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English Policy	Issued: June 2020
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APPROVAL BY	STANDARDS COMMITTEE

English Policy

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1. Purpose Of Study

A clear understanding of English has a crucial place in education and in our society. A high-quality education in English will teach our pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to

develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society. Therefore, pupils who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disadvantaged. Our purpose is to ensure that this does not happen and that our pupils see this purpose and strive to read, write and communicate effectively in all they do.

2. Aims/Intent

Our overarching aim for English is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping our pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. By enabling children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, we want our pupils to become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and plays, as well as non-fiction and media texts. During their time with us we want our children to gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. By taking into consideration the children's interests, differing abilities, cultural background and equal opportunities, pupils use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking, listening, reading and writing across a range of different situations.

By following the National Curriculum for English [1], our intent is to ensure that all pupils:

- Read easily, fluently and with good understanding and expression, with awareness, where appropriate, of their audience
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information, becoming enthusiastic and reflective readers
- Acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- Are enabled to listen, understand and respond appropriately
- 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
- Develop a fluent and legible handwriting
- Develop the skills of grammar and punctuation and apply them to their own compositions
- Use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- Become competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate in ways that take account of their listeners.

3. School Curriculum

3.1. Spoken Language

The National Curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak is vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Our teaching at Alfred Street aims to

ensure that we continually develop our pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills. Our pupils should have the capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They will be assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves, as well as to others, and teachers ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils are also taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

All pupils are enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils are supported become increasingly able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.

Statutory requirements which underpin all aspects of spoken language across primary education form part of the National Curriculum. These are reflected and contextualised within the reading and writing domains which follow.

3.2. Drama

Drama is a useful way to improve speaking and listening skills, as well as boosting attainment, imagination, purpose, self-esteem and confidence in reading and writing. Children are encouraged to use a range of dramatic forms, to express feelings and ideas both verbally and non-verbally. Children are encouraged to appreciate drama as participants and observers. Drama is built into the learning sequence of English lessons, as well as within other areas of the curriculum. Where appropriate, photographic evidence is obtained to show where and how it has been incorporated into the curriculum.

3.3. Reading

The programmes of study for reading at Key Stage 2 consist of two dimensions:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading).

It is essential that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. The development of phonics skills should therefore be emphasised for children who have not mastered these skills when they start our school.

Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction texts. The necessary skills of inference, summarising, predicting, making comparisons, authorial use of language and structures, as well as vocabulary, are taught as part of the reading curriculum. All pupils are encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction, to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to 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 up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious young minds.

It is essential that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence - in any subject - in order to be prepared for their forthcoming secondary education. Children who have more difficulty in acquiring reading skills, receive targeted support as appropriate. Part of this targeted support will be through phonic interventions, especially on entry.

Please refer to separate Reading Policy [2] and Phonics Policy [3] for further guidance on our approaches to the teaching of reading.

3.4. Writing

The programmes of study for writing at Key Stage 2 concentrates on the following skills:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition and effect
- structure and organisation
- grammar, sentence structure and vocabulary
- drafting, editing and proof-reading

It is essential that teaching develops pupils' competence in these five dimensions, ensuring that children have regular opportunities to plan, revise and evaluate their writing.

Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between phonemes and graphemes (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words. The effective use of dictionaries and word banks is taught to support pupils in spelling words accurately. Effective composition involves forming, articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting. Children are taught to use a comfortable grip, to form letters correctly and to develop a flowing style of writing. Handwriting skills are developed through both directed and independent activities.

At Alfred Street Junior School we use Talk for Writing as our approach in the delivery of writing

Please refer to separate Writing Policy [4] and Handwriting Policy [5].

3.5. Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar, Punctuation

In the National Curriculum document [1] for English, the two statutory appendices – on spelling and on vocabulary, grammar and punctuation – give an overview of the specific features that should be included in teaching the programmes of study. The teaching of these concepts in each year group is outlined in breadth maps and are covered within English lessons as well as in skills lessons.

Phonics is taught to those children who we assess as having gaps in their phonic knowledge – **please refer to the Phonics Policy [3].**

Opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing. 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.

Pupils are be taught to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English. They are taught to use the elements of spelling, grammar, punctuation and

‘language about language’. This is not intended to constrain or restrict teachers’ creativity, but simply to provide the structure on which they can construct exciting lessons.

Throughout the programmes of study, teachers teach pupils the vocabulary they need to discuss their reading, writing and spoken language. It is important that pupils learn the correct grammatical terms in English and that these terms are integrated within teaching.

3.6. Improvement Targets

The children may be given individual or group targets to support their learning. These are monitored to ensure that learning is moved forward at an appropriate level. The children are reminded of their targets and, where appropriate, encouraged to think about them as they work through a genre. The children will then be asked to assess their own work against their targets, at the end of a unit of work. These are applied across all curriculum areas as appropriate.

All improvement targets are available within our tracking system ‘Insight’ [6]. This provides an opportunity for staff to regularly assess pupils against the attainment targets for their year group and, where appropriate, make assessments against objectives from a previous year group.

By the end of each Key Stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

Targets will be set by teachers as part of the talk for writing process – *please see Writing Policy* [4].

3.7. Contribution of English to Other Areas Of The Curriculum

The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in, every area of our curriculum. The children’s skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all aspects of their work in school. It is expected that pupils’ written work in other areas of the curriculum is of a similar standard to that produced in their English books. Where a particular genre is revisited within another area of the curriculum the same success criteria is used and resources produced as part of the working wall (e.g. boxed-up plans) are displayed and discussed to ensure that the high standard is reproduced.

3.8. Teaching Of English to Those with Special Educational Needs

English is taught to all children, whatever their ability. English forms part of the school curriculum to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. We do this by setting suitable learning challenges and responding to each child’s individual needs. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child’s attainment and progress against expected standards and work at standards above or below as necessary.

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the child may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style and differentiation – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child’s needs. This applies both to children who are lower achievers and those who are higher achievers in English.

Intervention may lead to the creation of a learning plan for children with special educational needs. The learning plan may include, as appropriate, specific targets relating to English. These may be addressed through additional support during the English lesson and/or focused on at specified times during the school week individually or in a small group.

Teachers provide help with communication and literacy by using:

- texts that children can read and understand.
- visual and written materials in different formats.
- ICT, other technological aids and materials.
- additional communication, such as signs and symbols.
- writing frames, scaffolds and prompts
- wordmats/wordbanks

3.9. Inclusion

All children regardless of sex, ethnic origin, need, disability, age or perceived ability have access to a full English curriculum and have equal opportunities to develop their skills and interest in English to the best of their ability [7].

3.10. Resources

Human Resources: - all teaching staff are responsible for the teaching of English to the children in their care. Help and advice may be requested from colleagues or the subject leader. Where additional support is required other advisory staff may be involved. Learning support staff will also be involved in the support of English and will be directed in the activities undertaken by the class teacher with whom they are working.

There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have access to dictionaries, thesauri and book boxes containing fiction and non-fiction books, from which the children may choose. These are supplemented by the County Library van visits. Children have access to classroom ICT hardware. Access to the Internet is available in the computer suite and in the classrooms via the computer, interactive boards and iPads.

The library contains a range of books to support children's individual research and interests. A computerised system is in place for children to borrow books from the library. Free readers are allocated an extra book from the library. The library is open to pupils at lunchtimes if they wish to change their library books at an earlier date than their weekly timetabled slot.

Scheme reading books are stored in the lower corridor and are levelled. Group reading books are levelled and available for class use.

Big books are kept within classroom according to their suitability.

SEND materials are generally kept by class teachers and/or teaching assistants for use within the lessons. Further resources and advice can be obtained from the SENDCO.

4. Continuity, Progression & Planning

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum [1]. We use the Programme of Study for English as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements.

We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). Our yearly teaching programme identifies the key objectives in English that we teach to each year group.

The medium-term plans give details of the main teaching objectives for each term and when they will be taught. These plans define what we teach and ensure an appropriate balance and distribution of work across each term. The English subject leader is responsible for reviewing these plans.

Each class teacher is responsible for the English in their class in consultation with other teachers in either the upper or lower school. Each class teacher organises a daily lesson. Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English outlining specific learning objectives for each lesson and how the lessons are to be taught so that the work matches the objectives.

It is common practice for the planning to be altered as necessary, as a result of day-to-day assessment. This is generally annotated on the planning. Wherever possible the planning should take into account, develop from and reflect the children's interests.

The planning should be made available for scrutiny by the subject leader and Head teacher/senior leaders as required, and may be used for discussion with the class teacher.

5. Differentiation

All children are entitled to access the curriculum targets at their own ability level. We aim to achieve this through:

- Grouping the children by ability, where appropriate – this allows work to be assigned, group discussions to be more sharply focused and an appropriate level of language to be used.
- Pairing children when appropriate for peer support.
- Providing differentiated work – using small steps for the less able and more challenging tasks for the more able.
- Scaffolding tasks so that children have a structure to support them.
- Involving children in discussing success criteria.
- Setting individual and/or group targets that enable children to review their own work and move them forward.
- Providing targeted resources e.g. for English as an Additional Language (EAL) children.

6. Homework

It is our school policy to provide parents and carers with opportunities to work with their children at home. These activities may include reading, learning spellings, researching a topic or writing about an area of interest. Each year group sets homework as appropriate. All children are expected to read a minimum of three times a week and get their reading records signed by their parent or carer. Children who do not read as part of their homework, are asked to attend a 'Reading Club' to make up for non-completion of homework. A weekly competition for the 'Reading Cup' is held to see which class has the highest average reads. Children who also fail to complete expected pieces of homework, will complete these at a homework club. A notification text will be sent to parents in these circumstances. Certificates and rewards are given to pupils who regularly read at home. **See Homework Policy [8] for further information on homework.**

7. Recording and Assessment

In writing, formative assessment is carried out prior to a unit of work in the form of a 'Cold Write'. Children are assessed against specific success criteria taken from the Focus Education Assessment Materials, by the class teacher. The results of these then inform

future planning and enable specific targets to be set to move children on in their learning and for targeted teaching to be carried out within the learning sequence. Progress is assessed through a 'Hot Write' at the end of a unit of work, where children are graded on the same differentiated success criteria. These are scored to show progress from 'Cold' to 'Hot'. Focus Education statements are used within our school tracking system – Insight [6] - and it is the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure that assessments are added to Insight [6] so that attainment and progress can be measured in this area across the school.

In reading, formative assessment should be carried out continuously as part of daily lessons. When a child is heard to read, assessment against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) should be made.

Periodic Summative Assessment: - takes an overview of progress and provides diagnostic information about the progress of individual children which is linked to the national standards. PiXL [9] test materials are used tri-annually which enables us to:

- Use evidence of attainment to track and make a periodic review of children's progress.
- Identifying gaps in experience to inform planning and set targets.

This is done through the completion of Question Level Analysis. Future teaching and interventions are then planned from this data so that significant gaps in learning can be addressed.

Transitional Assessment (end of Foundation Stage, KS1 and KS2): - provides a summary of where, in relation to national standards, children are at a given time.

This involves:

- Bringing together a range of evidence, including tests, to reach a view of attainment
- External validation.

Attainment will be recorded and tracked using Insight, which will be used throughout KS2 to inform planning and set targets. This is also used to collate and analyse pupil progress and attainment.

Each term children's progress is tracked for Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening. This provides opportunity to identify children who are making less than expected progress and enables strategies to be put in place to support those children. The information is used by the SLT and subject leader to monitor progress.

There is opportunity, where appropriate, to use the Salford Reading Test [10] to assess a child's reading age. Vernon Spelling tests [11] can also be used to assess a child's spelling age.

PiXL [9] spelling assessments are used across the school to measure progress and check for common errors, where teaching is specifically required – this may well be material outside of the age range of the cohort but is essential in order for gaps in learning to be plugged. Results from formal testing will be shared with the Head teacher/ subject leader and analysed, ensuring that pupils work is monitored to show progress over time.

8. Monitoring & Review

Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and of the quality of teaching in English is the responsibility of the English lead and the Head teacher.

9. Role of the Subject Leader

The English Subject Leader is responsible for:

- Updating and amending the English policy and scheme of work to ensure that it continues to meet the Foundation Stage Early Learning Goals and the National Curriculum statutory requirements.
- Ensuring continuity and progression throughout the school.
- Monitoring standards in the teaching and learning of English and setting appropriate targets for development.
- Advising and supporting colleagues.
- CPD - keeping up to date by attending courses, by leading staff meetings, by organising for staff to visit and observe colleagues within school and within the cluster and by inviting advisers into school as appropriate.
- Liaison with other schools within the cluster and further afield
- Overseeing the audit, storage and ordering of new resources and equipment.

External moderation of writing is completed with other schools in the local cluster for every year group. Where moderation has occurred, stickers with the date, schools and grading are added alongside the work moderated.

10. Parental Involvement

Alfred Street Junior School (ASJS) welcome and encourage parental involvement in their children's learning. Two Open Evenings are held during each academic year, where parents can discuss aspects of their child's work and look at their books. Further 'Come and See' sessions are added to the school calendar so that parents can keep in touch with the progress of their child.

Reports are sent home during Term 6 detailing the child's progress throughout the year.

Parents may also see the class teacher at the end of the school day throughout the school year, to discuss any points of concern regarding their child's progress.

The school holds Open Days where parents and carers are encouraged to visit and see the children engaged in a variety of tasks.

Reading books are sent home on a regular basis. Parents are encouraged to help their child with reading, spellings and other activities as appropriate. At ASJS, the home/school book is used to monitor the reading that children are doing at home and is used as a communication book between teachers and parents.

Parent and volunteer helpers and governors are welcome in school and may be involved with the children in a variety of language activities. Where this occurs, volunteers will be given advice on questions to ask by the subject leader and the library will be made available.

11. Professional Development

Staff will be encouraged to develop expertise in current English initiatives through attending relevant courses. Opportunities should be taken by staff to share their skills and good practice and report back at staff meetings where appropriate.

12. References

- [1] gov.uk, "National curriculum in England: primary curriculum," 6 May 2015. [Online]. Available: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-primary-curriculum>. [Accessed 14 June 2020].
- [2] Alfred Street Junior School, "Reading Policy," 2020.
- [3] Alfred Street Junior School, "Phonics Policy," 2020.
- [4] Alfred Street Junior School, "Writing Policy," 2020.
- [5] Alfred Street Junior School, "Handwriting Policy," 2020.
- [6] Insighttracking, "Insight," [Online]. Available: <https://www.insighttracking.com/>. [Accessed 14 June 2020].
- [7] Alfred Street Junior School, "Equality Policy," 2018.
- [8] Alfred Street Junior School, "Homework Policy," 2020.
- [9] PiXL, "PiXL partners in excellence," 2017. [Online]. Available: <https://www.pixl.org.uk/>. [Accessed 3 May 2020].
- [10] Hodder Education, "New Salford Sentence Reading Test," [Online]. Available: <https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/new-salford-sentence-reading-test>. [Accessed 16 June 2020].
- [11] P. V. C. M. Mary Crumpler, Graded Word Spelling Test.
- [12] Alfred Street Junior School, "Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy," 2020.

13. Safeguarding

Safeguarding our children is our priority – see Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy [12]. All concerns must be reported to our Designated Safeguarding leads:

ASJS: Mrs K O'Connor, Mr C Butler, Mrs S Smith, Mrs W Watts, Mrs A Love