



Simonside Primary School

English Policy

Our Vision

At Simonside Primary School, we place great emphasis on good speaking and listening skills. We aim for all of our children to become clear communicators and to achieve success as confident readers and writers. English is at the forefront of our priorities as a means of impacting on a broad and balanced curriculum.

Aims

We aim to develop pupils' abilities within an integrated programme of spoken language, reading and writing. Pupils will be given opportunities to incorporate the teaching of English across the curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and reinforce literacy skills.

We aim for pupils 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 the powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness
- have a suitable technical vocabulary to articulate their responses

Policy Statement – English

This policy adheres to the National Curriculum (2014) for English. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all teaching staff.

The English teaching at Simonside Primary School aims to provide our children with the skills and understanding of English, its grammar, spelling system and structure so that they can confidently and effectively communicate. Children are taught the conventions of English within a variety of meaningful contexts, with provision for differentiation at all levels and with opportunities to incorporate English across the curriculum.

Through a daily English lesson, we aim to provide opportunities for children to:

- Speak effectively for different audiences; to listen, to understand and respond appropriately to others and to participate effectively in discussion
- Read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding, orchestrating a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct
- To have an interest in books and read for enjoyment
- To have an interest in words and their meanings, developing a growing vocabulary to articulate responses in spoken and written forms
- Understand a range of text types and genres and to be able to write in a variety of styles and forms, appropriate to the situation
- Develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness



- To be able to use the accepted conventions of spelling, punctuation and syntax with accuracy and confidence.

Statutory Requirements

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

The Daily Teaching of English

As a school, we have chosen to implement a 'novel approach', wherever possible, in Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The teaching of reading is delivered through a combination of Shared Reading within English lessons and Reciprocal/Guided Reading outside of the main English lesson. In Early Years and Key Stage 1, discrete phonics lessons are taught daily. Children are grouped according to their ability for phonics sessions, as we believe that this is the most effective way of pupils making the best progress. Children of all ability groups are targeted and planned for in order for them to achieve maximum progress, within an inclusive environment.

Reading

At Simonside, we believe that reading is an important life skill and we strive for all children to enjoy and value it. We recognise that enjoyment in reading arises from deriving meaning from text. It is our aim to develop and create passionate readers for life. We operate a 'Reading Buddies' system where children from Years 1 to 6 are paired with one another ; the older children are 'trained' by staff to support younger children with their reading and they have dedicated weekly reading sessions with their buddies.

Phonics

We begin the process of learning to read in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where we believe that the systematic teaching of phonics is the fastest and most effective way of getting young children to start reading. By the end of Reception, it is our expectation that all children can blend sounds and that the vast majority will be reading simple books. In Early Years Foundation Stage, the focus of writing is using phonics to write simple sentences with basic punctuation, following the Read, Write, Inc. phonics programme to deliver fast-paced phonics sessions.

The teaching of synthetic phonics continues throughout Years 1 and 2. Our programme is structured in such a way as to ensure the teaching of phonics is systematic and that progress is built on from year to year. By the end of Year 1, it is expected that the majority of children will reach the standard required to pass the Key Stage 1 phonics check. By the end of Year 2, it is our expectation that the vast majority of children will be fluent readers and will no longer need explicit phonics teaching for reading.

For those children who are not at the expected level by the end of Year 1, a programme of support is designed to ensure accelerated progress in Year 2.

1:1 Reading

We aim to instil a passion for reading in all our children and therefore, reading is an integral part of our school curriculum.



Baseline Expectations:

- 1 to 1 reading must take place in all year groups; every child must read at least once each fortnight with their teacher (other adults may hear children read in addition to this). The Class Teacher will comment in the child's home/school reading record and offer suggested areas to work on during their reading at home.
- From Year 1 to 6, daily Guided Reading sessions take place for a minimum of 20 minutes (children will read with a teacher in at least one of these sessions per week)
- Priority 1 to 1 reading with an adult must take place as an intervention for children that are below national expectations or target expectations (numbers of children will vary per class).

Reciprocal Reading:

At Simonside, we use a combination of techniques to develop fluency and comprehension skills. Reciprocal Reading is based on the 4 main comprehension strategies of predicting, clarifying, questioning and summarising. This approach has been adapted in order to develop the children's comprehension skills and to develop their ability to question things themselves. Child led dialogue is an important element of this session and these take place regularly within and outside of the main English lesson. Shared reading takes place regularly within the main English lesson and during class novel time.

Home Reading:

In EYFS, KS1 and KS2, children take home a reading book based on their reading level. The children change their books at least once per week (if required) and teachers initial reading records. We expect children to read at least 3 times per week at home with their families and to make comments in the reading record books. Children have access to 'Reading Eggs/Reading Eggspress' (an online reading programme) both at school and at home.

At Simonside Primary School, our books follow a 'book band' colour system and include a combination of the following reading schemes:

- PM
- Oxford Reading Tree
- Project X
- Reading Ladders
- Big Cat

Reading for Pleasure:

During class library visits, children may choose their own library book to take home. Many exciting and rewarding activities are arranged in school to promote the pleasure and knowledge that can be gained from books. Some of these events include: home/school competitions (such as 'Get Caught Reading' & 'My Hero Reads'), in-school performances by professional theatre groups, making books and using drama, dance and music to illustrate texts.

Writing

At Simonside, we believe that writing should be purposeful, rich and enjoyable for all. We aim to provide children with clear contexts for writing, ensuring they have a real purpose and audience for their work.



We believe that if children can't speak a sentence, they cannot write a sentence. Speaking and listening forms a key aspect of writing and it is incorporated throughout the teaching phases. We use a number of techniques to teach writing, including shared writing, 'Talk for Writing' and Alan Peat strategies. These strategies involve making explicit the thinking involved in the writing process so that it can be internalised and ultimately applied by children in their writing.

In fiction and non-fiction writing, Simonside uses a common language throughout the school when discussing the structure of each text type. This ensures that the children have a clear understanding of text structures before progressing in their writing to include more complex content.

Shared/Guided Writing

Teachers at Simonside Primary School use a combination of Shared/Guided writing, where appropriate.

Shared writing:

Shared writing takes place within the English lesson; the teacher models the writing process to the whole class as an expert writer, articulating the process. Teaching objectives are pre-planned and sessions are characterised by explicit teaching of specific writing strategies, oral response and high levels of collaboration. The children join in individually or through partner work, with the writing, where appropriate.

Guided writing:

Guided writing takes place as part of a guided session within a unit of work. During guided writing the responsibility for writing shifts to the learner. Guided writing takes place with a group of children with similar writing targets/needs. During a guided writing session, the children will write with a teacher supporting. It is intended that guided writing provides a forum for children to demonstrate what they have learned about writing and to further develop and extend their writing skills.

Grammar and Spelling

At Simonside, we firmly believe that a sound understanding of grammar will lead to an improved understanding of English and how the written and oral language works. We believe that the teaching of grammar should, as far as possible, feed into the writing activity that the children are undertaking and should not be taught in isolation. Children are taught and encouraged to use the correct grammatical terminology from Key Stage 1 onwards.

All teachers follow the expectations set by the spelling guidance within the National Curriculum Framework 2014. In Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, spelling will be taught and monitored through discrete phonics lessons. In these early stages of spelling, children are encouraged to use their phonic knowledge to make plausible attempts at unfamiliar spellings. Our younger children are taught explicitly how to spell 'tricky' words and it is expected that they will begin to apply this knowledge to their writing. In Key Stage 2, spelling rules are taught in discrete spelling sessions (at least 3 per week) and consolidated within the main Literacy lesson.

From Year 2 upwards, it is expected that children take home weekly spelling lists to learn. These lists are differentiated to address the individual needs of the children.



Handwriting

At Simonside, high standards of handwriting are expected across all subjects. It is an expectation that all children demonstrate good posture when writing and hold their pencil/pen accordingly.

In Early Years, children practise manipulative skills to prepare them for writing. They are taught to hold a pencil effectively and form recognisable letters. To support children in their early stages of writing development, we have devised 'phrases' to remind the children about correct letter formation. These phrases, along with accompanying images, are displayed in every Reception and Key Stage 1 classroom.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, handwriting should be modelled daily and taught discretely at least twice a week in Key Stage 2. During this session, teachers should model the formation of letters and letter joins for the children to practise. Teachers should ensure that writing in the classroom and in pupils' books mirrors the agreed style and provides a model for the children to aspire to.

Assessment

Reading:

- In the EYFS, pupils' achievements are ongoing and are assessed against the Early Learning Goals.
- Assessment for Learning is well established in all teaching and formative assessment occurs daily through oral feedback.

Summative Assessment Requirements:

- Year 1, 3, 4 & 5, children are assessed using the National Curriculum objectives. Year 1 children also complete the phonics screening test in June each year. Children who do not meet the standard in Year 1, resit this in Year 2.
- In Key Stage 2, children complete a half termly assessment using the online STAR assessment system. The results of these assessments are used to inform teacher's planning and overall assessments
- Years 2 and 6 complete past papers regularly and in May they sit the national SATs.

Writing:

- In the EYFS, pupils' achievements are ongoing and assessed against the Early Learning Goals.
- All teaching staff use AfL techniques in each lesson and formative assessment occurs daily.

Summative Assessment Requirements:

- Year 1, 3, 4 & 5 children complete a half termly writing assessment and this is assessed against the objectives from the National Curriculum 2014. This will form the main evidence required for assessment, although their class work will also be used to obtain an accurate assessment of children's individual writing skills. Children in Years 2 and 6 are assessed against the outcomes from the relevant Interim Teacher Assessment Frameworks.



- Internal and external moderation of writing assessments take place regularly as part of our assessment procedures.

Monitoring

The Subject Leader should be responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through monitoring and evaluating:

- He/she takes the lead in policy development designed to ensure progression and continuity of English throughout the school.
- He/she provides support for colleagues in their development of planning and the implementation of the scheme of work.
- The subject leader also gives support in assessment and record keeping activities.
- The subject leader assists in the monitoring of progress and standards in English, takes responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for English and keeps up to date with developments in English education and disseminates information to colleagues as appropriate.
- In association with the Senior Leadership Team, the subject leader will analyse data and monitor teaching and learning. Using this information, the subject leader will identify priorities and set appropriate targets. They should plan and deploy resources accordingly to meet these targets.

Parental Involvement

At Simonside Primary School, we recognise and value the role of parents/carers in their child's education and, as such, place great emphasis on the importance of developing strong, home-school links. We appreciate the impact that parental involvement can have on accelerating a child's development in all areas of English and actively encourage parents/carers to become involved with their child's education at Simonside by supporting their child at home or in school. As well as regular reporting to parents/carers, Simonside seeks opportunities to involve parents through a number of activities, including: home-school competitions and events where parents are invited to work alongside their children in the classroom. We also actively promote events and parental engagement through our school Twitter feed and through each child's Seesaw account.

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.

Policy updated: June 2019

Review: June 2020