

WEST TOWN LANE ACADEMY

WHERE LEARNING IS AN ADVENTURE

ENGLISH POLICY

Children's rights and responsibilities:

Article 12 Children have the right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account.

Article 13 Children have the right to get and to share information, as long as the information is not damaging to themselves or others.

Article 28 Children should have the right to a primary education, which should be free. Wealthy countries should help poorer countries achieve this. Discipline in schools should respect children's human dignity. Young people should be encouraged to reach the highest level of education they are capable of.

Article 29 Education should develop each child's personality and talents to the full. It should encourage children to respect their parents, and their own and other cultures.

Rationale:

At West Town Lane Academy we see the teaching of English as encapsulating a large area of the curriculum. It is the foundation for most of the learning that takes place in our school and is taught as a subject and as part of many other areas of the curriculum.

English encompasses all aspects of communication and provides opportunities to promote pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

It can make learning an adventure, empower the learner and is essential for independent learning and most aspects of every day life.

Aim:

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum and our aim is that all children, to the best of their ability, will:

- Develop the necessary skills to use the English language confidently, appropriately and accurately.
- Communicate meaningfully and effectively with others in both spoken and written forms.
- Develop a positive attitude towards all of the skills of English.
- Produce work of the highest quality in content and presentation.
- Develop the confidence to apply knowledge to unfamiliar situations and solve problems in a range of situations.
- Be able to write effectively for a range of audiences and purposes.
- Apply and develop their computing skills to support their learning.
- Adopt the principle that intelligence is not fixed and that children will challenge themselves continuously to strive to achieve mastery of the English curriculum.

Objectives:

- To provide a stimulating environment in which all the skills of English can thrive.
- To motivate children by using first hand experience as this often leads to rich language experience.
- To follow the guidelines set out in the national curriculum post 2014.
- To achieve the standards set out on target tracker to reach the expected standard in their relevant key stage.
- To support pupil premium / other children are presently below age related expectations and those with English as an additional language, and have suitable provision and challenge for AIM children.
- To enable all children to make sufficient progress from early years through to the end of KS2

National curriculum rationale:

Aims

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- ☐ read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- ☐ develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- ☐ develop the skill of reading aloud as well as by themselves
- ☐ learn to make inferences while reading, making judgements that reflect their personal experiences

- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Spoken language

The national curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers should therefore ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills. Pupils should develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They must be assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others and teachers should ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils should also be taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

All pupils should be enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils should be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They should have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.

Statutory requirements which underpin all aspects of spoken language across the six years of primary education form part of the national curriculum. These are reflected and contextualised within the reading and writing domains which follow.

Reading

Children are expected to read 3 times per week at home, with a comment recorded in their Reading Record. Children begin with a 'Phonics Bug' book in nursery and reception. Children are also given a colour banded book which supports comprehension and inference skills. Children then move through the phonics and colour banded books throughout their schooling, until they are a 'free reader'. Children will take part in a whole class guided reading comprehension session once a week and be heard 2 times per term by a teacher, TA or parent volunteer. This will be monitored regularly by subject and phase leaders. 'Frequent readers' will be identified by class teachers, who may be struggling readers for a variety of reasons. These children will be heard read weekly by a member of school staff, in addition to the normal reading expectations.

Reading in the EYFS is taught daily. Children are taught through discreet comprehension and phonics lessons, as well as daily cross curricular lessons and opportunities. Children are exposed to reading opportunities in their child initiated learning at all times and will be heard read once a week by a member of school staff.

The programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of two dimensions:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading).

It is essential that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why phonics should be emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners (i.e. unskilled readers) when they start school.

- Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction. All pupils must be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Reading widely and often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious young minds. It is essential that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education.

Writing

Writing in the EYFS is taught daily. Children are taught through discreet phonics lessons and English lessons, as well as daily cross curricular lessons and opportunities. Children are exposed to writing opportunities in their child initiated learning at all times, and will complete one formal writing piece of work in their red book weekly.

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading:

- ☐ transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- ☐ composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

It is essential that teaching develops pupils' competence in these two dimensions. In addition, pupils should be taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing have been incorporated into the programmes of study for composition.

Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words. Effective composition involves forming, articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting.

Spelling, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and glossary

The two statutory appendices – on spelling and on vocabulary, grammar and punctuation – give an overview of the specific features that should be included in teaching the programmes of study.

Opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing. As vocabulary increases, teachers should show pupils how to understand the relationships between words, how to understand nuances in meaning, and how to develop their understanding of, and ability to use, figurative language. They should also teach pupils how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than one meaning. References to developing pupils' vocabulary are also included within the appendices.

Pupils should be taught to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English. They should be taught to use the elements of spelling, grammar, punctuation and 'language about language' listed. This is not intended to constrain or restrict teachers' creativity, but simply to provide the structure on which they can construct exciting lessons. A non-statutory Glossary is provided for teachers.

Throughout the programmes of study, teachers should teach pupils the vocabulary they need to discuss their reading, writing and spoken language. It is important that pupils learn the correct grammatical terms in English and that these terms are integrated within teaching.

Spelling

All children should be able to spell camera words and exception words relevant to their year groups. Weekly spellings should also be given to strengthen a wide range of relevant vocabulary.

Children should be given the opportunity to;

- Learn given lists of personal spellings at home and school to be tested at school.
- Edit writing using a dictionary.
- Learn a bank of keywords they can spell correctly.
- Understand words families and the origins of words.
- Recognise alternative ways of spelling the same sound.

Handwriting

Children should be able to communicate through the written word. For their writing to be effective they need to be able to master the fine motor control needed to produce fluent and clear handwriting. Children in the EYFS will be taught pre-cursive handwriting as and when they have mastered standard print. Pre-cursive and continuous cursive will then be taught from year one onwards. Please read in conjunction our Academy's handwriting scheme of work.

Children should be given the opportunity to;

- Use a pencil until they achieve a consistent, neat and legible standard throughout all their written work. At such time they may use a handwriting pen.
- Use and develop a cursive style and once mastered, use at all times.
- Use different forms of handwriting for different purposes, e.g. print for labels, neat handwriting for published work and a faster script for notes.

- Establish a common pattern for letter formation.
- Write clearly and fluently.
- Set themselves high standards of presentation.

Assessment, recording and reporting

Children’s speaking and listening, reading, writing, spelling and handwriting is formally and informally assessed throughout the school. Children in year one-six will have English books. The children in EYFS will have one piece of writing recorded in their red books weekly and ongoing observations of children’s Literacy skills are made on a daily basis. Lesson observations, pupil interviews, book scrutiny are carried out by the subject leaders and key stage leaders and moderated by senior management in line with our school monitoring schedule.

- **Marking:** Should either encourage children to build on current learning or offer opportunities to push beyond what they have learnt. (Refer to the marking policy for further information).
- **Target tracker:** Should be updated at the end of terms 2,4,6 and judgements should be informed through regular marking of books, writing assessments in terms 2,4,6 (and ongoing extended write work).
- **Target tracker statements:** Should be regularly highlighted to track individual progress of pupils’ ongoing progression.
- **Writing statement sheets:** Should be checked off throughout the year to monitor the progress of children through the target tracker statements to ensure they are achieving mastery of the curriculum.

Phonics:

Phonics is taught daily in nursery, reception, year one and year two. Interventions are in place across the school to support children’s phonic knowledge. We aim for all children to work securely within phase 3 at the end of reception, and to be secure in phase 6 at the end of year two. Statutory phonics tests take place in year one, and retakes happen in year two where applicable.

Talk for writing:

English is taught across the school using talk for writing, a two / three week rolling unit program that begins by immersing children in a particular genre, learning how to manipulate texts and eventually writing their own work in the same style.

Talk for writing rationale: *Talk for Writing, developed by Pie Corbett, supported by Julia Strong, is powerful because it is based on the principles of how children learn. It is powerful because it enables children to imitate the language they need for a particular topic orally before reading and analysing it and then writing their own version*

Whole class teaching of comprehension and guided reading

Whole class: Guided comprehension lessons take place weekly. The purpose of these lessons is to teach children how to answer a range of different questions and to learn the kind of language that should be used when responding. The long term aim is to produce school leavers who have lifelong comprehension skills.

Cross-curricular links

English skills should be exploited in other areas of the curriculum at all times, and children should maintain the highest of standards across the curriculum in their written work. Project books should expect the same levels of Literacy as English books do and marking and feedback should reflect this. Children will be given the opportunity to use and apply the skills they have learnt in English lessons across the curriculum daily. ‘Extended writes’ may take place in project books where appropriate.

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..... Chair of Governors

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