

**ENGLISH POLICY**

**Policy review: October 2019**

**Next Review: October 2020**

# What are the aims of English Teaching and Learning in Fens?

A high quality English education provides a foundation for pupils to:

* access the wider whole curriculum;
* communicate their ideas and emotions to others;
* develop culturally, emotionally, spiritually and socially; literature plays a key role in this development.

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

We aim to ensure that all pupils:

* read easily, fluently and with good understanding
* develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
* acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
* appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
* write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style to a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
* use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
* are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

(National Curriculum in England)

**How do we teach English?**

English is taught through daily lessons and the skills and understanding are practised and applied across the whole curriculum.

**Foundation stage**

We promote communication and language development by giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

In addition children are encouraged to make links between sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials including books, poems, and other written materials to ignite their interest. Long term planning identifies stories which provide focus for all areas of learning.

Through taking part in a wide range of experiences children are encouraged to listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories and respond with relevant comments, questions or actions. We encourage them to ask and answer ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events, and to express themselves accurately.

Discrete systematic phonics sessions form the basis for early reading and writing.

Children are continually assessed against age related expectations in Development Matters to enable teachers to track progress and plan for exciting and challenging learning experiences.

**Speaking and listening**

Spoken language is given high priority in Fens because of its role in children’s cognitive, social and linguistic development. We aim to ensure that pupils

• develop confidence and competence in spoken language

• hear and speak quality and varied language to develop their understanding for reading and writing, grammar and vocabulary

• develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and poems and to prepare their ideas prior to writing

• are assisted to make their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others

• are probed by discussion with teachers to remedy their misconceptions

• are taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

We achieve this by direct teaching in English and across the whole curriculum, modelling by all staff and adults in school and use of high quality texts and audio-visual materials, through scaffolding talk where necessary, through the use of discussion and questioning and through the provision of a wide range of high quality opportunities for both formal and informal talk. Children are given constructive feedback on their talk, providing both praise and challenge.

We have experienced Teaching Assistants trained in Speech and Language and children requiring extra support are identified as early as possible, their progress monitored and external agencies involved where necessary.

**Reading**

Throughout school both dimensions of reading are taught: word reading and comprehension.

***Phonics***

At Fens, phonics is taught using the Letters and Sounds programme. This ensures that our phonics teaching is systematic and synthetic, which means that it teaches children:

* all the major grapheme-phoneme correspondences in a clearly defined sequence
* to apply the skill of blending phonemes in order, all through the word to read it
* to apply the skill of segmenting words into constituent phonemes to spell
* that blending and segmenting are reversible processes

Phonics is taught in discrete daily sessions at a brisk pace. These sessions are multisensory to actively engage children.

**Teaching sequence**

**Phase 1** (Nursery and ongoing)

Working on:

• General sound discrimination – environmental sounds

• General sound discrimination – instrumental sounds

• General sound discrimination – body percussion

• Rhythm and rhyme

• Alliteration

• Voice sounds

• Oral blending and segmenting

**Phase 2** (Nursery and Reception)

Working on:

• Using common consonants and vowels

• Blending for reading

• Segmenting for spelling simple Consonant Vowel Consonant (CVC) words.

• Knowing that words are constructed from phonemes and that phonemes are represented by graphemes.

Letter progression:

Set 1: s, a, t, p

Set 2: i, n, m, d

Set 3: g, o, c, k

Set 4: ck, e, u, r

Set 5: h, b, f, ff, l, ll, ss

“Tricky” words: the, to, I, no, go

**Phase 3** (Reception)

Working on:

• Reading and spelling a wide range of Consonant Vowel Consonant (CVC) words using all letters and less frequent consonant digraphs and some long vowel phonemes.

Graphemes:

ear, air, ur, er,

ar, or, ur, ow, ou oi, oy

ai, ay ee, ea igh, oa, oo (look), oo (zoo)

a\_e, e\_e, i\_e, o\_e, u\_e

* Reading and spelling Consonant Vowel Consonant (CVC) words using a wider range of letters, short vowels, some consonant digraphs and double letters.
* Consonant digraphs

ch, sh, th, ng, wh

* Reading and spelling Consonant Vowel Consonant (CVC) words using letters and short vowels.
* Set 6: j, v, w, x
* Set 7: y, z, zz, qu

“Tricky” words: he, she, we, me, be, was, my, you, her, they, all, are

**Phase 4** (Reception)

Working on:

* Segmenting adjacent consonants in words and apply this in spelling.
* Blending adjacent consonants in words and applying this skill when reading unfamiliar texts.

“Tricky” words: said, so, have, little, some, come, were, there, little, one, do, when, out, what

**Phase 5** (Year 1)

Working on:

* Reading phonically decodable two-syllable and three-syllable words.
* Using alternative ways of pronouncing and spelling the graphemes corresponding to the long vowel phonemes.
* Spelling complex words using phonically plausible attempts.

“Tricky” words: oh, their, people, Mr, Mrs, looked, called, asked, water, where, who, again, though, through, work, mouse, many, laughed, because, different, any, eyes, friends, once, please

**Spelling programme** (Year 2)

Working on:

* Recognising phonic irregularities.
* Becoming more secure with less common grapheme-phoneme correspondence
* Applying phonic skills and knowledge to recognise and spell an increasing number of complex words.

# Timetable

Nursery: Phase 1 with Phase 2 (and 3) teaching for appropriate children

Reception: Phase 2 – 6 weeks

Phase 3 - 12 weeks

Phase 4 - 4-6 weeks

Year 1: Phase 5

Year 2: Spelling programme

Some children need a different timetable and our phonics teaching is informed by daily assessments as well as period benchmarking to ensure that individual needs are meet. For this reason additional trained adults are available to match teaching and learning closely to the needs of each group.

# Vocabulary

**Phoneme** and **grapheme** are used in conjunction with **sound** and **letter** initially, building up to using phoneme and grapheme by themselves.

# Planning

Reception and Key Stage 1 teachers plan discrete daily phonics lessons using the teaching sequence below for each week and the school’s planning format. Planning is completed for each relevant phase by the year group teachers. Teachers and teaching assistants liaise daily about progress and outcomes, and planning is adapted as necessary to meet the needs of learners. Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning, and outcomes are noted using the school format by each group leader.

Sequence of teaching in a discrete phonics session

* Introduction - Objectives and criteria for success
* Revisit and review
* Teach
* Practice
* Apply
* Assess learning against criteria

***Assessment of Phonics***

**Formative**: Formative assessments are noted on planning and shared in the weekly feedback meeting.

**Summative**: A class record sheet is used to record results of periodic benchmarking assessments.

Benchmarking takes place in January and June using the York assessment in EYFS and the Phonic Play materials in KS1.

Both types of assessment are used to identify children requiring further support or greater challenge and to allow teachers to adjust groupings and teaching as necessary.

In addition, the Year 1 phonics screening is used to identify children who will need additional support in Year 2 to ensure that they develop secure phonics skills and catch up with their peers as soon as possible.

Note: Some children will not have fully grasped Consonant Vowel Consonant (CVC) blending and segmentation but may know all the Phase Two letters. CVC blending and segmentation continues throughout Phase Three so children can progress to Phase 3 even if they have not mastered CVC

blending.

# *Interventions*

Throughout EYFS and KS1 children are taught in groups, closely matched to their phonics attainment. Some children will require further support. Dandelion readers are available in the Community Room to give additional practice in the application of phonics for those children requiring it and a variety of multi sensory resources are also available to use in catch up sessions for individuals or groups.

A One to One reading kit is available for use with children requiring intensive early intervention.

In lower KS2 a small number of children may continue to need phonics teaching and practice. We use the Rapid Phonics scheme in Year 2 and KS2.

# *Use of Teaching Assistants*

TAs are used to support phonics in a variety of ways under the direction of the class teacher. They may teach parallel groups during timetabled phonics sessions, support individuals, lead intervention groups or provide opportunities for over learning and additional practice in phonics and their application in reading.

# Reciprocal Reading

Reciprocal Reading is used throughout KS1 and 2 to ensure children develop “deep comprehension” of texts and to build vocabulary. By modelling expert reading behaviours it allows us to ensure that children develop a language for talking about and investigating texts, and sorting out difficulties. We use it in shared and guided reading and also as an intervention. It also provides a consistent approach to support children's reading in different curriculum areas.

The sequence for Reciprocal Reading is:

**Activate Prior Knowledge**: What do we know about this already?

**Predict** what the book/page will be about.

**Clarify** any words your child does not understand.

**Ask questions** about the reading.

**Summarise** what has been learned so far.

Training in Reciprocal Reading is provided for all new staff.

# *Reading books IN EYFS and KS1*

Children at the very earliest stages of reading are given a phonically decodable reading book at their stage. They may also take home a “Shared Reading” book which can be read by the adult and shared with the child.

Any book given will be at the level where children make only one error in every 10 to 20 words i.e. 90- 94% reading accuracy.

Comprehension will be developed and supported through use of Big Books and whole class texts; class story time; texts used in other subjects and guided reading where appropriate.

Once children have reached Phase 5 phonic teaching, a wider selection of reading books will be given.

Children who are assessed as ready to do so, access the Bug Club reading scheme.

Children who fail to make progress on this basis have a personalised plan.

***Reading books in KS2***

Children in KS2 have access to a banded reading book which they are able to enjoy at home. As a rule any book will be at the level where children make only one error in every 10 to 20 words i.e. 90- 94% reading accuracy. However, the bands are broad and choice and independence are encouraged in both selection and reading. This may mean that sometimes a child chooses a book outside of these accuracy ranges. Staff monitor choices to ensure that children are reading a range of texts at appropriate levels and to engage in dialogue with children about their reading for pleasure. In addition some children will access the Bug Club books for guided reading or one to one reading. These books should not be sent home without a discussion with the English subject leader.

***Home Reading Records***

EYFS and KS1: Home reading records should record all reading books and Shared Readers sent home. Whenever a comment by a member of staff is made in the books, the comment should be dated and initialled.

In addition to the regular reading to teaching assistants and other adults in school, teachers should hear a child read themselves at least once each half term to affirm the child’s progress and achievement.

Y3 and Y4: Home reading records should have all reading books recorded either by the child or an adult. When an adult in school reads with a child, a comment should be made in the reading record and dated and initialled.

In addition to the regular reading to teaching assistants and other adults in school, teachers should hear a child read themselves at least once each half term to affirm the child’s progress and achievement.

Y5 and Y6: Home reading records should have all independent reading books recorded by the child. Children in these years who are regularly heard reading by an adult may have IEPs and will probably be using a specialist resource in school. A record of their reading achievement will be kept in the TA file and will be monitored by the class teacher and SENCO.

In addition to the regular reading to teaching assistants and other adults in school, teachers should hear these children read themselves at least once each half term to affirm the child’s progress and achievement.

# Writing

Writing is taught explicitly in English lessons and practised and applied across the curriculum. Links between speaking and listening, reading and writing are crucial to children’s progression in writing and our teaching sequence reflects this.

**Teaching sequence**

# Cold Sample

# Teachers plan for a cold sample which helps teachers and children establish focuses and targets for the unit. This is marked with praise and targets but is not close marked.

# Creative Introduction

# The purpose of this is to engage, excite and inspire children. The Bousfield Learning Suite can be very useful in providing a range of experiences to stimulate writing, model vocabulary and sentence structures orally and set high expectations.

**Reading as a Reader**

# High quality texts should always be used to model the structure and features of the chosen genre. On occasion it may be necessary for these to be written by staff, although normally the work of established writers should be used. Discussion, text marking (which needs to be taught as a skill through teacher modelling) and other Directed Activities Round a Text can all extend and deepen understanding of both the text chosen and the genre being studied. Explicit teaching of the grammar focus for the week/unit should be embedded in this part of the teaching sequence.

Each group studies at least one whole novel or 6 picture books in depth each term, one poetry unit and the non fiction text types set out in the non fiction progression document.

**Imitation**

Shared writing using reading is an extremely powerful teaching and learning tool and teachers should plan to include this in every unit. Shared writing should be a dialogue between teacher and class, in which the teacher as writer makes explicit the writing process: discussing choices, modelling the re-reading and re-drafting process, improving vocabulary and gradually introducing the children’s own suggestions and contributions. The writing should be aimed at the “aspirational level for the class” and the grammar or punctuation focus for the unit should be included and made explicit in the writing process. The progression documents for both fiction and non-fiction should be referred to as setting minimum expectations for the large majority of the children.

**Innovation**

In the Innovation part of the teaching sequence, children use their learning from the Reading as a Reader and Imitation to write their own text. Initially children will stick closely to the shared text, perhaps changing a character or a setting, moving to wider innovation as they progress through the school. “Boxing up” text can assist children in moving to greater independence as it makes explicit the structure of a text.

Expectations that children apply their learning about the grammar or punctuation focus of the unit should be clear and marking should reflect this. Similarly, for all but a few children for whom spelling is part of a Specific Learning Difficulty, spelling expectations should be high and taught words and patterns should be expected to be used correctly and corrected by the child when not.

**Invention**

In the Invention part of the teaching sequence, learning is applied and children are expected to take full ownership of their writing. Talk for Writing can help set expectations, inspire and engage but children are expected to write more independently.

Invention can also be practised in Foundation Subjects, where children should be given a wide range of opportunities to practise and apply their skills.

It is this writing which is used to assess children’s writing progress

**Publishing**

Some pieces of writing should be published to be shared as displays, sent home or made into class books for sharing. Where time is allocated to this, the expectation should be that children respond to marking and targets for improvement as part of the publishing process. Some pieces should be published as handwritten to give children the opportunity to practise handwriting for “best presentation”.

**Evaluation**

Evaluation at the end of the unit should focus on progress: referring children back to their cold piece and celebrating success, as well as setting new targets. Individual writing conferences with a child discussing their writing should be included as often as practicable.

**Marking**

Marking writing is central to children’s progress and a key professional skill. At Fens we take every opportunity to engage in professional dialogue with year group partners, in phase teams and across phase teams to hone our skills and share good practice. We use a marking code which is stuck into every child’s English book and mark every piece of writing with praise to reinforce achievements and progress and a target to signpost the next steps for that child. Occasionally, a piece of work represents a major (and sometimes hard-won) step forward for an individual and teachers may choose to celebrate success without further targets in this particular instance. We expect to see children writing at length (for the child) at least once a week on average as we recognise that the best way to improve writing is to write.

**Handwriting**

We use fully cursive handwriting, beginning in Year 1 for those children who are ready.

Writing in the air, on the back of another child, on the hand or in the sand are useful gross motor activities and form part of a multisensory approach. They can reinforce the way in which letters should be formed. Mini whiteboards can also be useful for children to write down the sounds they hear or spell whole words when segmenting and can be very useful for assessment for learning.

However, we recognise that handwriting requires children to hold a pencil correctly and that sitting at a desk (rather than on the floor) helps children to learn how to place the paper correctly in relation to their bodies. This is often particularly important for left handers. We teach a consistent letter formation throughout lower school moving to joining in Year 1. Grapheme mnemonics cards are used to ensure consistency throughout school.

**Spelling**

We an online scheme for Years 1-6. This provides for the teaching of all the statutory requirements of National Curriculum. Spelling is explicitly taught at least three times each week and ideas for activities and investigations are detailed in the Hartlepool document. Teachers note their teaching strategies and assessment outcomes on the given planning.

EYFS teach spelling as a fully integrated part of phonics whilst Year 1 teach spelling discretely in addition to that integrated in phonics.

**What provision do we make for children with additional needs?**

Some children will have additional needs in English and advice should be sought at an early stage from the English Subject Leader and SENDCO, who work closely together, and with the class teacher and support staff to ensure the best possible outcomes. Support from external agencies may be needed.

Some children may have a Specific Learning Difficulty such as dyslexia and we have access to a fully qualified Support Teacher who is qualified to diagnose dyslexia and advise teachers, parents and children.

Other children may need a greater degree of support and these children will have Individual Education Plans and have teaching and learning differentiated and adapted for them on an individual basis.

**How do we plan for teaching and learning?**

Teachers plan for English using the Long Term Planning grids for each year group. This gives a complete overview of the expected outcomes for each year group in KS1 and KS2. Nursery and Reception teachers plan using the EYFS learning goals.

Medium term planning for each unit shows the learning focus for each strand of English and the proposed teaching sequence. In addition, a coverage document ensures that teachers cover the whole curriculum in an academic year.

Short term planning for each week is completed on the school’s planning format and details learning objectives for each day, planned activities with appropriate differentiation, and planned assessment which informs subsequent learning.

**How do we assess in English?**

Formative assessment is central to our teaching. Teachers use formative assessment throughout the teaching and learning sequence to ensure that children make accelerated progress. Daily formative assessments are noted on the school’s planning format with particular reference to any groups or individuals who need additional support or challenge.

Summative assessments include termly use of the Hartlepool Assessment Outcomes to benchmark progress in Reading and Writing.

At the end of Year 1 children are screened for their phonic attainment and an individual plan for each child not meeting the standard is put in place.

At the end of Key Stage 1 statutory teacher assessments of children’s progress in Reading and Writing are made.

At the end of Key Stage 2 statutory teacher assessments of children’s progress in Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing are made. In addition children complete statutory tests in Reading and in Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar.

**How do we set targets for children?**

Overall targets for progress in Reading and Writing are set at the beginning of each academic year and reviewed on a termly basis.