



# **Fishburn Primary School**

## **English Policy**

**(Updated December2021)**

**Contents:**

The Contribution of English to the School’s Curriculum .....  
Statutory Requirements .....  
Curriculum Delivery .....  
Approaches to Speaking and listening .....  
Approaches to Phonics .....  
Approaches to Reading .....  
Approaches to Writing .....  
Approaches to Handwriting .....  
Royal Shakespeare Company work .....  
Cross-Curricular Links and ICT .....  
Assessment and Target Setting .....  
Inclusion.....  
Equal Opportunities .....  
Role of Curriculum Team .....  
Parental Involvement .....  
Conclusion .....

## **The Contribution of English to the School's Curriculum.**

### **The Purpose of English:**

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others, and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised. **(National Curriculum 2014)**

### **Intention:**

All staff at Fishburn Primary School, recognise the central importance of English as a subject in its own right, and the subject that underpins the rest of the curriculum in school. Gaining and using skills in language not only affects the child's progress in school, but also has a profound influence upon the course of his or her whole life. We aim to develop pupils' abilities within an integrated programme of Speaking & Listening, Reading & Writing. Pupils will be given opportunities to develop their use, knowledge and understanding of spoken and written English within a broad and balanced curriculum with opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught literacy skills. Children will be taught the importance of reading for pleasure and for information, and they will understand these are skills for life.

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 creative curriculum and ICT will be used as tools to further enhance children's love of reading and writing.

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.

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.

### **Statutory Requirements:**

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

### **English Curriculum Delivery:**

In reception through to Year 6, children are taught English within their classes. Through differentiation and the support, 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 a SEN support plan with a specific need in English will receive intervention that focuses on the child's more specific individual needs (see inclusion section).

A clear lesson objective and success criteria are a feature of all English lessons. Common displays are used to support learning in the classrooms such as working walls, VIPERS and ELS Phoneme charts in Nursery, Reception and Year 1. Assessment informs planning and reference is made to the National Curriculum in medium term plans. 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.

### **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development:**

English provides opportunities to promote:

**Spiritual Development:** through helping pupils represent, explore and reflect on their own and others' inner life in drama and the discussions of texts and ideas.

**Moral Development:** through exploring questions of right and wrong, values and conflict between values in their reading of fiction and non-fiction, in their discussions and in drama.

**Social Development:** through helping pupils collaborate with others to create or present devised or scripted drama and to take account of the needs of the audience and the effects they wish to achieve when adapting their speech and writing, and through reading, reviewing and discussing texts that present issues and relationships between groups and between the individual and society in different historical periods and cultures.

**Cultural Development:** through helping pupils explore and reflect on the way that cultures are represented in their stories and poems, through introducing pupils to the English Literacy Heritage and through learning about language variation in English and how language relates to national, regional and cultural identities.

### **Approaches to Speaking and Listening:**

The four stands 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 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.

## Approaches to spelling:

Each class has a structured weekly scheme for spelling. This begins with the application of phonic knowledge in Reception, Years 1 and 2. Their spelling scheme is aligned with the Essential Letters and Sounds phonics programme which covers all aspects of the National Curriculum. In Years 3- 6, the National Curriculum spellings have been broken down into teaching weeks leaving time at the end of each year to practice spellings from the word bank.

### Three steps to spelling

1. Phonic start by breaking the word up into syllables, ask the question 'what sounds can I recognise in each syllable?'
2. Are there parts of the word I can already spell using what I know? (could be from another word)
3. Underline parts of the word you are stuck on.

### Practice

Segment words accurately into grapheme sums.

Look, cover, write, spell.

Rehearse the words through Nelson handwriting exercises.

Use the words in context within a sentence through independent tasks and dictation exercises.

### Assessment of spellings

Children take their weekly spelling lists home for homework and are tested in class the following week. Scores are shared with parents on Class Dojo and collated on a class excel sheet.

Teachers monitor the application of the spellings taught in written tasks. Age-appropriate errors and misconceptions of taught spelling rules should be addressed in all subjects across the curriculum with a particular focus on technical vocabulary e.g. scientific terms.

Key teaching features	
Spelling sequence	Encourage children to follow the sequence:
	• Say the word 
	• Stretch the word 
	• Segment the word 
	• Blend the word 
	• Count the sounds within the word 
	• Say the whole word 
This sequence can be used for any word where the children have been taught the GPCs within the word.	

## Approaches to phonics:

At Fishburn, the teaching of phonic skills is embedded within English teaching in each class. Additional provision is made each day in discrete **Essential Letters and Sounds** sessions from EYFS - Year 2, with planned Assessment Weeks, Review Weeks and appropriate 'catch up' available in KS2 in line with the 'E Model' (Embed, Enable, Enact). Phonological awareness is taught discretely to give children the foundations they need to acquire phonic skills. These comprise of learning different graphemes, focussing on oral and aural phonological skills and sight vocabulary known as 'Hard to Read and Spell' words (HRS). The Enable and Enact Essential Letters and Sounds materials are used with fidelity to ensure all children receive consistency: Powerpoint Presentations, Apply Workbooks, E Books, Grapheme cards with letter formation mnemonics and other recommended ELS support materials only. During ELS sessions children are also explicitly shown how to apply their developing skills to their writing in Apply workbooks and then in their written work. All children are taught whole-class and then grouped in accordance to their individual needs/in phase-appropriate groups for Enact 'keep up' sessions. Essential Letters and Sounds fundamentally allows children to 'keep up, not catch up.' New starters are given the ELS Diagnostic Assessment in order to identify sound knowledge gaps immediately.

## The E Model explained:

'E' model components	Description
<b>Embed</b>	The theory and pedagogy behind ELS
<b>Enact</b>	How to deliver ELS lessons in your school
<b>Enable</b>	How to ensure all children 'keep up' rather than 'catch up'
<b>Execute</b>	How to lead ELS in your school
<b>Evaluate</b>	How to assess children's progress
<b>Evolve</b>	Optional bespoke training

## The Key Teaching Features are:

Key teaching features	
<b>Me, then you</b>	The teacher says something, and then the children repeat it exactly.
<b>Provide opportunities</b>	Practice and repetition are key. There is no 'down time' in the lesson – a consistent fast pace is maintained. Children have many opportunities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hear the sound or word</li><li>• Say the sound or word</li><li>• See the sound or word</li><li>• Read the word</li><li>• Write the word</li><li>• Use new vocabulary.</li></ul>
<b>Provide modelling</b>	Every single aspect of the lesson is modelled for children. As teacher, your main purpose is not to test the children but to teach them.
<b>Active teaching and learning</b>	ELS lessons are active – children are engaged at all times, whether joining in with a 'drum roll' to introduce the new sound, using 'robot arms' or 'tracking the teacher' as you move around the room.

An overview of Essential Letters and Sounds can be found below:

# ELS Overview – Phase 1 to Phase 5

Phase 1*	Phase 2	Phase 3**
<p><i>Nursery/Pre-School</i></p> <p>Seven aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental sounds</li> <li>• Instrumental sounds</li> <li>• Body percussion</li> <li>• Rhythm and rhyme</li> <li>• Alliteration</li> <li>• Voice sounds</li> <li>• Oral blending</li> </ul>	<p><i>Reception/Primary 1 Autumn 1</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral blending</li> <li>• Sounding out and blending with 23 new grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs)</li> <li>• 12 new harder to read and spell (HRS) words</li> </ul>	<p><i>Reception/Primary 1 Autumn 2, Spring 1 and Spring 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral blending</li> <li>• Sounding out and blending with 29 new GPCs</li> <li>• 32 new HRS words</li> <li>• Revision of Phase 2</li> </ul>
Phase 4**	Phase 5 including alternatives and lesser-known GPCs	Beyond Phase 5
<p><i>Reception/Primary 1 Summer 1</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral blending</li> <li>• No new GPCs</li> <li>• No new HRS words</li> <li>• Word structures – cvcc, ccvc, ccvcc, cccvc, cccvcc</li> <li>• Suffixes</li> <li>• Revision of Phase 2 and Phase 3</li> </ul>	<p><i>Reception/Primary 1 Summer 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Phase 5 for reading</li> <li>• 20 new GPCs</li> <li>• 16 new HRS words</li> </ul> <p><i>Year 1/Primary 2 Autumn 1 and 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revision of previously taught Phase 5 GPCs</li> <li>• 2 new GPCs</li> <li>• 9 new HRS words</li> </ul> <p><i>Year 1/Primary 2 Spring 1 and 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative spellings for previously taught sounds</li> <li>• 49 new GPCs</li> <li>• 4 new HRS words</li> <li>• Oral blending</li> <li>• Revision of Phase 2, Phase 3 and Phase 4</li> </ul>	<p><i>Year 1/Primary 2 Summer, Year 2/Primary 3 and Key Stage 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With ELS, phonics teaching does not stop at the end of Year 1, but continues as children move through the school, with links being made between their GPC knowledge and spelling</li> <li>• Revision of all previously taught GPCs for reading and spelling</li> <li>• Wider reading, spelling and writing curriculum</li> </ul>

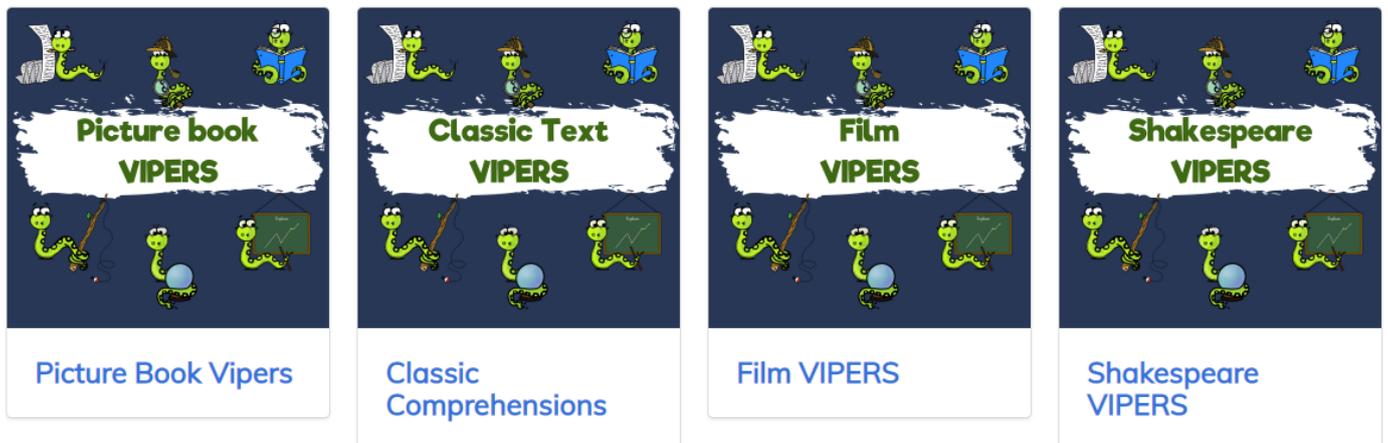
## **Approaches to Reading:**

Pupils have opportunities to undertake guided, shared and independent reading throughout the school day and in extra-curricular time. Children read in breakfast and after school club, take part in book clubs and have strong links with authors who we write to and have Skype conversations with. Our older children will read independently for 15 minutes each day and will be listened to by an adult in school as much as possible across a week. Reading skills will be taught early in the Autumn term and revisited often throughout the remainder of the year, according to the ability of the child. Shared class novels are also used in each class and children are able to develop stamina for reading as well as the full range of reading skills. In Key Stage Two- this is delivered through a VIPERS approach to further enhance children's reading skills so that they are able to:

- Explore Vocabulary,
- Infer,
- Predict,
- Explain,
- Retrieve and
- Summarise.

A VIPERS approach to teaching, questioning and learning can be applied to any lesson and we are now seeing this being embedded into good teaching practice across our full curriculum.

## **Our VIPERS Sessions cover a range of Genres:**



Teachers plan using the daily VIPERS Discussion Guides. Across the week we aim to cover the full spectrum of questions orally during the shared reading session, however, teachers use their judgement to decide which aspects of VIPER Skills will be answered in their written work. There is no expectation that the children answer all questions in written form and these are rewritten/rephrased when the pitch is not age-appropriate.

In EYFS, children do not need to formally record their answers to VIPERS questions until the summer term – all answers are oral and/or recorded on floor books during mark-making activities in the Autumn and Spring Terms.

## **Reading with adults:**

Home reading is encouraged and is an integral part of the child's development and reading records are monitored by school leaders. In KS2 the expectation is that each child will be read with at least 3 times per week at home, although more is encouraged. Staff make every effort to ensure that all children receive similar opportunities to read with an adult in school. Each teacher keeps a weekly log of the children who have been read with along with making comments in children's reading records. KS2 reading buddies plus parent and governor volunteers read 1-1 with children who are in need of reading recovery.

## **Approaches to Writing:**

To develop our children as writers we:

- treat children as writers, from the earliest stage, who have 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.

School have adopted the Durham County Council stranded sheets for the teaching of writing which teachers use to plan their lessons from. These sheets inform planning, assessment and intervention as required. We expect children to have the opportunity for extended writing (**on average**) once every two weeks. In some cases, with complex texts, this may take up to three weeks. For other simple texts, an extended piece of writing may be produced within one week. We will, wherever possible, make writing links with our year group topics and texts. Thus giving our children access to high quality texts and models to develop their own writing on. Please see each year groups curriculum map for further information on writing tasks.

## **Grammar and Punctuation:**

In Nursery and Reception, children are introduced to the basic principles of grammar and punctuation appropriate for their age range. They learn through a wide range of activities such as: singing rhymes, conversations with adults, stories, interactive educational programmes, phonics, reading and writing.

In Key Stage 1 a more formal approach is taken with grammar and punctuation teaching taking place in phonics and writing sessions. Children's learning is also supported through weekly spellings and in teacher-led reading activities.

In Years 1 -6, the Durham County Council's recommendation for progression in Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling has been adopted.

### **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. We use 'Squiggle while you Wiggle' to warm up the fine and gross motor muscles before moving onto Nelson Handwriting IWB Warm up and Apply Sheets.

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 is that children will join their handwriting in a cursive style by Year 3. Staff use the Nelson scheme for handwriting to teach individual letter joins with the leader feeder cursive style. This begins in year 2 with discrete lessons following a clear scheme of progression. 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.

**See Marking, Feedback and Presentation policy for exemplification.**

## **Assessment and Target Setting:**

Work is assessed in line with the Assessment Policy.

- Children in the Foundation Stage have their attainment on entry assessed by baseline observations and their progress is tracked and monitored through the use of Target Tracker throughout Nursery and Reception. The Foundation Stage profile will indicate if children are reaching expected levels by the end of Reception and will be used in transition into Key Stage 1
- Year 1 pupils undertake the phonics screening test.
- Phonics tracking is stored centrally Excel tracker on the Staff Drive.
- Year 2 children undertake SATs in Summer term.
- Reading ages will be assessed throughout the year using the Salford Reading Test and NTS Optional Tests (until children reach the upper reading age limit of the tests)
- Leaders track the impact of VIPERS Guided Reading Sessions through termly data drops on the Shared Area (supported by NTS Standardised scores).
- Every fifth week, we follow the ELS 'Assessment and Review Week' structure.
- ELS Diagnostic reports are undertaken as/when new starters begin and also during Week 5 assessment week.'
- Teachers use written and verbal feedback in order to identify where children have included elements of the learning objective and set next steps targets. They ensure that children are given the opportunity to revisit their work in order to make improvements.
- In school, cross-school and external moderation is undertaken throughout the year to ensure accuracy of judgements. This includes working with Durham County Education Development Service.
- The 'statements' section on Target Tracker is updated at least termly in order to give teachers the best indication of where gaps in learning are.
- Summative assessments (Steps) is updated termly once the statements have been analysed.
- Termly pupil progress meetings are held for reading and writing.
- Year 6 pupils undertake SATs in May.

## **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 staff.
- Children who are identified as having additional needs with reading, receive extra support from Teachers.
- Targeted phonic intervention is delivered using Lexia in addition to in-class intervention.
- More able children in English are identified and challenged appropriately.

Challenges for these gifted pupils are provided within English lessons or in addition through a range of wider opportunities e.g. More Able Writers Workshops and after school opportunities such as the Reading Café and the gifted and talented program at Sedgefield Community College.

## **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.

## **The role of the leadership team:**

Miss Ferguson is the English leader in school. The English curriculum team 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
- analysing data
- monitoring the provision of English in line with the subject monitoring policy
- 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
- Updating and amending the English policy in line with developments

## **Health and Safety:**

- All aspects of this policy and practice are carried out with regard to our health and safety procedures.
- All relevant risk assessments should be read in conjunction with this policy