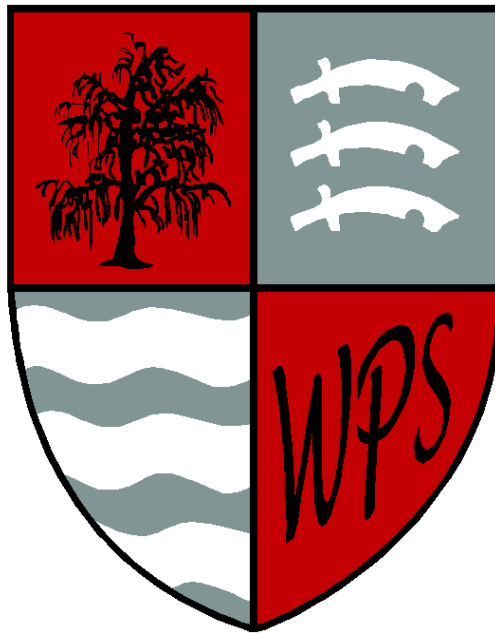


# Willowbrook Primary School



## English Policy

## **Introduction:**

At Willowbrook Primary School we believe that English is a fundamental life skill. English develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes. Children are enabled to express themselves actively, 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 listening across a range of different situations.

## **Aims and objectives:**

- To provide children with the opportunity to read, write and speak with confidence, fluency and understanding.
- To provide opportunities for the children to apply their skills in a variety of different situations and for a variety of audiences.
- To give children an environment which is safe and secure and which provides encouragement for the development of all aspects of English and the children take risks in their learning.
- To ensure that there is equality of access and opportunity for all children to develop their English skills.
- To promote the enjoyment of reading, writing and speaking and listening, and a recognition of its value.
- To show children how to improve the planning, drafting and editing of their written work.
- To provide children with a depth of understanding of all text types, including traditional British tales and values as well as those from other cultures.

## **Teaching and Learning:**

At Willowbrook Primary School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our English lessons in order to meet the needs of all our pupils. Our principle aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding of the subject whilst also promoting enthusiasm and enjoyment. In Key Stages 1 and 2 we do this through a daily lesson of approximately one hour. We deliver a thematic curriculum and endeavour to link the context of the text type to the current topic. For example, Historical Stories set in the Tudor period when studying The Tudors. This provides a purpose for the children and they are more engaged in their learning. Furthermore we use a range of written and multi-media texts in order to ensure children have access to a range of different texts and are stimulated in different ways.

Each unit follows a three phase process in order to ensure children are taught all the skills necessary for each text type. Phase 1 involves exposing the children to the text type and identifying the purpose, structure, language features and presentation features of the text type. Throughout the second phase, children are encouraged to develop their speaking and listening skills through drama activities such as role-play and hot-seating. Furthermore, grammar and punctuation skills are taught during phase 2. It is during this phase that the children delve deeper into the text they are studying and also plan their own piece of writing. During phase 3, the children step into the role of an author and write their own version of the text type.

Opportunities are then provided for the children to self and peer assess their writing according to the success criteria. As a result of this process they are able to edit and improve their work. By following this three phase process the children acquire the skills, knowledge and understanding

necessary to be successful writers. Working walls are used to support the children's independent writing. It evolves as a unit of work unfolds and the children make contributions and take ownership of the wall.

In all classes children have a wide range of abilities, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task with the ability of the child. At Willowbrook Primary School we have high expectations that all children can achieve their full potential and so children always have a challenge available for those that need to be stretched further.

Speaking and listening activities are embedded throughout the curriculum. Role-play areas, narrative therapy sessions and creative workshops provide regular opportunities for our pupils to develop their speaking, listening and social skills. We endeavour to consolidate and embed key English skills across all areas of the curriculum throughout the school day. Children use computing in English lessons where it enhances their learning. They have access to a wide range of technology including Macbooks, iPads, digital cameras, CD players and interactive clever touch whiteboards.

### **Foundation Stage:**

We teach English in the Foundation Stage as an integral part of the school's work. We relate the Literacy aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Development Matters and Birth to 5 Matters. Together these underpin the curriculum for our children. We give all children the opportunity to:

- talk and communicate in a wide range of situations
- respond to adults and each other
- listen carefully
- practise and extend their vocabulary and communication skills
- explore words and texts
- access role-play areas
- explore mark making and use phonic knowledge to write words and simple sentences
- develop own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.

### **Literacy Planning:**

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum and we currently use the 2014 National Curriculum as a basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English.

The National Primary Framework details what we teach in each year group in the long term. Our topic overviews and medium term plans identify the order that those units will be taught in order to ensure coverage and purposeful cross-curricular links. Short term plans give details of the daily objectives, modelling/teaching session, success criteria, differentiated activities and plenaries.

### **Phonics and spelling:**

Phonics sessions take place outside of the English lesson in the Foundation Stage and across Key Stage 1 and 2 where required. We follow the 'Little Wandle' programme of study and aim to carry out four, twenty minute sessions per week.

Assessments are carried out regularly. Sessions are carried out both within the classroom and in other learning areas by teachers and Learning Support Assistants. Children are assessed early in the academic year in order to ensure they are placed within the appropriate phase. Children take words and sounds home, according to the phase they are working at, to practise their reading and

spelling. Monitoring of phonics sessions is carried out by members of the senior leadership team. A statutory phonics screening check is undertaken by all pupils at the end of Year 1 in order to assess their phonic reading ability. Pupils who do not meet the required standard carry out the check again in Year 2.

In Key Stage 2 spelling is taught three times per week outside of the Literacy lesson. The twenty minute sessions teach spelling rules, patterns and conventions through games, quizzes and puzzles. They also provide the opportunity for children to explore the origins of words. A spelling activity is usually set as part of the weekly homework. Children in KS2 who have not reached the end of Phase 6 in the phonic programme, continue, when appropriate, to participate in the daily phonics sessions.

### **Handwriting:**

At Willowbrook Primary School we have high expectations in the presentation of work in all areas of the curriculum. Handwriting plays an important part and is taught three times a week. Before each handwriting session all children warm up within a dough disco session. When the children reach Key Stage 2 and demonstrate a good standard of handwriting in all areas of their work, they receive a handwriting pen.

### **Reading:**

Guided Reading occurs outside of the English lesson and is based on a KS1 and KS2 guided structure and plan. Sessions take place daily. The guided group works with the teacher while the other children carry out an independent activity or intervention activity with an LSA. The purpose of the Guided Reading session is to teach children to progress from their current reading level to the next. A variety of different genres are used for Guided Reading sessions. A session includes the teaching of a reading strategy, a learning focus, independent reading with a focus, group discussion and a personal response to the text.

Children are encouraged to read daily at home and are provided with a suitable reading book and reading diary. This ensures children are reading books that are suitable for their reading ability. As the children become fluent readers with good comprehension skills, they are encouraged to read their own books from home and the library.

### **Grammar and punctuation:**

We place a strong emphasis on the teaching and learning of grammar and punctuation. These skills are taught explicitly within the phase planning and are developed further in the final extended writing phase. While the key skills are taught during the literacy lesson, we endeavour to model and embed all spelling, grammar, punctuation and vocabulary skills across all areas of the curriculum.

### **Assessment for Learning:**

We use both formative and summative assessment strategies to assess pupil attainment in Literacy (reading, writing and speaking and listening). Learning outcomes are displayed and shared throughout each Literacy lesson in order for children to understand the purpose of the session. Through the use of success criteria, children are guided to assess their own work and identify strengths and areas for improvement. Teachers are constantly using formative assessment strategies throughout each English lesson in order to assess each child's understanding and progress and to identify misconceptions. Strategies include observing, questioning and discussion. Lessons and future planning are adapted according to the on-going assessments the teacher makes in order to ensure the lessons are pitched appropriately to the needs of the group. English work is

marked regularly and next step comments are used to provide the children with appropriate feedback on how to improve their work.

Summative assessments are also used to assess the children against national standards in English. We use a variety of standard reading and writing tests and use the results to record progress. Teacher assessments are used alongside the summative assessments in order to assess each child accurately. Statutory tasks include:

- a phonics screening check in Year 1
- reading, spelling and writing, punctuation and grammar with SATs at the end of KS1
- reading, spelling, punctuation and grammar SATs at the end of KS2.

Target Tracker's EP assessment are in line with the 2015 National Curriculum and 'life without levels' to monitor, record and assess the achievement of pupils in reading and writing. These assessments are used to inform the planning of English. On-going teacher assessment is used to assess attainment in writing at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.

### **SEND / EAL / Gifted and Talented:**

Willowbrook Primary School is committed to ensuring all children have access to a broad and balanced education. We provide learning opportunities that are matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties and those learning English with English as an additional language, as well as providing appropriate and challenging work and opportunities for those children who have been identified as Gifted and Talented in Literacy. Additional interventions for reading, writing, speaking and listening and spelling are put into place in order to support children who have been identified as needing extra provision.

### **Resources:**

There are a wide range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and Years 2 to 6 have thesauruses. All children have access to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts through the school library and class reading area.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation:**

In order to effectively evaluate this policy, as a Governing Body we will ask ourselves the following questions on an annual basis or in light of any developments and changes in school: Are our aims and objectives being met?

How can we tell?

Have there been any difficulties? Why have they arisen?

What have been the successes? What made these possible?

What do pupils and parents think about our policy?

Are there any local or national initiatives in which the school should join?

How can the policy be improved?