

English Policy

September 2019

At The Woodside Academy the teaching and learning of English is at the heart of our curriculum. English is our means of communication, in school and in everyday life. Competence in English is one of the keys to independent learning across the curriculum, and therefore the teaching of speaking and listening, reading and writing is given a high priority in our school.

At Woodside, we pride ourselves on being a Rights Respecting school, meaning that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child is at the centre of everything we do. We ensure that children are aware of their rights and the rights of others. By teaming this with a broad and balanced curriculum and an awareness of British values, the children at Woodside are able to thrive and are prepared for life beyond the school gates.

AIMS

We aim to develop pupils' abilities within an integrated programme of Spoken Language, Reading & Writing. Pupils will be given opportunities to interrelate the requirements of English within a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of English across the curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught English skills.

At The Woodside Academy we strive for children to be a 'Primary Literate Pupil'. By the end of KS2 we aim for a child to be able to:

- read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding, orchestrating a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct.
- have an interest in books and read for enjoyment
- have an interest in words, their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms.
- understand a range of text types and genres – be able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation.
- be developing the powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.
- have a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their responses.
- have the skills to edit and improve their writing.
- use and apply their literacy skills across the curriculum.

Links to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Responding to children's work Policy
- Computing Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- EAL Policy

Planning

English in KS1 and KS2 is planned using the National Curriculum and in the EYFS it is linked to the EYFS Guidance. However, children are given opportunities to meet the requirements of English across the whole curriculum. Children are shown how computing and ICT skills can be applied in their English work and are given opportunities to explore these possibilities.

All class teachers are responsible for weekly planning based on the agreed medium term plans (based on the National Curriculum and using the Power of Reading where appropriate). The KS1 and KS2 Assessment Frameworks are used to inform planning alongside our own Woodside statements that are based on the National Curriculum. There are daily English lessons as well as guided reading sessions and discrete grammar and spelling sessions.

A variety of teaching strategies and styles will be used to ensure an adequate balance, depth and delivery.

These will include:

- individual tasks
- work in pairs, small groups and whole class;
- reviewing, reflection and evaluation with the teacher;
- involvement with other adults, parents and non-teaching staff.
- Use of ICT

APPROACHES TO SPOKEN LANGUAGE

The Four Strands of Speaking and Listening: Speaking; Listening; Group Discussion and Interaction, and Drama permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. Examples include:

- drama and role play
- reflecting on the learning and reporting back during plenary sessions
- participating in Circle Time
- group discussions including planning, predicting and evaluating
- specific activities such as debates and discussions
- talk partners
- performing to a larger audience e.g. in assemblies and to parents

APPROACHES TO READING

Opportunities are provided for:

- Shared reading – within English lessons and at other times of the day
- Guided reading – this takes place outside of the English lesson (some year groups plan for whole class guided reading while others plan a ‘carousel’)
- Independent reading
- Class Teacher reading to the class
- Echo reading to help improve reading fluency
- Whole class reading comprehension to help develop skills such as skimming and scanning, word retrieval, inference etc.

- Resources –All classes have a collection of texts for home reading. In KS1 and Y3 the books are banded. There are also 2 libraries where children are encouraged to visit and borrow books.
- Phonics – Letters and Sounds lessons on a daily basis in EYFS and Key Stage 1

Teaching of phonics:

Phonics is taught from nursery through to KS1, using Letters and sounds.

In EYFS 1 the focus is on allowing the children to tune into sounds.

From the EYFS 2 and into KS1 the phonic phases are matched to the children's phonic ability. The children are set for phonics in KS1 and from Autumn half term term in EYFS 2. This continues into Y3 and some children continue to receive phonics support in Y4. The Read, Write Inc. program is used to support the delivery of phonics in KS2.

APPROACHES TO WRITING

Opportunities are provided for:

- Emergent writing in Foundation Stage through play and other meaningful activities.
- Shared Writing – within the English lesson
- Guided Writing/Independent Writing - within the English lesson or other areas of learning
- Extended writing - within the English lesson
- Handwriting – practised regularly within the English lesson
- Writing to be stimulated by experiences outside the classroom or as a result of a visitor to school or whole school writing stimulus.
- Active investigation of grammatical features to explore their effects
- Cross curricular writing

Spelling

Spelling is an integral part of the writing process. Children need to be able to speak, read and write Standard English fluently and accurately in order to participate in public, cultural and working life. Spelling is an integral part of English, which aids freedom in writing and improves communication skills.

Aims

- To enable children to become confident in their spelling skills and become independent spellers.
- To enable children to spell a variety of patterns and words accurately
- To provide children with a range of spelling strategies and an understanding of spelling rules.
- To reflect the new requirements of National Curriculum September 2014.

Spelling is taught as part of a planned programme, mainly during the discrete phonics or spelling lesson, progression in phonics or the Babcock Spelling Pathway which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. In addition, words such as those on the taught list are taught through subject specific lessons e.g. History. In addition handwriting lessons, shared and guided reading and writing sessions afford many opportunities for talking about spelling and revisiting and practising strategies. The teaching of spelling of subject specific vocabulary occurs in all subjects and opportunities are made in these lessons to reinforce spelling work undertaken in discrete spelling lessons.

Teaching and Learning

The teaching of spelling aims to develop pupils as independent spellers who take an active part in their own learning. This is through a multi-sensory approach incorporating the development of fine motor skills, auditory discrimination and visual perception. Pupils are taught the knowledge and skills that they need in order to become independent spellers. Spelling accuracy is promoted by following the structured teaching sequence as identified in the National Curriculum 2014 and Babcock Spelling pathway. Children should ensure they learn and practise those words they frequently misspell and increase their spelling vocabulary by learning how to spell technical and subject specific words they encounter across the curriculum.

Early Years Foundation Stage

- In the Foundation Stage, by teaching and practising letter shapes and patterns through games, through making connections between letter sounds used in reading and spelling, and letter names and sounds used in spelling.
- By following the letters and sounds programme children are taught to match phonemes to graphemes and to blend for reading and to segment for spelling.

Key Stage 1 and 2

- Through implementing the Letters and Sounds and Jolly Phonics programme for Key Stage 1.
- By developing children's knowledge of phonemes and their application in spelling.
- By using the Babcock Spelling Pathway from Years 2-6.
- By focusing on spelling 3 times a week using lists and activities suggested in the Spelling Pathway.
- By displaying the current spelling focus on English Working Wall.
- By recording spelling work in individual spelling logs.
- By making clear links between spelling and handwriting.
- By encouraging an interest in words, their meanings and derivations by providing a rich environment for the children to learn in, show and interest in words and language.
- By encouraging the regular use of dictionaries and thesauruses.

The Assessment of Spelling.

Teachers are encouraged to use formative and summative assessment methods.

When marking work teachers are encouraged to use their professionalism in the identification of errors. It is expected however the taught patterns, words etc. will be picked up at an age appropriate level and teachers set a clear and high expectation for the application of known and taught rules.

Generally, we would expect teachers identify one word in each piece of writing that they deep mark and ask the pupil to either correct the spelling or copy from the teachers corrected version 3 times. Commonly misspelled words are written on the 'spelling section' of the children's target cards kept in the front of their Writing Books. Weekly spelling homework is set which may include spelling words and investigations.

HANDWRITING

Overall Aim

To enable each child to develop a personal style of handwriting that is:

- ◆ neat, with correctly formed letters
- ◆ legible
- ◆ swift
- ◆ economical of effort
- ◆ relaxed
- ◆ fluent.

It should be recognised that, of these six elements, speed will develop over time.

Early Handwriting Skills

It is important that children begin to develop the correct handwriting habits very early on. At first children are taught to:

- hold their pencil correctly
- develop left to right and top to bottom orientation
- form letters correctly as soon as their fine motor skills are sufficiently developed.

At KS1 pupils are taught:

- To hold a pencil comfortably and correctly.
- To develop a legible style of handwriting.
- To write from left to right and top to bottom.
- To start and finish letters correctly.
- To develop control over the regularity of size and shape of letters.
- To leave regular spaces between words.
- To write upper- and lower-case letters correctly.
- To develop knowledge of letter formation to join letters in words, e.g. writing patterns and letter strings.
- To understand that clear and neat presentation is important to communicate meaning.
- To be introduced to cursive script in Year 2 once familiar with the 'printing formation' of letters.

At KS2 pupils are taught to:

- Write legibly in joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed.
- Use different forms of handwriting for different purposes. (For example, print for labelling maps or diagrams, a clear neat hand for finished presented work, a faster script for notes)

These correct habits are encouraged, reinforced and built upon throughout the school, not only when lessons concentrate on specific handwriting skills, but through written work across the Curriculum.

As many children have their first introduction to handwriting at home, samples of our chosen style, with advice to parents on letter formation, are included in Nursery. Parents are encouraged to use letter sounds rather than letter names to assist reading and writing. Handwriting is closely linked to spelling and sounding out. Children are encouraged to link letters to the sounds they write as they form the letters

The Cursive Alphabet is seen in use in the Nursery and is seen as incidental print on displays etc. around the classroom. The Cursive Alphabet is introduced once the children are familiar and confident with the 'printing' of letters (usually in Year 2). All letters are formed starting from the line in the first instance. The letters are formed with an entry flick and an exit flick. Those children who need time and practice to develop their fine motor skills will be encouraged to print for as long as necessary. Handwriting lessons will be differentiated in the same way as any other lesson - adapting for individual children's needs. This practice is continued in Year 2 where the children begin to form joined-up writing patterns and letter strings. Printed capital letters are taught. Children should be encouraged to leave the correct spacing between words.

There is regular handwriting practice per week, depending on the age, ability and needs of the children. This will take place outside English lessons.

Much of the work undertaken by the children from Reception to Year 4 will be written in pencil. However, children should have the opportunity to write with a variety of pencils and felt-tipped pens, though the standard writing tool is the pencil. Rubbers are discouraged.

When demonstrating patterns or letters, which are made in the air, it is important for the teacher to face the children and reverse the letter so that the children are 'seeing' the correct letter formation. Any visual demonstration should be accompanied by oral instructions, e.g. over the top, round, up, down and flick.

The teacher should ensure:

- the child is sitting comfortably and at a table of a suitable height
- the child is not 'shadowing' the work
- the free arm is resting on the table-top holding the paper/book steady
- the child is holding the pencil/pen correctly
- left-handed children are seated with other left-handed children or at the left-hand side of the writing table
- a note is kept of all left-handed children so that the above is facilitated
- extra support and/or allowances are made for children whose physical disabilities affect their handwriting.

Children should be encouraged to develop an awareness of space and layout from the earliest stages, thinking about the placing of headings, margins and the look of the text on the page.

General

When marking children's work and writing comments in books, teachers adopt the style, in which the children are taught to write. This also applies to teachers writing on the whiteboard.

Display writing throughout the school will include print, the taught handwriting style and computer-generated writing.

Communication with Parents/Carers

We aim to involve parents directly in the life of the school and consequently in the development of children's skills, knowledge and understanding in English. Parents are involved in hearing

children read and are encouraged to discuss books with them. During the year, numerous opportunities are given for parents to drop in to school, for example, English Open Mornings, Woodside Poetry Festival, half-termly Reading Breakfasts, Share a Story Week and World Book Day.

There are opportunities each term where parents can discuss their children's progress with their teacher. The weekly newsletter provides information about the English curriculum and how parents can support their children. Parents are encouraged to read both with and to their children at home in order to promote reading. The school places a strong emphasis on the importance of reading and the expectation is for the children to read daily at home and complete their Reading Record. Reading certificates are presented throughout the year as a reward for home reading.

Strategies for supporting children are shared at meetings. SATs results are published in accordance with Government Legislation.

References

National Curriculum

The Power of Reading Project

Linking Sounds and Letters

Jolly Phonics

Letters and Sounds