



## ENGLISH POLICY

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## **VISION**

This policy sets to outline our approach to teaching, reflecting the aims and objectives of Greenleas in relation to the teaching and learning of English. It sets a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can operate. The policy should be read in conjunction with the National Curriculum (2014) and sets out the rationale for teaching each area, specifying the skills that will be developed for the majority of pupils in each year group.

## **INTENT**

Rich, high quality texts are at the heart of our teaching and a love for reading is promoted throughout the school. We aim to develop confident, resilient, enthusiastic and fluent readers through the development of their understanding of meaning conveyed at word, sentence and whole text level.

English is fundamental to all learning across the school curriculum. Through the English curriculum, we help children to develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively through written language and equip them with the skills to become lifelong learners. At Greenleas School we use the Talk for Writing Programme underpinned by the guidelines set out in the National Curriculum, and supplemented by appropriate resources as required to enhance the planning and teaching of English across the school.

We teach English to whole classes and all children are encouraged to believe that by working hard they can succeed. Lessons are planned based on formative assessment of what is already known and we include all children in learning writing conventions. At the planning stage, teachers consider what scaffolding may be required for children who may struggle to grasp concepts in the lesson and suitable further challenges for those who may grasp concepts rapidly. Decisions are not made about who these children may be prior to the lesson.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

The National Curriculum (2014) clearly states that teaching the English language is an essential role of schools and the Programme of Study is based on four areas;

- Spoken language,
- Reading,
- Writing,
- Grammar, spelling and punctuation.

The curriculum is divided into 3 Key stages; Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4) and Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6). By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study. As a lower school, Greenleas' focus is naturally upon Key Stage 1 and Lower Key Stage 2, however we do recognise expected progression across all phases and teachers therefore have a working understanding of the whole curriculum, not just the particular phase in which they teach.

### **Spoken language**

Developing strong speaking and listening skills is a fundamental part of learning and teaching English at Greenleas School. Teachers place a high emphasis on spoken language and plan for the discreet teaching of skills as well as incidental learning opportunities. Our approach is firmly based on teaching how language changes in different contexts. We believe children need to develop strong oracy skills to enable them to internalise language patterns and understand how language changes in different situations. This enables our children to understand and manipulate language for different purposes and audiences. To do this, teachers provide authentic contexts, giving children a variety of opportunities to use a range of spoken language, such as role play, drama, discussions and debates. Teachers model the use of Standard English masterfully, increasing children's repertoire of vocabulary and sophistication of spoken English.

Children should be 'taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently in Standard English' (National Curriculum p10). They are expected to:

- Justify ideas with reasons,
- Ask questions to check understanding,
- Develop vocabulary and build knowledge,
- Negotiate,

- Evaluate and build on the ideas of others,
- Select the appropriate register for effective communication,
- Give well-structured descriptions and explanations,
- Speculate, hypothesise and explore ideas,
- Organise their ideas prior to writing.

This focus on the spoken word gives children the ability to cope with written language by discovering:

- How it works,
- That meanings are shaped by lexical and syntactical choices,
- That language changes in different contexts,
- That there are differences between written and spoken English and standard and nonstandard,
- Rules of spoken language,
- Creative thinking and self-expression.

## Reading

**Phonics-** At Greenleas phonics is taught using the Bug Club scheme which is a systematic approach to phonics. The Bug Club Phonics programme follows the teaching sequence of letters and sounds and lessons are structured in the same way each day with an introduction, revisit, teach, practise and apply element to every session, providing the children with consistent routines that they can become familiar with. The scheme follows a programme where children are taught the phonemes (smallest unit of sound) and graphemes (number of letters that represent a sound in a word) through a series of phases. Each phonics lesson **reviews** previous sounds taught and then introduces a **new** sound. The children learn how this is used in a variety of words, are taught how to segment the sounds and then blend them to read a word and then apply this understanding to spelling words. Nonsense words (alien words) are also taught as part of the programme which helps ensure our children are ready for the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check. Throughout the programme, teachers supplement the provided materials and embed the taught skills through a range of activities that they have identified to be successful. The programme is highly interactive and uses videos, interactive games and captivating reading through decodable books. This helps to secure essential phonic knowledge and skills as well as ensuring the lessons are fun, interactive and engaging.

**Early Reading Decodable Reading Books-** It is crucial to allow children the opportunity to practise their blending skills and to consolidate their knowledge learnt in each phonics session. Alongside our phonics teaching, we therefore use the Bug Club Phonics decodable reading books that have been written specifically to match the order in which grapheme-phoneme correspondences are introduced in class. These books are fully decodable, which means that every word in the book can be read using just the children's developing phonics knowledge. Children are sent home with two reading books per week, one for practising current sounds and one for revising previous sounds and to aid fluency. We ensure that the children's decodable books only contain sounds and words that have been taught to them, within our scheme. Not only does this allow children to embed and secure their phonics knowledge, but it also allows them to experience success and reading fluency. This in turn builds their confidence, motivation and enthusiasm for reading. Home Phonics packs are also sent out half termly to all Reception and Year 1 children to help assist Reading and learning Phonics at home.

To promote a love of reading, we:

- Read aloud to children to introduce them to new authors and styles of writing,
- Encourage and model reading for pleasure and establish an appreciation and love of reading,
- Ensure that reading is made fun by teachers and other adults, providing excitement and inspiring the imagination,
- Establish and develop a varied range of texts in the classroom through our curriculum texts as well as our class readers,
- Hold an annual World Book Day event,
- Work with parents and carers to promote reading at home

Classes throughout school have a weekly whole class reading session during which children engage collaboratively in purposeful reading activities with a teacher. These are the teachers' key opportunity to assess children's reading and to plan which skills they need to develop next. Planning is informed by curriculum objectives. We believe that well-

planned reading activities are more effective in developing children's reading skills than simply ensuring that every child reads aloud from a 'reading book' every day. We do, however, give all children opportunities to read aloud and expect parents and carers to support this activity at home.

## Writing

The National Curriculum states that children should;

- develop the stamina and skills to write at length,
- use accurate spelling and punctuation,
- be grammatically correct.

Handwriting - children learn and are then expected to apply correct letter formations and early joins by the end of Year 1. In Year 2, joined handwriting becomes the focus and most writing should be joined correctly and consistently across all written work. When this is evident, children are rewarded with a pencil of perfection. In KS2 children learn to join all of their handwriting and are expected to apply this to all written work. When this is achieved, a pen licence is awarded. In KS1 children have 3 discreet handwriting lessons per week, in KS2 the children have 2 longer handwriting sessions.

Spelling – 'Spell it Out' is used in Years 2-4 to constantly revisit and revise previously taught spelling patterns. Children have a 30-minute 'Spell It Out' Lesson each week, as well as a 'Spell it Out Display' in every classroom where the children add spellings they have found. New spellings patterns are taught using Read Write Inc. (RWI). RWI activities are used in Years 2-4 to teach the spelling patterns specified in the National Curriculum and each unit is taught over a two-week period in KS2 and one-week period in KS1. Each child also has a Focus 5 (KS2) or Focus 3 (Year 2) which are spellings that each individual child needs to focus on based on their Cold Write. Spelling patterns are also shared with parents via planners and words from the current spelling patterns are loaded onto 'Spelling Shed' for the children to practise online.

Composition – 'Talk for Writing' (TFW) is followed by all pupils in Early Years to Year 4. TFW is an approach to teaching writing that encompasses a three-stage pedagogy: 'imitation' (where pupils learn and internalise texts, to identify transferrable ideas and structures), 'innovation' (where pupils use these ideas and structures to co-construct new versions with their teachers), and 'invention' (where teachers help pupils to create original texts independently). These tasks aim to improve writing ability by giving pupils an understanding of the structure and elements of written language.

## Planning

Our expectations are:

- Yearly overviews are used to create long term plans which outline the 4 – 5 week blocks of teaching,
- 3-5 week blocks of teaching plan lesson by lesson,
- Planning ensures coverage of all curriculum objectives for that year group during the year,
- Learning Objectives (generated prior to the lesson) are evident in all lesson plans,
- Marking is directly linked to the Learning Objective, and children's next steps identified from Cold Writes (see Feedback and Marking policy),
- Following Hot Writes, writing is edited using a 'blue for you' pen or pencil,
- Skills taught in English are reinforced and embedded throughout all other areas of learning; this is evidenced in all work,
- A high level of presentation is expected across all subjects.

## Learning Environment

Each classroom has:-

- the **Genre** of writing displayed e.g. Narrative – Finding tale
- a **Toolkit** that has been co-created with the children using TfW toolkits to scaffold
- a **Memory Jogger**
- Pieces of **Shared writing**
- **Flipcharts created within lessons** e.g. idea generation, spine poems, boxing up, synonyms
- **Key vocabulary** – through planned vocabulary activities, shared writing or planned key vocabulary to embed in their writing

- TfW key **Sign Movements** (for conjunctions and openers) created with the children's faces

## **ASSESSMENT**

Assessment is regarded as an integral part of teaching and learning and is a continuous process. Assessments are used to inform planning and complete the evaluation cycle. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to assess all children in their class. Lessons are structured with opportunities for Assessment for Learning throughout. This enables teachers to evaluate what has been learnt, review success criteria and address misconceptions. Opportunities for peer/self-assessment are included so children understand what they have attained and what their next steps are.

Children complete one 'Cold Write' and one 'Hot Write' in each 3 – 5-week cycle of writing. Additional assessment information collected during lessons (AFL) endorses teachers' judgements.

## **REPORTING**

Children's progress, achievements and attainment are reported at parents' consultations during the autumn and spring terms and also twice a year through a written report. Reading and Writing outcomes at the end of KS1 are assessed against the Interim Teacher Assessment Framework and are reported nationally and to the Local Authority. Outcomes at the end of Year 4 are also reported to the Local Authority.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Subject Leaders are responsible for improving the standards of learning and teaching English, ensuring: -

- breadth, balance and coverage across the English curriculum,
- quality learning environments,
- keeping practice up to date and taking the lead in policy development,
- auditing and supporting colleagues with CPD, following outcomes from planning and work scrutiny,
- purchasing and organising resources,
- reporting to Governors and the Senior Leadership Team.

## **Adaptive Learning**

We aim to be as inclusive of all pupils in lessons making reasonable adjustments and adaptations to best meet their needs. Where appropriate, a range of catch up interventions are available to support children with gaps in their learning. Any children with an EHCP where specific support is identified for English this will be put in place both in the classroom and through interventions if applicable.

Children who regularly grasp concepts rapidly and have been assessed as having mastered objectives from their year group may be identified by their class teacher as More Able and Talented. Planning for these children will focus on developing breadth and depth rather than acceleration and/or covering content more quickly.