



Leamington Federation Sydenham Primary School and Lighthorne Heath Primary School English Policy Statement 2018/19

Aims

Across the Leamington Federation, we follow the 2014 National Curriculum and the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

We aim to:

- Build on our children's experiences of language learning, recognising their individuality, taking into account their personal experiences and acknowledging differences in their linguistic and cultural background.
- Help our children to use language effectively, to listen with understanding, to express themselves clearly in speech and in writing, to enjoy reading and listening to stories and to use books and other texts for research and information.
- Ensure our children are stimulated to use speaking, listening, reading and writing for valid and worthwhile purposes.
- Provide opportunities for our children to be read to daily from a variety of media.
- Acknowledge the essential role parents have in the development of their children's language learning and to encourage them to take an active role in this learning.
- Give all our children equal opportunities to be equipped with the essential learning skills of literacy, irrespective of ability, race and gender.
- Ensure we provide appropriately differentiated tasks to suit the needs of all our children.
- Make appropriate assessments and keep meaningful records to ensure progression and continuity.
- Provide a wide variety of tasks and situations within a lively and purposeful environment.

Teaching and Learning

In the Leamington Federation, we realise the importance of careful planning to ensure that:

- Each child receives Quality First Literacy teaching.
- Literacy work permeates the whole of the curriculum and is on-going throughout the year, with frequent opportunities for pupils to write at length.
- Literacy skills are achieved through all curriculum subjects.
- Spelling, punctuation and grammar are taught and practised across all learning.

- Phonics is taught on a daily basis in EYFS and KS1 and interventions are in place for individual children to catch up with phonics in KS2.
- Pupils receive developmental feedback (which may be oral or written) and act upon it to ensure they make rapid progress.
- A balance is reached in terms of speaking, listening, reading and writing.
- Opportunities are included for whole class, paired, group and individual learning.
- Each child's needs are appropriately met by differentiation, to ensure a broad, balanced literacy entitlement is received.
- Additional adult support is given, where appropriate, for children who have general and specific learning difficulties, including support for pupils learning English as an additional language (EAL).
- Opportunities are given for children to perform to others and to experience a range of live performances.
- Staff receive high quality professional development to refresh their skills and to keep them abreast of developments nationally in Literacy teaching.

Link with Royal Shakespeare Company

Our children are benefiting from an enhanced involvement with the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC). This partnership presents the opportunity for pupils to develop their literacy skills through dramatic engagement.

Exposure to complex language and themes develops the children's inference skills and develops their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

Drama develops confidence and an understanding of purpose, audience and performance. Children have opportunities to enjoy a range of drama experiences in the wider curriculum as well as in the RSC-supported work.

The children's experiences through the RSC partnership provide a strong base for a life-long understanding and love of the arts.

Teaching and learning are enriched by:

- Staff Professional Development opportunities with RSC Education practitioners exploring how rehearsal room approaches to Shakespeare can transform attitudes in the classroom
- Access to a local and national network of schools, teachers and theatre professionals committed to making Shakespeare's work vivid, accessible and enjoyable for children and young people
- The chance to take part in a national festival of work by young people
- Opportunities to contribute to a national programme of research and publications
- A whole-school Shakespeare project, including access to live broadcasts
- Experiencing high quality performances of Shakespeare's work in theatres and in school
- Pupils taking ownership and the lead on whole-school projects through the ambassador programme
- Opportunities to write across a range of genres with empathy for character, plot and theme
- Collaboration with local schools to support and embed Shakespeare across the curriculum locally.

Speaking and Listening

We teach our children to speak with confidence, clarity and fluency. They learn to use forms of speech appropriate for a variety of audiences. We provide a range of situations and groupings to ensure a progression of increasing complexity.

Our children are taught to listen with understanding, to respond appropriately, making relevant comments, and to listen to the reactions of others. We provide a range of ways to promote good speaking and listening skills e.g. recording devices, iPad apps and the examples of other children and adults within school.

Talk is valued highly in the classroom as a tool for learning. Every pupil has a weekly Talk Partner with whom they share and develop ideas. This also helps to develop good listening skills. All pupils are assessed in the autumn term of Reception, and interventions are used to support pupils with speaking and listening skills below age related expectations, taking into account the needs of those children who arrive in school speaking little or no English.

Talk home learning is used to encourage the involvement of parents in developing their child's speech and language acquisition, in preparation for writing in school.

Through Talk for Writing, pupils learn by heart a range of traditional tales, story genres and non-fiction model texts, as a basis for their writing. They use actions and text mapping to support their learning of grammatical structures and new vocabulary. They are given opportunities to perform these with expression and meaning, and to perform to others.

The *talkingpartners@primary* intervention is designed to improve the way children communicate across the curriculum, enabling them to be independent and skilful speakers and listeners. It is a targeted, time-limited (10 weeks) intervention led by specially trained Teaching Assistants, with groups of three or four children.

Children who speak other languages in addition to English are tracked on our EAL Proficiency in English register, and their language skills are recognised as a strength and resource that underpins their development of English.

Reading

Our children are taught to read fluently and with understanding through a range of material. The aim is that they will enjoy reading for entertainment, for interest and for information. They learn to appreciate the necessity of reading for learning in most areas of the curriculum and for their personal lives.

In our school we provide a range of reading material including 'Big Books', e-books, phonic readers, sets of books suitable for Guided Reading and individual fiction and non fiction texts, in order to meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and to support the needs of every child.

Each class in the school has a collection of books within their reading corner and access to the school library and annual book fair. Picture books are used with all age groups to encourage inference and deduction using the pictures to hypothesise about character, plot and emotion.

Pupils participate in:

- Weekly Guided Reading with a teacher, plus, where possible, a second session with a teaching assistant for children identified as talented and gifted or with an EAL or special educational need.
- Paired reading with a Talk Partner in class.
- Whole class reading led by the teacher using the interactive whiteboard or visualiser.
- 1-1 reading with a teacher, teaching assistant, trained volunteer or trained paired reader from an older class.
- In Reception, Friday morning share-a-book sessions, and in KS1, termly share-a-book sessions.
- Frequent library sessions where pupils can choose their own books to take home to read or share.
- Opportunities to choose books from the classroom reading area and, in EYFS and KS1, to enjoy using story sacks and participating in role play.
- Pupils in Year 5 can volunteer to train as Paired Readers to work with younger children to give them twice-weekly extra reading support; where possible, partners share a home language, so they can use this to build strong comprehension skills.

Children in Year 1, with low attainment in reading, work with our Every Child A Reader teacher to enable swift progress to catch up with their peers. All our Teaching Assistants are trained to lead *boostingreading@primary*, a ten-week 1:1 intervention to boost reading accuracy, fluency and comprehension for children with lower attainment.

Writing

Our children learn to write for a range of purposes and to organise the content according to the task. They are given opportunities to use styles of writing appropriate to the intended readership.

All staff participate in training in Pie Corbett's 'Talk for Writing' approach. Through repetition, they learn the rhythm, language, sentence structure, and organisation of each model text. Actions, and story maps are used to support their memorization of the text, and the punctuation.

They 'box up the text' to understand how it has been constructed. This gives them a deep understanding of the oral language, which then supports the development of their independent writing, through the teacher-led process of 'imitation', 'innovation' and then 'independent application'. Pupils complete a 'cold' and 'hot' task to measure their progress.

Lessons build the skills that pupils need in order to write in a range of genres, from different perspectives and for different audiences and purposes. There are regular opportunities to apply skills through pieces of extended writing and pupils are encouraged to edit and improve their work. Younger pupils, or those with a special educational need, are offered scaffolded writing frames to enable them to write independently.

Pupils are also given frequent opportunities to write at length in other subjects from a range of

perspectives and in a variety of styles.

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

Spelling

In EYFS and KS1, children have daily phonics sessions following the Letters and Sounds programme. All pupils in Y1 undertake the statutory phonics screen. Those who do not reach the required level have further phonics teaching and are re-assessed during Year 2.

Children are taught to investigate spellings, to look for patterns and investigate word families and to relate spellings to the sounds used to say words (using morphology, etymology, phonology and orthography), in order to develop accuracy, confidence and understanding in spelling words. They are expected to monitor their own spellings, and to check words they are unsure about.

The teaching of spelling follows the National Curriculum programme of study, and is linked to the exercises in the PenPals handwriting programme.

Punctuation and Grammar

Punctuation and grammar skills are taught explicitly during Literacy lessons. Pupils are then given frequent opportunities to identify and comment upon punctuation marks and grammatical structures when scrutinising texts in all subjects. They are also given regular opportunities to apply these skills when writing.

Regular dictation sessions allow children to practise spelling, punctuation and grammar. The session is reactive and responds to particular needs within a class, offering the opportunity to consolidate skills taught and to close gaps in understanding.

Handwriting

We use the Penpals handwriting scheme to support our high expectations of presentation. Neat, clear handwriting is valued because it enables the writer to self-monitor what has been written, because it enhances pupils' self-esteem, and because fluent joined handwriting helps children to learn spellings more easily.

Penpals uses the same letter formation as the Sassoon font that is used in many of the children's reading books, for displays and for resources that the children use in class. The scheme uses interactive fine- and gross-motor warm-ups and practice exercises. From Reception, the children are taught the 'letter families' that are each formed with similar starting movements:

Long-legged giraffe: l i t u j y

Curly caterpillar: c a d o s g q e f

One-armed robot: r b n h m k p

Zig-zag monster: z v w x

Children who have difficulties with pencil control are given extra support, so that they do not learn inefficient habits that will interfere with fluent writing later on.

In Year 1, when children are confidently forming letters correctly, they begin to learn some of the easier letter joins. Through Year 2 and Year 3 children learn to join more letters, and when it is more efficient

not to join. Further through KS2, children develop a fluent and more personalised style.

Joined handwriting is encouraged as soon as children are ready, as it supports fluency, and also confident spelling. Guidelines are used to support consistent letter formation, with ascenders and descenders positioned appropriately.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Pupil progress is recorded half-termly on iTrack. It is monitored half-termly by the Senior Leadership team, who meet with class teachers to discuss individual and group progress.

Writing is moderated against the National Curriculum end of year expectations. Staff moderate across the federation and across the local consortium.

Quality and quantity of writing, in English lessons and across the curriculum, is assessed through work scrutinies, book trawls and informal drop-ins.

Reading progress is assessed against the National Curriculum end of year expectations by gathering evidence of reading skills in guided reading and across the wider curriculum.

Home/School Reading Diaries are kept to facilitate communication with parents/carers and to monitor progress.

Records are kept of Guided Reading sessions.

Phonics attainment is tracked termly for all children not yet securely using phase 5 phonics in their writing/reading, including those in KS2.

National Testing

Children in the Reception Class are assessed by their teachers against the EYFS Early Learning Goals. In the summer term, children in Year 2 and Year 6 take the national statutory assessments, and Year 1 pupils take the statutory Phonics Screening Check.

Equal Opportunities

At Sydenham and Lighthorne Heath Primary Schools, we undertake to provide equality of access to all aspects of the curriculum to all members of the school community. Staff will endeavour to help all children to reach their full potential irrespective of race, gender, age or ability in accordance with the school's Equal Opportunities and Inclusion policies

Race Equality Statement

At Sydenham and Lighthorne Heath Primary Schools we offer a curriculum that reflects our cultural diversity. We teach children to be aware of the diversity of cultures within our schools, and to see them as a positive factor that enriches the experiences of the whole school community. We recognise that different languages are spoken and understood by staff and children in our school, and we value those languages and the impact that fluent first languages have on the development of children's English learning.

Review

This statement is part of a working document and therefore is open to change and restructuring as and when the need arises.

This policy was ratified: [March 2018](#) and will be reviewed: [September 2019](#)

Signed by:

Head teacher: Juliette Westwood

Chair of Governors: Jim Lyne