

Wootton St Peter's CE Primary School



English Policy

Date Adopted by Governing Body: February 2023

Date to be Reviewed: February 2025

Signed Chair of Governors

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Elliott', on a light brown rectangular background.

Josephine Elliott

Signed Headteacher

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charles Pitt', on a light brown rectangular background.

Charles Pitt

English Curriculum at Wootton St Peter's Primary School

Intent

At Wootton St Peter's we make learning English a creative and engaging experience. We have adopted a book-led approach and therefore high-quality texts are at the heart of our curriculum. Our English provision aims to support our work to encourage children to become critical thinkers and reflective life-long learners. We ensure children develop the key skills in spoken language, reading and writing that will empower them to become the rocks upon which a better world can be built.

Our curriculum is designed to give all children the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. We aim to achieve this through the diverse range of texts that children are exposed to, linking learning in English with other subjects and planning opportunities for additional rich learning experiences.

Implementation

The teaching of English at Wootton consists of the following key elements:

- Spoken Language
- Phonics
- Reading
- Writing
- Spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Handwriting

Spoken Language and Vocabulary

Spoken language is a key driver for reading and writing and is embedded within our curriculum and pedagogical approaches

Children will develop the skills necessary to read, write and speak fluently to communicate ideas and emotions. Teachers actively encourage our children to communicate their thoughts and ideas. Children are given opportunity to reflect on both their learning and feelings. Across the curriculum we use listening partners and a range of sharing strategies so all can contribute. In English, we use a variety of drama strategies such as conscience alleys, hot seating and debates to explore texts and generate and clarify ideas for writing.

Opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing as well as being explicitly taught related to texts and curriculum content. As vocabulary increases, teachers 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 also teach pupils how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than one meaning.

Throughout the curriculum, teachers teach pupils the vocabulary they need to discuss their reading, writing and spoken language.

Phonics

Phonics is taught daily in EYFS and KS1 following the Read, Write Inc (RWI) programme. RWI is a systematic synthetic phonics programme that provides the structure and resources needed to support children to develop their phonics skills. RWI is delivered daily to small ability-based groups across EYFS and KS1. Children learn 'speed sounds' in a sequential way, revising previously taught sounds and learning new ones each week. When reading books in phonics, children are asked comprehension questions about what they have read. Once children have finished the RWI scheme they read short chapter books in a group and answer comprehension questions.

[See appendix A – Phonics Policy]

Reading

Reading is a skill essential for life and at Wootton we want our children to leave school with a love and appreciation of reading. Reading is a habit, and that habit needs to be grounded in what we do at school. Reading allows us to discover more about our world, which we are all citizens of, and pupils are encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live in, 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 a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious minds.

All school staff are encouraged to share their love of reading with children and children are read to daily by their class teacher. Many children also have a reading counsellor (a member of our community) who they read with once a week. Their counsellor supports their decoding, fluency, and intonation and discusses what they are reading with them.

Reading Skills Sessions

We have adopted a whole-class approach to the teaching of reading in KS2, enabling all children to be exposed to the high-quality texts that encourage deep thinking. Reading Skills sessions take place daily in KS2. In year 2, this is implemented after Easter.

In these sessions, teachers choose high-quality texts that provide an appropriate level of challenge for all children. The text may not be decodable for all the children, so the teacher will read the text to the children. This is an opportunity for teachers to model the act of being a fluent reader.

Teachers plan explicitly the reading skills and strategies that they will teach through the chosen text, planning discussions and questions that encourage the children to enjoy, understand, discuss and analyse the written word in a supported environment. Teachers also make explicit the skills required to be a reader by 'thinking aloud'. Vocabulary, layout, structure and grammatical features are discussed and can later be applied in writing lessons. Where appropriate, texts chosen are linked to the current curriculum topic and written work in English.

[See Appendix B – Reading Skills Sessions]

Reading Spine

We have worked as a whole school team to create a list of core texts that we believe children should have experienced during their time at primary school. We aim to expose children to a vast range of classic, modern, diverse and inclusive literature. These texts may be explored in depth in reading

skills and writing sessions, linked to the current class topic or simply enjoyed for pleasure.
[See Appendix C]

Independent Reading

In addition to whole class Reading Skills sessions, children are given plenty of opportunities to read independently or with peers at other times of the week. Sustained, independent reading is encouraged in KS2, providing children the opportunity to enjoy a range of texts and to apply reading strategies that they have learned.

Each class has an inviting area for books and other reading materials to promote the enjoyment of reading. Books related to current topics should be displayed and reading materials should be organised in a way that enables the children to easily choose what they would like to read.

Reading at Home

All children are encouraged to read daily at home and we ask parents and carers to support their child with this.

In EYFS and KS1 children take home a selection of books each week. They choose one book to enjoy with a family member. This may be fiction or non-fiction and may not be decodable for the child. It is expected that this book is read to or with the child. Children will also be provided with a book that develops their word and sentence reading, such as a RWI Book Bag Book. This will be closely matched to the child's phonics skills; the sounds they have learned and the exception words that they have been taught in school. Details of daily reading at home should be recorded in the child's reading record book.

In KS2, children are encouraged to become more independent in making their own reading choices. Children may take home books from the class library or school library to read or bring in a reading book from home to read in class. Less confident readers are supported in their reading choices and children who did not complete the RWI programme in KS1 will still be provided with levelled reading scheme books. In KS2 children are encouraged to keep their own record of what they have read using their reading record books. Teachers will monitor these regularly.

Teachers and teaching assistants:

- monitor reading that takes place at home and ensure that book choices are appropriate
- provide decodable books closely matched to the child's phonics skills for children working through the RWI phonics programme
- check that books are returned to school from home on a weekly basis
- record reading at school in the child's reading record book where appropriate

Writing

Writing is an essential part of our curriculum and of high importance at Wootton to prepare children for the next stage of their education.

Writing is taught daily across the school. In EYFS, children at the beginning of their writing journey are taught to write words and sentences linked to the current sound that they are learning in their RWI sessions. In EYFS, children also have 'Drawing Club' sessions daily. Each week a new book is explored and children discuss the character, setting and events in detail. New vocabulary linked to the text is taught. Children are then invited to draw a key character or setting from the story and when they are ready, begin to label and write sentences linked to what they have read.

Writing and mark making is also encouraged as part of children's play within continuous provision. Teachers and teaching assistants explicitly model writing for a range of purposes and discuss this with the children.

In KS1 and KS2 each writing unit is anchored in a core text from our Reading Spine. The core text is chosen to inspire and engage children in their writing and is linked, where appropriate, to the current topic/theme that they are studying in other subjects. Core texts are often also explored at the same time in reading skills sessions, enabling children to move from 'reading as a reader', to 'reading as a writer' and exploring the writer's craft before using the skills and techniques in their own writing.

Children are provided with the skills to write a range of fiction and non-fiction text types which are mapped out in long-term planning.

Teachers use the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE) resources to inform their planning for the unit.

The termly and weekly planning for each writing unit will include:

- a main written outcome or text type, with a clear audience and purpose
- the core text leading the learning
- the writing focus for teaching in the unit
- the journey to success for the unit, showing the skills that children need in order to write for this audience and purpose successfully

Over time, text types and writing purposes are revisited across and within year groups to provide children with the opportunity to develop and secure their writing skills. This may occur within other subject areas. For example, children may be taught the necessary skills for writing a diary entry linked to their core text and then in later history lessons may write a diary entry in role as an evacuee in World War Two.

A range of strategies and approaches are taken across the school in order to equip children with the knowledge and ability to be skilled and confident writers.

Teachers:

- use the core text and other model texts to exemplify the writing skills and knowledge required for a particular text type, purpose or audience. This clearly shows children what excellent examples look like and provides a clear goal.
- ensure children know what the main outcome for the unit is
- use working walls to map the journey of writing and provide a resource point for children as writers

- explicitly model the whole process of being a writer, from generating ideas, through drafting and editing to publishing.
[See Appendix D]

Spelling, punctuation, and grammar

In EYFS and KS1 spelling, punctuation and grammar is taught within the daily discrete phonics (RWI) sessions. In KS1 weekly spellings are sent home along with the KS1 spelling list words.

In KS2, discrete spelling and grammar lessons are delivered following National Curriculum expectations. Activities are linked to spelling patterns and rules and grammatical terms. These include investigations of patterns and dictation exercises. Weekly spelling lists are sent home to consolidate learning. [Appendix E.1 – Spelling progression]

Teachers ensure that spelling, punctuation, and grammar skills taught during discrete sessions are modelled and revisited during writing sessions.

A variety of effective strategies are used to enhance spelling knowledge and understanding.
[See Appendix E.2 - Scaffolding spellings and games for teaching and practising tricky words.]

Some children need individual or group support with spelling. Gaps are identified through teacher assessment during spelling and English lessons and through independent written work across the curriculum. Some children will have differentiated spelling lists related to this and may receive additional support outside of spelling and English lessons. Spelling traffic light bookmark, phonic cards and word mats also support pupils' spellings. The marking of spellings is also differentiated based on the level of support that is needed.

[See Appendix E.3 - Marking of spelling]

Handwriting

In EYFS, pupils engage in writing, drawing, labelling, pattern and letter formation activities daily.

Handwriting is taught daily in KS1 and LKS2. In UKS2 it is taught twice a week. Teaching assistants may support pupils who have been identified as needing additional guidance in this area. Letter formation and joins are clearly modelled by the teacher and reinforce the week's spelling and phonics focus where appropriate. [See appendix F – Handwriting progression]

Inclusion

All children take part in English lessons and teachers ensure all pupils are included and can make progress throughout the lesson.

Teachers ensure that questioning, tasks and resources are appropriately differentiated to support the needs of all children and ensure that they are able to access the learning and be successful. Additional resources will be provided where appropriate to support and challenge individuals or groups of children. This may take the form of differentiated texts, topic specific vocabulary, word banks or mats, knowledge organisers, writing frames and prompts. Technology such as word processing programmes and speech to text applications may also be used. Additional adult support is deployed to support individuals and groups of children where needed.

Some children may take part in intervention sessions outside the normal English lessons to enable them to close gaps in learning and consolidate skills. For instance, additional phonics/spelling practice; reading 1:1 with an adult or reading comprehension practice. Interventions are planned and monitored by the class teacher in conjunction with the SENDCo and Headteacher.

Home school links

At Wootton we know that children benefit from teachers and parents/carers working together to support learning. We encourage family involvement through regular opportunities for children to share their learning, for instance by holding open classroom events.

Teachers provide topic webs for each term's learning, informing parents of the core text that children will be studying and the intended learning outcomes. Topic specific vocabulary is also shared so that it can be discussed at home as well as at school.

Homework

In EYFS and KS1 children are expected to read daily with an adult.

In KS1 children are also expected to practice their weekly spellings.

In KS2, children are expected to read daily and record this in their reading record and practice their weekly spellings.

Reporting to parents/carers

Teachers share children's individual progress in English with parents three times a year. This takes the form of parents' meetings in the autumn and spring term and a written report at the end of the summer term.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Through the vast subject that English is, there are great opportunities to develop opportunities for SMSC. For example:

- The studying of different texts - classical, contemporary, serious, funny can provide challenging starting points and give an appreciation of the beauty of great language and literature
- Exposure to great literature and poetry and its place within a culture can lead to appreciating moral or social aspects e.g. Dickens social commentary or knowing that we can learn a lot about other cultures from its writing.
- Drama and stories which create opportunities for moral judgements.
- Shared activities – shared reading, group drama, corporate writing that lead to an understanding of an appreciation of the importance of the group and other people's point of view.
- Knowledge of our language and its influence on our culture and the importance and value of other languages and cultures.
- Awareness of traditional tales and their cultural background.

Assessing Impact

Children are assessed against how well they have understood a range of key objectives and others from the National Curriculum. Formal summative assessments are carried out three times a year, with reading, writing and spelling formally assessed. Children's levels are recorded three times a year. The attainment and progress of pupils' learning is tracked by class teachers and senior leaders, so that early intervention can be put into place to ensure no child falls behind. Pupil Progress meetings are held each term, to discuss the progress of individuals in the key areas of reading and writing. Any concerns are raised and additional support required is put in place.

Assessment of Phonics

Regular phonics assessments take place as part of the RWI programme and groups are formed and adapted each half-term. Teachers and teaching assistants also monitor children's individual progress within their phonics groups and make changes as appropriate.

Year 1 pupils take the Statutory Phonics Screening Check in June. Any children who do not pass in year 1, retake in year 2.

Assessment of Reading

Teachers undertake formative assessment of children's progress in reading daily in each reading skills sessions.

Summative assessments take place termly. Children are assessed using PIRA reading papers and SATs papers as appropriate for their year group and teachers make a summative judgement based on these and their knowledge of the child and their progress.

Additionally, Reading Age tests may be used where appropriate.

Assessment of Writing

Teachers undertake formative assessment of children's progress in writing daily in each writing session, making informal judgements as they observe them during lessons and when marking work after lessons. Teachers identify areas for growth in pupils writing and adapt future lesson plans or provide individual or group with support and challenge as appropriate.

Teachers also complete regular summative assessment of children's independent writing, maintaining a record of each child's progress against key writing objectives. These objectives are listed on a target grid for each year group [appendix G – Writing assessment grids]. Each term, teachers use these grids to make a summative judgement about the progress of each pupil and their writing development in line with the National Curriculum.

Weekly spelling tests allow teachers to assess pupil's spelling development on a regular basis: lists of words are given to pupils each week and tests carried out the following week.

As part of the SATs in Year 6, pupils also take a formal grammar, punctuation and spelling test and reading test. These tests inform the final summative judgement that the teacher makes for these pupils.

Monitoring

We monitor the impact of our provision in English through:

- Staff feedback
- Planning reviews
- Learning walks and lesson observations
- Team teaching and planning
- Book reviews
- Pupil voice and surveys
- Tracking of whole-school, group and individual pupil data
- Internal and external moderation

Date: 25/06/2024

This policy will be reviewed in: September 2024