelling. Regular spelling and handwriting lessons based on the Raintree, No-nonsense spelling scheme will run alongside our English teaching. The Little Wandle 'Grow the Code' grapheme charts will be available in all classes to support children with their spelling and correcting spelling errors. We are also developing our use of Spelling Shed for children to practise spellings at home. Spelling lists will be linked to 'Read to Write' ensuring that the children have opportunities to apply spellings in their writing.

## Spelling

Children in KS2 follow the Raintree Spelling Programme. They are taught the statutory spellings using spelling rules as set out in the 2014 National Curriculum.

Children in Years 1-6 have 'English Skills' books. These are used to practise using words more creatively, also revisiting and consolidating spelling, punctuation and grammar rules. Particular spelling rules are taught each week. These are communicated to parents in the weekly class homework letter with spelling rules to be practised where applicable. All parents are also issued with a list of each year group's statutory words to learn and spelling rules and guidelines are posted on our website.

Most children complete Phase 5 by the end of Key Stage 1. Intervention programmes are put in place for children needing additional support with reading and phonics, delivered by teaching assistants.

In Years 3-6, children identified as needing additional support with reading and phonics have intervention programmes and are assessed in line with 'The Little Wandle' documentation.

## Whole Class Shared Reading – Steps to Read

Teaching of whole class shared reading is supported by the use of the Steps to Read planning units. These units of work help to provide curriculum knowledge for foundations subjects. They all aspects of word reading and comprehension through high-quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts.

Steps to Read provides a clear teaching sequence to reading sessions that explicitly teach reading skills and strategies in a cumulative way through evidence-based approaches. Through Steps to Read, the entire statutory curriculum for reading is covered.

Steps to Read:

- Is sequenced, coherent and progressive
- Uses language-rich texts for vocabulary teaching
- Includes all elements of comprehension, taught sequentially across an academic year
- Has a clear focus on the skills and strategies needed to be a proficient and confident reader
- Uses engaging texts to promote a life-long love of reading
- Includes poetry, non-fiction and fiction that enhances knowledge learning across the curriculum

## Guided Reading

Guided reading takes place in Y1 to Y6 each week. In Reception guided reading begins in the spring term. Teachers plan for and assess children's reading using resources from across the school. Children learn to use a range of reading strategies through their guided reading sessions.

### Independent Reading

Children are encouraged to read independently and we strongly advocate reading for enjoyment. Each classroom has a 'reading area' which is stocked with a range of fiction and non-fiction books and we also encourage all students to use our school library and Literacy Mill.

### Reading Records

All children have a reading record book. For EYFS and KS1 children, these books are a means of communication between parent and teacher. This is then developed in KS2 as children begin to record their own comments and views about the books they are reading.

### Wider reading

Across the school, children are encouraged to use class libraries to support curriculum work. Every class has story times when the children are read to. This session varies in frequency and length across the school.

The Literacy Mill is open daily and pupils are encouraged to take blankets and find a space in the school grounds to read a book of their choice. Key Stage 1 classes make regular use of the Mill and the children look forward to changing their books. The Literacy Mill will be back open to parents and children at the end of each school day, to choose books.

We have a team of Reading Rangers who are members of the local and school community. They read weekly with individual children who have been identified by the class teacher.

To support and inspire reading for pleasure, we hold an annual Scholastic book fair to raise the profile of reading for enjoyment across the school. Year 6 pupils are encouraged to help the English Subject Leader and staff to run the Book Fair as an opportunity to show their entrepreneurial skills.

## **Approaches to Writing**

### Emergent writing

Children in Reception are encouraged to make marks and write with a wide variety of tools and equipment available, for example, chalk, chalkboards, pens, pencils, paintbrushes, sand trays, wipe clean boards and pens. Children's mark making and writing is valued and put up on display / shared with parents regularly.

### Shared Writing

Shared writing is planned for and taught during whole class and group sessions with the teacher modelling specific genres or aspects of genres to the children.

### Guided Writing

Guided writing is an important element of the teaching sequence and is a key step between whole-class teaching and independent writing. It is during the guided writing session that children are supported to improve their writing and

to work with increasing independence. Children are taught skills to self and peer-assess their writing. All children have a green 'polishing' pen to make improvements to their written work.

During guided writing, teachers work with carefully selected groups of children according to their current targets or specific needs. Teachers consider carefully these targets or needs and plan the content of the session accordingly.

#### Independent & Extended Writing

Independent writing is planned for and carried out throughout the school at varying amounts of time during each week. Children are expected to write every day in a range of subjects.

Children from Reception to Y6 are also encouraged to complete an extended piece of writing as an end point of the Read to Write Scheme. The length of time spent writing varies depending on age and ability.

#### Marking

Children's writing is marked daily and next steps given. Children are then given the opportunity to respond to this the next day, using their polishing pens to make improvements.

#### Handwriting

The school uses a cursive handwriting scheme for letter formation and this is taught from Reception. When children are forming letters clearly and correctly, they will start to learn to join their letters. As children are taught digraphs and trigraphs in Phonics sessions they will be taught how to join them correctly.

All children are expected to be able to join by the end of Year 2. Once children are writing using a joined and consistent handwriting style they are awarded a handwriting pen and a certificate at sharing assembly. From this point they will then use a pen for all written work. By Y4 all children write in pen for all work apart from Maths.

Children throughout the school are encouraged to be independent thinkers. They are taught to use classroom resources and displays to find out the words they need. In Years 1-4 children are encouraged to try out their own spellings before asking an adult and are taught strategies to find spellings themselves using dictionaries, thesaurus, ipads, peer support etc.

At Willaston CE Primary School we aim to meet the diversity of children's English language learning needs through appropriate provision in the classroom.

We aim to provide a range of high quality support for pupils including:-

- Specialised literacy teacher
- Seeking every opportunity for CPD of all school staff and Governors

- Keeping up to date with developments and new initiatives in Intervention programmes

### **The use of ICT**

Opportunities to use ICT to support teaching and learning in English will be planned for and used as appropriate. Visualisers are used to show great writing and provide opportunities for the teacher to demonstrate editing.

### **Assessment and target setting**

Work will be assessed in line with the Assessment Policy. In addition to this:

- In the Foundation stage, assessments are on-going; information is collected and uploaded to the EYFS profile at the end of each the year.
- All teachers have half termly Pupil Progress meetings with the Head teacher or a member of the SMT, where each individual pupil's progress is tracked and children requiring intervention are identified.
- In Y2 and Y6 formal SAT tests are undertaken.
- In Y1 children take part in a phonics screening check. Children who do not achieve the expected standard are provided with intervention and support.
- In Y3, 4 and 5, tests are administered and the data from this informs the teachers planning.

### **Display**

The children are encouraged to feel proud of their writing. Children's work can be seen in colourful wall displays, class books and on the web site. The English working wall encourages children to utilise and build on the work they have done so far. Displays also show the grammar and vocabulary expectations of the classes Read to Write texts.

### **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. Teachers provide learning opportunities matched to children with additional needs. More able children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

### **Equal Opportunities**

All children are provided with equal access to English, through a thematic approach. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

## **Outdoor Learning**

At Willaston CE Primary School we make use of learning outside the classroom experiences to enrich and develop children's learning wherever possible.

## **Role of Subject Leader**

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

- pupil progress
- provision of English (including Intervention and Support programmes)
- the quality of the learning environment.

The Subject Leader is responsible for purchasing and organising resources, keeping up to date with recent developments in English education and supporting staff development through peer coaching.

## **Parental Involvement**

Parents are regarded as important partners in the process of developing children's language skills. We therefore encourage parents to play a full part in their children's education by:

- Involving parents in the school's reading programme throughout their time in school. Children have a reading record book where comments about reading can be shared between home and school.
- Updating the guidance for parents, via welcome meetings as their children move through the school so that they can continue to offer valuable support.
- Welcoming offers of help from parents to assist in school by listening to readers, talking with children and helping with writing.



## **Conclusion**

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

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Marking Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Computing Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy

## **Monitoring of the Literacy policy**

The effectiveness of this policy will be regularly monitored by the Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and English Subject Leader.

**Approved by Governors May 2022**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J. Smith', is written over a faint, rectangular grid pattern.

**Signed Chair of Governors**



## Appendix 1

### **Handwriting for pupils with specific needs**

- Emphasis given on gross and fine motor skills.
- Daily differentiated groups depending upon fine motor ability.
- Only when the children have the fine motor skills required we then start trying to use a cursive style – not before and only for their name.
- Until then a big emphasis is placed on developing the correct pen grip through gross and fine motor activities.



## **Letter formation in Reception**

- Introduce cursive font to parents at new intake evening.
- Guide sent home for parents.
- Cursive patterns introduced in autumn term eg. starting on the line through fine and gross motor activities.
- In the classroom cursive handwriting is modelled through the teacher writing on the boards and in fonts used in displays.
- Letter practised weekly following the phonics taught – curly caterpillar, long ladder etc.
- Regular focus of other letters.
- Writing table –opportunities to write using cursive formation.
- Letter of the week sent home on weekly newsletter.
- Develop at child's pace – focus on physical development and pencil grip – secure by the end of reception.
- Cursive lettering on display/visual around the EYFS classrooms – phonics mats etc.
- Daily practise of writing own name.
- Regular practise with the children and make it an important part of learning in Reception.
- Individual cursive letters of the alphabet are up in every classroom.



## **Handwriting in KS1**

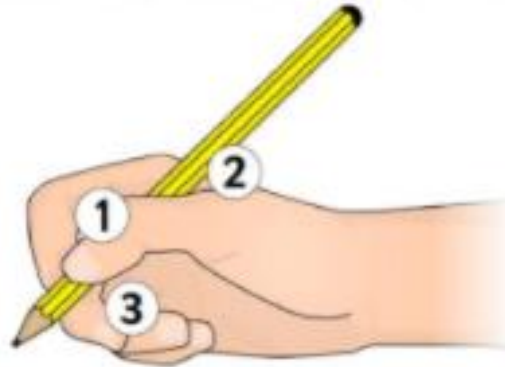
- In Year 1 & 2 we teach a daily handwriting session with focus on letter formation and the cursive joins.
- The children practise letters and joins and then apply it in a word. This is always modelled on the whiteboard and the children have an example in their handwriting books.
- In the classroom cursive handwriting is modelled through teacher writing on the boards and in fonts used in displays.
- We have done additional fine motor boosters for children with poor pencil control and in year 2 also for children who struggle with joined cursive writing.
- In our English marking we would model any incorrect letter formation.
- Children have alphabet strips for use during lessons.
- Weekly teaching is linked to phonics taught/topic words are used to practise the handwriting formation. Marking is in cursive script.
- Handwriting lessons – the teacher demonstrates the word using lines on the interactive board using the cursive script.
- Individual cursive letters of the alphabet are up in every classroom.
- Children who have a fluent and legible style can work towards using a pen and getting a pen licence once approved by the Headteacher.



## **Handwriting in KS2**

- In the classroom cursive handwriting is modelled through teacher writing on the boards and in fonts used in displays.
- Children who have a fluent and legible style can work towards using a pen and getting a pen licence once approved by the Headteacher.
- Handwriting lessons – the teacher demonstrates the word using lines on the interactive board using the cursive script.
- Handwriting practise at least twice per week – if there is an additional need then this is done more often.
- TA's also work on handwriting with certain children who have poor fine motor skills or pencil grip.
- Pencil grips are given to any child that needs them.
- Individual cursive letters of the alphabet are up in every classroom.
- Marking is in cursive script.
- Spelling patterns/Words of the week/ Phonic sounds/Topic words are used to practise the handwriting formation.

## How to Hold a Pencil



1. Put your thumb and forefinger just above the cone shaped part of the pencil.
2. Let the pencil rest between your thumb and forefinger.
3. Then put your middle finger underneath for support.

The quick brown fox  
jumps over the lazy dog.

Dotted Style

Lined Style

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