

# Park Hill School English Policy

## Park Hill English Curriculum

At Park Hill School, we provide teaching and learning opportunities to develop all areas of English: spoken language; reading; writing and spelling; performance; punctuation and grammar. Our commitment to inclusion and equality of opportunity is shown through the range of strategies we employ to ensure engagement in lessons of our pupils.

## Spoken Language

At Park Hill, particularly because many of our pupils begin their school life without the oracy skills appropriate for their age, we recognise the importance of spoken language in the development of reading and writing and, indeed, of the whole individual. The skills of speaking and listening are explicitly taught and children are given a wide range of opportunities to practise these skills and develop confidence and competence.

Throughout the school, children talk about their learning, developing ideas and understanding through discussion, asking questions, being able to listen carefully to others' views and giving them time to respond, sometimes challenging others' viewpoints, negotiating with others in group work and considering a range of viewpoints. Talk partners are often used as a strategy to encourage discussion in lessons. Relevant vocabulary is explicitly taught in lessons across the curriculum so that our children's knowledge and understanding of vocabulary increases. Talk for Writing, which is used throughout the school in order to embed key vocabulary in children's minds, is one such method that is employed on a regular basis.

For younger pupils, opportunities to develop their spoken language include role play within the indoor and outdoor learning environments where children can explore language in contexts such as a garage or a hairdresser's or a café, for example. As the children become older, opportunities are extended with the children preparing to speak to an audience using computer presentations or posters as prompts. Children in Year 6 learn to use spoken language in a formal debate.

Spoken language is also developed through drama activities as children improvise, refine and rehearse scripts and learn to present these to an audience - for example - in their class assemblies. Rehearsing ideas through role play and spoken language enables children to explore different genres, identify with characters and develop vocabulary: teachers often use this approach as preparation to improve the quality of written work.

During the year we run poetry performance competitions where children of all ages can showcase their ability to learn off texts by heart and perform poems of their choice with expression and actions.

Every week a talk homework topic is sent home for the children to talk about with their families and then come back into school to discuss with their teachers and peers.

We promote respect towards all languages and dialects that children may bring into school with them. We value all languages and recognise home languages as a stepping-stone to progress in the use of English.

## Reading

### Aims:

At Park Hill School, our aims relate to the two strands of reading found in the National Curriculum programmes of study:

- Word reading
- Comprehension (both listening and reading)

We aim to:

- ❖ Enable children to be able to speedily recognise familiar printed words and also to be able to speedily work out the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words.
- ❖ Equip children with a range of reading strategies, enabling them to read for meaning in a variety of different contexts, as well as being able to understand, describe, select or retrieve information, events or ideas from texts.
- ❖ Equip children with the critical skills of analysis, enabling them to deduce, infer or interpret events or ideas from texts. Furthermore we aim for children to be able to identify and comment on a writer's use of language as well as their purpose and viewpoints and its overall effect of the text on the reader.
- ❖ Encourage the children to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction so that they develop their knowledge of themselves and the world they live in and in order to develop their vocabulary by exposing them to words in texts they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech.
- ❖ Equip children with a life-long enthusiasm and enjoyment of texts in all of their forms.
- ❖ Equip children with the ability to read aloud and perform play scripts and poems, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action.

In addition we aim to provide opportunities for children to relate texts to their social, cultural and historical contexts and literary traditions.

At Park Hill, reading is taught as a separate lesson from writing. However, we very much try to link reading and writing activities so that often the same genre is being taught in both lessons. The children are taught reading skills, which are based around progression statements connected with:

- decoding and blending (for Year 1)
- recognition of 'tricky' words on sight (for Years 1 and 2)
- retrieval of information from a text
- interpretation of information
- prediction of what might happen next
- commenting on the writer's use of language, structure and presentation
- performance of a text
- discussing what is read and justifying their views
- identifying the writer's purpose and viewpoint (for Years 3 upwards)

Reading is taught daily, separate from the writing lesson. We use a wide selection of challenging fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts, which are linked with each other and often based around the year group's topic. In the reading lessons, teaching takes place on a whole class basis with one text being used by the whole class; in ability groups; on a 1:1 basis and independently, including using the

Reading Eggs computer program (which is also available to use at home). Key Stage 1 pupils (and Key Stage 2 pupils working on the Special Needs Register) also complete extra phonics and word recognition activities.

### Buddy Reading

Groups of children in Upper Key Stage 2 give up part of their lunch times once a week to read with children in Years Reception, 1, and 2. This not only supports the reading of the younger children but helps to develop self-esteem and confidence in the older children.

### Class Novel

Each class has a class novel, which the teacher reads aloud to the class for a short time every day. The texts chosen are designed to provide some challenge for the children and are above the independent reading ability of the majority of the children.

### Reading at Home

All children in the school are expected to read at home on a daily basis and to return their reading diaries with comments on books read at least once a week. Children in years 5 and 6 are expected to complete at least five diary entries each week.

### Balsall Heath Library

We have close links with our local library, Balsall Heath, and are often involved in projects with them. We make regular visits to the library and the librarians sometimes come into school to speak to the children to help promote a love of reading and make them aware of the library's facilities.

## Writing

### Aims:

At Park Hill School, our aims relate to the two strands of writing found in the National Curriculum programmes of study:

- Transcription including spelling and handwriting
- Composition including:
  1. Use and application in context of vocabulary, grammar and punctuation
  2. Planning, drafting, evaluating, editing and proof reading
  3. Structuring and organising texts, which should be informed by the audience, purpose and context (at KS2)

In addition we aim to respect all languages and we show this value through the use of translated signs and labels within the classrooms.

### The Writing Cycle at Park Hill:

At Park Hill School each class has five hours every week dedicated to writing. We use the following writing cycle:

In writing, we base our learning around the Writing Cycle which takes the following format:

- Immersion in a genre incorporating: Talk for Writing, role play, book talk, class discussion, paired discussion, sentence construction, punctuation and grammar work related to the end

piece of writing to be written, modelling of the writing by the teacher, text marking of modelled texts in the same genre as the one to be written and short pieces of writing.

- Planning for 'The Big Write' - this is very much a supported activity involving writing frames and differentiated success criteria.
- Writing the 'Big Write' with the aid of success criteria provided by the teacher. Again, this is a supported activity.
- Proof reading and evaluating own work. Sometimes, the children proof read together with a partner and evaluate it together.
- 'Close the Gap' lesson - general learning point which the teacher has picked up from marking the books will be taught to the whole class. This is followed by the children working on their own 'close the gap' comments which have been highlighted by the teacher in their books.
- 'Cold Write' - the children plan and write an unseen piece in the same genre. Children also write their own success criteria.
- Again the children spend some time proof reading their own work and then evaluating it.
- Older children sometimes produce first and then second drafts when they have had time to consider how they might be able to change it for the better.
- Peer marking - this piece is marked by another child against the success criteria. The marker states what they have particularly liked about the piece of writing and what they feel could be developed further. Both comments must relate to the success criteria. For older children, examples must always be given by them.
- Throughout the writing **modelling of writing** by the teacher is key. Wherever possible, we link our writing to what the children are learning in topic or other curriculum areas or to topical events.
- Year 1 follow an adapted writing cycle. Reception build up to a similar cycle during the year. There is much concentration in Foundation on talk for writing and building up story patterns in children's heads so that they will be ready to write in year 1.
- Outside the writing lesson, we actively encourage the use of writing skills in all other curriculum areas.

Though our use of the Writing Cycle, we instigate lots of opportunities for our spoken language aims to be incorporated into lessons. For example, talk partners are used as a strategy to encourage discussion in lessons and we use Talk for Writing in order to embed texts in children's minds. In addition, older children present their research findings to others in class.

### **Phonics and Spelling**

In order to teach **phonics**, in Foundation and Key Stage 1, we use a focused teaching strategy, based around the Letters and Sounds programme. Phonics is taught through 6 phases:

- Phase 1 supports the development of speaking and listening.
- Phases 2-5 are a systematic approach to phonics teaching and word recognition skills.
- Phase 6 focuses on word - specific spellings and the rules for spelling alternatives.

Phonics is taught as a discrete lesson for 30 minutes on a daily basis. Two lessons are centred around reading skills, two around writing skills and one is concerned with common exception words. It is always taught as a whole class lesson, although activities are differentiated.

For those children who have not been successful in the Phonics Check by the end of Year 2, there is continuing phonics provision in Key Stage 2. During Key Stage 2, children are taught the spelling rules

and patterns appropriate for their year group in accordance with the National Curriculum; they are also taught the words on the statutory word lists for Years 3 - 6.

**SPAG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar)** is taught as a discrete lesson in years 2, 5 and 6. In every year group grammar and punctuation points are taught at the beginning of writing lessons.

### **Handwriting**

#### **Aims:**

At Park Hill we aim to equip children with the skills to write in a handwriting style that is fluent, joined and legible. All children from Foundation upwards are to use the Park Hill cursive handwriting scheme.

Children should be using a joined handwriting for all writing, except where other forms are required, by the end of Year 3 and earlier if possible.

Handwriting skills should be taught regularly throughout the week at the beginning of the literacy lesson in literacy books. A high standard of handwriting should be expected in all curriculum areas.

Pens should be used for handwriting from Year 3 upwards.

Teachers are expected to model the handwriting when writing on boards or when marking books. Handwriting competitions will be held at the beginning of every half term.

### **Presentation**

It is expected that all children will be taught to present their work neatly and to take a pride in it.

### **Foundation Stage**

In Foundation, English is taught, following guidelines set down in the EYFS document.

## **ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING**

### **Daily Assessment**

Each class/set teacher monitors children's daily progress. This assessment informs teachers' future action, regarding the following day's lesson, which may require annotation or entire adjustment (AfL). Feedback to pupils should be clear and follow Park Hill marking policy.

### **Summative Assessment**

Formal tests in **reading** are undertaken at a designated time each term, from year 1 to year 6. These take the form of PIRA assessments. Years 2 and 6 also have practice in taking previous SATS tests. These tests are distributed by the Assessment Leader and are completed under strict test conditions. The data is collated and interrogated by the Assessment and English Leaders, whereby the analysis is directed towards investigating some of the following:

- Pupil tracking data
- Yearly progression analysis
- End of year targets
- Overall Key Stage progression analysis
- Learner group analysis
- Gaps in learning analysis

At the end of Years 2 and 6, the children take statutory SATs assessments in reading. The Year 6 SATs papers are marked externally. The Year 2 SATs papers are marked by the teachers; however, they are moderated by the Senior Leadership Group and by teachers from other schools.

Writing is judged by teacher assessment of 'cold writes' throughout the school. Years 2 and 6 attend moderation meetings with other schools, whereby pieces of writing are jointly assessed. The Services for Education moderation meeting is also attended by our Year 2 and 6 teachers.

At the end of Year 1, the children take the statutory Phonics Check. Those who are not successful in the Phonics Check in Year 1 are re-checked at the end of Year 2.

### **Marking**

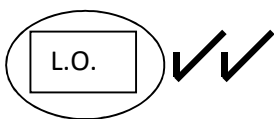
Children should be given immediate feedback with regards to their work - this can be presented as verbal comments when working with a focus group or in the form of a 'close the gap' statement.

Marking should encompass:

- Highlighting of what has been done correctly
- Correction/identification of errors - in-text modelling/re-modelling or annotation and expectation that this will be carried out correctly in following pieces of work
- Acknowledging that sometimes errors may be due to careless 'slips'
- What their next steps should be

Research into marking has shown that children's learning benefits from more diagnostic marking, by:

- Using set criteria to mark which should be shared with the children before they start work and linked to their specific learning objective (success criteria)
- Highlighting examples, which model correct performance (what they've done right)
- Annotating examples which accurately model precisely where children went wrong but not a
- Prioritising which errors need addressing immediately in brief feedback, in what steps and what size of step, in order for the child to move on.
- Indicating whether or not the child has achieved the learning objective with the following symbol, which should be known to the children and perhaps what the next step will be.



Achieved

- Opening a written dialogue which gives children the opportunity to comment on, or reply to comments about their performance, or answer enquiry questions written by the teacher
- Including short close-the-gap tasks to rectify misunderstanding or corrections to be completed

### **Resources**

All resources are purchased to match the National Curriculum requirements.

Furthermore, we ensure that resources are equally accessible to all children, taking into account their race, ethnicity, Birmingham's linguistic diversity, gender, social background, full ability range, and individual differences. The resources we currently use include the following:

- Many fiction and non-fiction texts
- Each class has a library, with a wide selection of texts for children to take home
- A selection of dictionaries/thesauruses available in each class
- The school library with a wide range of non-fiction and fiction texts
- Interactive whiteboards in all classrooms with Espresso.

### **Cross Curricula Links**

There are clearly many opportunities for children to develop their English Skills in other curriculum areas, including topic work, RE, science and computing. Where possible these links are made and planned for.

### **Home School Partnership**

Teachers and parents communicate formally on parents' evening and informally as the need arises about children's progress. We encourage parents to have an active role in developing their child's English skills. We encourage parents to read on a daily basis with their child, inviting them into school to read with their child on a set day each week and offer INSPIRE workshops, which demonstrate how English is taught in school.

### **Equal Opportunities and Inclusion**

Within the classroom, we should aim to provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and to achieve. We have a commitment to encouraging and stimulating the best possible progress and highest attainment for all pupils. This may be through differentiation of objectives and activities, adult support and/or resources. We ensure that all learning is made accessible to all children, taking into account their race, ethnicity, Birmingham's linguistic diversity, gender, social background, full ability range and individual differences.

The SEN and EAL Leaders will liaise with the English Leader and class teachers to ensure that the individual needs of all pupils are met and that appropriate targets are set and are regularly reviewed. Teachers will be mindful of the English needs of the children and differentiate questions and activities to allow all children access. Please also refer to the SEND and EAL Policies.

The Gifted and Talented Leader will also liaise with the English Leader and class teachers to ensure individuals' needs are met and that appropriate targets are set and reviewed regularly. Teachers will be mindful of the extra needs of gifted and talented children and will differentiate questions, success criteria and activities to allow for further progression and challenge. Please also refer to the school's Gifted and Talented Policy.

### **Governors**

It is the responsibility of the English Leader to meet with the English Governor on a regular basis to inform him of the direction and progress of English within the school.

### **Review of Policy**

The English Policy should be reviewed on an annual basis.

Date of issue: December 2017

Review date: December 2018