



Coppice Junior School

# English Policy

**Policy ratified and adopted by Full Governing Body:** January 2023

**Review frequency:** 1 Year

**Policy due for renewal:** November 2023

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Headteacher                      Mel Green

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Date

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Chair of Governors              Jo Bromige

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Date

## **English Policy**

### **2022-2023**

This policy sets to outline our approach to teaching, reflecting the school's aims and objectives in relation to the teaching and learning of English. The policy should be read in conjunction with the 2014 National Curriculum.

### **Our School Vision for English**

We aim to deliver a high quality English curriculum that gives children the best possible opportunities to become confident, literate, successful members of society with a deep love and understanding of English language and literature. We believe the development of Literacy skills is central to improving a child's life chances. Teachers have high expectations for all children to achieve and enjoy English and to be able to use the skills they have acquired in a range of contexts. We strive to ensure all children can communicate clearly in spoken and written form and become masters of language. Rich texts are at the heart of our teaching and a love for reading is promoted throughout the school. Teachers use cross curricular inspirational ideas to engage children in work providing memorable experiences, bringing topics to life through real life contexts.

### **National Curriculum 2014**

The National Curriculum (2014) clearly states that teaching the English language is an essential role of a Primary School.

The National Curriculum is divided into 3 Key stages; Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4) and Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6). By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

At Coppice Junior School the focus is, of course, on the Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2 sections. However, we appreciate that children do learn at different rates and therefore teachers have a working understanding of the whole curriculum - not just that of the phase in which they teach.

The National Curriculum 2014, gives detailed guidance of what should be taught at each Key stage under the following headings;

- Spoken language
- Reading - a) Word reading  
                  b) Comprehension
- Writing –
  - a) Transcription,
  - b) Spelling,
  - c) Handwriting and presentation,
  - d) Composition,
  - e) Grammar and punctuation

### **Spoken language**

Developing strong speaking and listening skills is fundamental to the teaching of English at Coppice Junior School. Teachers place a high emphasis on spoken language and plan for the discreet teaching of skills as well as incidental learning opportunities. Our approach is firmly based on teaching how language changes in different contexts. We believe children need to develop strong oracy skills to enable them to comprehend how language changes in different situations. This enables our children to understand and manipulate language for different purposes and audiences. To do this, teachers provide authentic contexts, giving children opportunities to use a range of spoken language skills. Teachers provide a range of purposeful opportunities through role play, drama, poetry recital, discussions and debates. Teachers model the use of Standard English masterfully, increasing children's repertoire of vocabulary and sophistication of spoken English.

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be *'taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently in Standard English'* (p10)

## Writing

The National Curriculum states that children should:

- develop the stamina and skills to write at length
- use accurate spelling and punctuation
- be grammatically correct

We aim to develop children’s ability to produce well structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the reader. Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. Teachers model writing strategies and the use of phonics and spelling strategies in shared writing sessions. Supported writing sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals. Children have opportunities to write at length in extended writing sessions for a range of purposes across the curriculum. The children are given frequent opportunities in school to write in different contexts using quality texts as a model.

We have adapted the Jane Considine ‘The Write Stuff’ approach to learning during our English lessons. The key ideas we are using in our English lessons are:

1. Encouraging an enjoyment in Writing.
2. Writing a variety of types.
3. Clear and well-structured sequence.
4. Teaching children the writing process.
5. Helping children’s working memory and modelling clearly and effectively.
6. Lower attaining pupils will have clear scaffolds in place to complete the same work as the rest of the class.

Below brings together the current research evidence on learning and writing in one place. The Jane Considine approach sharpens our thinking as a profession on the most important things that will make learning happen and improve our approach to the complex task of teaching writing. It tracks key scientific findings that have been shown to positively improve teaching and learning outcomes. Against this backdrop of understanding, The Write Stuff has been designed in such a way to maximise learning benefits for pupils.

Key Idea	Research Evidence on Learning/Writing	Quote for Consideration	Intended Design and Impact of The Write Stuff
ENJOYMENT - Pupils who enjoy writing are higher attainers.	Clark, 2012; Weiner, 1985	“Students emotional response to performance can profoundly effect future motivation.” - Paul A. Kirschner and Carl Hendrick	Experience days are built into The Write Stuff teaching sequence to enhance enjoyment, raise excitement and preparedness for writing.
WRITING VARIETY - Teach pupils to write a variety of types of writing/ a range of story types and non-fiction genres.	What Works Clearinghouse, 2012; Gillespie and Graham, 2010; Andrews et al, 2009; Graham et al, 2011; Santangelo and Olinghouse, 2009; Improving Literacy Key Stage 1 and 2 Education Endowment Foundation, 2021; Development Matters, DfE, 2020	"Purpose and audience are central to effective writing." - Education Endowment Foundation "Depth in early learning is much more important than covering lots of things in a superficial way." - Development Matters, DfE	The Write Stuff medium term view for teaching English provides a balance across teaching story types, e.g. adventure/science-fiction, non-fiction types, e.g. balanced argument/ persuasive letter and poetry. The Write Stuff approach also considers curriculum coherence through making cross-curricular connections to history, science, geography etc.

<p>SEQUENCE - Organise the writing teaching sequence carefully so that it builds and connects with previous learning so that it is coherent.</p>	<p>Muijs et al, 2014; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Early Career Framework, 2019 DfE; Kirschner and Hendrick et al, 2020; Development Matters, DfE, 2020</p>	<p>"Carefully sequenced and explicit modelling of tasks is more effective than unstructured, naturalistic modelling experiences." - Kirschner and Hendrick          "The curriculum needs to be ambitious. Careful sequencing will help children to build their learning over time." - Development Matters, DfE</p>	<p>The Write Stuff breaks the learning pathway down into a logical sequence from complete whole, shown as a map, then into plot points (narrative) or way points (non-fiction), that are taught as paragraphs or meaning domains respectively. Over time, these sections join up to make a complete piece that lead into independent writing.</p>
<p>THE WRITING PROCESS - Teach pupils the writing process.</p>	<p>What Works Clearinghouse, 2012; Gillespie and Graham, 2010; Andrews et al, 2009; Graham et al, 2011; Santangelo and Olinghouse, 2009; Improving Literacy Key Stage 1 and 2 Education Endowment Foundation, 2021</p>	<p>"Writing can be thought of a process made up of seven components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• planning;</li> <li>• drafting;</li> <li>• sharing;</li> <li>• evaluating;</li> <li>• revising;</li> <li>• editing; and</li> <li>• publishing." </li></ul>	<p>The Write Stuff enables pupils to understand the different functions of writing. When working on the 'The Thinking Side' they learn to understand this is the space for quick jottings and vocabulary building. In turn, 'The Writing Side' is a space to practise their sentence construction via the support of the teacher's model. They also understand this is part of a larger process of getting ready to show strength in their own independent writing as they move from planning, drafting and editing.</p>
<p>WORKING MEMORY - Learn how to avoid overloading working memory/increase likelihood of material being retained. Limit the number and complexity of new elements as the working memory can only handle so much at any one time.</p>	<p>Early Career Framework, 2019 DfE; Sweller et al, 1998, 2019</p>	<p>"In presenting material, teachers should pay attention to the 'cognitive load' it presents: limiting the number and complexity of new elements; breaking complex ideas or procedures into smaller steps..." - Great Teacher Toolkit</p>	<p>The Write Stuff lesson is organised into three learning chunks and within those chunks there is a smaller sequence of delivery. It has been organised in this way so that 'short burst' chunks of learning can occur to avoid overloading of a pupil's working memory. This increases the likelihood of material being retained and also enables pupils to revisit certain aspects e.g. short sentence for impact but applied to a new writing scenario.</p>
<p>MODELLING - Model writing clearly and effectively using a repertoire of appropriate explanations. Provide worked examples to introduce new ideas.</p>	<p>Adams and Englemen, 1996; Creemers and Kyriakides, 2011; Early Career Framework, 2019 DfE; Sweller et al, 2019</p>	<p>"By making the implicit explicit, teachers are supporting students to form their own mental models, gaining confidence with the decisions they make." - Tom Sherrington</p>	<p>At every learning chunk point during The Write Stuff lesson, the teacher will model the writing process. Pupils will see during this time two things at once. In the first instance, a sentence unravelling before them as well as the internal writing voice of the teacher who is making the invisible process of constructing writing visible.</p>

## **Spelling**

We want our pupils to become fluent and effective writers; we believe accurate spelling is essential to achieving this. Competent spellers need to spend less time and energy in thinking about spelling to enable them to channel their time and energy into the skills of composition, sentence structure and precise word choice.

We have adapted the Jane Considine 'The Spelling Book' approach to teaching spellings. It focusses more on spelling patterns and is closely aligned with the National Curriculum objectives for each year group. In the Appendix of this Policy, there are copies of how the Spelling Book matches with the National Curriculum objectives.

## **Reading**

Reading is one of the most important ways in which children observe and absorb the best language skills. So, while components such as grammar and vocabulary are important in the new curriculum, they will be taught in a contextualised way, through the enjoyment of shared reading.

To promote a love of reading, we:

- Read aloud to children, to introduce them to new authors and styles of writing.
- English and Reading lessons follow the Coppice 'book centred' scheme.
- Encourage and model reading for pleasure and establish an appreciation and love of reading.
- Establish and develop a varied range of texts in the classroom.
- Focus on book corners, displays and the library.
- Have a weekly class Reading challenge - which rewards regular reading.
- Use a well-structured reading scheme to ensure that pupils read good quality texts.
- Teach reading daily (with all pupils studying the same text) focusing on the reading domains.
- Encourage reading at home, daily, by providing children with home readers, carefully selected by staff for the child's reading ability.

## **Grammar**

Grammar is most effective when taught in the context of reading and writing; either in the context of the linguistic demands of a particular genre or the writing needs of a child. We take a pragmatic approach to the teaching of grammar and believe effective grammar teaching takes place in meaningful contexts.

## **Phonics**

All staff are trained in the teaching of phonics using the 'Little wandle' materials. Phonics interventions take place daily using this scheme.

## **Role of Subject leader**

The Subject Leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

- monitoring and evaluating English:-
  - pupil progress and analysis of data four times per year
  - provision of English, ensuring the breadth and balance of the curriculum
  - English across the curriculum
  - the quality of the Learning Environment,
- taking the lead in policy development,
- auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD,
- purchasing and organising resources,
- reporting to governors and SLT,

- guidance support and training for parents and carers,
- keeping up to date with recent English developments.

#### **Expectation of all teachers:**

- Planning covers all English objectives throughout the year.
- A high level of presentation is expected across all subjects.
- Topics offer children the opportunity to contextualise and apply discrete literacy learning for a wide range of purposes.
- Writing is edited and published at least twice every half-term.
- All children complete an Extended piece of writing every week. This can be in a foundation subject and will be monitored carefully by the Subject Lead.
- Learning Intentions and Success Criteria are displayed in all lessons and are evident in books.
- Marking is directly linked to the Learning Intention and Success Criteria in all lessons. See feedback and Marking policy.
- Success criteria are generated prior to the lesson (detailed on lesson planning) and with the children.
- Skills taught in English are reinforced and embedded throughout all other areas of learning; this is evidenced in all work.
- Yearly overview is used to create a termly medium term plan.
- Weekly plans are based on medium term planning and success criteria based on the most recent assessments.
- Assessment for Learning is used in classrooms.

#### **Time allocations for English:**

- English to be taught every day for 1 hour.
- Guided reading to be taught five times per week for 30 minutes.
- Handwriting taught sessions twice a week 15 minutes as required (LKS2).
- Handwriting practice within phonics/spelling teaching.
- Extended writing taught **at least** twice every half-term.
- Punctuation and grammar should be embedded in all English teaching and should be evident within planning.
- Spelling focus lessons as required.
- Phonics interventions or whole class focus where needed.