

Together, we nurture the future

Greenmount Primary School

English Policy

2019

Due for review: January 2021

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The Contribution of English to the School's Curriculum

At Greenmount Primary School we recognise the crucial importance of studying the English language. Improved performance at reading, writing and spoken language will enable our pupils to express their thoughts and ideas more fluently, accurately and, ultimately, to their greater satisfaction. This will also help them to deal more successfully with other curriculum subjects, while enriching their lives beyond school. The teaching and learning of language skills are, therefore, given a high priority in our school and where possible the creative curriculum and ICT will be used as tools.

Our overarching aim for English is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. Here at Greenmount, we believe that 'Reading is the Key'.

We aim for our pupils to:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

At Greenmount Primary School we encourage all children to become independent learners and be confident in all strands of learning. The children will be given opportunities to speak in a variety of contexts and learn to listen to and value the views of others.

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Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum in England: Framework Document (2014).

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Curriculum Delivery

In reception through to Year 6, children are taught English within their classes. Through differentiation, flexible teaching and grouping and the support of Teaching Assistants, all children will receive high quality teaching and appropriate support in order for every child to reach their full potential. Children may receive additional support if necessary outside of the English lessons. Children that have an EHCP may also be withdrawn in order to receive intervention that focuses on the child's more specific individual needs.

A clear lesson objective, success criteria and purpose are prominent features of all English lessons. Learning walls will also support learning in the classrooms and represent the learning journey of all children in English, Maths and Science. Evaluative, live and daily marking is used as well as pupil conferencing and this effective marking process is used for assessment - informing planning with reference made to the National Curriculum. The use of computing enables children to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. We encourage children to use ICT as a resource for learning, whenever appropriate.

We provide a rich and varied experience for pupils to draw on in their writing and reading which should include the whole curriculum.

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Approaches to speaking and listening

The four strands of speaking and listening: speaking, listening, group discussion and drama permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. We aim for children to be able to speak clearly, fluently and coherently, to be able to listen attentively with understanding, pleasure and empathy and contribute to group discussions effectively.

We 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 a 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 and whole school contexts.
- by providing opportunities to perform to a larger audience, in assemblies 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.

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Approaches to phonics

The teaching of phonic skills is embedded within English teaching in each class. Additional provision is made each day in discrete Letters and Sounds sessions which is supported by Jolly Phonics (songs and actions). These comprise of learning different graphemes, focussing on oral and aural phonological skills and sight vocabulary. During these sessions children are also explicitly shown how to apply their developing skills to their writing. All children are grouped flexibly and in accordance to their individual needs and are in phase appropriate groups.

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Approaches to reading

Here at Greenmount, we believe that Reading is the Key and therefore, pupils have opportunities to undertake guided, shared and independent reading throughout the school. A diverse range of group reading books and a staged reading scheme are available. We do not use any one published scheme to teach reading, instead we believe that it is important to provide pupils with a rich selection of reading books and experiences from different genres and subject matter, therefore we operate using 'book bands' in line with Oxford reading tree complemented by thematic books.

FirstNews newspapers are also available for shared reading. When it is felt appropriate for individual children, they may become 'free readers' and choose from the school and class library. Reading age tests are undertaken throughout the year to identify children who require extra support with their reading. Staff are deployed throughout the school to work with children in order to improve their fluency, intonation, decoding skills and comprehension. Home reading is encouraged daily and is an integral part of the child's development.

In order to have strong communication between teachers and parents/carers, each child has a home/school planner where both the staff and parents can write comments about how the child is progressing with his/her reading whilst at home. Reading challenges are offered within school and pupils are encouraged to undertake the annual Isle of Wight library reading challenge. Key Stage Two have an opportunity each year to take part in the IOW Literary festival which again provides an opportunity to meet authors, take part in reading/writing workshops and ask questions with the author present. World Book Day is also celebrated in school during which children have the opportunity to dress up as their favourite character and take part in a range of stimulating reading activities.

As part of our extra-curricular clubs on offer, Key Stage Two children can take part in a Book Club. Our English Link Governor leads the club alongside another keen reader of children's books. This club enables children to read books outside of their classroom - books that allow the children to use their imagination and run away with new adventures and ideas for them to use in their own writing and illustrations. In addition, when children receive the 'Gold' Award for collecting a certain number of house points, they are able to choose a new book of their own choice from a range of rich text the school provide.

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Approaches to writing

To develop our children as writers we:

- treat children as writers, from the earliest stage, who has ideas that they will want to communicate, building on writing skills they have acquired and their knowledge of print from their environment.
- provide experiences where the children can acquire confidence and a positive attitude to writing.
- develop and sustain writing skills by providing opportunities for children to write for a range of purposes and audiences.
- use guided writing sessions to model writing skills, teaching children how to compose, amend and revise their writing.
- teach children to become critical readers of their own writing by using self-evaluation and checking their work independently for sense, accuracy and meaning.
- teach grammar and punctuation in the context of children's own writing, as well as through discrete lessons.
- teach children to develop their ability to organise and present imaginative and/or factual writing and poetry in different ways.
- teach strategies for spelling to enable children to become confident and competent spellers.

Spelling

We value and encourage children as they move through the developmental stages of learning to spell, but we also recognise the importance of mastering and using accurately conventional spelling in order to convey meaning clearly in writing. Spellings are sent home in Year 1 through to Year 6 and will be set according to the individual child. To further support this goal, we aim to develop pupils' knowledge of:

- sound-symbol relationships.
- regular patterns in words and non-standard forms.
- the structure of words; compound/complex words, prefixes, suffixes, roots and origins.
- high interest words associated with topics and specific curricular areas.
- a variety of strategies to enable independence in spelling, such as word banks, dictionaries, displays, mnemonics etc.
- spelling rules.

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Handwriting approaches

Handwriting begins in the E.Y.F.S with mark-making and patterns. All pupils are given access to a wide range of writing tools and mediums to practise the early fine motor skills. The needs of left handed children, or those with physical difficulties are also taken into consideration and where necessary accommodated with resources or specific intervention.

Pupils are encouraged to develop fluent lines of correctly orientated letters from an early age and emergent writing is encouraged. We believe that discrete handwriting sessions where children's formation and pencil grip can be readily overseen should take place at least once a week and more frequently in the foundation stage. Correct posture and positioning of paper or books are also emphasised during these sessions. Letter formation and handwriting is taught and modelled using a range of resources.

The national expectation at the end of year 6 is that children will join their handwriting. As the children move up through the school they are encouraged to think carefully about the presentation of their work and to develop clear, legible and fluent hand-writing. Presentation of written work reflects the awareness of the writer to the needs of his or her audience. Our ultimate goal is for pupils to achieve a fast, flowing, legible style of writing.

We use the Berol scheme to support our delivery of a structured teaching programme which:

- ensures correct formation and orientation of letters.
- develops consistency and appropriateness in size and spacing.
- encourages a pride in presentation.
- eases the transition from printing to joining.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M

N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

a b c d e f g h i j k l m

n o p q r s t u v w x y z

The quick brown fox jumps
over the lazy dog.

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Cross-curricular Links

Teachers seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links where relevant. They plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

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Assessment and Target Setting

Work is assessed in line with the Assessment, Record Keeping, Target Setting and Reporting Policy

Rationale

Through the implementation of this policy we aim to:

- Reach robust judgements about a child's attainment based on knowledge gained through observation, questioning, marking and assessing.
- Record these in a useful and manageable way so that attainment can inform curriculum planning and reports to parents and others including the child.
- Set targets for the child's further attainment
- Ensure that pupils are given high quality feedback to support and involve them in their learning, enabling them to articulate what they have learned and how they need to progress.

Purposes

Assessment should:

- Assist the pupil in the learning process, making it clear what his/her next step should be
- Assist the teacher in the evaluation and planning of the curriculum
- Reflect a wide range of achievement and performance
- Provide information for parents/carers and others
- Be constructive, positive and honest
- Identify 'gaps' in pupils learning to ensure that planning and teaching enables every child meets or exceeds Age Related Expectations (ARE) at the end of the year
-

Record keeping should:

- Be relevant and meaningful for staff, parents and pupils
- Identify immediate and future needs to assist the planning of learning
- Include samples of work and photographs, particularly in EYFS using Tapestry as an assessment tool
- Impact positively on progress

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Target setting should:

- Be based upon knowledge of previous attainment
- Highlight the areas of National Curriculum that the child needs to continue to develop to meet the appropriate ARE at the end of the year
- Be challenging but attainable, providing opportunities for pupils to deepen their knowledge and skills to achieve 'Mastery' and beyond at the end of the year
- Be known, understood and acted upon by staff, pupils and parents/carers

Reporting should:

- Be informative, reflecting progress and next steps for pupils
- Give the pupil opportunity for self-review
- Make clear targets set for the future
- Demonstrate to parents any areas of weakness their child has that they could support at home

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Inclusion:

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. More able children are identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

- Children with identified SEND in English receive tailored support from Quality First Teaching and TA support.
- Children who are identified as having additional needs with reading, receive extra support from TAs and work is adapted to suit individual needs.
- More able children in English are identified and challenged appropriately.

Children working at Greater Depth are provided for within English lessons; tasks are designed appropriately in order to deepen knowledge and provide opportunities for children to choose their own 'form' when writing independently.

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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.

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Role of English Leads and SLT

The English Leads and SLT are responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through the monitoring and evaluation of the subject. This will involve:

- monitoring of pupil progress
- conference with pupils regarding all areas of English (Golden Ticket)
- analysing data
- monitoring the provision of English
- taking the lead in policy development
- auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- purchasing and organising resources
- keeping up to date with recent English developments
- analysis of SATs results to identify areas for development
- checking that assessment for English is carried out in line with the school's assessment policy
- moderation of reading and writing internally and within cluster groups
- book scrutiny
- learning walks with specific focus on an agreed English domain
- English curriculum development
- Allowing for opportunities to work with the HIAS English Team

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Parental Involvement

Parents can play a vital role in the development of English skills. We aim to foster a strong home-school partnership regarding reading, using home/school planners as a tool for communication between school and home. Parents also support the school by coming in to hear readers during the school day. Parents support World Book Day by helping their child to find a costume of their favourite book character. Parents also provide support for spellings learnt at home and by supporting their children with various genres of writing that may be set for homework.

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. We have an English Link Governor who monitors and works alongside the English Leads - monitoring and taking part in book scrutiny, moderation processes and learning walks throughout the year.

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Conclusion

This policy will be reviewed by staff and presented to governors for approval every two years.

Next review: Spring 2021