

English Policy

New End Primary School

Date Amended: Autumn Term 2023

Review Date: Autumn Term 2024

Rationale

This policy should be read alongside the 2014 National Curriculum, our English curriculum map and New End's Handwriting and Marking policy.

The National Curriculum clearly states that teaching the English language is an essential role of the primary school. Literacy is a fundamental life skill as it develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes. Through English lessons, our children are taught to express themselves creatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry, drama and non-fiction texts. They use their knowledge, skills and understanding of language to speak and write in a variety of situations.

Introduction

'English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach 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. The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the written and spoken word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.' **The National Curriculum 2014**

Aims

- To provide a language rich environment that promotes a culture of reading and writing.
- To support the children in the acquisition of a wide vocabulary
- To develop in children the confident and effective use of language to allow them to discuss their understanding and ideas and to communicate appropriately and sensitively to a particular audience.
- For children to learn to listen to and value the views of others.
- To develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- To teach reading skills throughout the school, that develop children's ability to read fluently and to understand and enjoy a wide variety of texts.
- To ensure that children develop the confidence and skills to write well for a range of purposes and audiences.
- To equip children with the tools – spelling, grammar, handwriting and punctuation – to allow them to communicate clearly, in writing.
- For children to be able to plan, draft, edit and reflect on their writing effectively

Governor and Staff Responsibility

Role of the Governing Body:

- ensure that there is a link governor responsible for English, who will meet regularly with the literacy subject leader;
- ensure that arrangements for the teaching of English throughout the school are regularly reviewed and agreed.

Role of the Headteacher

- Ensuring INSET, when appropriate;
- Providing a budget for sufficient resources;
- Enabling the English Leader of Teaching and Learning to work alongside other staff, where appropriate;
- Liaising with staff about record keeping and assessment;
- Ensure the monitoring of teaching and learning through lesson observations and intake of English outcomes across the school;
- Reporting to Governors, where appropriate, about the development of English and progress made.

Role of the English Leader of Teaching and Learning:

- support colleagues and help develop expertise and confidence in the teaching of English throughout the school;
- keep up to date with developments in English teaching;
- encourage use of ICT as appropriate in teaching/motivating pupils;
- monitor the quality of teaching of English at all key stages;
- use the English budget to buy appropriate resources and equipment;
- collect and maintain resources and ensure accessibility;
- contribute to in-service training of staff.

Role of the Class Teacher:

- ensure English is taught in line with the National Curriculum;
- record and assesses the children's outcomes in line with agreed English procedures;
- report on children's progress in English in annual reports;
- attend INSET, when necessary;
- liaise with and work alongside the English Leader of Teaching and Learning, when appropriate.

Teaching and learning

Teachers plan in units towards a written outcome with a clear audience and purpose. Wherever possible, writing is either linked to study of a book or is linked to the termly class topic and, therefore, the wider curriculum. There is a balance between fiction, non-fiction and poetry (see the English Curriculum Map) and there is an emphasis on whole texts rather than extracts and worksheets. We have high expectations of all children and every child is given the opportunity to achieve the highest possible standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

There are a wide range of abilities in every class and teachers seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We have high expectations of all children and as such every child is given their fullest opportunity to achieve the highest possible standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

The format of English lessons varies according to the age of the children, teaching and learning styles, and the genre being studied. Teachers seek to be creative and to inspire enthusiasm through the use of well written, engaging texts and topics which are relevant to the children's interests and experiences.

English lessons are delivered as units of work lasting between 2 and 5 weeks. They generally culminate in a high quality, motivating written outcome that has a clear purpose and audience within the school or wider community. We study a balance of narrative, non-fiction and poetry across the year, and ensure that children will encounter the full range of genres by the end of Y6. In an English lesson children may experience; a whole-class focused word or sentence activity, a whole-class reading or writing activity, a guided group or independent activity, and a whole-class session to review progress and learning. Lessons usually begin with a phonics, spelling or grammar based starter, linked to the main focus of the lesson where possible. Children use ICT in English lessons where it enhances their learning: commonly as a source of information and a way of enabling them to present their completed work effectively.

Oracy

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be taught to speak clearly and to convey ideas confidently in Standard English. They should be taught to:

- ask relevant questions
- develop their vocabulary
- articulate and justify answers
- evaluate and build on the viewpoints of others
- speculate, hypothesise and explore ideas
- participate in discussions, presentations, performances and role play
- maintain and monitor the interest of listeners
- select and use appropriate registers

We believe that oracy (speaking and listening) skills are of the same importance as reading and writing. These skills need to be taught explicitly, practised often and used across all contexts of the school. We use exploratory talk for the children to discuss new learning and create their own understanding of topics and situations and presentational talk when students share their knowledge with others.

We teach our children to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style to the audience and purpose. They learn to listen and respond to literature and develop the skills needed to participate effectively in a range of situations. Communication and Language is one of three 'Prime Areas' in the EYFS and is a building block upon which further progress through the curriculum depends. Interactive teaching strategies are used throughout the school to engage and inspire children, in response to reading, and in preparation for writing.

Ways in which we do this include:

- recounting events and experiences
- retelling stories
- performing/reciting poems
- talk partner work
- whole class discussions across the curriculum

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- talk partner work
- whole class discussions across the curriculum
- guided reading
- storytelling
- book reviews/recommendations
- philosophy enquiries
- school council
- class assemblies

We recognise the need for all pupils to speak, read and write Standard English whilst acknowledging the importance of our children's own dialect or home language. It is our policy to model and promote Standard English in both speaking and writing.

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Reading

Our priority is both the teaching of reading skills and enjoyment of literature, enabling children to become confident, lifelong, readers. Our aim is for all children to be mature, independent readers by the end of Year 6.

As children begin to read, in Reception and Year 1 we focus on decoding, primarily through the systematic teaching of synthetic phonics through *Little Wandle* and sight vocabulary in the context of a broad and rich curriculum. As children build fluency, comprehension strategies become our main area of focus and questioning looks at the skills related to the content domains. There is a real focus on vocabulary - understanding words in context - throughout the school. A range of approaches are used to teach reading including whole class reading, guided reading and 1:1 discussions.

The National Curriculum for English and the 2021 Reading Framework places reading at its core, particularly reading for pleasure. It asserts that all children must be encouraged to read widely across a range of subjects for information and enjoyment. We actively promote and value reading as an enjoyable activity and a life skill.

Ways in which we do this include:

- choosing engaging and challenging core texts as the basis for units of work
- keeping classroom book corners well stocked and up to date with a broad range of high quality material
- reading aloud and discussing books
- book recommendations
- using a wide variety of methods to introduce children to different books -e.g. peer recommendations, book tasting sessions, book bingo, reading adventures and the Reading Road Map
- visiting the library and book shops
- arranging author visits and workshops
- planning opportunities for children to use books, laptops and ipads for research in other areas of the curriculum

The curriculum divides reading skills into 2 aspects; word reading/decoding and comprehension. We recognise that both of these skills are essential to success and fully support their acquisition through various methods. Progression in reading starts with the systematic teaching of synthetic phonics through Little Wandle *Letters and Sounds* and sight vocabulary in the context of a broad and rich curriculum. As pupils develop reading fluency throughout KS1, teachers introduce a range of comprehension strategies which allow pupils to engage with texts in a variety of ways. All children listen to and discuss a wide range of stories, poems, plays and information texts. The daily teaching of phonics using the Little Wandle programme ceases at the end of Year1. However the assessment tool is used throughout the school to identify children who need further phonic teaching. The focus of teaching reading at KS2 is on deepening comprehension of characters, events and themes and discussing responses to texts.

Whilst teachers model reading, including book talk and strategies for the retrieval of information in shared reading, guided reading is the main vehicle for the explicit and direct, differentiated teaching of reading comprehension. In guided reading, texts are chosen to match the ability of the group whilst retaining an element of challenge.

KS2 guided reading sessions take place outside of the English lesson and we plan for independent reading activities to provide practice, develop personal response to texts and reading for pleasure, for those groups who don't have an adult working with them.

Children in KS1 have guided reading as part of their English lesson in addition to 1:1 reading with the class teacher on a regular basis.

Reading at home is a crucial part of reading development and as such parents should share a book with younger children for at least 10 minutes a day. Picture books are lent to children in the Nursery on a daily basis. Each child has a home-school reading record that parents and teachers use to share information about a child's reading. In Reception and Year 1 children take home the decodable book they have read with the class teacher through the week and a book selected for pleasure. Children in KS2 choose and change their own books when necessary and are expected to read daily for at least 20 minutes in

Phase 2, and 30 minutes in Phase 3, independently or with an adult. Phase 2 and 3 children complete their reading record themselves every day. We encourage all children to share their reading with adults at home, regardless of their ability or level as this aids the development of comprehension and supports a lifelong love of reading.

Writing

The National Curriculum splits writing into 2 elements; transcription (spelling and handwriting – see separate policies) and composition (articulating and structuring ideas). Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription and therefore we develop our children's competencies in these two dimensions simultaneously.

The curriculum states that pupils should:

- develop positive attitudes and the stamina and skills to write in a range of forms
- write for a variety of audiences and purposes
- build a varied and rich vocabulary and an increasing range of sentence structures
- use accurate spelling and punctuation
- be grammatically correct
- use and understand the correct grammatical terminology
- plan, draft, evaluate, edit and proof read
- read aloud and perform what they have written using intonation

At New End, we look for ways to inspire and motivate pupils so that they see themselves as writers. We establish the purpose and audience for writing and make the learning journey explicit so that children know why they are studying a particular text type, the skills and knowledge they will develop, and what the expected outcome will be.

We provide a range of writing opportunities and different levels of support including; shared, modelled, guided, collaborative, paired and independent writing. Children write in a variety of genres and forms, in different curriculum areas and using a wide range of stimuli. Writing is usually modelled and success criteria is shared or agreed with the children before they start writing to ensure they know what they need to do to be successful. Children in KS2 take responsibility for assessing whether they have achieved the criteria and what they need to do to improve their writing.

They are also taught to plan, draft, edit and publish their writing. All classrooms also display examples of writing by children who have been particularly successful and/or have made a real effort. From the summer term in Year 1, every child has an individual writing target which is constantly referred to and they are encouraged to review their progress against. Children are expected to apply their target in their writing across the curriculum. Each child from Year 2 upwards has a 1:1 writing conference with their teacher twice a year to discuss their progress and next steps.

Planning

Teachers use the CLPE Power of Reading resource to support detailed planning sequences. Recommended high quality texts are assigned to year groups and regularly updated to engage learners in English lessons from early years to Year 6. Detailed teaching plans for these texts, develop readers and writers and include contextualised teaching of phonics, spelling and grammar.

Marking

Marking is a crucial part of the assessment process to inform next steps and for providing constructive feedback to children. In accordance with our marking policy, teachers choose the form of marking that is most appropriate for each piece of work. It may be verbal, summative or formative feedback – see marking policy. Our marking code is gradually introduced from Year 2 to encourage reflection and independence. When we quality mark a piece of writing, we do so in relation to the learning objective and success criteria. Green highlighter is used to highlight areas of children's work that is particularly successful and yellow highlighter is used to demonstrate where the writing needs to be improved. Developmental comments are given and children are expected to respond to marking clearly demonstrating improvements made as a result of the teacher's feedback. Teachers regularly plan time in the following lesson to allow for this process to happen.

Assessment

We assess reading and writing from three aspects; short, medium and long term.

Assessment for learning is an integral part of each lesson and is used to adjust and inform future planning. Assessments are made from observations, discussions with the children and marking against learning objectives and success criteria in KS1 and 2. Informal medium term assessments take place at the beginning and end of units of work to measure progress of learning outcomes.

In the longer term, children in KS1 and 2 are assessed at the end of each term and a judgement is made based on whether they are working towards the expected standard, have reached the expected standard or are working at greater depth within the expected standard for their year group. Reading judgements are based on evidence from regular informal assessments made during guided and 1:1 reading sessions in conjunction, the reading the child does at home and with reading test papers taken by all children in Years 2 – 6. Children's writing is assessed in a range of genres with varying degrees of support throughout each term. All children take the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1.

Equal Opportunities and Racial Equality

The needs of most children in English lessons can be met through appropriate differentiation. Teachers should aim to ensure all make progress and gain positively from lessons. EAL students should receive appropriate support as well as those who may have experienced an interrupted education. Flexible groupings will take account of pupils' diverse cultural backgrounds. Cultural mixing and development of cultural identities aims to promote racial equality and provide greater access to the curriculum.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

All teachers will have in their class some children whose progress warrants special consideration. Their difficulties may have physical, sensory, behavioural, emotional or neurological causes, or may stem from a legacy of poor learning that inhibits their current learning.

Teachers should aim to include all these pupils fully in English lessons.

Gifted and Talented

Children demonstrating a particular ability in English should continue to be supported in achieving higher standards through extension activities provided in lessons and extra curricular activities. The school should also ensure that where offered, children with particular aptitudes should have access to outside opportunities.

Pupils with English as an Additional Language

At New End we have a large number of children who have English as an Additional Language. These children must all be encouraged and assisted to reach their potential in English.

Reporting to parents

Teachers share reading and writing attainment at parent evenings and the child's end of year report provides details of their progress as well as their final level for the year. Teachers will also talk to parents at other times of the year if either party has concerns.

Monitoring and Evaluating Policy and Practice

This policy will be reviewed annually by the English Leader of Teaching and Learning and discussed with staff, parents, governors and children to consult on future developments as widely as possible. The most recent review of the policy was in September 2023. The next review will take place in Autumn Term 2024.

Monitoring of the standard of children's work, the progress they make and the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English subject leader but will often be

undertaken with other members of the senior leadership team. Monitoring in English takes place at 3 times a year and may include; work and planning scrutiny, learning walks, observations, talking to children and staff, and data analysis of standards and progress. Feedback will be made to staff. A limited number of lessons will also be observed by the English Leader of Teaching and Learning across the key stages so that they have an understanding of the quality of teaching and learning in English in the school.

Information collected during monitoring is used to inform future planning and development priorities.