



# Smile – Learn – Excel

## English Policy

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*Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body.*

*-Richard Steele*

*You can make anything by writing.*

*-C S Lewis*

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Policy Reviewed: June 21

Next Review: June 22



English in spoken and written form is the foundation of all learning.

## **Introduction**

At Shortlanesend Primary school we believe that English and communication are key life skills and that through the English curriculum using cross curricular links where appropriate we should help children develop the skills, knowledge and thinking skills that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively with the world at large. This policy outlines the teaching and learning of English at Shortlanesend Primary School. The importance of developing successful English skills and knowledge is vital if our children are to communicate in the wider community.

## **Aims**

By the end of Year 6 we want all pupils to be able to:

- Have a love of books and read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding.
- Understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately.
- Have fluent, joined handwriting.
- Have an interest in words and their meaning and an expanding vocabulary.
- Know, understand and be able to write in a range of genres.
- Understand, use and be able to write a range of non-fiction texts.
- Plan, draft, revise and edit, their own writing.
- Be able to orally tell stories and verbally recite poetry by heart.
- Through reading and writing, develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.

## **Structure**

### **Foundation Stage**

We believe that communication and language with opportunities to explore reading and writing underpins children's future learning. The practice in Foundation Stage will follow the EYFS curriculum guidance and will work towards the Early Learning Goals aiming to meet the statement of the goals by the end of the reception year.



In **Reception** the daily routine will include planned and spontaneous activities that include:

- A wealth of opportunities to develop and experience speaking and listening skills.
- Experiences that develop fine motor skills through play to improve pencil grip and handwriting.
- Sharing and enjoying a range of rhymes, songs, stories and books.
- Immersion in a print rich environment with opportunities for oral language and written communication.
- Focus activities, including role play and a puppet theatre, that teach children early communication language and literacy skills.
- Read Write Inc Phonics.
- Shared reading and writing focuses.

## **Key Stage 1**

The teaching of English in KS1 will include:

- Explicit teaching of phonics and spelling, through Read Write Inc Phonics and RWI Spellings in Year 2.
- Explicitly taught and planned lessons.
- Sentence work led by quality texts to develop grammatical awareness and punctuation skills.
- Using a range of genres, to develop an awareness of the purpose and organisational layout of texts.
- Letter formation and handwriting taught and modelled using the Nelson style, (except the letter k, which is written as 'k' until joined handwriting is taught).
- Speaking and listening activities, e.g. role play, pair talk, drama and hot seating in order to prepare pupils for writing.
- Immersion in a print rich environment that promotes a love of reading and promotes the children's oral and written communication.
- Shared and guided writing sessions.



- Guided Reading and Comprehension Sessions- at least once a week. This is through RWI for Year 1 children.
- Cross curricular links made where possible.
- SPaG activities – using the Headstart materials.

## **Key Stage 2**

The teaching of literacy in KS2 will include:

- Explicitly taught and planned lessons.
- Unit plans tailored to the needs of the children and success criteria used for each unit of work.
- Explicit teaching of spelling strategies, rules and phonics where required. Year 3/4/5 and 6 to continue the Read Write Inc Spelling Programme, started in Year 2.
- Sentence level work led by quality texts to develop grammatical awareness and punctuation skills.
- Reading a range of genres to develop comprehension skills and scaffold writing.
- A range of text types, including cross-curricular writing.
- Teachers modelling writing.
- Handwriting and presentational skills taught and modelled.
- Immersion in a print rich environment that promotes a reading culture and develops speaking and listening skills.
- SPaG activities – using the Headstart materials.

## **Phonics and Spelling**

Phonics is taught explicitly in the Foundation Stage and KS1 and where necessary in KS2. The Read Write Inc scheme is followed. Children are assessed and grouped appropriately and then taught in small groups, led by a teacher or teaching assistant. Children are assessed at the end of every half term. Spellings are given out to practise reading and writing at home, in Year 1. The words are linked to the current Read Write Inc book. Spellings are tested within the RWI session.

Year 1 are assessed in the Summer Term by the Phonics Screening Test. Any child not reaching the expected standard is retested the following year, following further personalised learning input if required.



## Reading

At Shortlanesend School we inspire and develop a love of reading in all our children. Our school provide a print rich environment, with book displays and reading areas in all classrooms.

Reading is enjoyed, discussed and taught through:

- Whole class reading that develops listening skills, a love of story and reading for pleasure. This is teacher led reading with children listening and responding to questions, predictions and vocabulary choices as appropriate to the level of the children.
- Shared reading that immerses children in the pattern of story and features of text types. This happens in English sessions when introducing text and prior to writing. The teacher models as an expert reader and draws out the key elements of the content.
- Guided reading that targets the children's reading skills. Guided reading takes place in small ability groups at least once a week. Guided reading assessment sheets are completed at each reading session. Guided reading books are either colour banded or levelled using AR. The higher books are stored in the corridor by Class 4 and the lower books outside Class 1. Reading Journals are used to capture evidence for assessment. These are used from Year 2 up.
- Reading in EYFS and Year 1 – home school reading books are colour banded. There is a range of fiction and non-fiction books. Each child has an individual record of which books they have read.
- Reading in Years 1-6. During Year 1 the children will take a Star Reading Assessment to see if they are ready to move on to the AR scheme. This could be at any time during Year 1 depending on the child. The Star Reading Assessment will then give a book level to start reading at. There is a range of books at each book level, both fiction and non-fiction. Every time the children complete a book they take a short AR quiz. If they score 100% then they move up to the next number. Each child has a 'bookshelf' showing all of the books they have read and the score they achieved. Teachers track the book levels to ensure that all children are making progress. Once book level 7.0 is achieved they are a free reader. Certificates are given out at the end of the year for how many words have been read and prizes are given out for any word millionaires.
- Star Assessments. These begin in Year 1 and are used to give a starting level for AR and to track the children's progress. Star assessments take place four times a year. The results are kept in the class reading folders and the December and July results given to parents.



- The school library provides a wide range of both reference and fiction books. All children visit the library on a Thursday to choose a library book which they can then take home to share with parents.
- The Headstart materials are used to assess reading comprehension.
- Reading Folders. Each class has a reading folder which has trackers, individual word lists, Star assessment results.
- Target Readers- each class has children identified that need additional support with reading and are heard as often as possible.

### **Home school Reading**

Home school links are very important in reading and within KS1 and LKS2 children take home books regularly from our extensive resources in school. These reading books are matched to individual children's reading abilities. Children are heard reading frequently across school to support their development. Children share these books with parents/carers at home and teaching assistants and teachers in school. Any comments made during these sessions by either party can be recorded in children's reading diaries, therefore it is very much a two-way process. Children are encouraged to use the school library, bring books in from home or choose from a range of class novels that we have in school. We actively encourage parents/carers to share a good book with their children.

### **Writing**

At Shortlanesend School we believe that an immersion in reading, talk and preparation for writing is essential to the writing development process.

Writing is experienced, practised and refined through:

- Shared writing that is modelled by the teacher/TA as the expert writer with contributions from the children. The emphasis may be on the generation of ideas, grammatical awareness, spelling and phonics, compositional, presentational and text level skills or other key strategies needed in writing. Shared writing is not exclusive to English lessons and can be taught within the Foundation subjects.
- The children are given lots of opportunities to practise their writing skills and these can be cross curricular. All writing activities should have a purpose and quality should be promoted through marking, publication or presentation to an audience. Writing is modelled and supported to develop quality writing. Independent writing is supported through the use of dictionaries, word banks, writing frames, alphabet cards and displays within the classroom.



- Developmental writing. In the Foundation Stage children should experience writing in a range of settings and opportunities for developmental writing should be available through all areas of learning and throughout the learning environment. Children's own attempts at early writing should be celebrated and promoted, alongside the direct teaching of the key skills that will enable the children to progress through the stages of writing development.
- The writing environment. The school environment celebrates quality writing through displays of work in both handwritten and typed form as well as signs and labels. Class 1 has a designated writing area and has writing activities within their role play area.
- Working Walls are used to aid pupils as visual prompts.
- Each class has dictionaries, word banks and thesauruses to help with spelling and vocabulary.
- Unaided Writing Books- these are started in Year 1. Each child completes a minimum of 4 unaided pieces a term. These books show the children how their writing is progressing and are used by teachers for assessment.
- Hot and Cold Writing. To start a unit of work a 'cold write' is completed on blue paper then at the end of a unit the children will complete a 'hot write' on yellow paper. The cold write is used to assess where the children are and the hot write show the progress that the children have made during the unit of work.
- Marking- all writing is marked in line with the school marking policy

## **Handwriting**

At Shortlanesend School we teach the Nelson style of handwriting. Handwriting and letter formation is explicitly taught throughout the school. The correct way of forming letters with joining flicks is modelled by the teacher and patterns of letters are taught where appropriate. Children have separate handwriting books and at least one session a week is dedicated to demonstrating and practising handwriting. Good presentation is emphasised at all times and through all forms of writing. EYFS use the Nelson workbooks and all all other years have Nelson text books to support handwriting.

Support is given to children with poor pencil grip by the use of triangular pencil grips and triangular pencils. As much adult intervention as possible, is given during handwriting sessions, to ensure that incorrect formation is not practised.

Each class gives out a certificate for neat writing each week, to be presented in Friday's celebration assembly.



## Spelling and Grammar

### Spelling

We believe that foundations in spelling should be put in place from an early age. Within Reception and KS1 the focus is on phonics and children are immersed in the world of phonics (closely linked to their reading) as soon as they enter school. All children within Reception and KS1 access a daily lesson of phonics. The children in Years 1 and 2 also learn the common exception word lists for their year groups.

As children move towards the end of KS1 the focus changes from phonics to the learning of spelling rules and strategies. Within Year 2 children are also beginning to learn words from the national curriculum word list.

Within KS2 we allow teachers to follow a flexible approach to spelling tailored to the individual needs of their class. Key spelling strategies and rules are taught within the classroom. Children may receive weekly spelling lists or individualised spelling lists to learn at home.

Alongside learning spelling rules and strategies Years 3/4 and Years 5/6 are also expected to learn the words lists as stated in the national curriculum. This is supported through spelling games and activities to provide an interesting and engaging approach to learning spellings.

### Grammar and Punctuation

Within the national curriculum grammar and punctuation is a key focus and at Shortlanesend School

We have embedded a very clear and progressive approach to grammar and punctuation teaching; this begins in KS1 and follows through into KS2. It is essential that children are taught to use the correct vocabulary from an early age and all teachers model the use of this when they teach grammar.

The base stage of our grammar teaching is the explicit stand-alone session. This allows teachers to explain and model for the children the grammar or punctuation which is being taught. Children are then able to practise this new skill (usually through a written activity or cloze procedure). This develops the use of fluency of the new grammar/punctuation skill.

All our teachers model correct grammar or punctuation through the class text or a cross curricular lesson. Children are then able to see the new learning being used in context.



All our children would be expected to use any new learning in their own writing therefore embedding the skill. This learning is then quite often assessed in an end of unit piece of writing.

## **Speaking and listening**

At Shortlanesend School we believe that speaking and listening skills are fundamental to children's learning. Confidence in this area is essential to be successful in all areas of English. Oral skills are directly taught, modelled and sensitively encouraged in whole class and small group settings. Opportunities across the whole curriculum are planned for, including presentations, topic talks, group discussions, working with a partner, debates and drama activities. Every English unit includes some speaking and listening activities.

Reception and Year 1 has a role play area. Digital films are taken and photos taken of drama activities. ICT programs are used where the children can record their voices.

Every child has the opportunity to take part in the House Performance Afternoon. EYFS and KS1 children perform a Nativity. Class 4 perform a play at Easter and Class 5 at the end of the summer term. Children are encouraged to speak to an audience during school assemblies and every half term the children perform class assemblies to the parents.

Our school currently holds an Aspire Silver Standard Award in Pupil Voice and Drama.

## **Assessment**

Assessments are continually made for reading and writing. The results are tracked to ensure all pupils are making appropriate progress and they are used to set targets for the following term. The Headstart materials are used to assess reading comprehension and Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation termly.

Star Reading Assessments Reading Trackers allow teachers to keep track of children's individual reading levels and ensure that progress is being made. Guided reading records ensure assessments are used to inform planning and to target teaching to the needs of the children as well as track progress.

Children from Year 1 onwards have an Unaided writing book. These pieces of writing are used to allow accurate assessments to be made at the end of every term. There is a minimum of four pieces per term.

Children in Year 2 and 6 take their SATs tests in May.

Unaided writing books are passed on to the next teacher each year, as are individual reading assessments from the class reading files.



Year 1 children complete a Phonics Screening Test.

## **Role of the English Subject Leader**

The Subject Leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

- Monitoring and evaluating English.
- Pupil progress meetings.
- Provision of English across the school.
- Observing 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 through their own CPD and that of others.
- Monitoring and assessment of English across the whole school.
- Supporting teachers through team teach coaching sessions.
- Analysing data and trends to create action plans.

## **ICT**

Information and Communication Technology is used to enhance the learning experience and support effective teaching. All classes have an interactive whiteboard and access to tablets and ipads. There is a range of apps to support English, including- Book Creator, Show Be and Clicker. Apps are updated as we receive new information. Short film clips are used to enhance the teaching of literacy and each class has a visualiser enabling children's work to easily be shared and writing to be modelled.

## **Inclusion**

Intervention activities take place where necessary, using different resources. The Sound Start reading scheme is used for younger children who need more support when learning to read. Project X CODE books are also used as an Intervention for struggling readers. Coloured overlays are available in each class and a coloured background is used on the Interactive whiteboard. Writing books with coloured pages are used by children when needed.

Children in Year 2 who did not pass the Phonics Screening Test will take part in an Intervention Group. Children in KS2 who need additional phonics work take part in Phonological Awareness Groups.

Supporting children with Dyslexia- all children have access to a range of resources to support them in Literacy, including: coloured overlays, reading rulers, word/spelling



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mats, key information on working walls, dictionaries and iPad apps. Each class has access to an iPad with Clicker 7.

## **Other Information**

World Book Day is celebrated each year with a reading café. The day also involves staff and children dressing up as book characters linked to their current class reading book.

Storytime - A termly event where a family member is invited into school to share and enjoy a story with their child.

Story Assemblies to promote reading and create a love of books.