

Monksmoor Park CE Primary School

English Policy

Date ratified by Governors:

6th October 2022

Dates reviewed by Governors:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

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1. Vision

At Monksmoor Park CE Primary School we recognise the crucial importance of studying all aspects of the English language. Improved performance at reading, writing and spoken language will enable our children to experience all areas of their broad curriculum in all its fullness. They will be able to express their thoughts and ideas more fluently and become effective and engaging communicators. These skills will serve them throughout their academic career and enrich their lives beyond school.

Our approach to teaching of English is multi-faceted, incorporating oracy, drama, real contexts and high-quality literature. We aim to promote high standards by nurturing and inspiring fluent readers and writers with all the skills and knowledge they need to be confidently literate in life. This is encompassed in our ethos of “nurturing all to flourish and aspire”.

2. Aims and intentions

We aim for children to leave us:

- with a love of reading and a desire to read for enjoyment;
- reading and writing with confidence, fluency and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to take responsibility for their own learning including editing and correcting their own errors;
- with an interest in words and their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in relation to grammatical terminology;
- understanding a range of text types, media types and genres;
- able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation;
- using their developing creativity, imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness;
- having a suitable technical vocabulary to respectfully articulate their responses in any discussion.

3. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the statutory [National Curriculum in England: English Programmes of Study – Key Stages 1 and 2 \(2013\)](#) and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(2021\)](#).

We have also considered the following research:

- Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)
- The reading framework: teaching the foundations of literacy (2022)
- OFSTED Research Review Series: English (July 2022)
- Teaching and learning toolkit
- Preparing for literacy
- Improving literacy in KS1
- National Literacy Trust
- Oxford Language report 2018

4. Roles and responsibilities

It is important to ensure all staff, children, parents/carers and governors are aware of the aims for learning and teaching English at Monksmoor Park CE Primary School and that these are consistently applied.

Governors

Governors have a responsibility:

- To meet with the curriculum Subject Leader to find out about;
 - the school's systems for planning work, supporting staff and monitoring progress;
 - the allocation, use and adequacy of resources;
 - how the standards of achievement are changing over time.
- To visit school and talk to pupils about their experiences of the English curriculum.
- To promote and support the positive involvement of parents in English learning.
- To approve the English policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation

Headteacher

The Headteacher has a responsibility:

- to work with the subject leader and English governor to determine the strategic development of the English policy and provision in the school
- to hold overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners
- for ensuring that this policy is applied consistently across the school and for ensuring staff have the skills, resources and training required to implement the policy successfully.

Subject Leader

The subject leader has responsibility for the following key areas:

- Strategic direction and development to ensure high standards of teaching and learning
- Policy development
- Leading and managing staff in their subject area, including auditing and supporting colleagues in CPD.
- Ensuring efficient and effective deployment of staff and resources.
- To carry out subject specific monitoring activities in order to evaluate provision. This may include: analysing assessment data; visits to lessons; looking at children's work; speaking to pupils.

Class Teachers

Staff have a responsibility:

- To promote a confident, positive attitude towards the learning and use of English, making it an enjoyable experience.
- To promote the ability to communicate effectively in a variety of forms.
- To promote the range of skills required in reading in order for children to read for meaning, understanding and enjoyment.
- To provide opportunities for the development of skills across the whole curriculum.
- For the progress and development of every pupil in their class, ensuring children make progress from their individual starting points
- Identify own developmental and/or training needs in relation to the subject
- to ensure they follow this English policy

5. Organisation and planning

5.1 Planning

We use the National Curriculum (2014) to inform our planning and as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English. In accordance with the planning procedures, English is planned both discretely and as a vehicle for learning in other areas of the curriculum.

The curriculum objectives for English will be reflected in long, medium and short term planning. Class teachers are not asked to plan in a specific format as we believe planning is an individual teacher tool. All planning is stored digitally in a central location so monitoring can be carried out if required.

Class teachers use unit plans from "The Write Stuff" as a basis for teaching writing as a way of ensuring National Curriculum objectives are met. These plans may be annotated and adapted by staff based on the needs of the children and to inform future planning and assessment. Teachers ensure activities are well matched to the range of abilities in their class. Challenge will be provided through activities that allow children to deepen their knowledge and show their conceptual understanding through application in different ways. All National Curriculum Programmes of Study statements must be covered at least once in each key stage although it is likely it will be more. Teachers will use assessment for learning to ensure children have grasped the skills, knowledge and understanding before proceeding to the next step in their learning.

We have chosen to teach reading comprehension using Ashley Booth's whole class reading approach. Resources are adapted to meet the school's long and medium term planning based on the National Curriculum to ensure progression term-to-term and year-on-year. We believe our chosen approach provides children with opportunities to read and enjoy a range of high quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts.

Teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals which underpin their curriculum planning. The Write Stuff techniques are used in Reception, supplemented by a language rich environment which provides opportunities for communication, story-telling and role-play to enable children to fully immerse themselves in learning across all areas of development.

5.2 Cross Curricular Links

As a team we are truly passionate about the value of language. We recognise that

Opportunities are happening all the time in a classroom and in the school. It is taught in specific English lessons, but children are practising and using their skills constantly across all subjects too.

Our vocabulary approach is applied through topic lessons for all year groups with children being introduced to tier 2 topic vocabulary on a regular basis. This is displayed in classrooms as a visual reminder.

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 English lessons to other areas of the curriculum. This may be through extended writing in other areas of the curriculum, such as Topic and Science to showcase the children's transferrable literacy skills.

5.3 Metacognition/Long Term Memory

Research shows that children who are able to read fluently before they are 7 years old, have a stronger working memory. The working memory is where instructions and new concepts reside in the first instance and lasts no more than a minute or two. Children with strong working memories will be able to receive a list of instructions and follow them with ease. Children who have difficulties with their working memory will need supportive strategies in order to remove that cognitive load and allow them to focus on the core learning in smaller steps.

Our teachers plan experiential 'hook' experiences, including trips, visitors and visits, usually to introduce a topic or unit. This memory will evoke the emotions of excitement, enjoyment and engagement, helping children recall the event within their memory. Lessons that link to prior learning (within the year, or earlier in the schooling journey) or to the children's personal experience (such as a 'hook' experience) ensures that that knowledge of the world around us is locked in their long-term memory. This also ensures planned opportunities for spaced retrieval, building upon children's previous learning or experiences.

Many of our chosen strategies for teaching English incorporate a multisensory approach. Multisensory activities are based on whole brain learning. This means teaching involving multiple areas in the brain. Adding auditory, physical or visual components to teaching aids better connections and long-term memory.

We also use the "I do, we do, you do" strategy throughout English units which is rooted in metacognition. This allows children to experience clear models and examples before being guided in their understanding and gradually becoming more independent.

5.4 Spoken Language and vocabulary

At Monksmoor CE Primary School, oracy has a central place in our curriculum, reflecting the vital importance of spoken language in our pupils' development. Speaking and listening is fundamental to developing good communication, reading and writing skills and to ensuring children can access and achieve in all other areas of the curriculum. It is a critical prerequisite to learning to read and write and enables access to other areas of the curriculum.

We support pupils to achieve this by:

- giving our children confidence in themselves as speakers and listeners by showing them that we value their conversations and opinions. We also encourage respect for the views of others.
- being aware that as adults, we provide a model of speakers and listeners in our day-to-day interactions with them and with other adults in our school.
- helping them to articulate their ideas and provide purposes and audiences for talk within a range of formal and informal situations and in individual, partner, group and class contexts.
- by providing opportunities to perform to a larger audience, in Collective Worship, performances and productions, where children's efforts and skills are acknowledged by staff, parents, carers, visitors and peers.

- by providing a range of experiences where children can work collaboratively and participate in opportunities to reflect on talk and explore real and imagined situations through role play, hot-seating, drama and discussions.
- by developing the children's ability to listen with attention and understanding in all areas of the curriculum and where necessary, asking and responding to questions appropriately.

All English lessons incorporate the opportunity to articulate ideas verbally as this is a key stepping-stone to writing. Many of the strategies we use enable children to develop their understanding of spoken language through oracy and drama before writing takes place.

Vocabulary is a strong indicator of reading success (National Literacy Trust, 2017). The size of a child's vocabulary is the best predictor of success on future tests. Children with a poor vocabulary at age five are four times more likely to struggle with reading in adulthood (Why Closing the Word Gap Matters: Oxford Language Report, 2018).

To support children in their vocabulary development, we use the Word Aware vocabulary system. Word Aware is a structured whole school approach to promote the **robust, consistent** teaching of vocabulary development of all children. Teachers plan direct instruction for tier two words, as they can have a powerful impact on verbal functioning and be applied to a range of different situations (Beck et al, 2013). Each class has a word wall on display to showcase their current vocabulary learning. In EYFS Word Aware vocabulary is taught using the Early Years programme.

5.5 Reading and Phonics

As a school, we celebrate and provide rich reading experiences at every available opportunity, so that all our children develop a love of the written word. Through the school's systematic teaching and promotion of reading, pupils are able to confidently explore and discuss texts in detail. Our priority is both the teaching of reading skills and the enjoyment of literature, enabling children to become lifelong, confident readers. We believe that high-quality literature is key to motivating children to read and instilling in children a love of literature. This goes beyond the daily teaching in school and the books in their book bag each day. Children throughout the school are read to each and every day, supporting their comprehension, developing their vocabulary and creating the magic of losing themselves in a story. This also encourages children to enjoy texts together perhaps beyond their usual interests or abilities. At Monksmoor this is an issue of equity as not all children have the opportunity to read and enjoy books at home.

We have warm, inviting book corners in each classroom that children have plentiful access to during the school day. Books are refreshed regularly linked to each class' current topic or interests so children can build on their learning and explore the subject independently. Alongside this, we have our bespoke library space which all year groups can access and benefit from the increased selection of books to take home and share as a family.

In order to have strong communication between teachers and parents/carers, each child has a school reading record where both the staff and parents can write comments about how the child is progressing with his/her reading. Reading at home forms an important part of our home learning expectations and this is monitored weekly by staff.

As children begin to read, we focus on decoding, primarily through a systematic synthetic phonics programme. As children build fluency, comprehension skills become our main area of focus and questioning looks at skills such as re-telling, inference and prediction.

In the Early Years, pupils begin by exploring books with their peers and their teachers, using their understanding of phonics to begin the early stages of reading. All our classrooms have a language rich environment, indoors and outdoors and pupils are able to select from a range of exciting texts and engage in learning opportunities to further deepen their understanding. Parents are a hugely important part of a child's reading journey and therefore the staff work in partnership with families from the outset to support their child's learning at home. The strong foundations established in the Early Years are built on as children begin to develop their phonic knowledge to begin reading independently.

The Simple View of Reading provides the rationale for the structure of reading provision at Monksmoor Park CE Primary School. The Simple View of Reading, which is the conceptual framework that underpins reading in the new National Curriculum, sets out a model of reading that has two dimensions: word-reading and language comprehension.

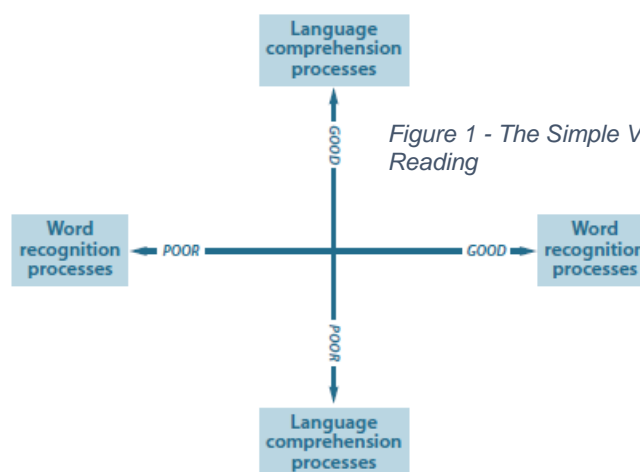


Figure 1 - The Simple View of Reading

5.6 Word-Reading

Skilled **word reading** involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words.

(Rose review of the teaching of early reading, DfE, 2006)

Our pupils follow a system of systematic synthetic phonics, based on the Read Write Inc. phonics scheme. This is in place throughout the school and begins on children's very first day in Reception. Children are taught in small groups based on regular and robust assessments which ensures teaching is highly targeted and at an appropriate level. Word-reading is assessed through continuous teacher assessment and further validated by the phonics screening check in Year 1. Our regular monitoring processes ensure children who struggle with word-reading receive further support, often through regular 1:1 intervention.

Home reading books offer an opportunity for children to apply their decoding skills with specific decodable books aligned to the Read Write Inc. phonics scheme. Children will have home reading books and materials carefully matched to their current phonics stage. Beyond this, we supplement these materials with a range of with other high-quality books that offer children opportunities to build fluency and comprehension through reading a wider range of genres and styles.

5.7 Comprehension

Once children are reading with an appropriate level of fluency, they will be moved on from daily phonics sessions to being part of small group or whole class reading (WCR) comprehension lessons. Whole class reading lessons take place for approximately 30mins per day. Pupils are expected to develop a range of specific comprehension skills, ranging from straightforward retrieval of information to more challenging inference.

We use VIPERS to refer to the reading domains of the National Curriculum:

Comprehension skills

VIPERS

- Vocabulary
- Infer
- Predict

- Explain
- Retrieve
- Sequence/Summarise

WCR lessons follow the below structure over the course of a week:

Monday: Summarising/sequencing based on class novel. Each Monday culminates in a PSHE discussion relating to the book whereby children are encouraged to explain their understanding or viewpoint.

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday: Linked lessons based on a common theme focusing upon inference and retrieval.

Friday: Summary and prediction based on class novel.

Curriculum mapping ensures coverage of a range of text styles across the year and that texts increase in complexity across year groups. The teacher will work with pupils as part of a pair or small group on a regular basis to guide and challenge all pupils.

In Early Years, children listen to a range of high quality texts and stories read by adults and each other, in whole class group and with partners. They begin to answer questions, making observations about characters, settings and events. As their own reading develops they are encouraged to work towards showing their understanding when talking with others about their reading and to broaden their range of texts along with vocabulary awareness. All Reception and KS1 children discuss their comprehension of their Read Write Inc storybooks within their daily phonics sessions.

5.8 Writing

We hope that by teaching the children at Monksmoor Park CE Primary School to write well, they will have the skills to:

- understand the importance and purpose of formal and informal written language;
- communicate in standard written form;
- express themselves creatively and encourage reflection about the content of their work; and
- organise their thoughts and ideas logically that are appropriate for their intended audience.

It is our aim that all pupils leave us able to write clearly, accurately and coherently, with the ability to adapt their language and style to a range of contexts, purposes and audiences. Wherever possible, writing is linked to the termly class topic and, therefore, the wider curriculum. There is a balance between fiction, non-fiction and poetry so that children become familiar with a range of genres and text types.

Our chosen approach to teaching writing is 'The Write Stuff' by Jane Considine. This teaching approach enables all learners, regardless of ability, to engage and access new learning. Our long-term plan ensures units build progressively across the academic year and between year groups. Each year group has opportunities to explore a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Each unit results in an independent final piece being produced by every child.

"The Write Stuff" follows a method called "Sentence Stacking" which refers to the fact that sentences are stacked together chronologically and organised to engage children with short, intensive moments of learning that they can then apply to their own writing. An individual lesson is taught in 3 learning chunks. Each learning chunk has three sections:

- Initiate – a stimulus to capture the children's imagination and set up a sentence.

- **Model** – the teacher closely models a sentence that outlines clear writing features and techniques.
- **Enable** – the children write their sentence, following the model.

Children may be challenged to 'Deepen the Moment' which requires them to independently draw upon previously learnt skills and apply them to their writing during that chunk.

Teaching of The Write Stuff is based upon "The Writing Rainbow" made up of three zones for writing:

FANTASTICS – Ideas for writing - offer 9 lenses with which to structure ideas and target children's thinking. This supports children in developing variety in their writing by focussing on the vocabulary used, initiating ideas, provoking thoughts and igniting imaginations.

GRAMMARISTICS – Tools for writing - focus on the importance of accurate grammar where tools are taught and used immediately to help children develop fascination around language so that they can manipulate and carefully structure words into sentences.

BOOMTASTICS – Techniques for writing – help focus on the art of writing, using a range of literary devices and techniques to make careful choices, playing with language to add creativity and achieve impact on our reader, painting vivid pictures through our word choices.

Reception children are introduced to The Write Stuff from the first term, beginning with an introduction to the FANTASTICS in other areas of the classroom (for example, role play) and working towards EYFS Write Stuff unit plans by the end of the year. Alongside this, planned and child-led opportunities take place across the setting to enhance storytelling, encourage oral retelling and enhance all areas of communication and language.

5.9 Handwriting

We recognise that fluent handwriting is part of building automaticity when writing, enabling children to focus on careful choices in other areas of their writing. Expectations with regard to handwriting and presentation are high and children are encouraged to take pride in their work at all times. We teach handwriting using the Kinetic Letters scheme and resources.

Handwriting begins in the EYFS with mark-making and patterns. All pupils are given access to a wide range of opportunities to practise early fine motor skills. Pupils are encouraged to develop fluent lines and emergent writing is encouraged. We recognise that for various reasons, many children do not start school with the strength needed for writing so our chosen approach focuses on making bodies strong before writing. This enables children to build the core strength, gross motor skills and fine motor skills needed for writing.

Correct letter formation is taught and modelled in a sequence of letter families that have similar movements. Children become familiar with "Brave" and "Scared" monkey to support them with letter sizing. Correct pencil grip, posture and positioning of paper/books are also emphasised during these sessions. This begins in EYFS and is taught regularly in Key Stage One and into Key Stage Two as required.

Children finding handwriting more challenging may be in receipt of physical literacy interventions or other fine motor interventions to support their development.

5.10 Spelling

Understanding how to spell correctly is important in supporting children to organise their thinking around language and write with automaticity. Knowing how to apply spelling rules and recognising key words is empowering for children. Spelling plays a significant part of standardised assessment and is taught throughout the school.

Children are initially encouraged to spell using their phonic knowledge. Children are encouraged to "Fred talk" words to segment them in to sounds, before selecting the appropriate grapheme to spell them. In the early stages of their phonic journey, we recognise children may not yet have acquired all the sounds required to spell some words correctly and praise independent attempts to spell words

using the phonic knowledge children do have. For example spelling “rain” as “rayn” if they have not been taught digraph “ai” yet). Expectations will therefore change as the child is taught more graphemes. This is further supplemented with the teaching of “red” words. These are words that may represent unusual sounds that cannot be decoded using phonics.

In Early Years children have red words to read and write at home as well as in the setting. As they move through the Reception year children begin to learn common exception words they will encounter in Year 1 as appropriate.

Beyond phonics, spelling across the school builds on the patterns children learn each year, both for phonetically plausible words and common exception words. From Year 1 onwards we use the Spelling Shed scheme to teach the spelling rules and patterns appropriate to each year group. The scheme uses a sequenced and multi-faceted approach to teaching spelling using different strategies and an opportunity to practise through an online game. Each week children take part in a weekly “hive” game to assess their accuracy. Children’s progress and achievements on the Spelling Shed game can be monitored by teachers so that any concerns can be addressed. The Spelling Shed scheme is matched to the spelling expectations for each year group in the National Curriculum.

5.11 Assessment

5.11.1 Formative Assessment

We firmly believe in the power of immediate, personalised feedback, so much informal assessment is done ‘pen-in-hand’ by teachers during lessons. Being next to a child and having a conversation in the moment about their work has far more impact than lengthy written feedback in many instances, so adults create classrooms where this dialogue is possible and powerful. Feedback may be provided in other ways, following the school’s feedback and marking policy. This formative assessment may be recorded on a whole class feedback sheet which can then be used to feed in to future teaching and planning in order to swiftly address misconceptions, prompt deeper thinking or ensure clarity of understanding.

Teachers also use examples of children’s work within lessons as good examples to inspire others, correct misconceptions and model expectations.

Teachers make regular assessments against the National Curriculum objectives using writing frameworks. The frameworks used are aligned to both the National Curriculum and ‘The Write Stuff’ approach for each year group. Pupils have target cards accessible in their classrooms so they are aware of what they need to do in order to progress. Teachers also record assessments digitally on Learning Ladders. This enables staff to track progress, analyse trends and monitor pupil progress closely. These records form a part of regular Pupil Progress meetings whereby pupils not making expected progress are identified and actions agreed to support future progress.

5.11.2 Summative Assessments

Summative assessments take place in the form of school-lead internal assessments and statutory assessments.

Statutory Assessments

- At the end of Reception, children are assessed against the EYFS profile and results are shared with parents.
- At the end of Year 1, children must take the end of year Phonics Screening Check. The results are shared in the end of year report. Children who do not pass the screening check will need to re-sit the check at the end of Year 2.
- Children in Year 2 take end of Key Stage national tests for Reading.

Internal Summative Assessments

Internal summative assessments for writing (including spelling, punctuation and grammar) are made termly against criteria drawn from the National Curriculum and end of key stage assessment

frameworks. These will be based on independent pieces of writing your child has completed in class. These judgements may be moderated internally by the teaching team or externally to validate teacher judgements are accurate.

Throughout the year, children in KS1 and KS2 take part in standardised reading comprehension assessments from National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER). The aim of these is diagnostic and to further validate teachers' judgements.

Assessment data generated from these assessments is used to plan future teaching, diagnose misconceptions and validate teacher assessments. Results will form a part of pupil progress meetings whereby children may be identified as in need of additional support.

6. Inclusion

Our school ethos of "nurturing all to flourish and aspire" embodies our attitude towards inclusion. There are children of differing ability in all classes at Monksmoor Park CE Primary. We recognise this fact and aim to ensure children of all abilities and backgrounds can access learning and achieve their potential. We provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by carefully planning and preparing resources to enable all to achieve. A broad range of teaching styles are adopted in response to diverse learning needs. We make every effort to overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and for groups of children. We aim for the school to be an ideal learning environment for nurturing and developing the whole child. Children may therefore access or record their learning in English in different ways, best suited to the individual needs of the child.

- Children with identified SEND in English receive tailored support depending on their individual learning plans. It is for class teachers to decide how to best target their support in liaison with the SENCO.
- Children who are identified as having additional needs are identified quickly and receive extra support from specialist staff.
- More able children in English are identified and challenged appropriately. Challenges for these pupils are provided within English lessons through differentiation and encouraging them to 'Deepen the Moment' within writing lessons (see above).

7. Monitoring

This policy and information report will be reviewed by English subject lead every year. It will also be updated if any changes to the information are made during the year.

It will be approved by the governing body.

8. Links with other policies

This English policy is linked to:

- Feedback and Marking
- SEND
- Early Years Foundation Stage policy and procedures
- Remote Learning
- Curriculum