



The Woodland Federation of Peak District Schools

English Policy

Review: Annually

Date of Governor Approval	Narrative - Author	Minute Number	Review Date

Intent

Our exciting and inspiring English curriculum will enable our children to write with confidence and accuracy for a wide variety of purposes using a rich and interesting vocabulary. In addition, our English Curriculum will equip our children with the skills to be confident and motivated writers who will acquire lifelong skills. We expect our children to write with accuracy using appropriate grammatical techniques and be able to apply the phonics and spelling patterns that they have learnt. We expect all children to develop a cursive handwriting style which should be embedded by the end of Y4.

Our children will develop a love for reading and will read fluently and widely. They will be able to express their feelings and opinions about what they have read with confidence.

We will support our children to be articulate and confident communicators who can express themselves and engage in discussions to enhance and deepen their learning and understanding.

We want all pupils to be able to read and write for a range of purposes and audiences across the curriculum and to transfer their English skills into these areas.

Implementation

Reading and Phonics

From their first days in school, we start to foster a love of books and reading through daily story time, which continues throughout school.

Children start their reading journey with daily phonics sessions which follow the Oxford Floppy's Phonics scheme, written by Debbie Hepplewhite, an internationally renowned phonics teacher/trainer/consultant. This is a synthetic phonics programme which is evidence based.

Reading books are carefully matched to children's ability in phonics and reading. Staff listen to children read frequently – at least three times per week - to ensure the right level of challenge and success in their reading books.

Children are taught to decode, comprehend and read for pleasure through engaging texts and a variety of reading experiences as part of the English lesson and the wider curriculum.

As a federation, we adopted the Active Reading approach. Elements from this approach are woven into all of our reading lessons.

Active Reading consists of the following aspects:

- Vocabulary / Clarification
- Inference / Explain
- Prediction
- Summarise
- Questioning
- Skim and Scan

Children are read to frequently by their class teacher. Wherever possible, these books are linked to studies in other curriculum areas.

We use Accelerated Reader throughout the federation for children from around Year 2 onwards. Children are assessed regularly through online tests. This gives each child a ZPD score which is the level of book that is right for them. This level gives enough challenge, whilst still being achievable for the child. Each child's ZPD is a range, for example 3.2 - 4.6. The child can choose to read a book nearer the top end of their ZPD for more challenge, or at the lower end for a book that will be a more comfortable read. Every book in our libraries is colour coded using the book band system and each book also has a number on which corresponds to the ZPD system. When a child finishes a book, they go on to Accelerated Reader and complete a quiz. This gives teachers an indication of the child's comprehension of their book and constantly updates their ZPD score.

Reciprocal Reading is used as an intervention for children in Year 5 and Year 6. This includes elements of Active Reading and helps improve children's comprehension of the texts they are reading. In KS2, this approach is also used in relation to the whole class book and recorded on the working wall.

Spelling

Children's phonic knowledge is assessed regularly (at least once per term), and they then work in ability groups at the correct stage for them. Following regular assessments, KS2 children may be working through the Floppy's Phonics scheme at the appropriate level. Other KS2 children work through the Jane Considine Spelling programme at an appropriate level for them.

Writing

We use Talk for Writing in EYFS and KS1; and a mixture of Jane Considine's The Write Stuff and Talk for Writing in KS2. We have found that the two schemes complement each other well and that children progress/transition from one to the other successfully.

We use Talk for Writing with our youngest children because of the active nature of the approach. Children learn texts using pictures and actions which then gives them the tools they need to be able to go and write on their own - confidently and independently. The approach starts with "Imitation", where children use a known text to help them create their own writing. Children then "Innovate" - keeping some elements of the original but becoming more independent. Finally, they move to "Independent Application", where children are creating their own work in the style of the model text.

In KS2, our long-term plans for English have been developed using Jane Considine's The Write Stuff to help our children become brilliant writers. The Write Stuff comprises of two modes of teaching. The first of which is Sentence Stacking lessons which have a sharp focus on the construction of sentences. The second mode is Experience Lessons which are based on immersive teaching to stimulate ideas. In conjunction with this approach, we also use some elements of Talk for Writing to increase the opportunities for short burst independent writes and to focus on features of the different genres. Following these sessions, pupils engage in an independent writing sequence where they are able to apply the skills they have learnt. An important part of the process is the editing stage where pupils make improvements to their writing using the Editing Stations for support.

As part of The Write Stuff, we use Jane Considine's Writing Rainbow which is a visual reminder of the components, or different "lenses" writing encompasses such as similes, metaphors, alliteration, complex sentences and inner thought. The rainbow is

prominently displayed in the classroom and children have individual copies to refer back to.

In KS2, vocabulary is introduced and taught within writing and reading lessons using Vocabulary Ninja. Furthermore, throughout the school, tier 3, subject specific vocabulary is taught within the wider curriculum.

Underpinning all of our work in English are opportunities for children to access a variety of quality fiction, non-fiction, songs and poetry.

Handwriting

We started using Martin Harvey handwriting scheme in September 2022. Children have handwriting sessions at least once a week, and more for children who need more support or are younger. This approach uses a simple cursive style where children are taught correct letter formation from the start of reception with flicks in preparation for joining. As children move through the scheme, they start to join up.

Children are taught to sit properly in preparation for writing and taught to a correct pencil grip. Sessions include patterns as well as letter formation to help children to develop a flowing style.

We expect all children to be using a cursive joined script by the end of Year 4. Those children in Upper KS2 are expected to use blue handwriting pens in their work.

Impact

Our children develop a lifelong love of reading and writing and enjoy discussing and recommending books to their peers. Children are motivated to create high quality written work across the curriculum that is well presented.

Children display enthusiasm for reading and choose to read for pleasure. They immerse themselves in worlds that reading opens up, topics of interest and beyond.

Their vocabulary is increased through the work done in their English lessons and they use a broad vocabulary in spoken and written work.

Communication skills are strengthened, and children can articulate themselves effectively.

Children know more, remember more and develop lifelong skills.

Equal Opportunities

We believe in the importance of providing education fairly to all pupils within the school and to give equal treatment to its pupils regardless of their age, disability, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or national origin.

Inclusion

Inclusion is at the heart of our teaching and learning, and teachers are considerate of the common, specific and individual needs of their pupils. At The Woodland Federation of Peak District Schools, we foster a culture of inclusivity and lessons are adapted to

ensure pupils achieve. We provide all pupils with a balanced and broad curriculum. The Governing Body will ensure that appropriate provision will be made for pupils with SEND. Following assessments, additional support is put into place for those who have not made expected progress and for those with additional needs. Pupils who are exceeding age related expectations are challenged accordingly.

Planning

Long-term planning is carried out by the subject leaders to ensure full coverage of the requirements of the National Curriculum. The long term plans are available for all stakeholders to view on the federation website. Medium and short term planning is carried out by the subject leaders to ensure high quality learning opportunities are taking place.

In order to inspire and motivate children at the start of a topic, we will often plan experience days where children are provided with a range of stimuli to ignite their enthusiasm for the new learning.

Pupils are encouraged and supported to become independent learners through a focus on the “Characteristics of Effective Learning”.

Assessment

Assessment of English is carried out both formatively and summatively in line with the federation’s Marking and Feedback policy. Assessment of English is carried out formally three times per year using NFER assessments for SPAG and Reading. In addition to that, reading ages are checked more frequently as part of the Accelerated Reader programme to ensure that children are accessing appropriate books. Writing is assessed at least four times per year. Writing assessments are kept in children’s Writing Journey books which follow the child throughout their time in school. Following assessment of independent writing, children are given targets in an age-appropriate way to work towards.

At the end of Key Stages, standards are HNM (has not met expectations); WTS (working towards the year group standard); EXS (working at the expected standard for the year group); GDS (working at greater depth in the year group). Moderation of writing takes place as a federation and also as part of cluster events.

Children’s progress in phonics is closely monitored as they work towards to Screening Check at the end of Y1.

Monitoring

Members of the Senior Leadership Team will carry out book scrutinies across year groups and feedback to staff regarding marking, assessment and progress. Subject Leaders monitor English progress and attainment data on a termly basis to ensure that areas for school improvement are identified and the progress of pupils causing concern is addressed.

Observations and learning walks are performed regularly to monitor the quality of teaching and pupil engagement. Opportunities to observe teachers in the same key stage are provided through lesson study activities.

The views of pupils are sought through pupil interviews with members of the Senior Leadership Team.

Triangulation of planning, lesson observations and book scrutinies to assure that the quality of teaching and learning is high.