

GREEN MEADOW PRIMARY SCHOOL

ENGLISH POLICY

The study of English develops children's skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing for a wide range of purposes, so using language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. It enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively. At Green Meadow Primary School, we aim to develop a love for the English language in its written and spoken forms. We are committed to delivering a broad and engaging curriculum in order to enable our pupils to become confident, independent and effective speakers, listeners, readers and writers.

The purpose of this policy document is to support Green Meadow Primary School in English teaching and learning in order to:

- establish an entitlement for all pupils;
- establish expectations for all staff and pupils;
- promote continuity and coherence across the school;
- promote a shared understanding of English within the school community.

We recognise English as a core subject in the National Curriculum and as a pre-requisite for educational and social progress, empowering children to communicate creatively and effectively. The National Curriculum in England (*DfE, 2013*) guides the teaching and learning of English. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all members of staff.

Aims

The aims of English are to encourage children to:

- develop a positive attitude towards English as an interesting, enjoyable and challenging subject and become competent and effective communicators within a range of purposeful contexts;
- develop powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness;
- enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners;
- encourage children to listen and respond appropriately in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- enable children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands demonstrating command and control of vocabulary and language structures;
- develop the ability to read with confidence, fluency, enjoyment and with understanding, and to develop a love of reading, using reading methods that are appropriate to the text and the reading purpose;

- develop the ability to write with confidence and control in a variety of styles and forms, organising the content and style to suit the purpose and audience;
- encourage a love of writing and enable children to confidently plan, draft, edit, proof-read and publish their writing in different forms and through different media;
- develop the ability to use spelling, punctuation and syntax appropriately and with confidence;
- enable children to write with legible, fluent handwriting style and take pride in the presentation of their writing;
- enable children to use and transfer the skills they are learning, in order to communicate effectively throughout the range of subjects taught in school.

Environment

At Green Meadow Primary School, we aim to provide an environment for language development that is stimulating and characterised by high expectations of success. Children's writing is celebrated in school displays and expectations of children's presentation are high. English is shared and celebrated inside and outside of the classroom through:

- provision of a book rich environment;
- thoughtful, creative display of reading and writing materials and published children's work;
- working walls which represent English teaching and learning;
- use of a wide range of high-quality materials to support effective teaching and learning;
- public celebration of pupils' success and participation in events, for example, through the school website, communal displays and public performances.

Subject Organisation: Teaching and Learning, Planning for English – Please see Teaching & Learning Policy

The English curriculum is planned and delivered according to the school's long term English overview ([appendix 1](#)). This was created in response to the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum 2014, and details coverage of English teaching sequences across each year group and term. This ensures appropriate coverage and development of skills throughout the school. The Early Learning Goals are followed to ensure continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage through to the National Curriculum.

At Green Meadow Primary School, we use a variety of teaching and learning styles. English is taught in daily lessons across the school. Discrete phonics lessons are taught in Foundation and Key Stage 1, and discrete spelling sessions are taught across Key Stage 1 and 2. In addition to the daily English lesson, regular small group reading sessions take place in

all classes (Key Stage 1-2). Teachers read children's literature to their children on a regular basis.

Teachers' planning is informed by the National Curriculum for English programmes of study and appendix 1 and 2. Using the long term English overview and the National Curriculum expectations to guide them, teachers plan sequences of English lessons which integrate explicit and contextualised teaching of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Reading comprehension and grammar and punctuation teaching is integrated into the teaching sequence. Teaching sequences are based on quality children's literature and provide meaningful contexts for the teaching of English.

Teachers write detailed medium term plans (*appendix 2*) which identify National Curriculum objectives, core texts, teaching units: the text types, outcomes, cross-curricular links and an overview of the teaching sequence. These plans ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work, that each teaching and learning experience builds on the previous learning, and ensure that teaching objectives are taught each term, informed by teacher assessment. Weekly planning sheets are completed by year group teachers (*appendix 3*) and saved on the school's shared drive. Weekly plans identify the learning objectives for each lesson, give details of how the lessons will be taught and managed, and the outcomes for learners. Year group partners plan for English together, guided by English Subject Leader and SLT.

Approaches to Spoken Language

The teaching of speaking and listening in Key Stage 1 and 2 is informed by the aims of the National Curriculum for English (*DfE, 2013:3, 7*). The importance of spoken language, contextualised within reading and writing, underpins the development of reading and writing. It is planned as part of the teaching sequence, and teachers use a range of strategies to promote learning. Teachers plan for and develop productive teacher-pupil/pupil-pupil talk. Questioning develops real dialogue and depth of thought. Children engage in drama strategies and group activities to support learning. Pupils are taught to make presentations, perform and take part in class discussions. The teaching of vocabulary is integrated into all aspects of English teaching and learning, and this is planned for specifically.

Teachers and additional adults should demonstrate and promote high standards of articulation at all times, using Standard English.

Approaches to Reading

Reading in Key Stages 1 and 2

At Green Meadow Primary School, we strive to create a text-rich environment for all of our children which appeals to their interests. Quality children's texts are at the heart of the English curriculum and reading for enjoyment is seen as the fundamental key which underpins the teaching of reading. Every classroom has a well-stocked library. This should be appealing to the children, well-organised and interactive. Pupils are encouraged to read books from home as well as different text types: fiction, non-fiction, poetry, comics and magazines, newspapers, on-screen texts, etc. Teachers read, talk with enthusiasm and recommend books to their pupils. Informal book talk takes place frequently and supports children in developing the habit of reading widely and often. Every class has a class book, which is read regularly to the children by their teacher. When appropriate, this text is used as a context for teaching sequences and daily English lessons.

The teaching of reading is guided by the requirements of the National Curriculum (word reading, reading comprehension). As part of each teaching sequence and daily English lesson, teachers in Key Stages 1 and 2 plan for the explicit teaching of reading comprehension. Shared reading, a key teaching strategy for reading, is a whole class activity using a common text. Carefully chosen and challenging texts are read and analysed in a range of genres. A particular aspect of grammar and punctuation or word work may provide an additional focus for teaching and learning using the shared text and linked to the learning.

Explicit teaching of reading is also undertaken in regular small group reading sessions. Drawing on the philosophies of guided reading, children are taught word recognition, reading responses, behaviours and strategies as well as knowledge and understanding of reading. These sessions take place in addition to the daily English lesson. Small group reading may or may not reflect the English teaching sequence being taught at the time. These small group sessions are carried out by the class teacher and an additional adult. Planning for small group reading is informed by the National Curriculum programmes of study and teachers' ongoing assessment of pupils' needs. Teachers record reading outcomes using the school's guided reading planning/record keeping proforma ([appendix 4](#)). Over the course of each term, in small group reading, children read a variety of text types: fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Children work on a shared book suitable for the ability group (in most instances they should be able to read the text independently with 90% accuracy). A variety of reading approaches are used in order to share the books within the group. High quality discussion between the teacher and group and effective questioning are fundamental elements to small group reading at Green Meadow Primary School. Teachers' record keeping notes are used to support assessment. Any written work produced as part of guided reading sessions is recorded.

At Key Stage 1 and 2, small group reading texts are taken from a range of scheme books (*Oxford Reading Tree, Badger, Project X etc.*). Guided reading books are initially banded to

support adults in choosing appropriately matched texts for readers. When children have developed word recognition and comprehension skills beyond the lime band, children read books of the appropriate age level. Banded books are kept centrally in the Key Stage 1 library and the classrooms for the Key Stage 2 children. Teachers also teach small group reading using different texts: novels, magazines, poems, non-fiction texts, newspapers, and these should include on-screen texts.

In addition to the teaching of reading during the daily English lesson and small group reading sessions, children are encouraged to share books as well as to read quietly by themselves as part of ERIC (Every Child Reading in Class). In some classes, reading volunteers work with individual readers and small groups, under the direction of class teachers. Reading groups, run by different adults, encourage children to discuss and share books.

At Green Meadow Primary School, we wish to develop our pupils to be life-long readers and have a love of reading. The school libraries play an important role in engaging children in reading and supporting reading for information. Both libraries are stocked with a wide range of engaging children's texts, and children are able to browse, discuss and borrow non-fiction books. Banded fiction books are kept in the Key Stage 1 library and for the Key Stage 2 children there are year group appropriate texts in classroom libraries. Developing a love of reading is also promoted through special events which are organised by the English Subject Leader or class teachers and include: visits from authors and Language Alive/ theatre groups; visits to the local library; book groups; participation in the Summer Reading Challenge; book events including The Big Read; celebrating World Book Day and National Poetry Day.

Approaches to Writing: Transcription, Grammar and Punctuation and Composition

Writing Transcription: Spelling

Spelling in Key Stages 1 and 2 is taught following the National Curriculum requirements from the programmes of study and Appendix 1. Teachers use Raintree's *No Nonsense Spelling* (<http://pages.raintreepublishers.co.uk/nnspeelling/>) to support discrete, regular, short spelling sessions within the daily English lesson. These sessions are focused and interactive, with investigation and discussion at the heart. Children are encouraged to investigate patterns, follow morphological rules and familiarise themselves with common exceptions.

As part of the teaching of spelling, children in years 1 to 6 undertake a regular spelling test to assess progress made towards achieving objectives and undertake dictation exercises. Spelling tests are recorded in spelling books and daily spelling activities are recorded on whiteboards, a photograph of practical group activities or in the back of the children's English books.

Teachers identify incorrect spellings in pupils' work (in every subject area). Children are required to revisit up to three spellings per piece of writing.

Classroom resources and environments are used to support spelling and vocabulary development and include: dictionaries, thesauri, word logs and word lists and spelling displays.

Writing Transcription: Handwriting

The Teaching of handwriting is guided by the National Curriculum writing transcription programmes of study. From Year 1, regular handwriting sessions teach children correct letter formation and cursive script. Teachers teach handwriting through regular discrete sessions. Children are taught to join letters in Key Stage 1 when they are ready and pens may be used for display work. In Key Stage 2, teachers teach handwriting using the *Nelson* handwriting scheme (<https://global.oup.com/education/content/primary/series/nelson-family/nelson-handwriting-new-edition/?region=uk>). Junior children graduate and are given a pen license when handwriting is sufficiently fluent and legible. Explicit teaching of handwriting is recorded in the English books and on handwriting sheets.

Excellent presentation of work is highly valued at Green Meadow Primary School; all pupils and adults should take great pride in their writing. Pupils' books, published work and teachers' scripts demonstrate this high standard. Children are expected to apply handwriting skills across the curriculum and the school presentation policy is followed at all times. Teachers should refer to the school presentation policy for more information.

Writing Composition

The Expanded Process for Teaching Writing - the teaching sequence for writing (*Bearne, 2002:31-32*) underpins the teaching of writing (*appendix 5*) and teaching sequences, of varied lengths, are informed by this process - the integration of spoken language, reading, grammar and punctuation and the writing process in order for children to become confident writers in a variety of writing styles. Teachers follow the expectations of the National Curriculum programmes of study to plan sequences of lessons, and children are taught to plan, revise and edit their writing in daily English lessons. Exciting children's texts provide models and meaningful contexts to support the teaching of reading, grammar and punctuation and writing. Following the school's long term overview ensures that children are taught to write in an appropriate range of genres and styles.

Modelled and shared teaching approaches support explicit, focused teaching of writing and are planned for as part of short term planning. Shared writing is a whole class activity where the teacher models the writing of text. In shared writing, the children 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 models thinking, rehearsing sentences and re-reading, constantly generating words and ideas. Across the key stages, teachers use modelled and shared approaches to teach and demonstrate aspects of writing, for example, the purpose, audience, level of formality, use of vocabulary, choice of sentence structure, text structure and organisation, use of punctuation. Particular aspects of transcription (spelling, grammar and punctuation) provide an additional focus as appropriate. Small group teaching or guided writing is also planned for and used to explicitly teach writing skills. This teaching is focused and addresses the needs of specific and flexible groups of children at different points during the writing process. Small group teaching may be led by the teacher or an additional adult. It allows the adult to give immediate feedback, address gaps in learning at the point of need and challenge writers to improve.

In order to become fluent writers and build stamina to write at length, at Green Meadow Primary School we ensure that children write independently and at length on a very regular basis. Planning for writing, drafting and revisiting writing in order to make improvements is planned for as part of the daily English lesson and teaching sequence. Expectations for independence are high and writing (including planning, drafting, editing and proof-reading) is recorded in the pupils' English books.

Working walls reflect the teaching sequence and writing process. All classrooms have a working wall which is used to support teaching and learning. Teachers' and children's writing is displayed as part of the working wall for English.

English as part of the broader curriculum

Teachers seek to take advantage of opportunities for cross curricular learning and develop children's stamina and independence in writing across the curriculum. They plan for pupils to practise and apply skills, knowledge and understanding acquired during English lessons to other areas of the curriculum, and this is evidenced in medium term plans and recorded in other curriculum work books.

Grammar and Punctuation

The National Curriculum for English informs and directs the teaching of grammar and punctuation which is taught explicitly but within the context of the daily English lesson and teaching sequence. Regular grammar teaching linked to the context of the teaching sequence makes links between the feature being taught and how it impacts and enhances writing composition (in children's texts, teacher composition and children's writing). Real children's texts are used to provide authentic examples of rules in practice, and investigation and discussion is central to all grammar teaching. The school follows the REDM sequence - the process of teaching grammar in context (*Bearne, Reedy, 2013: 7*) ([appendix 6](#)).

Pupils develop the vocabulary necessary to talk about their writing and appreciate the authorial choices made within the writing they're reading. They are taught to understand different ways that sentences can be structured to achieve a desired effect and are able to make intelligent choices in their own writing. All teachers use correct grammatical terminology and pupils are taught to talk about their writing using terminology outlined in appendix 2 of the National Curriculum for English.

The use of Computing

Opportunities to use ICT to enhance teaching and learning in English are planned for and used as appropriate. A range of educational programmes such as on-screen texts, the computing suites and Ipad applications support teaching and learning. Teachers should refer to the school's Computing policy for further details.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Reading and writing is assessed in line with the school's assessment and marking policies. Marking of pupils' work is positive and feedback reflects both the focus on teaching and specific needs of the pupil. Regular improvement prompts in the form of 'gap tasks' are identified in pupils' work and completed by learners. Where possible, work should be discussed with the child in terms of their progress and next steps in learning (specific targets).

At Green Meadow Primary School, independent writing is demonstrated in English, Science and Topic books. Each half term, children undertake a range of writing tasks which are recorded. These are used to support assessment.

Children are assessed against Year Groups Key Performance Indicators throughout the year using the school tracking system. Results are reviewed by senior leaders as part of termly pupil progress meetings. Ongoing dialogue with senior leaders and the subject leader ensures that every child is challenged and enabled to achieve their potential, and that interventions are well-timed and targeted appropriately. Precision teaching interventions are used across the school according to analysis from different data sources, overseen by the SENCO and reviewed in pupil progress meetings.

Teacher assessment of English is based on:

- informal/formal observations of pupils;
- pupils' work;
- verbal feedback and discussion with pupils;

- end of Key Stage test results and other tests, for example phonics checks, phonics screening, EYFS Profile.

Assessment of reading includes:

- ongoing teacher assessment;
- phonics testing;
- EYFS profile;
- Year 1 phonics screening;
- end of Key Stage testing and any relevant preparation tests;
- Salford Reading Tests and comprehension tests.

Assessment of writing includes:

- ongoing teacher assessment;
- regular spelling tests and dictation;
- ongoing marking and feedback of writing compositions (including cross-curricular application of writing);
- end of Key Stage tests and testing and preparation for these tests.

Green Meadow Primary School works with schools in the local consortium, with an external English consultant and with Services for Education to moderate teacher assessment judgements of writing. These sessions support the school in ensuring accurate and robust teacher assessment.

Reporting to parents occurs through parents' meetings and the annual report. Written reports, which include end of Key Stage test results and teacher assessments, are composed and provided annually. In assessment of English, teachers should adhere to the school's assessment policy.

Parental Involvement: English Partnerships

At Green Meadow Primary School, we recognise parental involvement is vital to the development of children's English skills. We acknowledge that a strong home/ school partnership actively promotes children's progress and achievement. The school works with parents and carers to share information about learning in English, offer stay and play activities, and periodically provide workshops to inform parents and carers of new developments in English.

Pupils are encouraged to read regularly with adults. This should be seen as an enjoyable activity which fosters a love of reading and supports learning. All children have reading records which parents and carers are encouraged to use at home. In Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, there is an expectation that children will read at home every day. Pupils take

home a book from the school reading schemes and a non-fiction library book. In Key Stage 2, pupils are also expected to read regularly with an adult, taking home books (both fiction and non-fiction) from the school reading schemes or their own choice of reading book if they have progressed beyond the reading scheme.

Home learning is also an important part of developing children's English skills. Key Stage 1 and 2 children have a home learning book in which they complete all set work. Children are given weekly spellings to learn which are then tested in class. They also receive a writing activity, which aligns with English teaching and learning. Please see Home Learning Policy.

The Role of the English Subject Leader

The English subject leader is responsible for promoting and ensuring high standards of teaching and learning in English through:

- working with colleagues to monitor and evaluate English using a range of data sources (data analysis, planning and book scrutiny, lesson observations, learning walks, pupil voice, etc.);
- working with colleagues and independently to audit English, action plan, monitor and evaluate the impact of subject plans;
- leading on policy development and ensuring school policy is followed;
- auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD and providing appropriate and targeted CPD;
- purchasing and managing resources;
- keeping up-to-date with developments and innovations in the subject.

References

Bearne, E. (2002) *Making Progress in Writing*. Routledge Falmer.

Department for Education. (2013) *English programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2 National curriculum in England*. London: DfE.

Reedy, D. Bearne, E. (2013) *Teaching grammar effectively in primary schools*. Leicester: UKLA.

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