

# Hollyfield Primary School English Policy



This policy should also be read alongside the National Curriculum (2014) and other documents from the Standards and Testing Agency.

## **Introduction**

The National Curriculum (2014) states that the teaching of English is a fundamental life skill which empowers the learner and is essential for independent learning. English develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes across the curriculum. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins.

## **Philosophy**

At Hollyfield Primary School we strive to develop children who are fully literate, articulate, and prepared for their secondary education and later life. Through engaging lessons, we aim to foster a love of literacy and language and an enjoyment of learning. We challenge children of all abilities and ensure they make good progress in all areas of the English National Curriculum. They are encouraged to have a growth mind-set and to develop the skills of perseverance and resilience. Through reading in particular, pupils are given a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. We celebrate children's hard work and effort, alongside their successes. They are encouraged to revisit their work, making changes and developing their ideas to ensure they achieve their best.

## **Organisation**

English is taught in mixed-ability classes in each year group. The National Curriculum for English (2014) is used by all teachers to ensure that all parts of the programme of study are taught. The programme of study is split into the different strands of Spoken Language, Reading and Writing (including spelling, grammar and punctuation).

Children in the Foundation Stage work towards the Early Learning Goals by following Development Matters and work is planned with links to other curriculum areas so that the children have a range of learning experiences. Pupils have access to a variety of play based activities alongside more structured teaching and opportunities for self-initiated learning.

## **Spoken Language:**

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

- Justify ideas with reasons
- Ask questions to check understanding
- Develop vocabulary and build knowledge
- Negotiate
- Evaluate and build on the ideas of others
- Select the appropriate register for effective communication
- Give well-structured descriptions and explanations
- Speculate, hypothesise and explore ideas
- Organise their ideas prior to writing

**Aims:**

- To enable our children to speak with clarity, confidence and expression, and to take account of their audience, purpose and differing situations.
- To encourage our children to listen with concentration to others, to respond and build on their ideas and opinions and to identify features of language used for specific purposes.
- To show our children how to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands by giving them the opportunity to listen and respond to literature, give and receive instructions and develop the skills of participating effectively in group discussions.

**Ways in which we support this:**

- Providing a range of opportunities for children to talk and listen in formal and informal settings
- The use of role-play and drama activities to explore situations e.g. hot-seating, performances
- Regular story times
- PSHE and Circle Time
- Class/group debates
- Opportunities to share experiences, ideas or describe events/objects
- Interviewing
- Praise given for use of interesting vocabulary
- Use of audio and visual recording

**Reading:**

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Reading is singled out as of extreme importance since through it 'pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually.' Reading allows pupils to 'acquire knowledge' and to 'build on what they already know.' (p13)

The Curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions: word reading/decoding and comprehension and here at Hollyfield we recognise that both these elements are essential to success so we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, writing, grammar and vocabulary. We also understand that reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning and we encourage and praise children at every stage of it.

**Aims:**

- To enable our children to learn to read fluently through the use of phonological awareness to decode and encode words.
- To encourage them to be able to read with fluency, accuracy, understanding and enjoyment.
- To help them become confident, independent readers, through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text level knowledge.
- To develop enthusiastic and reflective readers through contact with challenging and substantial texts.

**Ways in which we support this:**

- Phonics are taught daily in EYFS and Year 1 using Read Write Inc and are overseen by the designated RWI Leader. Those children who do not pass the Year 1 Phonics Screening continue with this in to Year 2 and further if necessary.
- Phonics Bug online texts are used to support the teaching of synthetic phonics.
- Use of flashcards and PowerPoint presentations support the learning of sight vocabulary.
- All children are given opportunities to regularly read to adults in school - more often for those who find reading a challenge.

- Pupils are encouraged to read widely and for pleasure, through our use of differing class texts, eBooks, library visits and high quality attractive books in reading corners.
- Reading Challenges also develop children's reading for pleasure. The children complete a Book Award for each year group. This is aimed at fostering a love for reading for pleasure and incorporates a wide range of genres and authors.
- Using a home-school reading diary and rewarding regular reading at home through our Amazing Reading System encourages and motivates pupils to be good readers.
- Exciting and interactive online texts are used in school or at home via Wordsmith and Bug Club.
- Picture books are often used to teach specific reading skills, especially inference and deduction
- Reading Owl Posters are displayed in each classroom. These highlight the key reading skills that children access on a daily basis across the curriculum.
- The use of directed activities related to each text (such as completing cloze procedures, highlighting main points or adjectives) teach the skills needed to become competent and fluent readers.
- Staff use A.P.E. (Answer, Prove, Explain) to challenge children's understanding of what they read and allow them to demonstrate their understanding at greater depth.
- Staff are inspirational reading role-models and regularly talk to the children about their favourite children's poems, books or parts of stories in class or assemblies. 'I got caught reading' posters are displayed around the school also sharing the favourite texts and authors of the staff, governors and regular visitors.
- Encouraging class discussion about favourite stories, books and other texts.
- Pupils across the school, who are identified as struggling with reading or making slow progress, are given specific support in a number of ways. These may include accelerated reading support by trained teachers or teaching assistants, reading buddies/paired reading, Reading PASScards or by using the online Lexia Reading Programme.

### **Writing:**

The National Curriculum states that pupils should:

- Develop the stamina and skills to write at length
- Use accurate spelling and punctuation
- Be grammatically correct
- Write in a range of ways and purposes including narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations
- Write to support their understanding and consolidation of what they have heard or read

The 2014 Curriculum divides writing skills into two dimensions: transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas in speech and writing). Both of these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods including Pie Corbett's Talk for Writing. At Hollyfield we recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, reading, grammar and vocabulary and these are taught explicitly within English lessons but reinforced constantly through all areas of the curriculum. Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) starters are used to support the teaching of these areas throughout the school.

### **Aims:**

- To help our children develop an understanding that writing is both essential to thinking and learning and enjoyable in its own right
- To enable our children to learn to communicate meaning in narrative and non-fiction texts, spelling and punctuating accurately and for a range of purposes
- To enable them to improve their planning, drafting and editing skills

Ways in which we support this:

- We value children's writing at all stages of development thus encouraging them to see themselves as writers from an early age.
- Providing a real purpose for writing and enabling pupils to become increasingly aware of their intended audience.
- A multi-sensory approach is preferred, providing a range of contexts and stimuli.
- The use of Pie Corbett's Talk4Writing (see <http://www.talk4writing.co.uk/> for more information)
- The use of a range of drama skills, e.g. hot seating, re-enacting, use of the theatre for making and presenting.
- Providing outstanding role models through shared writing, where the teacher shares their own writing processes and experiences.
- Opportunities for collaborative writing.
- Providing scaffolding and appropriate support where appropriate.
- Giving the children experience of a range of ways to plan, edit and revise their work so they can choose which is appropriate for their needs as they progress through the school.
- Staff teach spelling, grammar and punctuation (SPaG) as a separate lesson when and where necessary
- SPaG starters at the beginning of lessons engage children from the start and reinforce or assess children's understanding.
- Use checklists and success criteria for pupils to self-assess and/or peer assess, when appropriate so they can evaluate effectively and identify areas for development.
- Encourage joined handwriting to support spelling and speed.
- Supporting pupils with learning and motor difficulties through specific, targeted interventions and support from the relevant outside agencies.

### **Vocabulary Development:**

The National Curriculum makes clear that learning vocabulary is key to 'learning and progress across the whole curriculum' since it allows pupils to access a wider range of words when writing and for them to understand and comprehend texts efficiently. Each classroom displays new and interesting vocabulary that has been explored in class and a 'Word of the Week' in Writing, Reading, Maths, Topic and Science.

Vocabulary teaching needs to be:

- Ongoing
- Progressive and systematic
- Making links from known words
- Develop understanding of shades of meaning
- Subject specific e.g. accurate mathematical and scientific vocabulary

### **Aims:**

- To encourage our pupils to have a wide and growing vocabulary in a number of ways.

Ways in which we support this:

- Spelling lists/key words to take home to learn.
- Display of key words linked to topics and subjects.
- Modelling high level vocabulary.
- In-depth word based lessons looking at patterns.
- Using dictionaries, thesauruses and similar programmes.
- Using a range of fiction and non-fiction texts to explore vocabulary choices and the effect they have on the reader.
- Targeted one to one/small group support where appropriate.

## **EYFS**

Teachers in the Foundation Stage follow the Communication and Language strand and Literacy strand of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework 2013.

By the end of EYFS the children should:

- Listen attentively in a range of situations.
- Listen to stories, anticipate key events and respond with relevant comments, questions or actions.
- Give attention to what other say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity.
- Follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.
- Answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.
- Express themselves effectively, showing awareness of the listeners' needs.
- Use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events.
- Develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.
- Read and understand simple sentences.
- Use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately.
- Read some common irregular words.
- Demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read.
- Use phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds.
- Write some irregular common words.
- Write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others.
- Spell some words correctly and other in a phonetically plausible way. (EYFS profile 2013)

## **Planning**

The short term planning format is based on the schemes of work from Hamilton Trust, Wordsmith, Twinkl and the 2014 English Curriculum. The plans are adapted and altered to suit the children's needs in English, based on rigorous assessment for learning. A starter activity, usually spelling, grammar or punctuation, allows pupils to begin learning as soon as the lesson starts. The main activities aim to introduce new learning and is differentiated to ensure pupils are learning according to their needs. Lessons include mini reviews which are used throughout the lessons to develop and embed children's understanding further and allow for the progression through activities to develop at the appropriate pace for each individual child. Reviews are used at the end of a lesson to consolidate, assess and take learning forward.

The school has adopted Read, Write Inc for the teaching of phonics and this is primarily used in EYFS and KS1. Read, Write Inc and/or Fresh Start is used in KS2 as an intervention for those needing extra phonic support.

Although most English lessons are taught in mixed ability groups, some pupils may be streamed by ability for the teaching of specific skills e.g., spelling, reading comprehension, homework, interventions etc.

## **Cross curricular**

Class teachers regularly plan for opportunities for children to apply their English skills across the curriculum. This allows the children to revisit, practise and consolidate different areas of English and apply them within different contexts.

## **Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

- Assessment for learning occurs throughout the entire English lesson, enabling teachers/teaching assistants to adapt their teaching/input to meet the children's needs.
- On a daily basis children self-assess against the learning objective and success criteria, giving them a sense of success and empowering them to take ownership and responsibility of their own learning.

- Children in the Foundation Stage are baselined in September to provide an accurate starting point for each pupil. Pupils are then continually assessed throughout the year and progress towards the Early Learning Goals is monitored.
- Pupil's work is marked in line with the Marking Policy. 'Juicy Mistakes' (JM) are often used to identify errors or misconceptions in English (particularly SPaG) and pupils are encouraged to learn from their mistakes and try again. Some 'Juicy Mistakes' are displayed on the working wall and used as a teaching points within the lesson.
- Pupils' knowledge and skills in reading and writing are assessed using Classroom Monitor. Teachers will assess pupils' independent work throughout the week and record progress on Classroom Monitor, which awards levels for the different areas of English. See Assessment policy for further details.
- Summative assessments in the form of PIRA testing for reading comprehension, Rising Stars for SPaG and Classroom Monitor for writing are used termly to assess against age related expectations and help teachers plan for future work. Optional half termly Rising Stars reading comprehension tests are also available to inform staff or progress and children's strengths and/or areas for development.
- Results of assessments from all year groups are recorded in mark books and through Classroom Monitor, these are analysed by the English Co-ordinator and Leadership Team. Results of assessments are used to inform planning, groupings and to identify underachievement so that targeted support can be put in place.
- All summative and formative assessments are tracked and monitored half termly by SLT in Pupil Progress meetings.
- At the end of each academic year, a written report is given in Writing and Reading and parents are informed of SATS results. Termly progress against age related targets is discussed at termly Parents' Evenings.
- End of Key Stage Assessments are analysed by the co-ordinator and Head Teacher and feed into the school improvement plan and performance management.

### **Display**

- In each classroom there are reading and writing working walls to display current teaching.
- All classrooms have engaging reading corners where children feel enthused about reading and can find out more about the skills to become a good reader and learn about different authors.
- High order vocabulary and technical terms are displayed so that children are encouraged to use this in their work and in the communication of their understanding.
- There are displays in corridors and in other areas of the school in order to encourage a positive attitude and enthusiasm towards reading and writing.
- 'I got caught reading at Hollyfield' posters are displayed around the school sharing the favourite texts and authors of the staff, governors and regular visitors.
- Our Amazing Reading System poster is displayed in each classroom and keeps track of the number of times a child has read at home. Prizes are given to encourage children to read more regularly.

### **Resources**

There are a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries, thesauruses, and a variety of age appropriate resources. All classes have a good selection of fiction and non-fiction texts in reading corners. The KS1 library is well stocked with a range of fiction and non-fiction texts aimed at a range of abilities. The Owl Room is a resource base for KS2 guided reading books, dictionaries and atlases.

### **Special Educational Needs**

In order to provide work that is appropriate to the learning experiences of the individual children it is necessary for the teacher to be aware of the EHCP/Learning Plans that apply to children in the class he/she is teaching. This assists in the planning of differentiated material to ensure that all children are able to achieve at the level that is appropriate to their ability.

### **Equal Opportunities**

It is the responsibility of all teachers to ensure that all pupils, irrespective of gender, ability, including gifted children, ethnicity and social circumstance, have access to the curriculum and make the greatest progress possible. The use of differentiation allows children to respond to the work presented to them at the appropriate level.

All pupils have equal opportunities to reach their full potential across the English curriculum, regardless of their race, gender, cultural background or ability. Class teachers will be responsible for planning activities that are differentiated and suitably challenging to meet the needs of all children, enabling all to access the study of English.

### **British Values**

We strive to promote the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs across all subjects and assessments.

### **Safeguarding**

At Hollyfield Primary School, Staff and Governors are committed to the safety and welfare of all pupils and will ensure that through the robust implementation of all safeguarding policies, that all pupils are protected from any potential exposure to extremism and radicalisation.

We strive to ensure that all our pupils, especially those with SEND will be fully supported academically and socially to ensure that no pupil is at risk of bullying, including cyber-bullying, or any other form of discrimination.

### **Information Communication Technology**

All classrooms have either Smart Boards or Interactive Whiteboards with a wide range of resources available for them on ActivInspire. Each classroom has at least one computer and access to iPads. Wordsmith, Bug Club and Phonics Bug and Lexia are examples of some of the programs which can be used to practise skills and support the daily English lessons as well as a wide range of activities on varying websites. There is also timetabled access to the Digital Learning Suite.

### **Differentiation**

Using summative assessments and AfL, work is appropriately differentiated to meet the needs of individual pupils including Special Educational Needs and more able children. Resources are therefore differentiated, modified and used imaginatively to support or challenge learning, and Teaching Assistants play a valuable part in supporting the effective delivery of daily English lessons for all pupils. Every effort is made to support all children in achieving their targets. If pupils are struggling with a concept in an English lesson then further interventions will be needed in the form of pre-tutoring or post-tutoring. Post-tutoring should take place the same day so children 'catch-up and keep-up' with the curriculum.

### **Marking**

Work is marked according to our School Marking Policy and indicates whether or not the Learning Objective and Success Criteria have been achieved. Some English work may be marked during the lessons by pupils or teachers to identify the amount of progress being made. Some more able pupils may need to be challenged further and other pupils may need extra support to achieve the objectives. Pupils who are falling behind in a lesson will have a further intervention later that day to help them quickly catch-up and achieve the appropriate level. See Marking Policy.

### **Target setting**

Children in the Foundation Stage are baselined on entry using the Development Matters age related development bands. Targets and next steps are taken from the appropriate development band and the Early Learning Goals and during the course of the year children's progress is monitored and shared with parents. Targets taken from Classroom Monitor are displayed on the inside cover of pupils' English books.

KS1 and KS2 targets are taken from the KPIs on Classroom Monitor and are displayed on the inside cover of pupils' English and guided reading books. When children have independently completed the targets (or part of the target) pupils colour the targets to record their progress, in-line with classroom monitor.

In Year 2 and Year 6, however, targets are taken directly from the Interim Framework for Teacher Assessment documents in order to support staff in making robust and accurate judgements at the end of each key stage.

### **Homework**

Homework is set each week throughout school focusing on using basic skills in reading and writing. Each class also sends home a spelling list focusing on that week's spelling pattern. These are differentiated to suit the needs of the pupils and are then tested the following week.

### **Evaluating and Monitoring**

English teaching is evaluated and monitored by the Senior Leadership Team. This includes monitoring of planning, lesson observations, book scrutinies, pupil conferencing and learning walks.

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the subject leader and SLT. The work of the English coordinator also involves supporting colleagues in their teaching, staying up-to-date with current subject developments, and providing a strategic lead and direction for English across the school. The subject leader gives the Head Teacher and Governing Board an annual summary report evaluating the strengths and areas for development in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement.

January 2017

To be reviewed January 2018.