



Lenham Primary School

Take Pride; Be Proud


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English Policy

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This policy needs to be read alongside other school policies including:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Marking and Feedback Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Handwriting Policy
- SEND Policy
- Homework Policy

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

Intent

English makes a major contribution to the development of a child's language which, in turn, contributes to the child's understanding of his or her world, the world of others and the world of imagination. Since English is integral to the learning process throughout the curriculum, it follows that whenever anything is being taught or learned, there is potential for developing a child's language. At Lenham Primary School, we ensure that English is not only taught as a discrete subject but that it is embedded throughout the curriculum. Through using high-quality texts, immersing children in vocabulary rich learning environments and ensuring curriculum expectations and the progression of skills are met, children will be exposed to a language rich, creative and a continuous English curriculum which will not only enable them to become primary literate but will also develop a love of reading, creative writing and purposeful speaking and listening.

The overarching aim for English is to promote high standards of language and literacy, by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding;
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information;
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language;
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage;
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences;
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas;
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Statutory Guidance

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum in England: English programmes of study 2014 and in the Communication, Language and English section of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage (2017).

In the **Foundation Stage** children should be given opportunities to:

- speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities;
- use communication, language and English in every part of the curriculum;
- become immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

At **Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2)**, children should learn to:

- speak confidently and listen to what others have to say;
- begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm;
- use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

At **Key Stage Two (Years 3-6)**, children should learn to

- change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences;
- read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them;
- explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

Implementation

We ensure the development of effective spoken language so that pupils can:

- formulate, clarify and express their ideas;
- express themselves in a variety of situations, using language which is appropriate to their needs and the intended audience;
- listen, understand and respond appropriately to others;
- use, with increasing confidence, the vocabulary and grammar of Standard English;
- speak clearly and convey ideas confidently in Standard English.

We ensure the development of reading:

- reading skills will be split in two dimensions – word reading/decoding and comprehension;
- children will be taught to master their initial reading skills so that they become independent and enthusiastic readers, who develop a love of reading;
- pupils will read a range of texts fluently, accurately and with understanding, enhancing cultural awareness;
- children will be taught to scan texts to find out the information they need, in order to research and answer the questions of others;
- pupils will understand the variety of written language and the differences between fiction and non-fiction;
- children will understand and respond to a wide range of books and media texts;
- children will be taught to improve their abilities to analyse, evaluate and criticise texts which they have read.

We ensure the development of pupil's writing skills:

- the English curriculum divides writing in two dimensions – transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas);
- children will be taught to express themselves clearly and precisely for enjoyment;
- pupils demonstrate their understanding of how writing enables them to remember, communicate, organise and develop their ideas and information;
- pupils are encouraged to plan, draft, edit and improve written work;
- write for an increasing range of purposes matching their language to the needs of the appropriate audiences;
- children will understand the appropriate use and purpose of an increasing range of written forms;
- pupils will write neatly and with accurate spelling and expression;
- children will write with accurate punctuation and grammar.

Spoken Language

There should be a planned approach to the systematic teaching of spoken language across the curriculum where:

- skills are taught explicitly and opportunities found to reinforce and extend developing skills. It is important to plan cross-curricular as different subjects offer opportunities for different kinds of talk;
- opportunities are planned for informal/teacher directed role play;
- children participate in discussions, presentations, performances, improvisations and debates and are taught to gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener;
- there is articulation and justification of answers, arguments and opinions;
- children are taught to maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments;
- children speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English.

Phonics and Reading

Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1

The Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 follow a systematic synthetic approach to the teaching of phonics set out in Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised. Phonics is taught for 20 minutes every day where children revisit and review previous learning before a new GPC is taught through oral blending and segmenting as well as application through reading and spelling. Each week, the children will also take part in three group guided reading sessions to help build fluency. For these sessions, we use Collins Big Cat Phonics books to ensure the children are reading fully decodable books. This is then supported by parents and carers when the children use the same book to read at home. Grapheme wall charts or 'Grow the Code' charts are displayed in classrooms.

Accelerated Reader and Reading from Year 1 – Year 6

Towards the end of Year 1 or at the beginning of Year 2, the children are ready to join the Accelerated Reader programme to continue their reading journey through to Year 6. Accelerated Reader continues to support each child's love of reading, and further develops their fluency throughout their primary education. The programme ensures that each child has a reading book that will comfortably challenge pupils of all ages and abilities, while continuing to support their vocabulary acquisition and fluency of reading.

Four times a year (at the start of term 1, end of term 2, start of term 4 and middle of term 6), pupils undertake a short assessment called a 'Star Assessment' on a Chromebook, in order to inform their class teacher of their reading age and level of comprehension, which in turn allows the teacher to help each child set goals and direct ongoing reading practice. Following each Star Assessment, each child will be given a new ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development) range from which they can select their daily class reading books. After each book they read within their ZPD range, they will complete an online quiz and receive immediate feedback on their comprehension of the book, which motivates them to make progress with their reading skills. The aim is to achieve a quiz score of 85% or above as this will ensure that good progress is maintained.

A daily Accelerated Reader session of 15 minutes is planned into the timetable for each class. During these sessions, the teaching assistant will listen to targeted children read on a 1:1 basis while the class teacher will work with a group focussing on prosody and vocabulary, moving on to inference once ready. Teachers also use a weekly whole class reading session and supplementary small group intervention sessions to focus on developing vocabulary, fluency and prosody alongside a range of comprehension skills including the use of inference to answer questions and ascertaining meaning beyond the literal.

Reading for pleasure

Reading for pleasure is promoted and regularly encouraged through independent and paired reading; class story time; library visits and visiting authors; writing units are often text-driven; children are encouraged to recommend reading books to their peers; and a variety of texts are used to support the learning in foundation subjects.

In all year groups, home reading records are sent home with reading books. These should have the title of book and a brief comment if wished. The children can also make comments about their books. Parents/carers or family members sign the diary when they hear their child read; likewise teaching staff and volunteer readings will also record any 1:1 reading using the reading record books.

Writing

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are given as much opportunity as possible to use writing in child and teacher-initiated activities. They are encouraged to have a go, using sounds and word building skills learned in phonic sessions. They are given the opportunity to write for a broad range of purposes and audiences.

In Years 1 to 6, children are given opportunities to write across the curriculum, covering a wide range of genres. In Year 1, activities begin from the end of September in small groups, with the children

completing tasks more independently after they transition onto the Y1 curriculum, around the October half term, depending on the needs of the class. Various strategies are used in to scaffold the writing process, such as model writing, shared writing, oral rehearsal, scribing, sharing the pen, 'magpie-ing' ideas, etc.

At Lenham Primary School, we use stimuli from The Literacy Shed and 'The Write Stuff'. The Writing Rainbow and its lenses (see below) are used to support our teaching and learning of English to ensure clarity to the mechanics of writing. All genres covered within writing sessions are those taken from the Genre Overview on our Writing Progression Document. Writing is focused on one of the following purposes: to entertain, to inform and to persuade with the addition of to discuss in UKS2.

Units of work generally begin by sharing and discussing the stimulus (text, picture, video, music, etc.) This stage is often completed in reading sessions. If using a text stimulus, children then discuss features such as vocabulary use, sentence structures and layout. Pupils are immersed in a rich language discussion and activities to provide a wealth of vocabulary to aid their writing.

Teacher modelling of writing is used to demonstrate the thoughts and processes of the writer and articulate writing choices. A collaborative approach to the exploration and selection of vocabulary through 'thesaurus thinking' is used to support modelled and shared writing which in turn supports pupils to showcase what they can do within particular writing parameters known as The Three Zones of Writing taken from The Write Stuff approach. These are the FANTASTICs, GRAMMARISTICs and the BOOMTASTICs. The Three Zones of Writing are components we use to support pupils in becoming great writers. Through the nine idea lenses known as the FANTASTICs, pupils focus on intended purpose of a sentence. The GRAMMARISTICs allow pupils to focus on the grammar element of writing which focuses on sentence structure, grammar rules and punctuation. The BOOMTASTICs allow pupils to capture and create a vivid visual for the reader through the use of poetic devices.



The teacher will provide models to aid children in practising each of these elements with and without adult support. Children will then practise applying these to their own writing, often through a shared write and sentence stacking sessions first, and then independently. Throughout the writing process, children edit and redraft their work in response to feedback from their teacher and peers. Editing Stations are used following the completion of extended pieces of writing.

Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation

Children are given opportunities to increase and enhance their vocabulary through reading, writing and speaking. It is important that pupils learn the correct grammar, punctuation and vocabulary in English as modelled by all adults and these are taught throughout the curriculum. Vocabulary, Punctuation and Grammar can be taught in discrete lessons but are also embedded as part of everyday teaching and learning practice.

Spelling

In Year 2 and throughout Key Stage 2, spelling is taught based on Diane McGuinness' research which identifies 176 common spellings for the 44 sounds in English. This approach recognises that spelling alternatives for each phoneme can be mastered through controlled exposure and varied repetition, and from Year 2 to Year 6 must be sequenced from simple to complex, common to rare. Each week, classes focus on a specific phoneme: this begins with a teacher-guided session to introduce the phoneme and its corresponding graphemes. This learning is then revisited and consolidated through daily work throughout the week, involving independent practice, guided and paired work. Teaching this way allows us to deliver the National Curriculum spelling objectives but also ensures we can plug any gaps in the children's phonetic knowledge. The year 3/4 and 5/6 statutory words and homophones have been split into their constituent sounds, so they are often covered multiple times across the year. For children who struggle with spelling, we individually tailor the lists according to their needs to ensure they can access an appropriate level of challenge whilst still being included in whole-class work. End of week informal spelling dictations are used to assess the children's understanding. Dictionary skills are taught and a range of dictionaries are available for use in the classroom.

Handwriting

Please refer to our separate Handwriting policy.

Impact

- Pupils enjoy reading regularly, for information and for enjoyment and pleasure. They discuss books and texts with excitement and interest.
- Pupils enjoy writing and use the features of different genres and styles. They can write for different purposes and audiences.
- Skills progression (in spelling, grammar and punctuation) throughout the school is evident in children's books including that of other subjects.
- Pupils are adventurous with vocabulary choices and they continue to grow a varied vocabulary throughout their time at Lenham Primary School.
- Pupils have a strong sense of ownership of their writing. They are able to identify mistakes in their own writing and are able to use a bank of strategies to help them to edit and improve their own work and the work of their peers.
- Pupils are proud of their writing and always know that their writing has purpose. They know that others value their writing; they see it in display, shared during Book Look sessions and shared on the school website/Twitter feed.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment in English is continuous, to inform planning and diagnose strengths and weaknesses. Speaking and Listening involves observing children using a variety of spoken language for different purposes.

Formal and informal observations take place in reading, these monitor children's developing use of strategies and responses to texts. Target Tracker is used to record and track progress for Year 1 – 6 and data harvests are submitted every 6 weeks. As well as Star Reading Assessments used to inform our Accelerated Reader programme, NTS reading assessments and Cornerstones Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar assessments are carried out 3 times a year in Years 2-6, and in Year 1 at the end of the Spring and Summer terms. EYFS track progress through records based on guidelines contained in Development Matters. Every six weeks a phonics assessment is completed for all children working within the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised scheme. Writing (including vocabulary, grammar and punctuation) involves marking which is positive, constructive and developmental. Feedback to children about their progress is through verbal comment, discussion and the marking of work. Whole school writing moderation takes place three times a year. EYFS assessment is ongoing through records based on Development Matters. Termly testing, teacher's own

records, home/school reading records and children's work will provide a record of progress. In Years 2 and 6 statutory tests will also provide a record of progress. Parents will be informed of their child's progress, in English, through parent consultation meetings and reports.

Planning

Yearly overviews (Long Term Plans) of units taught are kept and these indicate genres and texts covered as well as accompanying vocabulary, grammar and punctuation objectives. Cornerstones is used to record unit plan sequences and individual lessons. These indicate National Curriculum learning objectives, differentiation and adjustments made to support all abilities and resources used.

Year group text lists are updated termly and monitored by the English Subject Leader to ensure the children are experiencing high-quality and age-appropriate texts.

Inclusion

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

Equal Opportunities

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

The Role of the Subject Leader

The Subject Leader should be responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through monitoring and evaluating English by:

- providing staff training;
- monitoring pupil progress;
- provision of English (including Intervention and support programmes);
- 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.