

English Policy

including Phonics and Early Reading

Copeland Road
Primary School



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Date: March 2023

Last reviewed on: March 2023

Next review due by: March 2024

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1. Aims

This policy is for the staff in our school. It aims to set out:

- › Our approach to teaching, monitoring and assessing English and literacy knowledge and skills
- › How we will make sure our provision for the teaching of English and literacy is of consistently high quality

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements and expectations set out in:

- › The [National Curriculum programmes of study for English](#)
- › The [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice 2014](#)
- › The [Equality Act 2010](#)

3. Our vision for English in our school

Our school aims to develop pupils' skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening. By the time that pupils move on from our school, our aim is for them to:

- To promote and encourage a lifelong enjoyment and love of reading
- To provide regular opportunities for pupils to read out loud and to be read to
- To access a variety of texts, including fiction and non-fiction
- To create independent and confident readers
- To equip pupils with the skills to know more, remember more and understand more.
- Develop children's vocabulary through reading.

- Enjoy writing in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences.
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting language and style accordingly
- Be curious and creative when it comes to reading and writing, for example by being interested in learning the meaning of new words
- Have a wide vocabulary and understanding of grammar
- Feel confident speaking in class and be able to clearly explain their understanding and ideas
- Listen carefully and sensitively to adults and their peers

4. Our guiding principles for the teaching of English

We teach English and literacy best when:

- › There's a joyful culture around reading in the school
- › All staff feel they have the knowledge, skills, understanding and professional support they need to teach English effectively
- › There's sufficiently detailed and frequent ongoing assessment of pupil progress
- › We expose pupils to different types of reading material, such as through stimulating, high-quality and curiosity-inspiring classroom displays
- › We involve families in supporting their child's reading and writing
- › The English curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced
- › We identify where pupils have learning gaps or aren't making the expected progress, and make sure interventions target these
- › Teaching resources are available, up to date, varied and diverse, and match pupil and curriculum needs
- › We engage pupils in high-quality back-and-forth interactions
- › We model new language and accurate grammar to pupils
- › We support pupils with speech, language and communication needs, for example by putting on extra small-group storytimes

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- › Building a team of expert teachers who know and understand the processes that underpin learning to read and write
- › Providing teachers with the appropriate training and resources so that they can competently deliver the English curriculum
- › Creating a stimulating school environment where pupils are exposed to different types of reading material, such as through displays, books and other classroom resources

5.2 The English and Early Reading lead

Our English lead is Joanne Murray and our Early Reading lead is Emily Spenceley. They're responsible for providing leadership and management for English and early reading to secure:

- › High-quality teaching and subject knowledge of staff

- › A coherently planned and sequenced English curriculum
- › Consistent assessment and accurate teacher judgements within all aspects of English
- › Effective use of resources

5.3 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- › Planning effective English and literacy lessons
- › Providing opportunities for pupils to apply their English skills in a variety of ways
- › Completing the relevant marking and assessment
- › Making sure that support staff have:
 - Access to planning materials and resources
 - The knowledge and skills they need to support and challenge pupils

6. Curriculum

Reading

At Copeland Road Primary, we strive to teach children to read effectively quickly. The systematic teaching of phonics is a high priority throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. At Copeland Road Primary we use the Read Write Inc. programme.

Using the RWI Scheme, to teach children to decode and then read, we aim to teach children from Early Years up to Year 2 to:

- apply their phonic knowledge and skills as the route to decode words
- respond speedily with the correct sound to graphemes (letters or groups of letters) for all common 40+ phonemes
- read accurately by blending sounds in unfamiliar words that contain the Grapheme Phoneme Correspondences (GPCs) that they have been taught
- read common exception words, noting unusual correspondences between spelling and sound
- read words containing taught GPCs and –s, –es, –ing, –ed, –er and –est endings
- read words of more than one syllable that contain taught GPCs
- read words with contractions and understand that the apostrophe represents the omitted letter(s)
- accurately read aloud books, that are consistent with their developing phonic knowledge and that do not require them to use other strategies to work out words
- reread books to build up their fluency, accuracy and expression and hence develop confidence and enjoyment of reading
- read most high-frequency regular words quickly and accurately, without overt sounding and blending; only needing to sound out unfamiliar words
- spell words containing each of the 40+ phonemes by segmenting the sounds in words
- spell common exception words correctly
- add prefixes and suffixes to previously taught words
- spell effortlessly, and with confidence, so that all their focus when writing can be directed towards composition
- make phonetically plausible attempts to spell words correctly
- select the correct GPC for words that contain sounds that have more than one GPC – e.g. ay, ai, a-e etc.
- form each letter correctly, using RWI letter formation rhymes to encourage correct entry and exit points, orientation and letter size.

At Copeland Road we understand the importance of children being exposed to reading from an early start and begin teaching phonics as soon as pupils begin in reception.

Staff systematically teach pupils using the Read Write Inc. programme enabling pupils to see the relationship between sounds and the written spelling patterns, or graphemes, which represent them. Phonics is delivered

in different groups throughout the EYFS and KS1, this ensures that pupils are at the correct group for their phonics ability and have regular assessments to ensure pupils are making progress.

Pupils will learn the 44 common sounds in the English language and are taught how to blend these sounds to decode (read) words. We start by teaching children to read and blend the first thirty Set 1 sounds. Once they have acquired this skill, they start reading stories and texts that have words made up of the sounds they know. This means that they can embed and apply their phonic knowledge and start to build their reading fluency. Once secure, children learn Set 2 and Set 3 sounds and then read texts with increasingly more complex sounds and graphemes. Throughout this process there is a focus on comprehension, reading with expression and reading for enjoyment.

Once children have completed the RWI programme, they move onto reading through the use of class texts, extracts and guided reading activities. This is often part of a sequence of English lessons but also reading is taught in stand-alone lessons in Y4-6 using the Comprehension Express scheme. This scheme focuses on teaching children the skills of

- Making predictions
- Looking for clues
- Visualisation
- Stop, check it makes sense
- Ask a question
- Think and remember
- Summarise
- Explore vocabulary
- Read it again
- Use text structures, features and language.

Children in school are listened to read regularly. All children read to an adult at least once a week, with additional reading for those children who did not pass the Y1 phonics screening, children identified as bottom 20% of readers and children working at greater depth. Each reading session begins with a conversation about the book ; plot, characters, author etc. During and after reading, children are asked a number of questions about what they have read.

Writing

We believe that the learning of writing skills should be embedded across the curriculum. The key skills of composition, planning & drafting, punctuation, spelling, handwriting & presentation, and standards of English and language structure are therefore taught explicitly in the context of English lessons, but also indirectly through cross-curricular writing tasks in other subjects. As much as possible writing is linked to class texts. Children learn the Nelson script for handwriting and practise in its use is provided for at all ages. This has been adapted to allow children who are joining to use loops. In EYFS, writing is about how children build an understanding of the relationship between the spoken word and the written word, and how through making marks, drawing and personal writing, children ascribe meaning to text and attempt to write for various purposes. In EYFS writing materials are always available for the children in their continuous provision. Children start with large motor control activities moving on to writing patterns, then on to letter formation. In EYFS and KS1 letter formation is taught using the RWInc rhymes. The development of writing skills at KS1 progresses by building on the basic skills learnt at EYFS and working towards expectations at the end of KS1. Writing tasks are planned for and scaffolded according to need, by the provision of written structures and templates, by the use of technology, or by the intervention of a supporting teacher or adult.

Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling

Spelling is taught through RWI spelling scheme and supported by other resources with a focus being placed on HFW lists and statutory word lists. Spellings are given on a weekly basis and children are encouraged to learn these both at home and at school.

Grammar and Punctuation is taught both within English lessons and also discretely. Children are taught an aspect of grammar and punctuation and then this is modelled to them within their writing. Grammar and punctuation is taught through the Nelson scheme and supported with a range of other resources to meet the needs of our children.

6.1 Timetabling

> Phonics

Children are taught daily, in small groups which reflect their phonic knowledge and reading fluency. We regularly assess children so that they are taught in a RWI group which matches their phonic knowledge. We make sure that pupils read books that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and ability to read 'tricky words'; so they experience early reading success and gain confidence that they are readers.

> Reading

Children participate in regular reading sessions, where they practice their skills of reading aloud to a group or whole class as well as being listened to read independently.

> Independent writing

Children have the opportunity to write daily. This may be short or longer pieces of writing. Children are encouraged to check and edit their work before it is checked by an adult. Margin marking is used to increase children's editing skills.

> Spelling

Children complete a daily spelling session; this is either within their phonics session or a separate planned session.

> Grammar and punctuation

Grammar and punctuation is taught within daily English lessons as well as a weekly discrete session.

> Spoken language

Opportunities for children to develop their spoken language and oral skills are planned throughout all lessons. Children are given the chance to express their own opinions as well as listening to others with respect.

6.2 Cross-curricular links

We will facilitate cross-curricular learning of English skills, making sure that the links with other curriculums are natural and not forced. This will be achieved through activities in other subjects such as:

- > Annotating sources
- > Group discussions
- > Comprehension
- > Topic research

6.3 Adaptation

We will provide suitable adaptations to make sure that every pupil makes maximum progress in English, by:

- > Recognising where some pupils need specific help with their English skills, e.g. if they are dyslexic
- > Providing resources such as phonics mats and writing frames to scaffold pupils' learning
- > Identifying pupils who would benefit from more support in an area of their English learning, and running small intervention groups for targeted support each week to aid their progress and attainment. We will monitor these closely to move pupils in and out of these groups as needed

- › Making sure pupils who need it are extended through the use of additional, more-demanding and open-ended tasks and planned challenges within each lesson

7. Marking and feedback

Feedback will clearly explain to pupils what they're doing well, and what they need to do next to continue to improve their work.

It will be given during or after every lesson by verbal feedback, written in pupils' books, suggested improvements or questions to move the learning forward.

Please see marking and feedback policy for further information.

8. Monitoring, assessment and moderation

8.1 Monitoring

We will monitor teaching and learning of English and literacy in our school to make sure that all of our pupils make the best possible progress from their starting points.

The English lead and Early Reading lead will monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning through:

- › Conducting learning walks
- › Formal lesson observations
- › Reviewing marking and feedback
- › Termly pupil progress meetings
- › Gathering input from the pupils
- › Planning scrutinies
- › Book scrutinies

8.2 Assessment

We will track pupils' progress using a combination of formative and summative assessment. Formative assessment will take place every lesson, summative assessment will take place termly (using NFER assessment). Writing moderation between teachers takes place termly, where a range of writing examples are used to inform teacher judgments.

Our pupils will sit the following formal assessments:

- › The phonics screening check at the end of year 1
- › National Curriculum tests in the summer terms at the end of KS1 and 2

We will provide regular targets for pupils, and provide termly verbal reports against these at parents' evenings. Pupils will receive a written report annually in the Summer Term.

Please see Assessment policy for further information.

8.3 Moderation

We will standardise writing samples to:

- Demonstrate how pupils' work meets National Curriculum attainment targets for KS1 and KS2, to help with assessment
- Make sure staff have a consistent approach to marking pupils' work
- We will refer to the Standards and Testing Agency (STA)'s exemplification materials for [KS1](#) and [KS2](#) to support with this.
- We will moderate teacher assessments of reading and writing termly in school.
- Teachers from Y2 and Y6 will attend local authority moderation sessions.

- Cross-school moderation takes place yearly with a local cluster of schools.
- For each National Curriculum statement, we will:
 - › State what the activity involved, for example if it was done in controlled conditions or involved specific resources
 - › Explain how the evidence was collected, for example by observation, written work or drawing
 - › Indicate how much support was given to the pupil during the activity

9. Learning environment

Pupils will learn English in spaces that:

- › Are well-organised
- › Contain appropriate and good-quality resources for pupils to refer to (in a space where they can find or see them easily)
- › Are quiet
- › Have minimal distractions, for example not containing a distracting amount of decoration
- › Display letter cards and posters showing grapheme-phoneme correspondences that match our school's phonics teaching programme

10. Resources

10.1 Books

We will select and use books that:

- › Engage pupils emotionally
- › Cover a wide range of subjects
- › Elicit a strong response, such as curiosity, anger, excitement, laughter or empathy
- › Have a strong narrative that will sustain multiple readings
- › Extend pupils' vocabulary
- › Have illustrations that are engaging and reflect children from all backgrounds and cultures
- › Help pupils connect with who they are
- › Help pupils to understand the lives of people whose experiences and perspectives may be different from their own
- › Include stories set in both the UK and around the world
- › Include both modern and traditional stories
- › Include fiction and non-fiction

It's unlikely that just 1 book will meet all of these criteria, but our full selection as a whole will.

Once we've chosen our books, we will:

- › Identify a core set of stories for each year group
- › Refresh the list regularly (at least once a year), as new books are published and as our school welcomes new teachers
- › Encourage teachers to familiarise themselves with the stories their pupils will know from previous years
- › Get teachers to choose their own books to read aloud alongside the core set of stories
- › Share the list with parents, and explain its purpose, so they can buy or borrow the books

10.2 Library and Book corners

When visiting their book corner, pupils will be able to:

- Browse the books
- Revisit the ones the teacher has read to them
- Borrow books to read or re-tell at home
- Spend time there

10.3 Rhymes and poems

We will choose rhymes and poems that will develop pupils' language skills. The class teacher (supported by the English lead will identify a core set of poems for each year group, including:

- Rhyming poems
- Poems where alliteration is a strong feature
- Word games
- Traditional songs and rhymes
- Nonsense rhymes
- Poems that:
 - Are particularly rhythmical
 - Can withstand a lot of repetition
 - Elicit a strong emotional response
 - Extend pupils' vocabulary in different areas of learning

10.4 Dictionaries and thesauruses

To support with writing and spelling, we will make sure that pupils have access to dictionaries and thesauruses by

- Having at least 1 dictionary and thesaurus available in each classroom
- Allowing pupils to use the computer during lessons to look up word meanings and synonyms where appropriate.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed every year by the English lead with support from the Headteacher and link governor for English (Paul DGLISH). At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

12. Links with other policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- SEN/SEND policy and information report
- Marking and feedback policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Behaviour policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy