

## **English Curriculum Statement**

### **Intent**

The English curriculum is designed to build a secure understanding and develop skills to prepare the children for life and learning beyond our Infant school. Children will have a sound understanding of phonics and will use code knowledge and skills to read texts. Children will have a growing knowledge of texts which they read of their own volition. From being confident speakers with an ever increasing vocabulary; the children will be competent writers across a range of genres

### **Implementation**

Our school is language rich as we promote the importance of talk, stories, poetry and reading across the curriculum. We use an evidence based Systematic Synthetic Phonics Programme – Sounds Write and have a commitment to ensuring we have a team of expert reading teachers. Assessment is used, both formatively and summatively to inform their teaching across all areas of English. Children with SEND are mainly supported within class and gaps are quickly identified. Appropriate and timely interventions ensure children make progress.

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum 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. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- 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.

### **Reading**

The Rose Review (2006) set out a reading model – The Simple View of Reading. The model was designed to show that skilled reading requires two processes:

- word recognition processes – using phonic rules to read words
- language comprehension processes – understanding of language

## **Phonics**

Our approach to teaching phonics is through the linguistic phonic programme: Sounds-Write. Sounds-Write begins with the sounds in the language and moves from the sounds to the written word. In order to become a fluent reader and speller of English the learner must have a sound understanding of **conceptual knowledge** and **skills**.

The Sounds-Write programme develops the understanding of:

### ***Conceptual Knowledge***

1. Letters are symbols (spellings) that represent sounds.
2. A sound may be spelled by 1, 2, 3 or 4 letters.
3. The same sound can be spelled in more than one way.
4. Many spellings can represent more than one sound.

### ***Skills***

1. Blending – the ability to push sounds together to build words.
2. Segmenting – the ability to pull apart the individual sounds in words.
3. Phoneme manipulation – the ability to insert sounds into and delete sounds out of words.

Daily whole class phonics lessons, 30 minutes in length, are taught in Reception to Year 2. Group and 1-1 phonics interventions, and post teach lessons are also implemented.

### **General teaching points for Sounds-Write lessons –**

- **The lessons are written in a script format** to enable the teacher to use accurate language from the start.
- **The sounds are presented in the context of a whole word, not in isolation.** No previous knowledge of sounds is needed before starting these lessons.
- **Always refer to the sound, not the letter name.**
- **Precise pronunciation** of consonants is vital. Pupils should say the individual sounds separately and without an attached vowel, for example /b/ not 'buh'.
- **Continuants** are emphasised to help pupils with blending and segmenting.
- **The teacher's gestures** are very important. They let the pupils know exactly what we want them to do. Pupils should also be encouraged to use the gestures themselves.
- **Writing/Spelling** is a part of each lesson. Teacher uses whiteboard which can be seen by all children. Each child has something on which to write.
- **The Lesson Plans** have two sections:

**Main Lesson:** is suitable for any number of pupils: whole class, small group or individuals. This lesson is usually presented first. It requires little or no advance preparation of materials.

**Follow-Up Lessons:** These are useful extensions and variations of the main lesson, designed, primarily, for use with pupils seated at tables. All are suitable for whole-class work. Each lesson begins with a list of required materials, some of which need advance preparation.

- **Teaching through errors** forms a very important part of the Sounds-Write teaching approach.
- **Word lists and stories:** word lists and stories are provided to support lessons.

The Sounds-Write Programme consists of 3 sections:

1. **The Initial Code** – Lessons 1-5
2. **The Extended Code** – Lessons 6-10
3. **Polysyllabic Words** – Lessons 11-15

### **The Initial Code**

In the initial code, children will learn:

- to segment, blend and manipulate sounds in words with the structure: CVC, 2 consonants in final position, 2 consonants in the initial position, 3 adjacent consonants.
- sounds can be represented by spellings with one letter, some spellings are written with a double consonant and some spellings are written with two different letters.

The code knowledge is set out on p84 of the Sounds-Write programme.

### **The Extended Code**

In the extended code, children will learn:

- to segment: to spell words containing the target sound.
- to blend: to read words containing the target sound
- to manipulate alternative sounds in and out of words.
- a sound can be represented by more than one spelling.
- the most common spellings which represent the target sound.
- a spelling can represent more than one sound.
- the most common sounds represented by the target spelling.

### **Polysyllabic Words**

In Polysyllabic words, the children will learn:

- to segment: to spell polysyllabic words by segmenting them first into syllables, and then each syllable, in turn, into sounds.
- to blend: to read words by first blending sounds into syllables, and then syllables, in turn into words.
- some words are made up of more than one syllable.

- the spelling of common syllables, such as prefixes and suffixes.
- some polysyllabic words contain schwas.

Daily lessons should be a combination of 3 Sounds-Write lessons, no less than 2. All staff delivering phonics teaching must have completed and passed the Sounds-Write training and assessment.

## Phonics Books

In order for children to practise by reading texts closely matched to their level of phonic attainment, that do not require them to use alternative strategies to read unknown words we have purchased books from the following publishers:

**Phonicbooks** – Dandelion Launchers (Initial Code) and Dandelion Readers (Initial and Extended Code)

**Sounds-Write** – Initial and Extended Code Books

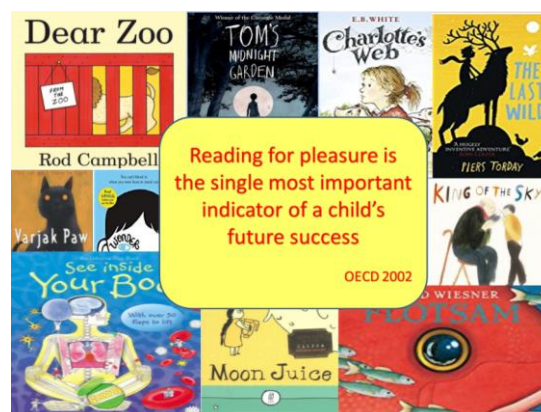
Phonicbooks and Sounds-Write books are aligned to the Sounds-Write Programme.

Dandelion Launchers have 1-2 lines of text per page.

Dandelion Readers have 3-4 lines of text per page.

Sounds-Write Books mainly consist of 1-2 paragraphs per page.

Children in Reception and Year 1 must read a phonics book to a Sounds-Write trained adult before it can be taken home to practise. The aim for children in year 2 is that they will have acquired enough phonics knowledge to read a range of non-decodable texts. The children chose books to read from a bank of high quality age appropriate texts. Those children, in year 2, who have not acquired those skills, will continue to read phonics texts matched to their phonic attainment.



## Comprehension

From Nursery to Year Two, we use stories and non-fiction texts to develop children's understanding and to foster Reading for Pleasure. We have dedicated story times in all year groups. We have worked together to ensure our children experience a range of high quality texts and authors during their time at our school, this is in the form of year group reading and poetry spines. These books are supplemented by many other rich and diverse texts to enrich children's experiences and, to develop their vocabulary and comprehension. Book talk is valued and encouraged. Staff and children are supported to develop their knowledge of high quality children's literature and authors. **"...subject knowledge development is critical to the development of rich pedagogical practice and necessary to support children's reading for pleasure."** (Cremin, T, Mottram M, Collins F, Powell S and Safford K. 2014 Building Communities of Engaged Readers Reading for Pleasure)

We operate a weekend library in every year group, for families to share books together; EYFS children choose from a bank of stories, KS1 children access the school library to choose a fiction or non-fiction book. The Open University Reading for Pleasure website states:

### Reading Together in families counts!

Children need support to develop the habit and love of reading. Three core strategies support readers, as our OU research indicates:

Reading Aloud

Time to read as a family

Book chat

So 'just relax and read'. Time and space to hear stories and to read and talk informally about what you're reading makes a difference to children's pleasure in reading.

In year 2, comprehension lessons are timetabled weekly alongside daily story times Children also develop comprehension skills through discussions in the Wider Curriculum subjects. Subject leads purchase texts to support the learning in their subjects.

## Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation

Through the Sounds Write phonics programme children are taught to spell. They are introduced to spelling in the very first lesson in reception. Letter sound correspondences are not taught in isolation but in the context of a word. They build the word then write the word. Children working in the initial code learn first that sounds can be represented by spellings with one letter, then with double consonants and finally with two different letters (consonant digraphs). In the extended code children write words with vowel digraphs, they sort words according to the different spellings of one sound. The children apply this knowledge through dictation, in writing lessons and through the wider curriculum. In phonics, children are taught

how to spell polysyllabic words by segmenting them first into syllables, and then each syllable, in turn, into sounds. Children are taught to analyse polysyllabic words to identify any difficult spellings and use their knowledge of other words to support this.

Within English, vocabulary is increased from reading and writing. Story books have been purchased to challenge and develop children's increasing vocabulary. Through the Talk for Writing process - specific vocabulary is taught. Children are taught what the words mean and are encouraged to use the words both in spoken and written language. In the phonics decodable reading books, vocabulary is highlighted and the meaning is written alongside the word. This supports the teacher who is reading with a child 1-1.

Grammar and punctuation are taught in context using a key text through the Talk for Writing Process. Planning is based on Pie Corbett's **Teaching guide for progression in writing year by year**, this highlights the grammar and punctuation to be taught from reception to year 2. Children are taught key vocabulary of grammar and punctuation to enable them to discuss and identify it in texts and to use it in their own writing.

### **Spoken Language**

The national curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. (The national Curriculum 2014)

Our curriculum is designed to provide opportunities for children to verbalise their thoughts, feelings and ideas, and to communicate these effectively in all areas both in school and at home. From nursery children are immersed in a language rich environment and staff support children's communication skills with high quality interactions throughout the school day.

The programme of visits provides first hand and shared experiences to embed the use of new vocabulary for all. Subject leaders identify key vocabulary to enable children to communicate their understanding within each subject. In our Talk for Writing approach children are given opportunities to discuss texts and prepare ideas before they write, and children take part in practises linked to drama. Across the curriculum children take part in discussions, debates and are taught to actively listen to others. Throughout the year there are opportunities for children to present and perform in front of audiences; Early Years Nativity, Year 2 Leavers' performance.

Language intervention programmes are used in the Early Years where gaps in language are identified; Launchpad for Literacy, Blast, Talk Boost, Time to Talk and Nuffield Early Language Intervention.

### **Impact**

Children will effectively apply their code knowledge and decoding skills to the texts they read, in spelling quizzes and dictations. RAG rating supports identification of those for extra reading support and Sounds Write intervention programmes give targeted support to narrow the gap in learning. Children will choose, read and recommend texts to each other based on their growing knowledge of children's literature.

Children are scaffolded through a small steps approach to be able to write well punctuated pieces of work at length and in a legible handwriting style. Children plan and write narratives, they write about experiences and produce factual information linked to the wider curriculum. Visual scaffolds, writing models and planned review supports pupils on their journey from the *Have a Go!* to the *I Can Do it!* tasks. These writing tasks illustrate the impact of the small steps content across the units.