



## **ENGLISH POLICY**

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## **1. The aims of English in our school.**

At Attenborough School, we aim to develop pupils' abilities within an integrated programme of Speaking & Listening, Reading & Writing. Pupils will be given opportunities to interrelate the requirements of English within a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of English across the curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught literacy skills. We aim to promote the following in our teaching:

- To help children develop as confident, enthusiastic and effective learners.
- To teach pupils how to craft language for particular effects, through an understanding of how texts are created in relation to genre, purpose and audience.
- To provide interactive opportunities for pupils to practise using language in relevant, real life contexts.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to communicate independent views and opinions, respond imaginatively and express feelings through spoken and written language.
- To enable pupils to make critical responses about the language which they read and hear in a variety of media.
- To provide an integrated approach to reading, writing, speaking and listening.
- To develop language skills in all curriculum areas. To recognise the language experiences of all pupils at home and in the wider community, and to foster pleasure and enthusiasm for the spoken and written word.
- To increase the understanding of how language is used in the world beyond school.

## **2. Objectives of English in our school are:**

- Develop children's ability to use speaking and listening skills to solve problems, speculate, share ideas, make decisions and reflect on what is important.
- Foster the children's ability to read with fluency, understanding and enjoyment.
- Develop the children's skills in acquiring and retrieving information.
- Develop the children's ability to use the written word as a means of communicating experience, knowledge and understanding.
- Teach children to write imaginatively and accurately covering a wide range and audience.
- Encourage children to spell for themselves, building confidence and strategies to attempt unknown words.
- Develop handwriting skills in order that children can acquire a legible, fluent and fast style.
- Promote the use of ICT in presentation of children's work.
- Encourage parents' understanding and support of all the aspects of teaching English.

## **3. Subject Organisation and Curriculum Planning**

Planning is devised at three connected levels: long term, medium term and short term.

Long term planning for English is taken from the statutory National Curriculum. This outlines what should be taught in each year group and ensures continuity and progression. Coverage is monitored through Learning Ladders and teachers are able to identify curriculum areas that have been taught and need to be taught.



Medium term planning is recorded on a termly overview and outlines the units being taught and how many weeks each unit will last. These can be found in:

*Staff Shared Area – aa Curriculum – English – Talk for Writing – Curriculum Coverage*

*Staff Shared Area – Shared Resources – Talk for Writing – Curriculum Coverage*

Our **short-term plans** are those that our teachers write on a weekly or daily basis. Teachers are able to adopt a style of planning that suits their preferred style but all **short-term planning** for English in years 1-4 must meet the following criteria:

- Learning Intention / Learning Ladders Target
- Planned teaching input
- Tasks / Success Criteria (this may be found on success criteria stickers in individual books)
- Differentiation / groupings
- Pupil groups in a footer
- G&T, EAL and SEN provision
- Plenary - including Key questions
- Deployment of LSA (if applicable)
- Cross Curricular Writing identified on weekly planning
- Appropriate annotations to inform future planning and lessons.

In the Foundation Stage children access English skills through a combination of child initiated and adult led tasks. The EYFS curriculum is followed, with the children being exposed to activities relating to Linking Sounds and Letters (following the Read Write Inc. phonics strategy), Language for Communication and Thinking, Writing and Reading.

#### **4. Speaking and Listening**

##### **Guidelines**

- Good speaking and listening is fundamental to good learning. From the first days in school, speaking and listening plays a central part in a child's progress in all curriculum areas and teachers plan to develop these skills in a wide variety of ways.
- Intricately connected to good speaking and listening is the development of the skills of group interaction and discussion, or collaboration. We plan to develop these skills as part of our aim to encourage fluent speakers, who confidently operate in a wide range of situations. Speaking, listening and collaboration form part of the curriculum in all subject areas.
- We recognise the importance of verbalising thoughts as a means of learning and plan for children to have opportunities to discuss and formulate their ideas before committing them to paper. These opportunities can take place in a whole class situation, with a partner, or in a small group, paired work, or 'talking partners',
- Children spend a large amount of time in school outside of taught lessons and we are keen to promote opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills at all times. Some of the ways in which we aim to develop these skills are through: collective worship, circle times, school council meetings, enrichment events and school or key-stage productions.
- Involvement in drama provides children with powerful means of expressing themselves and developing their ideas and understanding in a wide variety of situations and curriculum areas. These range from using hot-seating to develop insights into character through to role playing parts of a story.



- We possess a wide range of resources appropriate to different age groups, including, puppets, story sacks, small world play, listening areas, role play, ICT, collection of props for storytelling, carpet area, and book collections.

## **5. Approaches to Reading**

### **Guidelines:**

#### **Reading in EYFS**

In the early years when children are acquiring pre-reading skills, a great deal of emphasis is placed on quality “talk” about books. This includes discussion about authors, illustrator and titles and equips the children to tell a story by deriving meaning from pictures. This stage is not to be rushed and is of particular importance to children identified with SEN, or EAL learners.

In FS2 children are taught using ‘Read Write Inc.’ speed sounds. This develops their ability to decode words and read sentences. This initiative promotes a strong and systematic emphasis on the teaching of synthetic phonics to aid the teaching and learning of reading. A 20 minute discrete phonics session takes place in FS2 and KS1, while in KS2 phonics is taught where there are gaps in the children’s knowledge.

Planning adheres to the RWI speed sounds document. As part of this scheme the children will be taught to:

- learn the letters and letter combinations most commonly used to spell sounds;
- read words by sounding out and blending their separate parts;
- study written representations of a sound and how it looks
- recognise on sight vocabulary identified as ‘Red words’

#### **Individual Reading**

We encourage parents to read with their children at home and are asked to make a written comment in the home/ school reading diary. They are informed of our approach to reading at the parents’ meetings for the new FS2 children in September, and are invited to a follow-up meeting in the spring term. New Year 1 parents are given the opportunity to come to a meeting about our approach to reading early in the autumn term. Teachers also hear children read on a 1:1 basis at different points during the week. In KS1, children are to read with a teacher or LSA once a week and in KS2, once a fortnight. The expectation is that parents will hear their child read daily.

Our reading resources are organised in book bands, so that children have access to a range of reading materials, from scheme books through to extension readers.



### **Guided Reading**

In years 1 to 4, children have access to weekly guided reading sessions with an adult. Guided Reading takes place in a small group, with a teacher or learning support assistant, and focuses on developing children's ability to become independent readers, thinkers and learners. The children are grouped by ability and read individual copies of the same text, which matches the reading level of the group. Texts are selected from the School's guided reading schemes or using 'real' books. The teacher / LSA shares the learning ladder they will be working on for the session and records their progress on the planning template.

When groups are not reading with an adult, teachers will have planned independent activities that closely relate to the reading objectives for a specific group. These may include: comprehension activities, pre-reading of texts and group work linked to texts already read.

### **Shared Reading**

We use the 'Talk for Reading' approach once per week to develop reading skills and to promote reading for pleasure. This shared reading session takes place with the whole class, where short extracts of text or images are read and shared with the children. DIAL questioning (Deduction, Inference, Authorial and Literal) is then used along side learning ladders objectives. By planning and using these questions, we aim to deepen the children's ability to comprehend and engage with reading materials.

### **Library**

To encourage the children to develop a love of reading children in years 1 – 4, each class has a 30-minute weekly library session where they can choose a book to take home. In the early stages it may be one that they share with an adult or in the later stages it may be one that they read independently.

## **6. Approaches to Writing**

In the early years, children are encouraged to take part in a range of mark making activities as well as:

- a teacher modelling writing names, words or sentences they have said;
- writing taking place in role play;
- children choosing to write during child initiated activities.

Writing can take place at any point in the day and in any area in EYFS settings.

Using the 'ditty' books (a book that has been read by the child during shared reading activities), a differentiated activity is planned for to teach the skills of writing. The children will then have opportunities to develop this during further adult led activities where the child will be encouraged to extend their writing beyond single words.

Significant pieces of writing completed during child initiated activities are put into the children's writing books to record their achievement. In the daily discrete phonics lessons, children are taught to segment words into sounds to assist spelling and are taught the letters and letter combinations most commonly used to spell words.



## **Talk for Writing**

In EYFS, T4W aims to focus on the development of children language and vocabulary as well as their understanding of stories. Children take part in storytelling sessions, learning actions and rhythms to develop their understanding of the text being learnt. This is followed up by opportunities in continuous provision that encourage children to practise their storytelling, story mapping and story writing skills. Nursery rhymes are also taught using a similar structure and the children are always encouraged to join in.

In KS1 & KS2 across the Federation, writing is taught using the 'Talk for writing structure'. By introducing and following this clear structure for the teaching of writing, speaking and listening is integrated as part of the writing process and teachers are able to teach and secure ambitious vocabulary and sentence structure within future written work.

Talk for Writing enables children to imitate the key language they need for a particular topic orally before they try reading and analysing it. Through fun activities that help them rehearse the tune of the language they need, followed by shared writing to show them how to craft their writing, children are helped to write in the same style. The process follows three specific stages (Imitation, Innovation and Invention) taught over a period of three weeks.

Before the process starts, each child undertakes a cold writing task. This is explained in more detail under the assessment section.

### **Imitation**

The imitation stage begins with learning a model text, supported visually by a text map and physical movements to help the children recall the story or non-fiction piece. In this way the children hear the text, say it for themselves and enjoy it before seeing it written down. Once they have internalised the language of the text, they are in a position to read the text and start to think about the key ingredients that help to make it work. Alongside this stage, teachers will plan and prepare lessons and activities that develop grammatical knowledge and understanding. These lessons will link with the text genre taking place.

### **Innovation**

Once the children have internalised the text, they are then ready to start innovating on the pattern of the text. Younger children and less confident writers alter their text maps and orally rehearse what they want to say, creating their own version. A key teaching activity that is used in this stage is shared writing.

### **Shared Writing and Modelled Writing**

Shared writing is a whole class activity where the teacher models the writing of text, helping the children to write their own by "doing one together" first. With the help of the class, a text is 'boxed up' so that its structure is evident. This may be paragraph by paragraph in a narrative unit, or separating sections in a non-fiction text. Once this has been completed, the text is then able to be altered from the original. Through the shared writing, the children will contribute to the text by suggesting words or sentences to be used; they are critical partners for the teacher. The teacher demonstrates how to write and explains decisions. S/he will model thinking, rehearsing sentences, writing and re-reading constantly generating words and ideas.



The teacher is able to model how each section of the text may look, drawing the children's attention to particular planned learning intentions for each paragraph / section of a text. Throughout the shared writing, the children are strengthening the toolkit so they start to understand the type of ingredients that may help.

### **Independent Application**

Having worked on writing an innovated text and learnt from the structure of the original, the children are now in a position to write independently. Children are given time to plan and write a 'hot' piece of text. This is then assessed against the 'Learning Ladders' criteria. As children build up a repertoire of text types and genres learnt, they are able to apply their understanding across the curriculum in topic lessons.

### **Spelling**

Read Write Inc. is used as a resource for teaching phonics and spelling from FS2 to year 4. In FS2, children take part in a daily phonics session and are encouraged (during child initiated and adult led activities) to apply the sounds they have learnt when writing of words.

Phonics (taught from RWI) continues into year 1, with the daily phonics session teaching new sounds and revisiting those previously taught. Children are regularly assessed and grouped depending on their ability. The children's progress is closely monitored with the year 1 statutory phonics screening in mind.

In year 2, the aim is to progress the children on to RWI spelling. Again this takes place daily, with children learning alternative ways to spell known phonemes and applying their skills in a variety of ways including: dictating and writing sentences, spelling words from memory and playing spelling games. Children who are not ready for this continue to be taught in smaller groups, where RWI phonics is revisited to consolidate and embed the gaps in their learning.

In KS2, children continue with the RWI spelling scheme, following the same structure as year 2. The scheme links directly to the national curriculum and teaching children spelling rules set out in the English appendices.

### **Handwriting**

In the EYFS, there is a strong focus on developing the children's fine motor skills and pencil control before they begin letter formation. Handwriting takes place in FS2 on a daily basis and links with the sounds they have been learning to say, read and write in phonics.

Years 1 to 4 have a 15-minute handwriting session 3 times a week. During the first session, teachers will model the handwriting target, with the children practising this during the following sessions. Nelson Handwriting is used throughout the school to promote a legible, fluent and fast style. In year 4 the children will be learning to write with pen.





## **7. Cross-Curricular English Opportunities**

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. As non-fiction genres are being taught in English lessons, teachers can plan for pupils to practise and apply their skills, knowledge and understanding towards other areas of the curriculum.

## **8. Assessment**

### **Writing**

Work will be assessed in line with the Assessment Policy and recorded using the Learning Ladders system. In addition to this, assessment of pupils written work will happen at least eight times each term, four cold tasks and four hot tasks. When pupils have undertaken a cold writing task, targets will be generated and set using the Learning Ladders format. These are used to direct teaching throughout the unit and the attainment of these targets will be assessed and updated when a hot writing task is produced. Targets for the unit will be clearly displayed in the English books after the cold write and pupils will be introduced to these through the use of the Learning Ladder booklets.

### **Reading**

During guided reading sessions, learning ladders booklets will be used. The children will be directed to the 'ladder' the session(s) will focus on and they will be asked questions that require them to demonstrate their ability to meet the objectives set out in their year groups rungs. Teachers will date the learning ladder booklets when they feel a child has achieved or is working towards achieving a rung. When they feel a child can 'master' a rung, all three sections will be completed. This data will be transferred onto the online system to give an overview of progress and identify gaps that need to be addressed in further guided and shared reading sessions.

## **9. INCLUSION**

We are committed to providing a teaching environment conducive to learning. Each child is valued, respected and challenged regardless of ability, race, gender, religion, social background, culture or disability.

The full and effective participation of all pupils should be achieved by:

- Acknowledging and valuing the variety of different experiences, interests, social and cultural backgrounds of pupils; using such differences constructively to raise confidence and self-esteem.
- Ensuring access to learning at an individual level, through differentiated teaching and learning strategies; planning should set high expectations and provide appropriate learning opportunities for pupils from all social backgrounds, ethnic groups and for those who are disabled.
- Providing texts from a range of cultures and which are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- Providing resources to support specific learning difficulties.





## **10. Role of the Subject Leader(s)**

- Encouraging staff to provide effective learning opportunities for all pupils, to develop valid activities appropriate for children at different stages of development and which enable pupils to progress in English.
- Helping colleagues to develop their subject expertise.
- Organising and advising on the contribution of English to other curriculum areas, including cross-curricular and extra-curricular ones.
- Liaising with SENco to ensure intervention groups are planned and used when children have gaps in their knowledge or skills in English.
- Training new staff on our English policy and methods of teaching.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of English within the school.
- Preparing policy documents, an action plan and a yearly self-review for English.
- Updating resources and training staff on the uses of these resources.

## **11. Parental Involvement**

We regard the school/parent relationship as vital to the development and educational progress of our pupils. Parents are encouraged to read with their children at home and teachers communicate ways to support English outside of the classroom in weekly homework, home/school diaries and class dojo.

## **12. Monitoring and Review**

The standards of the pupils' achievements are evaluated by the subject leader and areas for improvement are recommended.

All staff are encouraged to engage in professional dialogue to ensure that there is a shared understanding of standards. There will be opportunities for staff to take part in cross marking of pupils' work. These opportunities to share the standard will lead to increased teacher confidence and better progression for pupils from one level to the next.

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