



## **English Policy**

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Signed: B.Mackenzie \_\_\_\_\_

Chair of Teaching and Learning Committee

# **ENGLISH POLICY**

## **1. INTRODUCTION & AIMS**

In English, we aim for pupils to gain confident communication skills that allow them to explore and use a range of language and literature to read, write, speak and listen. By exploring a wide range of age appropriate quality texts, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. The curriculum will engage and encourage children to be curious about our literary heritage and the creative process of being a writer. All pupils will acquire knowledge and build on what they already know using carefully designed journeys to clear points, building on prior learning. Throughout their school life, they will develop the transferable skills of English that are essential to participating fully as a member of society.

## **2. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum English Document (2014) and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the EYFS (revised 2023).

## **THE GOVERNING BODY**

Regular reports are made to the governors on the progress of English provision.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or in the light of changes to legal requirements.

## **3. SUBJECT ORGANISATION**

At Galley Hill School, the English Curriculum is delivered using a range of strategies including whole class English lessons, whole class guided reading (Yr2-6) and small group reading (Reception- Yr1), spelling and phonic sessions. The Early Learning Goals are followed to ensure continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage through to the National Curriculum.

All children take part in a daily English lesson. During these lessons children experience a whole-class shared reading or writing activity based around a high quality focus text which is followed by either a guided group or independent activity. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts and use a range of resources to support different learning styles. Wherever possible we encourage children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum. Additionally the vocabulary, grammar and punctuation statutory requirements (National Curriculum 2014 English Appendix 2) are taught in these lessons as well as being supplemented by daily grammar activities.

There are children of differing ability in all classes. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons we do it through adaptations or scaffolding group work, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use adults to support children and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals.

Units of work for English are devised either by the class teachers or by using the HfL's DEP planning materials to meet the needs and interests of the children in the year group and the requirements of the National Curriculum. Yearly long-term plans are put in place to ensure that a breadth of high quality texts are used to engage pupils. A range of fiction, poetry and non-fiction learning opportunities are offered each term in line with year group expectations. The long-term plan for each year group can be accessed on our school website. Short term planning is presented on the school's standardised format. The planning reflects the Teaching Sequence for Writing (see appendix).

Phonics sessions, taught with fidelity to our Super Sonic Phonic Friends (SSP), are taught daily in Foundation Stage and Key Stage One. Children in Key Stage Two receive regular spelling lessons which address the objectives of National Curriculum 2014 English appendix 1. In Reception and Yr1, children have pre and post teaching sessions for phonic to enable them to keep up rather than catch up. Additional phonics/spelling support is provided for children who continue to struggle to decode in Key Stage Two.

## **4. APPROACHES TO SPEAKING AND LISTENING**

Aspects of Spoken Language permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills through a variety of strategies including role-play, hot seating, oral rehearsal, echo reading and debate in readiness for later life.

All Foundation Stage classrooms have themed role-play areas to promote speaking and listening.

## **5. APPROACHES TO READING**

As a whole school, our primary aim is to promote a love of reading. We aim to immerse our pupils in a rich, diverse range of books both in their English and reading lessons as well as encouraging them to seek out their own reading experiences and preferences. Each week, there is a Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) session which focuses only on the enjoyment and sharing of books in the class. All members of the class, including the adults, read a book of their choice. 'Book Club' sessions are also used to promote discussion around the children's own reading choices, recommendations and exploring a wider range of books. Each day, children are read a class book by the teacher – this is purely read for pleasure. Children are encouraged to participate in choosing these texts e.g. EYFS – book voting stations/ Year 6 – first chapter reading and vote.

Pupils are given regular opportunities in English and reading lessons to develop the skills of reading and to explore a range of age-appropriate texts in depth. Books are carefully selected to reflect the school community and also explore diversity outside their own experiences. Texts are also used to develop empathy and understanding for how other children live/have lived. These lessons fit within the teaching sequence for writing where a core text is explored and authorial skills are taught.

In Yr2-6 majority of children take part in a Whole Class Guided Reading session with a teacher 4 times a week. Each week begins with a vocabulary focus session where children explore the meaning of Tier 2 vocabulary they will encounter in the text. The other sessions in the week are planned using the HFL Guided Reading Toolkit which has KS2 focus objectives and example activities. Retrieval skills are practiced in each session in a quick quiz/multiple choice style. Teachers read to the children and the pupils follow their own copies of the text. Teachers use a variety of methods to engage the pupils including echo reading, continuous reading and detailed discussion of the text. All children complete a short, written activity or discussion linked to the focus objective of the session.

In Reception and Yr1, children participate in small group reading sessions. These are lead by a teacher or TA. The books used are linked closely with their phonics level to promote engagement and to support the development of fluency. These sessions are planned using the HFL Guided Reading Booklet for EYFS/Yr1. In Year 1, pupils not in the small group session, will complete phonics activities linked with current learning supported by an adult.

Early reading is taught through the teaching of our SSP phonics scheme (Supersonic Phonic Friends). In Nursery, they are immersed in Firm Foundations which engages them the seven key aspects of speaking and listening. From Reception - Yr1 children participate in daily phonics sessions which is also reflected in the continuous provision in the setting. The scheme is based in rhyme and action and engages the children with the familiar characters and learning phrases and each session follows a predictable pattern. Children are identified early on if they are not 'keeping up' and pre and post sessions are done daily with these pupils. From early in the Autumn term, all children are given a reading book to take home. These books are matched with their phonic attainment and offer opportunities for children to practice word recognition and fluency. These texts are phonically decodable.

Across the school, those children who are not 'keeping up' with reading, received daily reading support 1:1 with an adult.

Each classroom, has an inviting, engaging library area which raises the profile and value of reading across the whole school. These are newly stocked with a range of diverse authors and characters to allow all children in our school community to 'see themselves in a book'. They include a wider range of non-fiction books. The book stock is added to throughout the year and books in each library are age appropriate including some books which will provide challenge and some that will enable less confident readers to engage with a book for pleasure. Children are encouraged to think about and develop their 'reading identity' with the support of adults in the classroom.

## **6. APPROACHES TO WRITING**

Across the school, each English unit is focused on a main text. These are plotted on the English overviews. The curriculum is designed to engage the children with a wide range of both classic and contemporary authors as well as a diverse range of characters and topics. English units follow the Teaching Sequence for Writing (appendix 1) where children are immersed in the text through reading and skills-based learning incorporating a range of incidental writing opportunities to suit a variety of interests and abilities. Children are encouraged to explore and emulate a range of writing styles, this includes the understanding and use of clear sentence structures, grammatical features as well as writing authorial intent. All units of work lead into at least one longer written outcome. Lessons are planned and adapted to the needs of each individual to enable them to progress either independently or with support, identified through assessment for learning.

Children in Nursery to Year 6 use the 'Writing Toolkits', which clarify writing expectations for each year group are used to develop greater self-regulation and editing approaches. This is a consistent approach which allows for new learning for each year group to be built in and reviewed during lessons by both the children and staff. In Nursery and Reception, this is guided by the class adults.

At Galley Hill we understand the importance of emergent writing to create independent writers further up the school. Practice in the Foundation Stage provides regular opportunity for emergent writing through adult led activities and during child-initiated learning.

In Reception, handwriting is taught through the Supersonic Phonic Friends' handwriting scheme.

The school has a standardised handwriting scheme (PenPals – Yr1 – 6) which involves a cursive script (cross-reference Presentation Policy). Children in Reception and Key Stage One participate in daily handwriting activities to support their development, including opportunities for developing fine motor skills. Children in Key Stage Two are taught handwriting at least three times weekly.

## **7. THE USE OF ICT**

The school is very well equipped for computing resources. Opportunities to use ICT to support teaching and learning in English will be planned for and used as appropriate. Teachers will be supported by the computing Subject Leader as necessary.

## **8. ASSESSMENT AND TARGET SETTING**

On-going Assessment for Learning is happening at all points in English and through the regular, detailed marking of work as outlined in the Marking Policy.

Work is assessed in line with the Assessment Policy. In Yr1 – 6 the Teaching Assessment Framework (TAF) for writing is used to assess termly and the HFL Guided Reading Toolkit is used for assessing reading using age-appropriate statements. Teachers report termly on Arbor, to the SLT, on the children's current level of attainment against the expectations of the National Curriculum 2014 for their year group. Within and across lessons, formative assessment is used to identify and address individual areas for development. This can be seen through next steps given in books, adult support, precision intervention and targeted interventions completed.

In Reception – Yr2, each pupil undertakes a termly phonics assessment. This is administered by their class teacher and assesses their understanding of the previous terms' phonics sounds. The assessment framework is provided by Supersonic Phonic Friends and comprises a detailed assessment of the child's ability to recognise, read and write each sound. Teachers input the data into a standardised assessment spreadsheet, and this is used to inform subsequent planning and interventions. While children are out of class with the teacher to complete this assessment, the remaining children participate in a phonics recap lessons taught by the class teaching assistant.

Children in Years 6 complete Statutory Assessment Tests in the Summer Term of each year. Children in the Foundation Stage are assessed in the Autumn term using the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) and they are assessed termly against the Early Learning Goals for Literacy Development and Communication and Language. In addition to this, children in Year 1 complete the National Phonics Screener. Children who have not passed the National Phonics Screener in Year 1, retake the test in Year 2.

The progress and attainment of children in English is discussed in termly Pupil Attainment and Progress Meetings held between the class teacher and Head and monitored throughout the school year by the English Subject Leader and members of the SLT (Senior Leadership Team).

### **9. ROLE OF SUBJECT LEADER**

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

- Monitoring and evaluating English provision across the school
- 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

### **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 identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. Their progress is discussed termly, during Pupil Attainment and Progress Meetings held between the Head and class teacher. More able children are identified and suitable learning challenges provided. Learning tasks are adapted appropriately to ensure there is a level of challenge and scaffolding for all children. The school planning format for English includes a section for SEND children to prompt teachers to ensure they are meeting the needs of those children in their class and refer to their My Target Trackers as appropriate.

### **INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES**

Quality First Teaching is expected to meet the needs of all children. Where children do need additional support, carefully selected Intervention Programmes for English are used, in line with the school provision map and Precision Intervention is used by teachers to meet specific learning needs.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background. Opportunities to promote Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural understanding are identified and utilised.

### **11. CONCLUSION**

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

Teaching and Learning Policy

Marking Policy

Presentation Policy

Home Learning Policy

Inclusion and Special Educational Needs Policy

Equalities Objectives

Health and Safety Policy

## **Appendix 1: Teaching Sequence for Writing**

Familiarisation with  
the text type





## Appendix 2: Literacy Provision Overview

	Foundation Stage	Keystage 1	Keystage 2
English Lesson	Daily adult led CL or L lesson, opportunities in child initiated learning and sharing of stories	60 minutes x 5 days	60 minutes x 5 days
Guided Reading	All Reception children begin weekly guided reading by the Autumn Half Term.	Year 1 – small group reading sessions linked to phonic ability. Year 2 – whole class guided reading sessions. Daily retrieval practice in sessions. Short writing activities completed with scaffolding/adaptations where needed.	Year 3 – 6 – whole class guided reading sessions. Daily retrieval practice in sessions. Short writing activities completed with scaffolding/adaptations where needed.  DEAR session weekly.
Home Reading	Reception: All children have a phonically decodable book from the school reading scheme. This is matched to their reading level. Reading at home is recorded in the Reading Record book.  All children have a 'library' book to share with parents at home.	All children have a phonically decodable book from the school reading scheme. This is matched to their reading level. Reading at home is recorded in the Reading Record book.	Children who need phonically decodable books are provided with a book that matches their current level. 'Free Readers' read a book either from home or from their classroom library (these are age appropriate). Reading is recorded in their Reading Record book.
Phonics	All children have a daily discrete phonics lesson following Supersonic Phonic Friends.	All children take part in a daily discrete phonics lesson as part of the English lesson. This following Supersonic Phonic Friends and the objectives from the National Curriculum 2014 (Yr1/2 spelling rules).	Phonics teaching as appropriate is completed through the revise section of the spelling lessons. Phonological needs for children who are having difficulties are addressed through personalised Wave 3 Interventions.
Spelling	High frequency words taught in phonics session.	High frequency words taught in phonics session and spelling teaching to meet the objectives of the National Curriculum as part of the phonics session as appropriate. Weekly phonics newsletters are sent home with activity suggestions for pupils to engage in at home.	Children complete three spelling lessons per week following objectives from the National Curriculum. We follow the Essentials Spelling scheme. We follow a Review, Teach, Practice, Apply approach.
Handwriting	Daily handwriting lesson for all children. Letter formation is taught in a variety of ways. Activities are available on a daily basis.	Daily handwriting lesson for all children using SSPF/Penpals scheme. Focus is on accurate letter formation and then moves onto joining. Other opportunities for practicing are used.	Children in Years 3, 4 5 and 6 receive taught handwriting lessons at least 3 times a week using the Penpals scheme. Children with specific needs in handwriting are provided with additional opportunities in small groups.

Speaking and Listening	Themed role-play areas are available. All activities are planned with opportunities for speaking and listening.	Speaking and Listening objectives are planned for in relevant English lessons. Themed role-play areas are available. Speaking and Listening opportunities permeate the whole curriculum.	Speaking and Listening objectives are planned for in relevant English lessons. Speaking and Listening opportunities permeate the whole curriculum.
Homework	Shared reading experiences. Weekly phonics newsletter	Shared reading experiences. Weekly phonics newsletter	Independent or shared reading experiences
Literacy Interventions	Talking partners Wellcomm Pre/Post phonics teaching Speech therapy EAL focused support	Following assessed need and school provision map. May include: Fischer Family Trust, precision teaching, personalised reading and writing interventions	Following assessed need and school provision map. May include: Precision teaching, personalised reading and writing intervention, Tricky words, Year 6 Booster Classes, Fischer Family Trust.
Class Library	Children borrow books from the extensive class library.	Children have access to the class library throughout the day.	Children have free access to the library for research and selecting non-fiction readers and fiction books in KS2.

## Appendix 3: Writing Toolkits

