

# Houghton on the Hill

## Church of England Primary School



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| <b>School Policy For</b>        | <b>English</b>          |
| <b>Date Revised</b>             | <b>September 2023</b>   |
| <b>Responsible Staff Member</b> | <b>Melanie Pickford</b> |

This policy outlines the teaching, organisation and management of the English taught and learnt at Houghton on the Hill C.E. Primary School.

### AIMS

At Houghton on the Hill Primary School, English Literature and Language is at the heart of our curriculum. A cross-curricular programme of Reading, Writing and Speaking & Listening enables children to express themselves clearly, creatively and imaginatively. Opportunities are given so that pupils develop their knowledge, understanding and use of spoken and written English.

Children at Houghton on the Hill Primary school will;

- Learn how to read and write with fluency, understanding and confidence, developing a range of independent strategies to take responsibility for their own learning
- Be encouraged to develop a love of reading and to read for both enjoyment and information
- Develop their vocabulary, through an interest in words and their meanings
- Experience a range of text/media types and genres, across a range of contexts, to develop their understanding
- Learn to write in a variety of styles and be able to apply characteristic features of texts to their own writing
- Develop a technical vocabulary with understanding of grammatical terminology and learn how to apply grammatical terminology in their own writing
- Have the opportunity to write for pleasure; to explore and develop their own ideas
- Use their developing creativity, imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.

We fulfill the aims in the following ways:

Have an expectation that all pupils are capable of achieving in speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Use quality literature (books, texts and film) to provide a stimulus.

Provide instruction and deliberate practice in writing including sentence structure, paragraphing, punctuation, handwriting and spelling.

Plan carefully designed lessons that develop skills in planning, drafting, sharing, evaluating, revising, editing, and publishing written work with a focus on audience and purpose.

Assess regularly so that gaps in understanding can be addressed quickly and children are encouraged to think about the choices that they make in their work.

Provide high quality and targeted feedback.

Continually self –reflect on our own teaching and look for ways to improve our own professional development such as sharing good practice within our school community, drawing on the expertise of others and researching ideas.

Plan lessons that celebrate speaking, listening, reading and writing so that children have an interest and enjoyment of the subject that will remain within them beyond their time at Houghton.

## STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The school’s policy for English is based on the National Curriculum (2014) and the English sections of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012). This policy has been drawn up as a result of staff discussion and has the full agreement of the Governing Body. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all the teaching staff.

The Governing Body, in particular the English Governor, make regular visits and receive regular reports on the progress of English provision so that the governing body and its committees can make well informed judgments about progress being made towards the priorities and targets in the school improvement plan.

In the Foundation Stage (Reception) children are given opportunities to: speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities; use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum; become immersed in an environment rich in print and opportunities to communicate and have daily phonics sessions based on the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Program. These phonics sessions include daily opportunities to write the graphemes taught as well as separate reading lessons three times a week.

At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2) children learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They learn to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They learn to use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

At Key Stage Two (Years 3-6) children learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They explore the use of language in literary and non- literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

## ORGANISATION

### EYFS

In EYFS, children have daily phonics lessons based on Little Wandle Letters & Sounds to develop skills like blending and segmenting in preparation for early reading and writing. Children are provided with opportunities to develop their communication, language and literacy skills on a daily basis with a focus on child-initiated activities. As well as a Writing Area, which provides children with a range of materials with which to experiment and practice mark marking/letter formation (and eventually to practice taught skills), other Learning Zones provide children with the opportunity to read and write in a range of contexts. A range of resources in the outdoor area, including a mud kitchen menu and writing belts, provide valuable opportunities to engage children in writing for pleasure. In the outdoor area children have constant access to reading and writing resources that children can use

independently. They also have access to a vast range of texts, including fiction and non-fiction. Children enjoy daily 'story time' so they become familiar with stories and authors and begin to develop a love of reading.

Adult led activities in EYFS are often linked to stories, poems or nursery rhymes or to cross-curricular Topics. From when they start school, children learn that writing can have a range of purposes and they begin to explore the features of different types of writing.

### **Key Stage 1 (Year 1 & Year 2)**

In Key Stage 1, Little Wandle Letters & Sounds continue to be taught in whole class lessons, with an increased focus on spelling and spelling rules. Additional "keep up" phonics sessions are taught in small groups for those who need them. In English lessons, children study fiction and non-fiction and begin to compare characteristic features of writing. Children learn how to apply these features in their own writing and begin to write at length. In Key Stage 1, children will write for a range of purposes, including (but not limited to): stories, diaries, newspaper reports, instructions, explanation texts, poetry, letters, labels, lists and caption, recount and non-chronological reports.

Children are taught Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar objectives from the National Curriculum and learn how to use these taught rules in their own writing. Writing skills are developed across the curriculum and children are given lots of opportunities for cross curricular writing. This may be linked to specific curriculum areas (for example, the United Kingdom in Geography, the Great Fire of London in history or other curriculum areas such as R.E or Science).

Children have at least 3 reading sessions a week in small groups as well as whole class reading sessions to develop their reading comprehension. Children are encouraged to develop a love for reading through daily story time and are heard read individually weekly.

### **Key Stage 2 (Year 3 - 6 )**

In Key Stage 2, spellings are taught in whole class with the focus on spelling patterns and using and applying them in writing. Phonics continue to be taught in small groups or in 1:1 sessions for those that need them specifically those that need additional support with their reading. In Key Stage 2 this may be through the Little Wandle Catch Up program or through our "Growing Readers" program. Additional support for children with SEND or those children who are significantly behind their peers is also provided.

During English lessons, children study fiction and non-fiction and develop the skills to independently identify the features of texts. Children write for increasingly longer periods of time to develop a stamina for writing. In Key Stage 2, children write for a range of purposes, including (but not limited to): stories, diaries, newspaper reports, poetry, chronological and non-chronological reports, formal and informal letters, discussion texts and persuasive writing.

Children continue to be taught Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar objectives from the National Curriculum and learn how to use these in their writing and think about the impact that they have on the reader. Children are given lots of opportunities for cross-curricular learning (for example, explaining how the Romans built roads or writing about a science experiment). As well as working on their understanding of what they read in daily whole-class reading sessions, children are encouraged to read independently and are read to on a daily basis.

## **PLANNING**

Teaching and learning of English focuses on acquiring and developing the range of skills needed in order that pupils leave us as fluent and confident readers, writers, speakers and listeners. Learning objectives are taken directly from the National Curriculum and are broken down into smaller, manageable and meaningful steps. Skills are explicitly taught and children are given opportunities to practise and master them in different contexts. Our integrated curriculum ensures that learning is contextual and purposeful. For example, children learning about the Ancient Greeks might read Greek myths, write a diary extract of an Athenian or Spartan soldier or explain the idea of democracy and organise their own debates. Vocabulary enrichment is a priority through-out the school and

each year group has a progressive "Word of the Week" to ensure that children's vocabulary is widened..

### **The Spoken Word**

Pupils are taught to speak clearly and confidently and articulate their views and opinions. They are encouraged to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose, listening and responding to literature, giving and receiving instructions and participating in discussions and debates. We recognise that children need to be able to adapt speech to a range of audiences and practise their ideas and sentences verbally.

### **Reading**

Pupils are taught throughout EYFS, KS1 and KS2 to become competent readers. Children are encouraged to read for both pleasure and meaning across a wide range of texts. In EYFS, daily phonics sessions are planned and delivered for teaching new sounds, and to practice the skills of blending and segmenting based on Little Wandle Letters and Sounds. Teachers plan both shared and guided reading sessions using the development matters statements and Early Learning Goals, taking into account the current knowledge and understanding of the children.

The structured programme of phonics is continued in KS1 and is then built upon in KS2. Alongside word reading, we have a whole school approach to the development of key comprehension skills. We have a shared language (VIPERS -Vocabulary, Infer, Predict, Explain, Retrieve, Sequence or Summarise) through which we explicitly plan and teach in line with the reading content domains.

The teaching of reading may take place on a one to one basis, in small groups or with the whole class. Pupils who have been identified as working at a level below that which is age related are given additional intervention sessions. These interventions may be focussed on decoding skills, reading fluency or comprehension skills. We have a range of resources to support these interventions.

In KS1 all pupils have, at least, two school reading books – one of these will be a "Reading for Pleasure" free-choice book and one will be a phonics book at the appropriate book level. All books are linked to Children progress through the book bands (which are categorised in line with phonic ability). Once they are fluent readers, children independently choose books from our school or class library or they may read a book from home. In EYFS and KS1 each pupil has a home/school reading record. We have developed a Reading Spine to set out the books that children will experience during their time at our school and this is continually updated to ensure that there are contemporary books. These books are reviewed to also ensure that there are a range of authors and representations in the books – it is important that all children have the opportunity to see themselves in books.

### **Writing**

Planning focuses on engaging children in the writing process by immersing them in quality stimuli, reading in depth, oral rehearsal and drama-based activities. Independent writing opportunities are planned for across the curriculum and explicit skills are directly taught alongside vocabulary development and the ability to articulate thoughts and ideas. Pupils are given the opportunity, within a broad and balanced curriculum, to practise and consolidate taught English skills.

Writing is taught through a progressive build-up of skills and knowledge and allows for lots of opportunity to practise and consolidate previous learning. Lessons are planned with a focus on the purpose (why we are writing) and the audience (who we are writing for). In KS1 children are taught to practice speaking sentences (thinking about form and structure), verbally articulate ideas, plan, draft, revise, edit and share work. In KS2, children are taught to plan, draft, share, evaluate, revise (looking at composition), edit and sometimes publish their work. Teachers make cross-curricular

links and plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

In English lessons, specific teaching strategies are used to develop children's skills: phonics; modelled writing; shared writing; guided writing.

We aim to make writing meaningful; we encourage all children to see themselves as writers, whether it is informing, entertaining, persuading or discussing.

### **Handwriting**

Great emphasis is placed on achieving fluent cursive handwriting. When handwriting becomes second nature, it allows children to focus on higher order composition skills. Children are taught to make letters for their first day in EYFS without joining. Continuous cursive script is introduced in Year 2 and is then taught and practiced in all years from Year 2 to Year 6.

### **Grammar and Punctuation**

All year groups are taught in accordance with the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Wherever possible, grammar and punctuation are contextualised within the context of the reading and writing lessons.

### **Spelling**

Pupils are taught to spell firstly through phonics. Throughout EYFS and KS1, all pupils have regular phonics lessons. This knowledge is built upon in their independent writing. As part of this process and beyond it into KS2, pupils are taught to think critically about words, their sound patterns, meanings and origins and will be given spelling dictations to help them to understand the words in context. They are encouraged to use spellings in their written work. Pupils who have specific difficulties may have additional teaching as part of an intervention.

## **ASSESSMENT**

Teachers plan lessons that aim for all children to master the key skills. Therefore, ongoing assessment is an important component of the curriculum. Class teachers are responsible for assessing individual's attainment in line with the school's Assessment Policy.

Assessments are either formative (day to day assessments that take place continually and inform planning) or summative (formal assessments that take place at the end of a strand, term or year). Each year group has a checklist to ensure that children are on track to meet the expected standard. These checklists are then used by the teachers' to plan the next steps so that gaps are filled.

### **Assessments include:**

- Work samples e.g. books
- Observation notes e.g. from guided sessions
- Questioning e.g. retrieval of information, asking a child to explain how they know something
- Photographs
- Tests e.g. teacher generated, published tests or end of Key Stage statutory tests
- Feedback from pupils e.g. responses in books, verbal feedback

In foundation stage, teachers continually update the children's 'Learning Journeys' through Tapestry and also keep more formal records directly relating to the learning objectives and Early learning Goals. Children are also given targets each term.

In KS1 and KS2, teachers record assessment results using class tick lists and informal notes. A child's attainment is regularly updated to monitor progress against age appropriate expectations.

At the end of Year 1, children complete the phonics screening check and at the end of KS1 and KS2 children complete Statutory Assessment Tests. These results are reported to parents.

## **PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT & HOMEWORK**

We value the part that parents play in the education of the children at Houghton and they are regularly invited into school for curriculum evenings and open mornings. There is a dedicated English page on the school website that includes details about the English provision at Houghton. Parents are signposted to this page, via the school newsletter, as new items are added. We value feedback and regularly ask them their views following school events.

Weekly class newsletters and homework provide information about the English Curriculum and the areas being taught. Spellings are sent home to practice weekly and children are expected to read daily. Other homework set may include grammar and punctuation taught in class, work on reading comprehensions skills or may be writing focused.

Parents have opportunities to discuss progress with the class teacher in the Autumn and Spring term but they are very welcome to speak to the teacher at any suitable time during the year.

## **SEND PROVISION**

It is assumed that the large majority of children progress through the curriculum content at the same pace. If a child has a specific difficulty relating to English that is listed on their IEP, they are given extra time or additional support with a teacher or LSA to address their specific needs and to support and develop their English knowledge and skills accordingly.

## **CHILDREN WORKING AT GREATER DEPTH IN THE EXPECTED STANDARD**

If a child has demonstrated that they have a deep understanding of an age appropriate concept and is excelling in an area of English, they are given further opportunities to develop their reading or writing with particular emphasis on the choices that they or authors have made. They will be encouraged to apply higher order thinking skills through carefully planned tasks.

## **INTERVENTION**

In Foundation, KS1 and KS2, if a child is identified as having a difficulty or misconception with an age-related expectation, they are immediately targeted through individual or small group work. These interventions provide short-term targeted support using precise questioning, scaffolding and careful modelling to enable learners to reach their full potential.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

We incorporate English into a wide range of cross-curricular subjects and seek to take advantage of multicultural aspects of English e.g. looking at stories and writings from other countries and cultures. All children have equal access to the curriculum regardless of their gender. This is monitored by analysing pupil performance throughout the school to ensure that there is no disparity between groups.

## **ROLE OF SUBJECT LEADER**

The Subject Leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

- the monitoring and evaluation of reading, writing, speaking and listening :-
- pupil progress
- provision of English teaching and learning
- the quality of the Learning Environment,
- taking the lead in policy development,
- auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD,
- purchasing and organising resources,
- keeping up to date with recent English developments
- the delivery of reading and writing surgeries for teachers.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

Teaching and Learning Policy

Assessment and Record Keeping

Special Educational Needs Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Continuing Professional Development Policy

Curriculum Statement

Marking policy

ICT Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Assessment Policy