



HELSBY HILLSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

ENGLISH POLICY

1. POLICY AIMS

Literacy is a fundamental life skill; it develops the children's ability to communicate effectively – to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes. We aim to develop these skills through an integrated programme of Speaking & Listening, Reading and Writing. From Reception to Year Six, Hillside strives for pupils to become accurate, fluent and resilient readers who are able to read a wealth of material. This skill of becoming proficient and efficient readers underpins the development of our children as writers and is the gateway to finding out about the World they live in through books and indeed all media forms today.

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 literacy skills. We aim to extend the children's understanding through careful and rigorous questioning so that they can begin to 'read between the lines'. Children will be encouraged to be active readers and writers and demonstrate a desire to question and investigate what it presented to them rather than passively accept different texts and explanations.

At Helsby Hillside Primary School we strive for children to be literate.
By the age of 11 our **Curriculum Intent** is 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 their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.
- Have a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their responses.

2. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the 2014 National Curriculum and in the Communication, Language and Literacy section of the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014).

End point attainments aimed for are as follows:

(Note individual Year Group end points can be seen in the English Curriculum Pathways overview and in individual Year Group Curriculum documents.)

2.1 In the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) children's learning and competence in communication, speaking and listening, being read to and beginning to read and write must be supported and extended. All children should be given opportunities to:

- Speak, listen and represent ideas in their activities;
- Become confident in their literacy skills and develop a positive disposition to using their skills through support and encouragement by all members of the school community;
- Use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum and in a range of class based opportunities and wider experiences;
- Become immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

2.2 At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2), children should learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They should begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. In writing, they should use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

2.3 At Lower Key Stage Two (Years 3 and 4), children need to begin to listen to, and respond to the spoken opinions of others. They should be beginning to widen the range of texts they read and be able to pick out and explain specific details and text features when reading. Writing development should show a clear awareness of the audience and purpose for writing.

2.4 At Upper Key Stage Two (Years 5 and 6), children should learn to purposefully change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They should read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They should explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

3. SUBJECT ORGANISATION

Literacy learning and teaching begins in Reception with children following the Early learning Goals from the base-line start point to the end of their pre-school provision. These are followed through into Key Stage one until the child is ready to embark on the National Curriculum thereby ensuring continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage through to the National Curriculum. Pupil provision is related to attainment, not age.

4. WRITING

Teachers plan specific units of literacy using the 2014 curriculum objectives supported by Pathways Writing Units (The Literacy Company) for each half-term which focuses on a key book. Each book is the lead driver for our whole school commitment to a creative curriculum with all foundation subjects as well as RE and Science linked to the texts whenever possible. This ensures that all learning is connected and relevant for pupils. Continuity and progression is ensured through careful selection and delivery of learning

opportunities to enable the children to meet the learning objectives outlined in the 2014 Curriculum.

Each unit of work begins with a vocabulary focus, includes speaking and listening objectives and contains key success criteria (Mastery Keys) which are reinforced, enabling mastery of the curriculum. The Mastery Keys build upon the prior learning of the previous year group (Gateway Keys). Support for less able pupils is planned for by each class teacher and the extension of the more able is included within each unit.

5. APPROACHES TO SPEAKING AND LISTENING

To develop as fully as possible each child's competence, confidence and enjoyment in speaking and listening, group discussion, interaction and drama are embedded throughout the whole curriculum. The 2014 Curriculum provides guidance on incorporating speaking and listening into planning through specific tasks.

The curriculum provides many opportunities to enhance speaking and listening skills. Activities such as open minded homework tasks, which the children present to their classes, speaking and listening competitions (e.g. poetry recital), class presentations, assemblies, school council & sports council roles, whole school debates and also school productions all contribute to the development of confident speakers and listeners.

6. APPROACHES TO READING and GUIDED READING

Key to developing reading and writing is the child's understanding of phonics and how letters can be combined to make new sounds and words. The 'Read, Write, Inc' programme provides a clear sequence of progression and a wealth of activities that can be used to support the acquisition and application of phonic skills. This programme is delivered through Foundation Stage and Key Stage One and is used as an intervention tool where necessary in Key Stage Two. Once all children are settled into their new classes, they are then assessed and grouped according to ability for the delivery of daily, focused phonics teaching by all members of staff across Foundation Stage and Key Stage One.

Shared reading of the focus Pathways text is an integral part of each unit of Writing focus with reading of the text a constant daily activity. Children are placed into groups for guided reading based on formal and informal assessments carried out by the teacher.

As well as a focus Pathway text and guided reading material, all teachers have a class text that is read most days to the pupils.

6.1 Guided Reading:

All children in school have opportunities for guided reading lessons with the teacher; these take place outside the literacy lesson.

- All classes will have a guided reading file and plan on the school format with texts noted.
- During the sessions, objectives will be shared with children and a follow up tasks may be set for independent work later in the week. Recording of any outcomes may be done on whiteboards, orally or in books.
- Lower ability groups in KS1 may not record in a journal as many of their independent activities are practical and linked to letters and sounds work.
- Reading Diaries will be checked weekly and the teacher will record using notes or ink stamps the date, guided session and a brief outline of the objective. The diaries will also be used as a means of parent communication and to note change of reading book and any individual or home reading sessions.
- Phonics activities may form some of the work in guided reading especially in KS1 and lower ability groups throughout KS2.

6.2 Reading Scheme

Individual reading books are grouped according to the book band levels and books are selected from an appropriate band for their ability.

At Helsby Hillside wider reading is encouraged through regular visits to the local library, class libraries and regular sharing of class novels, short stories and poems.

7. PHONICS AND SPELLING

Phonic knowledge also forms the basis for our teaching of early writing as well as reading and through the RWI programmes. Children in Foundation Stage and Key Stage one receive phonic teaching based on the Read, Write, Inc. program. This is delivered on a daily basis with the children being grouped according to ability and within their own class depending on the time of year.

Children in Key Stage Two (year 3-6) follow the National Curriculum spelling rules and patterns for year groups. Weekly spelling lists are given and supported by class activities. For those who may not be secure in year three, phonics teaching may continue or take place within an intervention setting.

8. APPROACHES TO WRITING

Writing is a key life skill for all children and teachers seek a range of opportunities to make writing 'real' for children and provide a true purpose to their learning. When children first begin to write they are encourage to 'have a go' and then discuss the marks they have made with their teacher.

Emergent writing is an important stage in developing confidence as an independent writer before the complexities of spelling and punctuation are introduced.

Within the course of daily literacy lessons children will take part in shared, modelled, guided and independent writing activities.

8.1 Shared writing enables all ideas to be collected and some of the secretarial aspects of writing to be supported by a teacher or teaching assistant.

8.1 Modelled writing is a powerful tool that a teacher will use to demonstrate the thought processes involved in composing and organising a piece of writing. The teacher may work from a pre-prepared piece of writing and will share the process of putting that writing together through thinking aloud as they write.

8.2 Guided writing provides the opportunity for focused teaching and supported application of key skills and targets with smaller groups of children of a similar need or ability.

8.3 Independent writing ensures that the children apply all the key teaching points (mastery keys) and focused tasks encountered as part of the teaching cycle in their own piece of writing. It provides the teacher with an overview of which aspects of writing have been secured and which need further teaching and extension. Across a complete unit of work there are several planned opportunities for all these types of writing to occur. Children are also engaged in short writing opportunities throughout the teaching unit.

8.4 Extended writing and application of writing skills will occur in other cross curricular lessons as well. Similar standards of writing in terms of composition, word selection, spelling and punctuation are expected in writing that occurs in other areas of the curriculum.

9 HANDWRITING

The formal teaching of handwriting takes place outside English lessons and is explicitly taught in discrete sessions with occasional practise once mastered. Teachers have high expectations in the presentation of work in all areas of the curriculum. The 'Pen Pals' handwriting scheme is used within years 1-6. Using this scheme teachers demonstrate the correct letter formation and the children practise it. Teachers monitor the formation of letters and as children master formation and joining the focus shifts to writing neatly, consistently and at a reasonable speed. In Reception, the teaching of letter formation and handwriting is taught through the Read write Inc. Phonics Programme.

9.1 Foundation Stage

The emphasis at this stage is on the development of fine motor skills with movement rather than neatness the priority. Letter formation learned at this early stage becomes automatic and has a profound influence on later fluency and legibility. To aid movement, close attention is given to pencil grip, correct posture, the positioning of the paper and the organisation of the writing space. Teachers are vigilant to ensure that bad habits do not become ingrained and that the specific needs of left-handed pupils and those with special educational needs are met. Writing books have lines covering half a page to support the correct sizes of recorded letters.

9.2 Key Stage 1

Building on the Foundation Stage, pupils at Key Stage 1 develop a legible and joined style. This will be dependent on ability not age / year of child. Handwriting books with guidelines are available for use. The same lines are in English books to support the writing of letters of the correct size and orientation. These lines are bigger in Year 1 and reduce in size for Year 2 onwards.

9.3 Key Stage Two

The target for children in Key Stage Two is to produce a fluent, consistently formed style of fully cursive handwriting with equal spacing between the letters and words.

Children will have regular handwriting practice sessions recording their writing in their exercise books. They will be expected to develop and use a fully joined style. English books with lines to support handwriting are used in Year 3 and these are phased out during Year 4 when the children begin to use standard line spaced books for writing.

10. CROSS-CURRICULAR LITERACY OPPORTUNITIES

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through literacy lessons to other areas of the curriculum. Our Long term planning documents identify objectives to be taught within year groups, support progression and also give the named texts (Pathways Units) linked to the context for learning that the children will be working on.

11. THE USE OF ICT

ICT is used throughout the teaching of English to inspire, model, edit, review and improve work. Teachers often take the opportunity to use animations, images or videos to enhance teaching inputs. Feedback (see marking and feedback policy) from a taught objective is given to classes using the visualiser which allows class teachers to highlight good practise, edit work for all to see and focus on any specific points for improvement or development.

12. THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Hillside recognises the importance of the learning environment in inspiring and supporting a child's development. Within the Foundation stage and Key Stage 1 a dedicated writing area is established. In KS2 suitable materials are available for pupils to work at their own tables.

In all classrooms teachers display excellent examples of good writing practice in their 'Taking Pride In our Writing Display'. This gives a high profile to well presented, constructed writing and shows pupils that their writing efforts are both celebrated and valued.

Working walls display key objectives taught within each unit of work to provide a current display that supports the children with their writing. This display will often incorporate some of the following children's work, features, word and sentence level work and it is updated regularly.

13. ASSESSMENT AND TARGET SETTING

Work will be assessed daily in line with the current Feedback Policy. In addition to this children will be assessed formally on a termly basis using assessment papers linked with the curriculum. Writing is teacher assessed and supported by Pathways assessment grids with exemplar writing examples provided to support judgements.

Targets for guided writing are taken from the gaps in the children's assessment grids. These targets should then be explicitly planned for and taught to groups of children during consecutive guided writing sessions within a literacy unit.

14. INCLUSION

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. Pupils or groups of pupils who are under-achieving are identified during pupil progress meetings with the headteacher and steps are taken to improve their attainment with the implementation of intervention strategies and support programmes. More able children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided within the literacy lessons.

Intervention Programmes

Intervention programmes will be delivered as the need arises. The impact of the intervention programmes will be evaluated by the SENDCO/English Coordinator during the summer term and then reviewed ready for the beginning of the new school year.

15. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

16. ROLE OF SUBJECT LEADER:

The Subject Leaders should be responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in Literacy through monitoring and evaluating Literacy in terms of

- Pupil progress
- Provision of Literacy
- The quality of the learning environment;
- The deployment and provision of support staff.

They will also ensure that their own subject knowledge is thoroughly updated through professional development, training and reading of journals and articles. Part of this will involve providing quality INSET to colleagues and directing colleagues to INSET opportunities provided by outside agencies.

In order to ensure that children and staff are equipped with quality resources and materials, the subject leader will need to undertake a regular audit of current materials, including library books, and purchase new and replacement materials on an annual basis.

17. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parental involvement will be encouraged through regular dialogue with parents in home/school reading diaries and journals. Reading journals in Key Stage One include a variety of reading activities that parents can complete with their children to further their child's understanding of the books that they read. Reading at Hillside is discussed

and explained to new parents during the Reception intake meeting prior to starting school and at a reading workshop early in the autumn term.

All year groups run workshops for parents during the academic year and give strategies, support and materials to enable to support parents working with their children at home.

Parents are also encouraged to become involved with World Book Day and reading events that take place in school throughout the year. They are informed of the reading events that take place at the local library through assemblies and leaflets provided by the library.

18. CONCLUSION:

In following the guidance and philosophy provided in this policy, teachers will provide the best opportunity for the pupils at Hillside Primary School to begin to realise their literacy potential. It should also be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment
- Feedback policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy

This policy will be reviewed every three years or in the light of changes to legal requirements.

Member of staff responsible: L Thomas

Date policy written: February 2020

Date approved by the full Governing body:

Date to be reviewed: April 2023