

**GRINDON INFANT SCHOOL**



**WHOLE SCHOOL**

**ENGLISH POLICY**

## **Grindon Infant School English Policy**

### **Rationale**

*At Grindon Infant School we believe that every pupil has the right to be able to read and write effectively and to be able to communicate with others successfully. In order to achieve this aim, the teaching of English, in all of its forms, has a high profile within School.*

### **Principles**

The study of English develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, views and feelings. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

### **Aims**

The aims of Teaching English are:

- To enable children to speak clearly and audibly, and to take account of their listeners;
- To encourage children to listen with concentration, in order to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- To show children how to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- To teach children effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal, through a variety of drama activities;
- To help them become confident, independent readers, through an appropriate focus on word-, sentence- and text-level knowledge;
- To develop enthusiastic and reflective readers who foster a love for reading, through contact with challenging and substantial texts;
- To foster the enjoyment of writing, and a recognition of its value;
- To encourage accurate and meaningful writing, be it narrative or non-fiction;
- To improve the planning, drafting and editing of their written work.

### **Teaching and Learning Style**

- Lessons have clear and specific learning objectives.
- Teaching is flexible and follows a mastery approach which responds to the needs of the pupils.
- Tasks are meaningful, giving pupils real audiences and contexts.
- A variety of activities are planned to interest and engage pupils, especially in encouraging discussion and using small group work.
- Good support for pupils is provided to become independent learners, and to develop research and study skills.
- Good use of live marking and constructive feedback are used to help students identify areas of weakness.

Within the National Curriculum for English, skills are broken down into Reading, Writing and Spoken Language. Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation are also included within Writing.

### **Reading**

Our aims are that our children will learn to read; they will enjoy a wide variety of texts and will become independent, critical, lifelong readers and learners. We will secure pupils' reading skills by the end of Key Stage 1 and develop clear systems and policies for promoting the love of reading.

### **Talk For Reading**

At Grindon Infant School, we follow Pie Corbett's 'Talk For Reading' which aims to develop children into efficient, effective, thoughtful and strategic readers who learn about life, discover information and deepen their thinking through considering other people's views and experiences with a critical mind.

All children in Key Stage 1 will complete a daily 'Talk For Reading' session on an afternoon which follows the Sunderland Reading Long Term Plan. Within this session, Teachers will focus in on a specific group of children each day. Vocabulary Ninja word based work will also take place daily with a 'Word for the Day' in Reception and Key Stage 1.

### **Shared Reading**

Shared reading is when the whole class joins in the collaborative act of fluent, expressive text reading and re-reading. The Teacher's role is to make overt what good readers do: acting as a model, demonstrator and instructor and leading discussions about the interpretation of the text. The Teacher orchestrates responses, drawing attention to reading strategies and features at

text, sentence and word levels, appropriate to the age, experience and ability of the majority. Sensitive questioning and prompting of individual children helps to ensure maximum participation and understanding.

## **Independent Reading**

### **What is Independent Reading?**

Independent Reading is either when children return to familiar texts-re-reading to strengthen a reader's control over the reading process, or when children read texts selected by themselves. This is an important part of developing independence, motivating readers and helping children to develop and discuss their reading preferences. All pupils within the School are working on a book that is appropriate to their current phonics phase and reading attainment, as assessed through the use of Reading Screen and Pearson Phonics Bug Assessments. At each phonics phase book band, pupils become fluent and confident both with decoding (saying the words) and in comprehending the text. Pupils are assessed with an individual miscue analysis to ensure that they have secured both of these skills before moving on.

### **When does Independent Reading take place?**

Children are encouraged and given the opportunity to read a wide variety of reading materials on a regular basis. Teachers provide independent reading sessions throughout the week. These sessions usually take place outside the daily English or Reading sessions but are part of these sessions when appropriate. Children are also encouraged to read independently at home and are rewarded through our school's reading reward of 'Afternoon Tea With Mrs C'. Children move a space on their class reading race track for every day that they read at home and then go for an Afternoon Tea with the Head Teacher in the Staff Room on a Friday afternoon. A Home School Reading Record provides the opportunity for Home and School communication. All children within Reception and Year 1 will complete two individual reading sessions per week in school in addition to their daily phonics sessions. All children within Year 2 will read a minimum of once per week. Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 who require additional support will complete daily reading.

### **Enjoyment of Reading**

By giving Reading a high profile within the School and within each classroom we hope to encourage a lifelong relationship with reading, which allows our pupils to enjoy and experience a wide variety of literature from many genres, so they can escape into the world of a book or learn something new.

We encourage the enjoyment of reading in a wide variety of ways that continue to be adapted in order to gain and maintain the enthusiasm of the pupils within the School. These include creating a new forest themed library reading bay, running book fairs, planning reading sessions that engage children's interests, holding World Book Day events and inviting Authors into School to inspire the children.

## **Phonics**

### **Rationale**

We aim to provide children with an integrated programme of learning letters and sounds through Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing. The Teaching of Phonics is delivered across school using Pearson Phonics Bug as our school Systematic Synthetic Phonics Programme.

Within our school, we provide children with:

A daily Phonics session, based on a model of review, introduction of new learning, practice and application;

- Focused directed Teaching involving oral and written practice of letters and sounds;
- A variety of Teaching methods, including demonstration, modelling, games, interactive activities, singing and other practical activities using the Phonics Bug Active Learn platform.

### **Purposes**

1. To ensure a consistent and systematic approach to the teaching and learning of Phonics.
2. To provide opportunities for pupils to have daily oral and written practice to increase phonic knowledge and handwriting skills.
3. To encourage pupils to implement their phonic knowledge in Reading, Writing and Spelling activities.

### **Broad Guidelines**

1. As a school, we follow the Phonics Bug scheme which sets out the order of what we teach in Phonics.
2. All children are grouped within their year groups and will work in groups according to the phase of Phonics they are currently working on. This will allow all pupils to progress as individuals and build on previous learning whilst allowing them to complete work that addresses any gaps also.

3. Assessment should be a continuous process and Staff include assessment activities within each phonics unit in order to have a clear understanding of how children are doing with their Phonics. Children's progress throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 will be tracked half termly using our Pearson Phonics Assessment. Children will complete the Phonics Screening Check at the end of Year 1 and intervention will be in place for those who do not meet the standard in Year 1 to ensure they catch up to their peers by Year 2.
4. Weekly Teaching of Phonics will include planned learning objectives so that new learning takes place daily as part of the Phonics Bug scheme. Daily lessons should be planned in the sequence outlined in the Phonics Bug Planning, and should allow opportunities for both oral and written practice.
5. Intervention groups will take place using the 'Rapid Phonics' intervention programme in Year 1 and Year 2.
6. All children should be encouraged to apply their phonic knowledge across the curriculum wherever appropriate.
7. To enhance pupils' enjoyment and understanding, teaching should reflect a variety of learning styles including the use of ICT, games, drama, speaking and listening and writing.
8. Principles of good teaching and learning in Phonics will be shared with Parents through workshops and literature. Home support and practice is acknowledged as being extremely valuable and is highly encouraged using Phonics Bug Active Learn.
9. Pupils will be taught a consistent way of forming their letters, both lower case and capital letters, through purposeful guided practice as part of the Phonics session using the Phonics Bug letter script. Modelling letter formation should be used to encourage a comfortable and legible handwriting style.
10. To develop an approach to spelling, as outlined in the English National Curriculum, which includes learning phonic patterns and key words, we use Pearson Phonics Bug within Phonics sessions.
11. Once children have completed the Phonics Programme then they will use Spelling Ninja to teach spelling rules and patterns in Year 2.
12. The teaching and learning of key phonic skills should be taught and developed throughout the curriculum. (Phonic terminology used in our School is set out in Appendix 1)

## **Writing**

At Grindon Infant School we believe that being able to write coherently not only enables pupils to communicate effectively, but also allows them to experience the joy of crafting their own individual stories and articles that express their points of view clearly. Writing makes a significant contribution to the development of children as thinkers and learners. The purpose of this policy is to promote a consistency of approach and to ensure that continuity and progression are embedded in our practice.

## **Our Aims**

1. To assist pupils in becoming efficient and effective writers who are able to write appropriately for a variety of audiences.
2. To assist pupils in acquiring the knowledge and skills to communicate effectively within a range of contexts.
3. To assist pupils to become aware of and appreciate the writer's craft.

We believe that Writing is a complex skill that will not develop without Teaching and practice and so we endeavour to meet our aims by ensuring that pupils are provided with experiences that:

- Help children to use texts to gain more knowledge about improving their own writing.
- Allow practice of extended writing in a variety of purposeful contexts.
- Develop positive attitudes to the writing process including planning and redrafting.
- Support improvement and high expectation of core skills i.e. Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation.
- Provide feedback to pupils which will enable them to improve their writing skills.
- Maintain and develop a high writing achievement ethos at all stages in the School.

## **English Sessions**

English sessions are planned in units of work, based on objectives from the National Curriculum. Lessons should provide opportunities for the children to practice the skills needed to be a writer. Each unit of work covers a specific text type and can last for any number of weeks. A unit outcome will be completed by the end of each unit, allowing the children to put all of the skills they have learned in to practice.

## **Talk For Writing**

At Grindon Infant School, we follow Pie Corbett's 'Talk For Writing' which aims to improve children's writing skills by immersing them in a language rich environment initially through oral activities such as storytelling and drama before transitioning to written work.

## **Writer Talk**

- Reading as a Writer involves making comments on choices made in an extract, at word/sentence level and text level.
- Writing as a Reader-Through Shared and Guided Writing.
- What is 'Modelling' writing? Through Demo Write-Teacher to model how to write.

- What is Teacher Scribing? Through Shared Writing-Teacher scribes and formulates children's ideas.
- What is Supported Composition? Through Guided Writing-Teacher works with a small group to plan, write or redraft or improve work that has already been written.

### **Story Telling and Story Making**

- This involves the learning and repeating of oral stories, building children's confidence to develop them through telling and then extending that development into writing; later creating 'new' stories orally as a preparation and rehearsal for writing.
- In this way, the development of storytelling is built through a sequence involving:
  - Imitation-The straight retelling of learned stories.
  - Innovation-Developing, extending and changing elements of a story.
  - Independent Application and Invention-Creating a new story.

### **Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation**

All Key Stage 1 classes have displays linked to Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation in classrooms on Talk For Writing walls or washing lines that are referred to in English sessions. This is a focus for all children when completing written tasks and for Teachers when marking. Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation activities are now embedded in English Teaching. Progression for Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar follows the National Curriculum and is delivered using Pearson Phonics Bug or within Talk For Writing and Talk For Reading sessions. When children have completed their Phonics programme, they will complete Spelling activities using the Year 2 Spelling Ninja programme.

### **Promoting High Expectations**

All Teachers should have high expectations in regard to the standard of pupils' writing, taking due account of the child's stage of development. All pupils should be encouraged to achieve the highest possible standard of writing according to their stage of development and level of ability. These expectations can be made explicit in a variety of ways including; the use of positive feedback-oral or written as live marking, Star of the Week certificates and reading children's writing to the class or in assembly as the class 'Star Writer'.

### **Handwriting**

Handwriting and presentation of work within our School is important in all areas of the curriculum. Pupils are taught handwriting from Nursery onwards using the Nexus Handwriting resource 'Peg to Pen' which focusses on the use of peg boards in our Two-Year-Old Provision, Nursery and Reception before moving to pencils in Reception. Pupils begin pre-writing activities in our Two-Year-Old Provision and Nursery. They then move on to pre-writing patterns and letter formation in Reception using the 'Letter-join' handwriting scheme where the children are taught where to start each letter in preparation for later joining using the 'Letter-join Print Plus' font. When the pupils are confident in accurately forming their letters, they are taught to join their handwriting in Year 2 using the 'Letter-join Basic' font. (See the Handwriting Policy for more information)

### **Spoken Language and Oracy**

At Grindon Infant School we recognise the importance of being able to communicate orally and to understand what others are saying. We will teach pupils to use language precisely and coherently. This involves giving pupils opportunities to experience a rich language environment to develop their skills in expressing themselves, and to speak and listen in a range of situations. We follow the Sunderland Long Term Plans for Drama and Oracy to ensure that drama based opportunities are included in our curriculum and that the four strands of Oracy (Physical, Linguistic, Cognitive and Social and Emotional) are evident in our English teaching and across the wider curriculum.

- Children should be able to listen to others, and to respond and build on their ideas and views constructively.
- Pupils are given opportunities to participate orally in groups and in the whole class, including:
  - Using talk to develop and clarify ideas;
  - Identifying the main points to arise from a discussion;
  - Listening for a specific purpose; discussion and evaluation.
- Pupils are also given opportunities to speak in front of a wider audience during assemblies and Christmas productions.

### **Launchpad for Literacy**

Launchpad for Literacy is used in our Two-Year-Old Provision to assess, plan and ensure that the skills that children need within Literacy are explicitly considered and taught. Launchpad for Literacy is then used in Nursery and Reception as an intervention tool and embedded within continuous provision in classroom areas. It is also used in Key Stage 1 as an intervention tool for those children who require this additional support.

### **Organisation**

Full account is taken of children with Support Plans when Staff are planning sessions to ensure that the daily English lesson is appropriate for all pupils so that learning is not capped. Teachers will involve all children through appropriate scaffolds and support and the use of resources and adult help. Where a child is working two years behind age related expectations then they may complete different tasks or activities in order that they can develop their skills at their level.

In the Foundation Stage, children access literacy skills through a combination of child initiated and adult led tasks. The curriculum is followed, with the children being exposed to activities relating to the specific area of learning in Literacy of Comprehension, Word Reading and Writing and in the prime area of learning in Communication and Language, comprising of Listening, Attention and Understanding and Speaking.

## **Planning**

Planning is devised at three connected levels: Long Term, Medium Term and Short Term.

Long Term Planning is taken from the English National Curriculum using the Sunderland LA Long Term Planning Documents. This outlines what should be taught in each year group and ensures continuity and progression.

Medium Term Planning is recorded on a half-termly overview document which outlines the units being taught, how many weeks each unit will last and the focus for the afternoon reading session also.

Short Term Plans are completed for each unit to be covered, in a daily format. These include: learning objectives, resources, spelling and handwriting focus, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation for writing, main teaching activities (which include shared, guided and independent work), plenaries, Teacher focus, TA support, scaffolds and an evaluation of the learning. Learning objectives for an English session contain links to both Writing and Reading objectives. These are recorded in a PowerPoint format in Key Stage 1.

Planning is monitored by the Head Teacher and by the English Lead as part of the yearly monitoring and evaluation cycle.

## **Assessment**

Assessments are made using the Sunderland assessment materials for Reading and Writing which follow the National Curriculum and data is inputted and analysed using Anthony Conlin's 'The School Data Company' Assessment package. At the end of each half term, assessments are completed to assess children's Reading using 'Reading Screen'. Writing assessments will be completed at the end of each unit. Phonics assessments will be completed at the end of each phonics unit and this information is then used to ensure that children are in the correct phonics groupings and to identify those children who require additional support through phonics interventions.

(See the Assessment Policy for more information)

## **Cross-Curricular Links**

English contributes to all other subjects within the Primary Curriculum. Opportunities are sought to develop English skills in a wide range of activities, allowing the children to apply their English skills to other contexts. Extended writing opportunities are developed through a range of subjects and are often linked to themed topic units. We are developing the concept of 'Free writing' weeks at the end of some topics where children complete writing based on their own ideas for genre.

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the EYFS, Assessment, Handwriting and SEND/Inclusion Policies.

## Appendix

### Appendix 1

#### Phonics-A Definition

##### What is Phonics?

Phonics refers to a method for teaching speakers of English to read and write their language. It involves connecting the sounds of spoken English with letters or groups of letters (e.g. that the sound /k/ can be represented by c, k, ck or ch spellings) and teaching them to blend the sounds of letters together to produce approximate pronunciations of unknown words. In this way, Phonics enables people to use individual sounds to construct words. For example, when taught the sounds for the letters *t*, *p*, *a* and *s*, one can build up the words "tap", "pat", "pats", "taps" and "sat"

##### Phonics-Methods of Teaching

**Synthetic Phonics**-An approach associated with the teaching of reading in which phonemes (sounds) associated with particular graphemes (letters) are pronounced in isolation and blended together (synthesised). For example, children are taught to take a single-syllable word such as *cat* apart into its three letters, pronounce a phoneme for each letter in turn /k, æ, t/, and blend the phonemes together to form a word.

**Analytical Phonics**-An approach associated with the teaching of reading in which the phonemes associated with particular graphemes are not pronounced in isolation. Children identify (analyse) the common phoneme in a set of words in which each word contains the phoneme under study. For example, Teacher and pupils discuss how the following words are alike: *pat*, *park*, *push* and *pen*.

**Analogy Phonics**-A type of Analytic Phonics in which children analyse phonic elements according to the phonograms in the word. A phonogram, known in linguistics as a rime, is composed of the vowel and all the sounds that follow it, such as *-ake* in the word *cake*. Children use these phonograms to learn about "word families" for example *cake*, *make*, *bake*, *fake*.

**Embedded Phonics**-An approach to the Teaching of Reading in which Phonics forms one part of a whole language programme. Embedded Phonics differs from other methods in that the instruction is always in the context of literature rather than in separate lessons, and the skills to be taught are identified opportunistically rather than systematically.

##### Phonics Glossary

Blend-to draw individual sounds together to pronounce a word, e.g. s-n-a-p, blended together, reads snap

Cluster-two (or three) letters making two (or three) sounds, e.g. the first three letters of 'straight' are a consonant cluster

Digraph-two letters making one sound, e.g. sh, ch, th, ph.

Vowel digraph-comprise of two vowels which, together, make one sound, e.g. ai, oo, ow

Split digraph-two letters, split, making one sound, e.g. a-e as in make or i-e in site

Grapheme-a letter or a group of letters representing one sound, e.g. sh, ch, igh, ough (as in 'though')

Grapheme-Phoneme Correspondence (GPC)-the relationship between sounds and the letters which represent those sounds; also known as 'letter-sound correspondences'

Mnemonic-a device for memorising and recalling something, such as a snake shaped like the letter 'S'

Phoneme-the smallest single identifiable sound, e.g. the letters 'sh' represent just one sound, but 'sp' represents two (/s/ and /p/)

Segment-to split up a word into its individual phonemes in order to spell it, e.g. the word 'cat' has three phonemes: /c/, /a/, /t/

VC, CVC, CCVC-the abbreviations for vowel-consonant, consonant-vowel-consonant, consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant, which are used to describe the order of letters in words, e.g. am, ham, slam.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Responsibilities of the English Lead**

The English Lead in School is Mrs Lois Dugdale. She will lead the Area of Learning of 'Language and Literacy' within the School, aiming to secure high quality learning and teaching, effective use of resources, and the highest standards of achievement for all pupils.

#### **Key Tasks:**

##### **Strategic Vision**

1. Have a strategic vision for English development within the School.
2. Have a good knowledge of issues related to English.
3. Keep up to date with developments e.g. Teaching methods, resources, assessment issues and record-keeping procedures.
4. In consultation with the SMT and Staff to devise the School's English policy based on statutory requirements.
5. Ensure that there are schemes of work for English in place which outline the progression from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 that are updated on a regular basis.
6. Encourage displays of children's work and celebrate children's achievements.
7. Promote opportunities for children to use their English skills for a range of purposes and audiences other than the Teacher e.g. involvement in competitions, writing for other children and Parents.
8. Devise an annual Action Plan for the development of English.

##### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

1. In consultation with the SMT, monitor the implementation of the policy
2. Support Staff, in collaboration with the SMT, in analysing all available data to inform learning and teaching.
3. In consultation with the SMT and Staff, evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and scheme throughout the School.
4. Ensure that pupils' assessment records are kept up to date, in line with the School's Assessment Policy.
5. Lead on internal standardisation and moderation.
6. Liaise with the School's SENDCo regarding pupils who require additional support in English, keeping records of meetings connected with the Subject Leader.
8. Present reports to SMT and the School Governors on the effectiveness of improvement measures.

##### **Resource Manager**

1. Be responsible for organising, maintaining and cataloguing resources and equipment.
2. Keep abreast of suitable new resources to support classroom strategies.

##### **Professional Development**

1. Identify and facilitate the professional development needs of Staff.
2. Disseminate information from INSET and provide updates to Staff.
3. Ensure Parents are informed of the School's approaches to teaching English and advise on how they may support their child's English development.

### **Appendix 3**

#### **Responsibilities of the English Governor**

The named Governor responsible for English is Mrs Gill Bramley. She will:

1. Liaise with the English Subject Lead/Deputy Head Teacher-Mrs Dugdale or the Head Teacher-Mrs Charlton as appropriate.
2. Visit the School and see English in operation.
3. Discuss the existing use of resources and future needs.
4. Regularly report to the Governing Body on developments and progress.
5. Attend appropriate training led by Mrs Dugdale and externally if appropriate.



### English Policy

<b>Author's Name</b>	Grindon Infant School
<b>Review Date</b>	September 2027

<b>Date Ratified by Governing Body</b>	September 2025
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### ***SIGNATURES:***

<b>Head Teacher</b>	
<b>Chair of Governors</b>	