



English Policy

Date of policy:	January 2016
Date last review adopted by governing body:	28/01/2016
Frequency of review:	3 years

1. Rationale

At Writtle Infant School we firmly believe that the learning of English is a significant life skill and that the development of strong learning foundations will enable our children to listen, speak, read and write confidently throughout their school career and on into adult life. English is taught, of course, as a core curriculum subject. However, the key skills of speaking and listening, reading and writing are practised and extended throughout the day in a wide range of cross curricular contexts. Since children enter school with differing levels of linguistic skill and experience there is a commitment of personalising each child's learning so that their ability to use English confidently and flexibly is steadily developed throughout their infant years.

2. Aims

We aim to develop in all the children:

- A positive attitude towards all aspects of English.
- The ability to communicate and respond effectively.
- A love of reading and books.
- The competence to produce work of high quality.
- As much independence and confidence as possible.
- A keen awareness of audience in all areas of English, across the range of English skills.
- Persistence and stamina.
- The confidence to tackle and solve problems through the application of knowledge and the use of skills.

3. Objectives

- To provide a rich topic based English curriculum starting from where the children are.
- To provide a stimulating environment in which all the skills of English can thrive.
- To develop trusting relationships in the classroom so that the children can express and explore half-formed thoughts without the fear of negative criticism.
- To follow the guidelines of the New Curriculum of 2014, Early Years Foundation Stage, and Letters and Sounds.
- To motivate children by drawing on their experiences and perceptions.
- To provide multi-sensory English education in order to maximise engagement and enjoyment in all children.
- To use a variety of techniques, including drama, to expand the range of opportunities for expression and interaction in English.

- To encourage an atmosphere of trust and supportiveness in which children can take creative and intellectual risks.

4. Children's Experiences

Speaking and Listening

Most children will be able to talk by the time that they come to school. It is essential that these skills are developed so that children are able to express themselves confidently, clearly and fluently using a variety of vocabulary. Talk is valuable in the development of a range of skills and a good starting point for reading and writing. It is also necessary in developing social skills. However, the children must become aware of the times when it is necessary not to talk but to listen instead. This is an acquired skill which is absolutely essential in a learning situation. At Writtle Infant School we employ a number of different approaches to facilitate this, including: talking partners, Narrative Thinking, 'time to talk', 'talk for writing', hot seating, role play, puppets, class discussion, social stories intervention programmes, sharing assemblies and drama productions, 'show and tell', story sacks and audio listening posts. Speaking and listening opportunities are provided daily in English sessions, drama opportunities and across the curriculum.

Reading

At Writtle Infant School, early literacy in EYFS and KS1 is learnt through developing work on speaking and listening, early reading and phonics, and in line with the Communication and Language and Reading and Writing strands of the Early Years Curriculum. All children are heard read regularly by an adult in school and are able to independently choose books to share at home. These books are a mixture of 'structured reading' and 'real books'. There is no limit to how many times a week they change their books. The books are in boxes and are grouped in approximate reading levels according to their reading fluency, decoding skills and comprehension. At Writtle Infant School we provide a variety of styles and levels of reading books and schemes to meet all needs. Parents and other family members are actively encouraged to be involved in their child's reading development. We have set up a very successful home 'reading reward scheme' which encourages pupils to read at home and in return they can collect awards for the amount of times they have read. At FS and KS1 a 'Reading Record' is maintained where all adults hearing the child read will write the progress made with the book and teaching staff will communicate how the child is getting on and what to do to develop his/her reading skills further.

Guided reading occurs regularly across the school in KS1 and during the summer term in Foundation Stage. The guided reading group is led by the teacher or another adult and is based on the 'booktalk' approach of 'Talk for Writing'. We have a wide selection of guided reading texts and where possible these relate to the topic. We have daily story sessions read by an adult to encourage the love and enjoyment of books, in addition to this we have a session where we teach whole class reading skills such as comprehension and using other cues to read a word- not just phonics!

We believe that free access to books of all kinds is important in the development of the child's interest in, and appreciation of, reading. To this end, all classrooms have inviting reading corners/mini-libraries, and also book displays and collections related to ongoing topic work. In addition to this, children are encouraged to use the fiction and non-fiction libraries, where research and book selection skills are taught from an early stage. We also have a purpose built library for which each class has a weekly

session. Following the application process children from Year Two take on the role of librarian and help care for the books and foster a love of reading for the children who visit.

Writing

At Writtle Infant School we believe that the learning of writing skills should be embedded across the curriculum. The key skills of planning, composing and evaluating, spelling, handwriting & presentation, and grammar, punctuation and vocabulary are therefore taught explicitly in the context of English lessons, but also indirectly through cross-curricular writing tasks in other subjects.

In EYFS, writing is about how children build an understanding of the relationship between the spoken word and the written word, and how through making marks, drawing and personal writing, children ascribe meaning to text and attempt to write for various purposes. The appropriate developmental age in EYFS curriculum informs planning for learning activities, and writing materials are always available for the children in their child-initiated learning and play. Children are introduced to Narrative Thinking and 'Talk for 'Writing' through 'word and language games' 'role play' and 'story telling'.

The development of writing skills at KS1 progresses by building on the basic skills learnt at EYFS and very much with an emphasis on Talk for Writing. Children are introduced to many different genres and opportunities are given for extended writing. Tasks are planned for and scaffolded according to need, by the provision of written structures/templates (where appropriate), by the use of IT, or by the intervention of a supporting teacher or adult.

5. Cross-curricular opportunities

At Writtle Infant School we believe that children learn best in a creative, cross-curricular and integrated context. As staff we will therefore seek to make cross curricular links with the learning taking place in English with that in other areas, both at the planning stage as well as in response to formative assessment. We also aim to provide extra-curricular opportunities to enhance English skills, knowledge and understanding, such as drama workshops, visiting authors, special book day activities, and storytelling sessions.

6. Use of ICT

All use of ICT is led by our Internet Access/E-Safety policy. We have the intention that all children are Infant IT literate by the time they leave KS1. We believe that computers and other forms of IT can play a key role in learning in English. Children have access to computers, i-pads, audio recorders, video and class digital cameras and audio-editing software, to support learning. From a teaching perspective, teaching staff have opportunities for training to take advantage of IT in the form of interactive whiteboards, SMART Board, visualisers and digital resources including Espresso.

7. Phonics

Systematic and high quality phonics learning takes place daily at EYFS & KS1, via 'WRP' (Writtle Reading Programme). This programme is school designed and is an amalgamation of two successful phonics programmes. We believe that this programme of learning will equip our children with a range of decoding skills by the time they leave KS1, in addition to giving them a good grounding in spelling. This is

built upon with the 'Support for Spelling Programme' which is taught in Year 2 once children have completed Phase 5 in Letters and Sounds. We are able to use a PowerPoint to teach daily WRP and a variety of 'Letters and sounds' games are taught during literacy and WRP sessions. As a school we have a large bank of centrally available phonic resources for staff to use including 'The Ultimate Guide to Phonological Awareness'. Phonemes and key vocabulary are displayed in all classrooms. In preparation for the Year One Phonics screen children in Foundation Stage and Year One are set for phonics sessions across the year group. All children in Year two follow the government Support for Spelling programme and in addition those who are still at Phase 5 or below are also taught within small intervention groups.

8. The School Provision

The school will provide the following:

- a daily S&L session;
- daily WRP phonics programme;
- Small group and individual reading interventions;
- school handwriting scheme;
- at KS1 a weekly grammar lesson;
- Opportunities to write across the curriculum using and applying skills and understanding developed in English lessons.

9. Organisation

All teaching staff are responsible for the teaching of English to their own class. Teaching Assistants carry out learning activities, directed by the class teachers, with small groups or individuals. Classes are of mixed ability. The length of lesson will vary, according, to the task. Teachers will provide appropriate planning. Each half-term we plan to teach fiction, non-fiction and poetry, through a 'talk for Writing' approach.

10. Management

The head teacher will have overall management of the English curriculum in consultation with the English leader and other members of staff. The English governor will be informed and kept up-to-date on a regular basis. School development targets which are set by the school and agreed by the class teachers each year are used to inform planning.

11. Equal Opportunities

All pupils will be provided with learning experiences which enable them to experience success, gain confidence and acquire competence. Every opportunity is made to ensure equal opportunity for all children, irrespective of ability, race, culture and gender. It is important that the materials used give a balanced view of events and people. Books used for the teaching of reading should also reflect the interests of the children. (See Equal Opportunities policy) The English curriculum should fulfil the needs of all pupils. SEN children with specific English targets will be supported where necessary. The work will be differentiated according to the needs of the child. Every child must be able to make progress, however small, and have a positive attitude towards his/her work.

12. Equality Statement

“The governors and staff are committed to providing the full range of opportunities for all pupils regardless of gender, disability, and ethnicity, social, cultural or religious background. All pupils have access to the curriculum and the right to a learning environment which dispels ignorance, prejudice or stereotyping.”

13. Implementation

All year group teams complete, medium (half-termly) and short term (weekly/daily) planning, which are linked to the year group’s cross-curricular ‘Themed Approach’ long term curriculum planning (LTCP). Class teachers refer to the English Curriculum Guidance to identify objectives. Examples of all aspects of English should be displayed, not only in the classrooms, but around the school. Home learning tasks are set for each year group in accordance with the school home learning policy.

14. Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment opportunities are an integral part of English teaching. Formative assessment is ongoing and involves the children. Summative assessment will take place through Early Years Foundation Stage Profiling and end of Key Stage tests.

Each half-term children’s unaided writing is levelled and with other assessment is used to record children’s progress on Target Tracker. Children are expected to make accelerated progress in reading and writing each year in line with national Expectations. In addition to ongoing assessments made and noted against planning records on a regular basis, termly assessments are also made in speaking and listening, phonics, reading and writing. The outcome of these assessments for each child is discussed with the Senior Leadership Team and is fed into on going tracking data. As a result of this, individuals or groups may be identified for further targeted support.

Written reports informing parents of their child’s progress are provided each term. They are intended to provide a discussion point at parents evening. Annual reports are written by class teachers, identifying achievements in line with the NC level descriptors and EYFS Curriculum, with general targets being set.

Marking should be diagnostic and supportive and in line with the school’s marking policy, especially in respect to ‘Assessment for Learning’. Children are made aware of the learning intention for the lesson and success criteria are shared in a variety of ways.

15. Resources

Resources are available in each of the classrooms and in the corridor and Library to promote the development of skills, knowledge and understanding in English. The English Subject Leader will assist members of staff with the resources which are needed. A wide range of fiction and non-fiction ‘Big Books’ and story sacks are available in the library.

16. Monitoring and Evaluation

Members of the Senior Leadership Team and the English Coordinator, in line with the cycle of monitoring for this subject, will carry out monitoring of the teaching and learning in English through lesson observations, pupil interviews, governor assemblies and work scrutiny.

17. Role of Governors

Governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies. They support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively. They ensure that the building and equipment are safe. They monitor pupil attainment across the school and ensure that staff development and performance management promote good quality teaching.

18. Role of the Co-ordinator

- To facilitate the development of English identified in the School Development Plan.
- To review English Policy periodically.
- To work collaboratively with staff to promote continuity and progression.
- To create and monitor Schemes of work.
- Monitoring including lesson observations, pupil voice surveys, work sampling and climate walks.
- To attend relevant INSET courses, and encourage and support staff where possible.
- To organise and if relevant deliver staff training.
- Monitoring and organization of centrally held resources.
- Purchase of resources in consultation with staff and in line with the allocated budget.