



Woodthorne Primary School

English Policy

Document Control Table

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Author	S. Jones (Deputy Headteacher)
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English

The overarching aim for English at Woodthorne Primary School is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

Within Early Years, English is based upon the Foundation Stage Profile strands of Communication & Language, Physical development and Literacy and outlines our commitment to providing a nurturing environment that fosters a strong foundation in English language skills, encompassing verbal communication, literacy, and phonics.

Reading

Intent

At Woodthorne Primary School, we take every opportunity to ensure that all of our pupils love to read. It is vital that all children learn to read as quickly as possible and that reading sessions promote reading for fluency and accuracy, reading for knowledge and reading for pleasure.

The aims of teaching reading in our school are to develop pupils who:

- show high levels of achievement and exhibit very positive attitudes towards reading;
- rapidly acquire a secure knowledge of letters and sounds and make sustained progress in learning to read fluently;
- read easily and fluently with good understanding across both fiction and non-fiction;
- acquire a wider vocabulary;
- develop their reading in all subjects to support their acquisition of knowledge;
- develop a love of reading;
- read for pleasure both at home and school on a regular basis;
- through their reading, develop emotionally, socially, morally, spiritually and culturally;
- develop good comprehension drawing from their linguistic knowledge.

Implementation

Here at Woodthorne, we teach and encourage reading in lots of ways. Our early readers, develop their phonics knowledge by participating in daily, 45 minute, systematic teaching of 'Read, Write Inc' phonics sessions. These sessions equip children with the tools needed to recognise sound, blend and decode words and learn to read texts effectively and fluently. Prior to this, Nursery focus on Phase 1 Phonics such as body sounds, sounds in the environment and percussion. Throughout the RWI Programme, children complete regular assessments and are then grouped accordingly, moving to different classrooms and learning areas to be taught by the specialist reading teacher responsible for their group.

From Year 2 to Y6, we follow the Literacy Counts 'Steps to Read' programme, which is a daily 30 minute whole class reading session promoting both fluency and comprehension skills. Each lesson follows a 4 step approach consisting of: Read, Model, Practise and Apply. The children learn a variety of strategies to support their reading comprehension including: skim reading, stop and jot and highlighting evidence. The texts used are of a high quality and allow the children to explore new and challenging vocabulary within an age-appropriate context they will find exciting.

We foster an environment that nurtures reading for pleasure so that children can learn to enjoy and love reading and understand the benefits of being a competent reader. Each classroom has a reading area, well-stocked with books that are relevant, of high interest, topic specific and boast a wide range of genre. Children have the opportunity to visit the school library regularly to read and borrow books from this area. Children enjoy taking a reading for pleasure book from the library, home, alongside their levelled book. The levelled book is determined by conducting termly 'Collins Reading Fluency Assessments' to ascertain how many words per minute of an age-related text, children can read, alongside comprehension questions. Once children have completed a book (either their levelled text, or reading for pleasure text), they record it on their 'Class Bookshelf' on Padlet. All staff are encouraged to share their love of reading with the children in the form of book recommendations too.

Whole class reading is also a crucial part of our curriculum. Children are read to by their teacher at least three times per week, for 20 minutes each session. The whole class text is voted for by the children in the class.

Impact

Through our assessments, we are able to set high expectations for the children, encouraging them to develop perseverance and self-belief to problem solve and achieve their full potential. Reading assessments are carried out on a regular basis to ensure that all children are accessing books at the right level, yet are also being challenged in their reading.

We measure the impact of the reading curriculum through the following methods:

- Phonics assessment
- Phonics screening results
- Collins Reading Fluency Assessments
- Summative assessments carried out on a termly basis
- End of Key Stage SATs results

Writing

Intent

It is vital that by the time children leave the school at the end of KS2, they are capable and confident writers, who are passionate about their work and who express their ideas clearly, accurately and creatively within a range of different genres and to suit a range of different audiences and purposes. We also intend to create writers who can re-read, edit and improve their own writing, and enable pupils to be able to use the essential skills of handwriting, grammar, punctuation and spelling in order to produce written work that they are proud of.

The aims of teaching writing in our school are to develop pupils who:

- show high levels of achievement and exhibit very positive attitudes towards writing
- use and understand language as speakers, readers and writers
- are competent, confident and independent in the use of language in their writing
- have an awareness of different audiences and purposes for writing
- apply their grammatical knowledge in their writing
- apply their phonetic and spelling knowledge in their writing
- apply the English language in all areas of the curriculum

Implementation

Literacy Counts 'Read to Write' units are used across school, from EYFS to KS2, which ensures continuity and progression of both the planning and the teaching across the key stages. The Literacy Counts units use high quality texts as a focus for each unit of work. These texts are varied and diverse; incorporating different ethnicities and world-wide settings.

Initially, in EYFS, an oracy based approach is undertaken, engaging our youngest learners through exploring, questioning, storytelling and interactive sessions. Adults lead the way by modelling effective communication and writing techniques, helping children to absorb vital skills such as vocabulary, letter formation and understanding of what has been written.

In addition to our Literacy Counts program in EYFS, adult-led weekly writing sessions further nurture early writers, as well as offering an abundance of opportunities for mark making and writing within our learning environment, further reinforcing literacy skills.

As the year progresses, as does children's phonological awareness, physical writing skills and understanding of what they wish to communicate. At the appropriate point in time, children begin to be introduced to more structured writing opportunities. These encompass a wide variety of purposes which also underpin writing in all curriculum areas in Key Stage 1 and beyond such as lists, labels, captions, instructions, letters, recipes and so on.

Throughout KS1 And KS2, these 'Ready Steady Write' lessons, teach children explicit sentence accuracy; inference skills; high-level and adventurous vocabulary, which they will be able to use in their own writing and a wide range of punctuation, including how to use this correctly. Teachers use modelling and shared writing as a method to teach and embed new skills as well as a way of discretely teaching editing.

In addition to teaching the national curriculum objectives, teachers embed the skills taught within Writing lessons throughout the year, in end of unit cross-curricular writing opportunities. These are completed for PKC (Primary Knowledge Curriculum) subject areas (Geography, History and Science) and ensure that children are achieving the objectives at their expected level, including some children working at a greater depth standard.

Spelling

At Woodthorne, in KS1 and KS2 we follow a spelling teaching scheme called 'Spelling Shed'. Spelling Shed's approach to spelling involves the relationship between sounds and written symbols as well as using morphology to help spell through meaning.

The carefully selected word lists and engaging activities provide opportunities to incorporate phonics and meaning to strengthen spelling skills and build vocabulary acquisition. Spelling sessions are taught for a minimum of twice weekly as part of a 15 minute session in addition to a weekly spelling test. Spelling lists are shared weekly in our KS1 and KS2 pupil planners, in order that children can practise them regularly at home. Teachers take every opportunity to reinforce spelling strategies within lessons for further embedding.

Handwriting

For children to achieve a high standard of handwriting, they need to be explicitly taught the skills needed. At Woodthorne Primary School, in Key Stage 1 and 2, we use and teach the 'Nelson Handwriting style' letter formations and joins in handwriting to ensure consistency across the school. We have high expectations in handwriting lessons and make sure that children are expected to apply the same standards in all other writing as well. Handwriting practice takes place at least twice per week and has a clear focus, with key teaching points demonstrated to the class. Each 15 minute session provides allocated time for children to practise the specific handwriting skill. Extension activities will allow for further practice, development and challenge in order that emphasis can be placed on children's development of writing legibly, fluently and with increasing speed.

In the Early Years, children are taught to use their phonic knowledge gained from 'Read, Write Inc' to write letters and words in ways which match their spoken sounds, as well as some common words with irregular spellings. Planned

opportunities are provided for the children to develop writing simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Children develop the use of effective pencil grip throughout their time in Reception.

Impact

Assessment for learning strategies are used by all staff on a daily basis. These allow a picture to be built up of the pupils' progress, any areas of strength or development, which can then be addressed during 'in the moment' interventions and reflected in teachers' planning.

We measure the impact of the writing curriculum through the following methods:

- Daily marking of English books following feedback policy
- Effective questioning to probe for depth of understanding
- Self & Peer assessment opportunities
- Ongoing formative assessment throughout the lesson
- Individual half termly, summative writing assessment (working towards, working at and working at greater depth standard). Using this assessment to plan follow up lessons

6. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Head of School. Next renewal date: September 2024