

Welbeck Primary School

English Policy

Reviewed October 2021

Introduction

At Welbeck Primary we give high priority to English, placing English skills at the very centre of all children's learning. This policy aims to set out the pedagogy underpinning all elements of English within Welbeck Primary, and ensure a consistent approach to teaching, along with progression of skills from year to year. We believe that achievement in English provides the skills required to be successful independent learners, allowing children to access the wider curriculum with depth and meaning. The skills we teach through English enable children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively and to communicate effectively with others. At Welbeck we place particular emphasis on vocabulary development in all subjects.

Speaking and Listening - Oracy

We believe that children should become clear, fluent and confident speakers, and should understand that speaking is a tool for learning. We believe that children should develop listening skills to become attentive, open-minded and enquiring listeners. They should encounter a range of situations, audiences and activities designed to develop their confidence and use of speaking and listening skills. We ensure children develop a broad vocabulary in order to articulate themselves clearly.

Aims and Objectives

To enable children to:

- Speak clearly, fluently and confidently in a range of situations including role-play, discussion, reporting and describing events, as well as more formal presentations and drama-based performances.
- Use 'Talk for Writing' as a tool for planning and engaging with texts
- Work collaboratively and to join in confidently as members of a group.
- Listen attentively, with sensitivity and understanding, in a variety of situations and act accordingly.
- Use grammatical constructions that are characteristic of spoken, standard English and apply this knowledge to a range of contexts.

Reading (Because we see reading as a priority, we have a policy dedicated to reading.

For more information, please refer to the Reading Policy.)

Reading is a priority and embedded in daily life at Welbeck Primary. We are passionate and ambitious in our expectations for reading across the whole curriculum and throughout the school day, and aim for all children become fluent, confident and competent readers, who read for a range of purposes. We aim to nurture a love of books and reading for pleasure, opening the door to a world of knowledge and imagination.

Aims and Objectives

Our aims are:

- To create a stimulating environment in which children are actively encouraged to enjoy books, and are motivated to want to read independently.
- To teach pupils to read efficiently and effectively for a variety of purposes.
- To develop an awareness of the range of reading skills required for different purposes and for a range of text types including multi-modal texts.
- To develop powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.
- To raise the standards of reading within the school.

Writing

We believe that writing begins with the encouragement of emergent or developmental writing skills which rely on the use of phonic strategies to construct words. This process begins in FS with the teaching of 'Rhyme, Rhythm and Robot' and Phonics Phases 1-4, and continues in KS1 with phases 4-6. Phonics, spelling, punctuation and grammar are taught alongside whole text units throughout the school. This leads to writing sentences and texts with coherence, increasing the complexity of structure, punctuation and vocabulary from year to year following the expectations of The National Curriculum 2014.

Handwriting is taught and practised throughout school to ensure that children learn to form the letters of the alphabet with the correct sequence of strokes and joins from the outset.

Aims and Objectives

To enable children to:

- Become independent, enthusiastic writers.
- Express themselves in different contexts and for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- Become aware of the writing process, from the planning of ideas through to completion
- Be able to assess their own efforts, edit and improve them through drafting, sharing, refining and editing, including using Computing.
- Find interest and lasting enjoyment in their own creative ability and that of others.
- Extend and develop their creative abilities by experimenting with a range of genres, poetry and language conventions.
- Present written information effectively through developing fluent, joined and legible handwriting, and using Computing.
- Develop a breadth of knowledge and strategies in order to become independent and accurate with their spelling.

Planning

The Foundation Stage Curriculum and The National Curriculum 2016 form the basis of our Long Term planning.

These are adapted and modified in our Medium Term planning to meet the diverse needs of the children, and link with current topics. These plans are informed by assessment, and should include opportunities for Speaking and Listening, grammar, punctuation and spelling activities, and texts the children will meet within each unit.

Short Term (or weekly) planning gives details of daily lessons including objectives, modelled and guided writing activities, learning outcomes, activities, differentiation and role of support staff. Use of Computing is highlighted in planning.

Teaching and Learning

Lessons build on previous learning. They are interactive, have pace and use a variety of teaching and learning styles to cater for the varying needs of our children. All lessons offer opportunities for speaking and listening. Generally, the lesson input is delivered to the whole class with differentiated activities for guided work and independent work. Differentiated learning outcomes and success criteria allow for a range of abilities to make progress within each lesson. Lessons conclude with a plenary session to summarise what the children have learnt, address any issues arising from the lesson and indicate what the next session may involve. Children are given the opportunity to write an extended piece each week, following text analysis and modelling. Teaching Assistants in each class work with individuals and groups, supporting children in their tasks and challenging where appropriate to ensure progression for all. Computing is used whenever appropriate to enhance learning.

Reading and spelling homework is given across the key stages.

Handwriting

We place great importance on pupil's taking pride in their own work and developing an ability to present work neatly for an audience. Following the National Curriculum 2014 objectives for handwriting, we teach pupils to form the letters of the alphabet using the correct sequence of strokes and joins at age appropriate levels and according to the needs of individuals.

Aims and Objectives

To enable every child to:

- Hold a pencil with a comfortable, correct grip
- Position themselves correctly, whether left or right handed
- Correctly form upper and lower case letters
- Develop an ability to join letters in words by building upon their knowledge of letter formation
- Develop legible, fluent and efficient handwriting style

Teaching and Learning

Handwriting is consistently modelled across the school in all areas of writing in the classroom. Handwriting and letter formation are embedded across the curriculum in EYFS, particularly alongside phonics.

Handwriting is taught three times per week throughout KS1 and KS2.

Lesson structure includes:

- An active practical warm up in KS1 – practise of fine motor skills and anti-clockwise directions
- Clear modelling of the letter or join using the agreed handwriting script
- Practise in books – teacher to assess first practise before pupil moves on to complete the line
- Begin with letter/join, move on to word/words, finish with a high level sentence containing the join multiple times

In KS1, letters are taught in groups of similar formations with focus on consistent size and spacing. Pupils begin to join in year 2. If a pupil is ready to join before then we encourage them to do so and teach their handwriting session accordingly.

In KS2, staff follow the suggested planning sequence, linking with spelling focus for the week and any misconceptions noticed in books.

In UKS2, Pen Licences can be earned to acknowledge consistently high quality handwriting. When a Pen Licence is earned, Blue Berol Handwriting pen should be used for all writing in the classroom apart from in Maths. Children are reminded that these standards must be maintained to keep their licence.

All display work in Year 5 and 6 should be written in pen.

Children with particular difficulties in fine motor control and pencil grip will be supported by a teacher or teaching assistant. Pencil grip aids are available, letter formations and joins are modelled in yellow pen and incorrectly formed letters or joins are corrected during the session.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The subject leader, along with phase leaders, is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of English planning, teaching and assessment across the school to ensure coverage and continuity.

The quality of teaching and learning is monitored through daily classroom assessment, lesson observations and termly assessment analysis.

Assessment data and test results are collected and analysed termly in order to monitor standards and provide information for the School Development Plan.

The English linked Governors visit school half termly to monitor standards in English provision across the school.

Assessment Opportunities

In Key Stage 1 and 2, progress in English is monitored through ongoing Teacher Assessments using skills ladders, half-termly POS reviews and SIMs data, and through annual formal assessments.

In the Foundation Stage progress is also monitored through Teacher Assessments, and through the ELGs for Reading, Writing, Understanding and Speaking and Listening. This is done on entry to F1, on transition to F2, termly in F2 and at the end of F2 data is submitted to the LA.

All work is marked regularly and next step targets are set based on new curriculum standards and termly targets. Individual targets for reading and writing, based on key objectives, are also set and reviewed termly. Age related curriculum layered targets for writing are set termly across KS1 and KS2 and reviewed and extended continually.

Children are encouraged to self-assess or peer-assess their end of unit work using Key Feature objectives or success criteria as guidance and peer assessment is regularly used within lessons.

Teachers keep records of children's progress across the year through the use of Data Analysis forms. Termly Teacher Assessments and end of year Formal Assessments are made in both reading and writing and results are fed back to the head teacher, subject co-ordinator and assessment co-ordinator for analysis. This analysis is used to inform future target setting, focus groups, interventions and use of support staff.

Progress in English is discussed with parents at termly open evenings. A written report is sent home at the end of the summer term including results of Optional SATs, SATs and Reading Tests.

Resources

Each year the English Team determine, utilise and review the school's English budget after consultation with all staff. This is the largest subject budget within the school's capitation budget reflecting its importance.

Each class has its own book corner with a broad selection of fiction, non-fiction and poetry books, dictionaries and thesauruses. Sets of textbooks for comprehension, handwriting, grammar and spelling are available for all KS2 classes. Big books and sets of guided readers are renewed and upgraded regularly. Teachers make use of available resources from both the ELS and local library, both for the classroom and visits, and internet resources are utilised where appropriate.

Governors

The subject leader liaises with the English link governor termly to review policies, complete monitoring and analysis of books, displays, provision and data. They are regularly informed of standards of attainment, targets and current initiatives. Link Governors complete reports following visits and share with Governing Body.

Role of Subject Leader

The subject leader, together with the head teacher, is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning of English across the school, also ensuring continuity and coverage of the subject across school.

They are responsible for collecting and analysing school data in consultation with the assessment co-ordinator.

The subject leader will undertake any relevant training, inform staff of necessary information and keep abreast of current initiatives.