



# Thornaby Church of England Primary School

## Literacy Policy

### 1 - Rationale

- The school believes that all pupils have a right to a broad and balanced English curriculum.
- In the school curriculum, the development of English has two distinct, yet mutually supportive aspects. First, English is a core curriculum subject in which the skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing are specifically developed. Secondly, English is the medium through which other curriculum areas are taught; English skills are further consolidated by the use of specialist styles, forms and vocabulary required by these areas across the curriculum.

### 2 - Aims

- To provide children with the opportunity to read, write and speak with confidence, fluency and understanding.
- To give children an environment which is safe and secure and which provides encouragement for the development of all aspects of Literacy
- To ensure that there is a quality of access and opportunity for all children to develop their Literacy skills as part of dedicated Literacy lesson and across the wider curriculum.
- To seek to ensure that all children achieve their full potential in all aspects of Literacy.

### How English is taught:

### 3 - Organisation and management of Literacy sessions

#### 3.1 - General

- Literacy lessons take place on a daily basis, each morning, across the school. Following the launch of the New National Curriculum in 2014, Literacy planning and subsequent teaching relates directly to the relevant year group objectives. There is a distinct focus on grammar, speaking and listening, reading and writing including the effective use of ICT where appropriate.
- Literacy activities will be included in other curriculum subjects, providing a broad and balanced curriculum across all stages.
- Children are taught in ability groups across the school from Reception to Year 6. Each year group is divided into two sets, a more able group and a less able group. Lessons are tailored to meet the needs of the children in each group.

### **3.2 - Early Years (EY)**

- In the Early Years (EY), English is taught as part of Communication, Language and Literacy development. As the reception class is part of the EY, we relate the literacy aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELG's), which underpin the curriculum planning for the children. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and exchange their range of vocabulary and communication skills. Learning takes place through both directed and self-directed activities. All children are taught to read using phonics and guided reading lessons. We use 'Floppy's phonics' as a synthetic phonics programme in small and large groups during the morning sessions. The EY teachers will plan for daily speaking, listening, reading, writing and role-play activities.

### **3.3 - Key Stage 1 (KS1)**

- In Key Stage 1, children work in ability groups. This is to ensure that all pupils' potential is maximised. Objectives and content are devised using the school's 'Assertive Mentoring' system and the guidance from the new curriculum 2014. Literacy takes place for an hour and fifteen minutes each day and this time incorporates phonics. Children are taught phonics using the 'Floppy's phonics' programme. Across a typical week the children are taught grammar rules, spelling rules, comprehension and decoding skills and how to write in different genres. Children will develop skills in chunks as the week goes on, building to a longer writing task.

### **3.4 - Key Stage 2 (KS2)**

- Key Stage 2 children work in ability groups. This is to ensure that all pupils' potential is maximised. Objectives and content are devised using the school's 'Assertive Mentoring' system and the guidance from the new curriculum 2014. Literacy takes place for an hour and a half each day and this time incorporates guided reading. Children are taught to spell using the 'Support for Spelling' programme linked to Oxford Owl. Across a typical week the children are taught grammar rules, spelling rules, comprehension and decoding skills and how to write in different genres and for a variety of audiences. Children will develop skills in chunks as the week goes on, building to a longer writing task in an extended writing session so as to develop skills in writing outlined by the objectives being covered in a particular unit of work. Some children in Key Stage 2 will also require support in reading which will be provided through the 'Fresh Start' element of the Read Write Inc. programme.

## **4 - Writing**

4.1 - The 2014 Curriculum divides writing skills into two dimensions:

- Transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- Composition (articulating ideas in speech and writing)

4.2 - Children must also be taught how to plan, revise and up-level their writing. We also believe that our children must be able to write within a range of genres for a true purpose and an audience.

4.3 - We have high expectations that our children will develop to become fluent writers across the curriculum.

4.4 - We expect our children to be able to write with increasing stamina throughout the school as a result of increased spelling, grammar and text composition work.

4.5 - We teach our children to communicate ideas through neat, legible handwriting with increasing fluency throughout the school.

4.6 - Ways that we support this in school are:

- At Thornaby C of E we expect that children will write, in some form, every day. This could be as part of the Literacy lesson or in cross curricular topic writing.
- In Literacy lessons writing will be modelled in shared writing. During this time children will work with the teacher to practise letter and word formation, sentence construction and using punctuation and different sentence types appropriate to the genre being covered.
- Teachers plan to cover a range of agreed genres in each year group and make cross curricular links with topic where possible.
- Following a writing task, children in KS2 are expected to up-level their work based on teacher marking and the success criteria.
- During the first half of each term the children from Y1 to Y6 will experience 'Talk for Writing' where they will study, learn by heart and write a story using speaking and listening techniques as championed by Pie Corbett. By the end of Key Stage Two we aim for every child to have built a bank of stories which they can recite orally (with actions!) and in writing on an independent basis. For more information on Talk for Writing visit <http://www.talk4writing.co.uk/>.
- During the second half of each term the children from Y1 to Y6 will cover a 'Big Writing Adventure' where they will develop a specific literacy writing skill, and again, complete an independent write. Online materials from Oxford Owl help teachers plan and deliver interesting and stimulating big writing lessons. For more information on 'The Big Writing Adventure' visit <https://global.oup.com/education/content/primary/series/big-writing-adventures/?region=uk>

## 5 - Reading

5.1 The National Curriculum states that pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose and be encouraged to read for meaning and pleasure. Reading is singled out as of extreme importance since through it 'pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually' (p13) Reading allows pupils to 'acquire knowledge' and to 'build on what they already know' (p13). The 2014 Curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions:

- Word reading/ decoding
- Comprehension

We support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, writing, grammar and vocabulary. We also understand that reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning and we encourage and praise children at every stage of it.

5.2 - The following strands are planned and delivered consistently across the school;

- Shared reading.
- Guided reading.
- Independent reading.
- Reading across curriculum.

5.3 - Ways that we support this in school are:

- Children are expected to read for pleasure, reread favourite or popular texts and to check the meaning of new vocabulary using dictionaries or other reference texts.
- Children are expected to read at home each day as part of their homework.
- Pupils learn to read easily and fluently through daily phonics in Early Years and Key Stage One, regular reading to adults in school including our 2 Reading Assistants, guided reading, reading to peers and incentives to read at home.
- Pupils are encouraged to read widely, using a range of reading strategies, through our use of differing class texts, in class libraries, iPad based research and attractive, well-loved texts in classrooms.
- Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure using reading partners, quiet reading time, listening to an adult read, and the various methods outlined above.
- Pupils also need to read to find information in all lessons and comprehension is assessed in a formal way every term.
- Pupils are exposed to a range of texts and genres in literacy and topic during their time at our school.
- Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils needing to close the gap access appropriate reading interventions such as additional phonics, Project X or Reading Eggs.
- The school participates in national events, such as National Story Telling Week and World Book Day, promoting a genuine love and celebration of stories and books.

## **6 - Handwriting**

6.1 The National Curriculum states that writing is dependent on legible, fluent and eventually speedy handwriting. We recognise that teaching staff must provide daily opportunities to practise and improve handwriting and encourage pupils to develop a fluent, cursive, legible style. Teachers model the agreed style consistently across the school using the 'Penpals' programme to support letter formation and accurate joining of letters across all curriculum areas.

## **7 - SPaG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar)**

7.1 The National Curriculum provides two statutory appendices on spelling and on vocabulary, grammar and punctuation, with which all teaching staff should become familiar. We acknowledge that opportunities to enhance children's vocabulary should be fully exploited when opportunities naturally occur. Children in KS1 and KS2 are encouraged to question and investigate new vocabulary using a range of strategies and to proofread their own writing. Children should be encouraged to use ambitious vocabulary and spell accurately through their knowledge of phonics, morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure). Explicit links are made between teaching of handwriting and the teaching of spelling.

7.2 Grammar and spelling are taught and assessed using 'Grammar Hammer' work from the 'Assertive Mentoring' system used by school.

### **7.3 Spelling**

Pupils are encouraged to:

- Develop dictionary skills to support their spelling.
- Attempt words for themselves using a range of strategies.
- Write an increasingly wide range of words from memory (KS2 Spelling Bank).
- Children in KS1 and KS2 receive spellings to learn for a weekly spelling test. They use the Look, Say, Cover, Write and Check method to learn and practise them.
- In KS1 spellings are linked to the sounds covered in Floppy Phonics plus common exception words of The New Curriculum 2014.
- In KS2 spellings are linked to the Assertive Mentoring spelling and grammar systems.

## **8 - Phonics**

8.1 Through the daily teaching of synthetic phonics from Foundation Stage and throughout KS1, pupils are taught a balanced programme based on the 'Floppy Phonics' scheme from Debbie Hepplewhite. This develops understanding of the alphabetic code, the phonemes of the English Language and their corresponding graphemes and skills in segmenting phonemes for spelling and blending them for reading. Towards the end of Y2 this phonics learning leads seamlessly into teaching and learning of spelling, which continues throughout KS2. Teaching staff have high expectations that phonic knowledge acquired will be utilized across the curriculum in all reading and writing.

## **9 - Spoken Language**

9.1 The National Curriculum states that language development underpins the development of reading and writing. It is essential that all staff always ensure the continual development of children's confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills.

It is essential that staff model speaking clearly; this includes clear diction, reasoned argument, using imaginative and challenging language and use of Standard English. Teachers must also be sensitive in encouraging the participation of retiring or reticent children. Listening is modelled as is the appropriate use of non-verbal communication, respecting the views of others.

9.2 - Ways that we support this in school are:

- Speaking in complete, grammatically accurate sentences is an expectation from Nursery to KS2.
- Accurate articulation of phonemes in the daily teaching of phonics across the school to support clear pronunciation.
- Supporting the correction of errors and ensuring that children hear good examples of Standard English spoken.
- Planned teaching and learning of speaking and listening skills, drama, role play and talk for writing.
- Planned Show and Tell takes place in EY and KS1 each week. Children in EY also encourage speaking and listening at home via the use of 'Star Bear' who goes home each week.
- Daily story time across the school, in which children are encouraged to listen carefully, respond to text and given the opportunity to tell their own stories.
- Discussion based activities are embedded across the curriculum to encourage full participation in talk partner/group discussions and debates by all children, irrespective of ability.
- Celebration events within the community, such as Harvest, allow all children the opportunity to present speeches, singing and drama to a wider audience.
- School council members in KS2 debate and discuss pertinent issues and then relay them back to their peers.
- Children with specific speech and language and auditory problems will be identified and specialist help sought, where appropriate.

## **10 - Opportunities for additional English**

- Dedicated story sessions take place across the school in order to promote an enjoyment of English and to further enhance reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.
- Opportunities are also provided for pupils also to develop their literacy skills across the wider curriculum by writing longer texts in topic lessons such as diaries, letters, stories etc or using drama and role play to investigate historical events or PSHCE issues.

## **11 - Planning**

- Planning is organised into long, medium and short term. The New Curriculum 2014 for Literacy is the basis for teachers' planning. Units of Work are appropriately planned and delivered in conjunction with topics taught across the wider curriculum where possible. Teachers' short term planning is based on an agreed format with specific Key Stage amendments where appropriate e.g. short term EY Planning. Planning templates are accessed on the shared work area on the school's computer network.
- Individual teachers keep up to date copies of their plans for Literacy, and these should be typed where possible and stored on the school network for others to access.
- Teacher's short term planning should make reference to text and specific grammar focus. Planning should also make reference to specific sentence types to be taught during shared work as well as application of spelling and phonics rules as appropriate.

### **11.1 - Early Years**

Planning and teaching in the Foundation Stage is in line with the statutory requirements of the 'Early Years Curriculum (EYFS)'

### **11.2 - ICT**

ICT is incorporated into planning and delivery as appropriate, for example, use of the i-pads and Visual Literacy resources.

## **12 - Teaching Strategies**

**12.1** - A range of interactive teaching and learning strategies are used in order to maximise pupil progress in Literacy. These strategies include:

- Direct, whole class teaching.
- Opportunities for group and paired work.
- Opportunities for independent learning.
- Using drama and role play to deepen understanding of text and character.
- Using group discussion, debate and market placing to share and explore ideas.

**12.2** - Differentiation is planned either by outcome, by task or through support to ensure that each pupil engages with appropriately challenging tasks relevant to their individual needs. As a school we are working on 'open' tasks and challenges so as not to put a 'ceiling' on learning.

## **13 - Monitoring and Evaluation**

**13.1** - The Literacy Subject Leader is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of Literacy teaching and learning across the school.

**13.2** - Literacy planning and teaching is monitored on a regular basis via focused lesson observations and subject specific walkthroughs (both of these in conjunction other members of the Senior Leadership Team) and termly book and planning scrutinies during SLT meetings. Monitoring and evaluation are focused on the implementation and evaluation of the Literacy Subject Leader's Action Plan.

**13.3** - CPD opportunities are provided for staff as part of the ongoing School Improvement Plan and Literacy Subject Leader Action Plan.

**13.4** - The Literacy Subject Leader updates the Governing Body on developments within the subject in the Spring Term via a 1:1 meeting and an annual report.

## **14 - Assessment**

- Completion of half termly tracking grids for reading and writing to measure pupil progress.
- Regular writing sessions using 'Assertive Mentoring' enables individual targets to be set for children. Each child is aware of their personal target and knows how to 'up-level' their work
- Children will complete an assessed writing task each half term.
- Reading will be assessed via a culmination of evidence from guided reading, phonics and keyword work in KS1 and from guided reading evidence and formal tests in KS2.
- The school's assessment policy sets clear procedures and time scales for formal and informal assessments. The Literacy Subject Leader, alongside the Headteacher, will be responsible for monitoring the progress of all pupils in the school and will use the Assertive Mentoring system and half termly tracking sheets to track progress made and identify children who need further support. Please refer to Assessment Policy.
- Class teachers will make and record ongoing informal, formative assessments including:
  - a. Optional SATs KS2
  - b. Statutory SATs Y2 and Y6
- Assessment for Learning - see marking policy for further info.
- Spelling test at the end of each year (Parallel Spelling Test)
- Reading test at end of each term - Salford (Y1-5) Daniels and Diack (Y6)
- Class teachers will maintain accurate Class Group Record sheets for reading and writing, these will be updated half-termly and will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team.
- QCA optional tests and SATs will provide numerical data about the pupils' progress made in an academic year.
- Children's progress and attainment based on teacher assessment, the optional tests and the end of Key Stage tests will be recorded on the assessment sheets and will be reported to parents in the pupil's end of year report.



## **15 - Expectations**

- It is expected that pupils in EY will achieve a good level of development in Literacy meaning that they will achieve the Early Learning Goal in Reading and Writing.
- By the end of each year group thereafter, children are expected to be 'Ready' for the next stage. E.g. by the end of Key Stage 1 working within level 2 with most pupils achieving level 3R or above.
- By the end of Key Stage 2 working within level 6 with most pupils achieving level 7R or above.

## **16 - Inclusion**

- All children receive quality Literacy teaching on a daily basis and activities are differentiated accordingly. Where identified pupils are considered to require targeted support to enable them to work to age-appropriate objectives, a variety of interventions are available, for example, Early Literacy Support (ELS) in Year 1, Additional Literacy Support (ALS) in Years 3 and 4, Further Literacy Support (FLS) in Year 5 and specific targeted group support where necessary.
- Gifted, Talented and More Able pupils are planned for in line with our policy for teaching More Able pupils.
- Specific teaching strategies are used to maximise access to the curriculum for EAL pupils.
- Gender equality is promoted by ensuring that both boys and girls have access to all aspects of the English curriculum.

## **17 - Additional Staff**

- TA support throughout school for identified groups of pupils where appropriate.
- TA role in implementation of intervention programmes.
- Listening to targeted individual pupils with reading.
- TA support to help groups of children make a 'flying start' at the beginning of Literacy lessons.

## **18 - Home School Links**

- Parents in school to support individual pupils with reading.
- Parents encouraged to share books with children at home and listen to them read on a regular basis.

## **19 - Resources**

- Purchased/updated where necessary
- Songbirds KS1 reading material
- ORT main reading scheme - KS1 and KS2 where appropriate
- Guided reading resources (Scholastic Reading Resources)
- Library access
- Individual classroom book areas

October 2016 to be revised October 2018

Revised October 2018- To be reviewed October 2020