



Partney Church of England Primary School Policy for English

Our small school community welcomes everyone and aspires to meet the needs of all through high expectations and compassionate support. Through shared values we create a firm foundation for all to fulfil their potential as future citizens of the world. Our challenging and exciting learning environment enables everyone to go forward as champions of happiness, health and hope.

Reviewed: March 2020
Date for Next Review: March 2022

Introduction

- English is one of the three core subjects in the National Curriculum (2014).
- This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the English taught in our school.
- The school policy for English reflects the consensus of opinion of all the staff. It 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 the Head teacher and all the teaching staff.
- The English Policy should be read in conjunction with the Equal opportunities policy, marking policy, assessment policy and teaching and learning policy.

At Partney Church of England Primary School, we recognise that competency in the four areas of literacy (Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing) underpin learning across the curriculum. Therefore the provision of quality teaching and learning opportunities for children to acquire these vital skills is central to our teaching practice. The four areas of literacy will be considered individually, however since literacy is dependent on the interrelationship between these four areas, teachers will build on links between them.

We recognise that language and literacy learning is most effective in a meaningful and purposeful environment, through experiences and opportunities that contextualise learning and through excellent adult and peer modelling.

We acknowledge that in order to become confident users of language, pupils need to be able to write, speak and read Standard English with fluency and accuracy. We aim to support children in becoming keen, enthusiastic and competent readers.

Speaking and Listening

Rationale

Pupils' understanding of spoken word and capacity to express themselves is central across the whole curriculum. We recognise the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing, and as such forms the starting point for teachers when planning for progression in these areas.

Aims and objectives

- To build on oral skills that have begun at home prior to children reaching school age, however limited.
- For children to develop a wide vocabulary and spoken grammar skills.
- For children to develop questioning skills and the ability to interact purposefully with peers and adults.
- For children to express and justify opinions, using the conventions for discussion and debate
- For children to listen attentively to each other and to adults in school
- For children to be able to work cooperatively in small groups and class groups with a variety of people in variety of contexts.
- For children to gain knowledge and participate in the artistic practice of drama
- For children 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

Policy into practice

Teaching and learning methods:

- Teachers will provide excellent modelling through class and group discussions and provide opportunities for children to talk and listen in groups of different sizes and to a range of audiences.
- All teachers will use 'talk partners' as a medium to encourage excellent speaking and listening skills, cooperative working and as an inlet to support child led enquiry and questioning.
- Teachers will use "think, pair, share" to incorporate speaking and listening, in particular oral rehearsal prior to writing.
- Teachers will use cross-curricular themes to reinforce excellent speaking and listening skills, creating an ethos of respectful listening and discussion.
- Oral recital of poetry will be part of the English Programme of Study for all year groups
- Class assemblies, in which children will present to peers, staff and parents will take place routinely
- Children will have opportunities to listen frequently to stories, poems, non-fiction and other text types, including whole books and not just extracts.

Resources and learning environment

Teachers may use resources to support acquisition of speaking and listening skills which could include;

- Role play

- Games
- Story sacks
- Collections of poetry/ plays
- Reading areas
- Enlarged texts
- Ipads or other Recording media

Reading

Rationale

At Partney Church of England Primary School we have a clear, consistent, whole school approach to reading. Competence in reading is the key to independent learning and is given the highest priority, enabling the children to become enthusiastic, independent and reflective readers. Success in reading has a direct effect upon progress in all other areas of the Curriculum and is crucial in developing children's self-confidence and motivation.

Aims and objectives

- To provide all children with the necessary decoding skills/reading strategies to access text
- For children to become confident and fluent readers with excellent understanding of what they read.
- For children to read aloud, with expression and intonation, including reading as performance.
- For children to read with enthusiasm and develop a lifelong love of books.
- For children to access and understand how to effectively use a range of genres of text including narrative, non-fiction and poetry.
- For children to develop competency in using electronic media for meaningful text
- For children to develop a critical appreciation of what they read.
- For children to develop their own imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness
- For children to monitor and evaluate their own reading and reading experiences.
- For children to develop reading and retrieval skills that allow them to use a text effectively.
- For a home-school partnership that complements and supports progression in reading.

Policy into practice

Teaching and learning methods

Children will be taught decoding skills through daily, discrete systematic synthetic phonics sessions from Reception, using the Letters and Sounds and Jolly Phonics scheme of work. These sessions will continue for each child until they have achieved Phase 6 of letters and sounds. Children in KS2 who have not achieved Phase 6 of Letters and Sounds will continue phonics learning through interventions appropriate for the child. All children will learn reading and understanding skills through focussed guided reading sessions with a teacher.

All teachers will model excellent reading practice and will provide opportunities for reading throughout the curriculum.

Teachers will use a range of texts including narrative, non-narrative and poetry and will incorporate understanding of text types as part of their literacy teaching.

Teachers will provide all children with the opportunity to access independent reading activities that will enhance their skills and nurture an enthusiasm towards reading a range of texts via a range of media.

Children will have opportunities to listen frequently to stories, poems, non-fiction and other text types read aloud, including whole books and not just extracts.

Children will be taught the technical and other terms needed for discussing what they hear and read, such as metaphor, simile, analogy, imagery, style and effect.

Children working below national expectations will be identified and intervention programmes will be delivered as necessary.

Resources and learning environment

Teachers will use a range of resources to support teaching and learning of reading skills, to include:

- A wide selection of fiction, non-fiction and poetry reading books including graphic novels
- A wide selection of guided reading books and 'big books' for class room use
- ICT for children to access books and reading activities via electronic media
- A well-stocked library for children to access a range of fiction and non-fiction, using the Dewey catalogue system.
- All classrooms will have a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry books relevant to the age and interests of the children.
- Classrooms will have dedicated reading areas that encourage the enjoyment of books and support children in their independent reading.
- A print-rich environment including labelling and displays.
- All classes in which children are learning phonics through letters and sounds will have phonics displayed for reference by children and adults.
- Reading records for use in school and at home that enable communication between parents and teachers about children's reading.

Assessment and Monitoring of Reading

- Guided reading groups will allow teachers to make detailed informal assessments of a child's conceptions of print, decoding strategies, phonics, comprehension, fluency and expression.
- These informal assessments will be summarised in a half-termly teacher assessment to allow the child's progress to be recorded on Insight Tracker.
- Monitoring of groups of children for reading will be undertaken for groups of children within school for pupil progress meetings.
- Interventions for reading will be put in place for children who are behind for age related expectations. These will be matched to the child, their ability and nature of difficulty.
- At least one moderation of reading will take place per year.
- SATs tests at KS1 and 2, with phonics screening at the end of Year 1 provide information for Governors to monitor the progress and attainment of pupils and groups of pupils.

- Pupil progress meetings and pupil progress will be monitored by Leadership to ensure effective teaching and learning of reading, intervention and accurate assessment is taking place.

Use of ICT

If ICT is used to support English e.g. reference work, reading, then the class teacher should make sure that this is done in line with our online safety policy. E.g. provide recommended websites through QR codes to minimise the possibility of accessing unsuitable websites.

Writing

Rationale

At Partney Church of England Primary School, we believe real life experiences that encourage children to write independently for purposes that excite and motivate is essential for them to develop the ability to communicate effectively through writing. We strive to provide writing opportunities within a rich, broad and purposeful curriculum. We recognise that writing is an essential skill for children to learn in order to access learning across the curriculum, and we have a structured and focussed approach to ensure that children achieve age appropriate writing objectives that are built on throughout school.

Aims and objectives

Our aims for writing are:

- Competent writing begins with competent oracy, and this will be the starting point in preparations for all writing.
- Children enjoy writing and are competent in communication through writing.
- Children are able to write for a variety of purposes and audiences .
- Children are able to organise and structure their writing appropriately.
- Children achieve age appropriate objectives as a foundation to be built upon at each stage.
- Children take pride in the presentation of their written work (following the cursive style).
- Children are able to use information technology effectively as part of their writing skill base.
- Children are able to proof read and edit their own writing to improve the quality of their written work.

Policy into practice

Teaching and learning

- All teachers will carefully plan purposeful lessons that support the acquisition of writing skills and facilitate the learning of age / ability appropriate objectives for transcription, composition, vocabulary, punctuation and grammar and handwriting (see handwriting policy).
- English lessons will routinely reinforce learning in vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and grammar. Children will be taught grammatical terminology relevant to each year group using the structure in the National Curriculum (2014) Programmes of Study.
- Children will be supported to write dictated sentences, allowing them to apply and practise spellings.
- Teachers will provide opportunities for children to learn techniques for writing a range of genres and structures, for different purposes and audiences.
- Teaching of writing will routinely include shared/modelled and guided writing practices.
- Teachers will provide excellent modelling of writing skills across the curriculum. Teachers will provide opportunities for writing to a high standard across the curriculum.
- Children will be integral in the assessment of their writing and the setting of objectives for progression in writing through the use of verbal and written feedback. Children will be taught to plan, draft, edit and improve their work.

- Children will routinely be offered opportunities for extended writing in literacy sessions and across the curriculum.
- Homework will be set weekly which will inform parents about learning in literacy and how to support their child to achieve the objectives set.
- Children that are identified as working below age related expectations will be identified and intervention programmes will be delivered as appropriate.

Resources and learning environment

Teachers will use a range of resources to support the learning of writing skills, which may include;

- Mark making resources (EYFS)
- Children to have access to a range of written resources that model excellent writing skills.
- Teachers will provide a language-rich classroom environment that supports the acquisition of writing skills.
- Attractive writing equipment that encourages and motivates children to write.
- A range of ICT software that supports children in using varied media for writing, for researching and for editing and improving.
- Dictionaries/thesauri to support spelling/word selection.
- Appendices from the English National Curriculum 2014 spellings.
- Writing opportunities throughout school

Assessment and Monitoring of Writing

- Informal assessments are made on a daily basis by the teacher and AfL used by the child to self-assess own progress.
- Half-termly and termly assessments are made on an unaided piece of writing as well as other writing across the Curriculum; once a term these pieces will be internally or externally moderated to ensure accuracy of assessment and identify any individual, class or whole school issues that need to be addressed.
- Formal Assessment of writing will take into account transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (Vocabulary, Style, Grammar and Punctuation).
- Monitoring of groups of children will be undertaken for groups of children within school for pupil progress meetings.
- Interventions for writing will be put in place for children who are behind for age related expectations.

Vocabulary

All children are taught explicit, Tier 2 vocabulary linked to class topics or themes. New words are taught and assessed each week. Each half term, vocabulary taught is assessed on a weekly basis, giving children a chance to revisit the previous week's words e.g. week one: 6 words are taught and assessed; Week 2: 12 words are taught and assessed etc.

When writing is assessed, use of taught vocabulary is also considered and children are encouraged to up-level vocabulary and make adventurous word choices.

Spelling

- At EYFS interactive listening games will be used in conjunction with the Letters and Sounds scheme which has a multi-sensory approach to the teaching of phonics.
- At KS1 and KS2 the National Curriculum for English provide a detailed basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programmes of study for writing (spelling).
- We want children to develop as confident spellers and so they will be encouraged to write independently from Year R, attempting as much of a word as they can manage.
- Children will be discouraged from becoming dependent on the teacher for the spelling of words.
- They will be taught to use dictionaries, word-books (and spell-checkers on the computer where appropriate) to gain access to correct spellings of words.
- The 'Look, Cover, Write, Check' approach to learning the spelling of words will be encouraged.
- Spelling games will encourage children to look closely at words.
- Where possible, children will be encouraged to identify their own spelling errors.
- They will be given opportunities for presenting written work for display so that they will understand the need for correct spelling.
- The school's approach to spelling will be applied in all cross-curricular activities but spelling strategies will be taught in a subject specific way.
- Class teachers will exercise their discretion in arranging groupings within their class that maximise the children's progress in spelling.
- All teachers will be responsible for the planning and teaching of spelling.
- Children's early attempts to communicate in writing will be valued and built upon.
- From the earliest stages they will be encouraged to look closely at words and will be helped to develop strategies for writing when they are unable to spell whole words or part of words. They will be given lots of experience of rhymes and rhyming words and their attention will be constantly drawn to print in the environment, highlighting familiar letters and words, and words within words.
- Teaching will take into account each child's developmental stage in spelling and all children's best attempts at spelling will be valued and built upon.
- When appropriate children will be encouraged to check spellings on a computer in support of their specific needs.
- Children's spelling games will be used to reinforce the learning of spellings and to make the task enjoyable.
- Parents will be encouraged to play word games at home with their children and to draw children's attention to the 'look' of words.
- All children will have access to suitable dictionaries.

Assessment in Spelling

- Informal spelling tests will be held from Year 1 to Year 6 on a weekly basis.
- Standardised assessments will be made twice per year.
- Spelling interventions will be used for children who are displaying signs of difficulty and/or show more than a 12 month discrepancy with their chronological age.
- Children will be shown which parts of a word are correctly spelt and which need attention.
- Teachers will not allow the correction of spelling errors to become dominant. The emphasis will always be on the content of the writing and on the need to make the writer's meaning clear to the reader.

Handwriting

Rationale

At Partney Church of England Primary School, all children are introduced to Cursive Handwriting from EYFS onwards. EYFS children practise correct cursive letter formation, but are also introduced to pre-cursive and print.

The Cursive Style helps:

- To minimise confusion for the child as every letter starts on the line with an entry stroke and leads out with an exit stroke
- with the flow of Cursive Writing as letters naturally flow into each other, it is impossible to write separate letters without joining.
- To form spacing between words as the child develops whole word awareness
- To develop a child's visual memory
- All children's writing skills regardless of academic ability
- To develop skills of punctuation and grammar

All children write with a pencil, although older pupils are introduced to ink pens, which may include a fountain pen.

Children who struggle to read/write cursively due to specific difficulties are able to access pre-cursive printed letters.

Aims

- To provide equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve success in handwriting.
- To produce clear, concise, legible handwriting.
- To present work to a variety of audiences neatly.
- To develop accuracy and fluency.
- To help children recognise that handwriting is a form of communication and as such should be considered important in order for it to be effective.
- To promote confidence and self-esteem.
- To encourage children to take pride in their work.
- To build in cross curricular links to broaden experience.
- To help children recognise that handwriting as a life-long skill and will be a fundamental element of all forms of written communication throughout their lives.
- To display neatly presented work around the school as a model of excellence for others to aspire to.

Development of learning and teaching handwriting

Reception

- On entry, Reception children are involved in a variety of activities to develop essential pre-writing skills and letter formation in line with the Early Learning Goals of the Foundation Stage.
- Activities to develop gross motor control, for example rolling hoops and running with a hoop, ribbon movement, chalking, painting on a large scale, Interactive White Board.
- Activities to develop fine motor control: e.g. tracing, colouring within guide lines and pictures, pattern work, using glue spreaders in small pots, painting with the tips of the fingers, cotton buds, plasticine, threading. All these develop spatial awareness: "P.E. on paper."
- Children develop the basic handwriting patterns found in letter formation in the order found in the phonics progression.
- Children are introduced to actual letter formation in conjunction with the introduction of phonic skills.
- Sounds are closely linked in handwriting patterns and the children's visual awareness of words is harnessed e.g. 'cat', 'hat'.
- Practise of particular High Frequency Words helps to develop good visual and writing habits e.g. 'the', 'and'. Usually by the end of the Reception Year all children will have been introduced to all letters of the alphabet through patterns as shown above and introduced to more independent writing.
- Handwriting Workshop for Parents

Year 1

As the children move to Year 1 so these skills acquired in the Foundation Stage are continued, consolidating correct formation, concentration and accurate precision work.

All children write in pencil. Children continue to practise cursive script.

Again, spellings are closely linked with handwriting activities assisting the children with phonic skills required for successful reading.

Year 2-6

The Cursive style continues to develop through close links with the Primary Framework for literacy. Phonic, spelling and awareness of grammar are all taught through handwriting practise and as fluency and accuracy develops, pupils are encouraged to write with an ink pen. (Usually in Year 4, although exceptions may be made for younger, more able pupils as appropriate.)

Handwriting is timetabled in short, regular sessions and where possible is integrated across the curriculum, e.g. practising scientific vocabulary, cloze procedure linked to history.

How do we teach handwriting?

All handwriting activities are undertaken as class activities for the following reasons:

- To develop effective and efficient pen hold
- To develop the habit of concentration which is crucial to good handwriting

- To place a strong emphasis on the insistence of perfection
- To provide the class teacher with the opportunity to help assess individuals' progress and monitor areas requiring reinforcement.

Lessons might begin with a warm-up activity (e.g. exercising hand/fingers to music, 'air-writing'), including writing patterns or phonemes, etc which is led by the teacher modelling writing on the board. Children copy into their books, applying the same techniques, closely monitored by the teacher. In some lessons, it is also appropriate to practise speed-writing which also helps them to think quickly and remember spellings.

Handwriting books have coloured lines to assist with accuracy and consistency in size and form, although other exercise books are either blank or have one line only. Where pages are blank or when children write on to A4 paper, they are expected to use a line guide and paperclips to hold the guide in place.

For those children who have mastered a fluent, neat cursive style continual practise will not be necessary and alternative provision will be made for these pupils.

How can ICT help us teach handwriting?

All teachers use the Interactive Whiteboard or Whiteboard in direct teaching: use of the lined writing templates are an essential tool for learning, as the teacher can demonstrate the correct letter formation and joins clearly to the whole class at once if necessary.

Younger children rehearse 'large letters/joins' on a blank screen, using different colours and thicknesses of line.

Print should be distinguished from handwritten items and attention drawn to the different style used as below.

How do we link Handwriting and Reading?

In school, children are exposed to both cursive and print styles as well as commercial print. They develop awareness for reading in print and writing in cursive side by side in their learning, such as prompts around classrooms/school – teachers lettering, labels on displays/teaching aids e.g. alphabet on tables and through teachers modelling of writing.

What if a child is Left Handed?

Each left-handed child is identified and closely monitored by the class teacher to ensure success. The following guidelines are useful to help left-handed children.

Guidelines for writing left-handed:

- The writing surface and chair are suitable for the child's own height
- The child sits towards the left of their partner leaving plenty of space for writing on the left side of his/her – mid line (this allows maximum space for arm movement)
- The writing paper is to the left of the child's body midline.
- The paper is tilted up to 32 degrees in a clockwise direction
- A writing tool which moves smoothly across the paper is used
- The paper is supported with the right hand
- The writing forearm is parallel with the paper edge as the child writes
- The writing tool is held sufficiently far from its point to ensure that the child can see what he/she is writing.

What if Children display difficulties?

Sometimes some children may experience difficulties but this is often due to a co-ordination

problem or adapting a left-handed style.

Activities to develop 'gross motor skills' can be promoted as these will assist fine motor skills, as will plenty of pre-writing activities to loosen up the wrist and upper arm.

Older children needing additional support are given short bursts of handwriting practice, one -to-one with a Teaching Assistant, as often as possible (daily preferably.) Use of a small whiteboard and pen is often the most successful aid as they are less restrictive and enable the child to feel less inhibited.

What resources can we use?

Teachers can use resources such as handwriting lines, Notebook files, handwriting books, pencil grips.

How do we Monitor and Assess handwriting?

The presentation of all work is monitored through annual work scrutinies, moderation and teacher assessment.

Provision for children that require extension for Greater Depth

This is managed through extension within the class teaching and enrichment through the provision of additional learning opportunities of an appropriate level of challenge.

These may include:

- Accessing work to combine and apply objectives from academic groups in advance of their age.
- Being challenged to complete specific tasks of a standard appropriate for their heightened level of ability.
- Taking part in enrichment opportunities outside of the usual timetable e.g. clubs, residential etc.

Monitoring, Review and Development

School performance in English can be monitored and reviewed by the following means:-

- monitoring of planning
- Classroom observation
- Scrutiny of children's work
- Work sampling and moderation
- Seeking the views and opinions of the teaching team
- Seeking the views and opinions of the children
- Seeking the views and opinions of the parent body
- Analysis of pupil attainment and achievement, both individually, as a cohort and as a class
- Analysis of pupil performance in different aspects of mathematical understanding
- Governor visits

Opportunities for improvement in provision will be identified in the School Improvement and Development Plan.