

LOUDWATER COMBINED SCHOOL

ENGLISH POLICY

English is an integral and fundamental component of the primary curriculum. After providing a safe environment in which to learn, most primary teachers would emphasise that one of the most important aspects of their work is in helping children to communicate effectively through spoken and written language, as we need communication skills to equip us for everyday life.

ABOUT THE POLICY

This policy reflects the school's values and philosophy in relation to the teaching and learning of English. It sets out a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can operate. It gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment.

The policy should be read in conjunction with the framework provided by The National Curriculum for English. The National Curriculum details the specific skills that will be developed for the majority of pupils in each year group. Other useful documents are the curriculum maps and the medium term planning for each year group.

This document has been produced for all the teaching staff, non-teaching staff with classroom responsibilities, School Governors, parents, inspection teams, LA advisors and other interested parties. Copies are available for the school staff and the Curriculum Committee of the Governing Body.

This policy also has links with the following policies: SEN, Inclusion, Teaching and Learning, Target Setting and Marking and Feedback.

PRINCIPLES

At Loudwater Combined School, we recognise that English is a core subject within the National Curriculum and, therefore, are concerned with developing pupils' abilities.

Good language skills are required for:

- the expression of one's own needs, feelings, emotions and spirituality;
- the understanding of another's needs, feelings and spirituality;
- resolving misunderstandings and conflicts;
- ascertaining information to make sense of the environment and infrastructure;
- the acquisition of knowledge for personal interest and pleasure;
- the acquisition and sharing of knowledge, data and skills to improve society;
- the expression of creativity through writing, poetry, singing, composing music etc;
- most jobs in the workplace.

At Loudwater Combined School, we are concerned with the development of the whole child. A child who can communicate effectively has every reason to be confident and have a healthy self-esteem.

AIMS

During our teaching of English, we aim to teach a broad and balanced curriculum and we will aim to encourage pupils to:

- listen attentively, paying attention to detail, to process the information and retain aurally as much detail as they can;
- speak confidently with intonation, clear diction, accurate grammar and style with regard for their listener;
- read fluently with good comprehension, which is reflected in appropriate expression and intonation, from a wide variety of texts at their own level for pleasure and expectation;
- recognise the close relationship between reading and writing;

- develop writing skills through a variety of “real” contexts wherever possible;
- have an interest in words and how they are spelt and used, e.g. encouraging children to acquire as wide a vocabulary as possible;
- develop their cognitive skills, imagination and personal views through a range of writing tasks using clear, precise language in a style appropriate for the purpose – we want children to become independent learners;
- become neat, legible hand-writers using a cursive style;
- reach their full potential by extending their knowledge and skills in language to other areas of the curriculum.

At Loudwater Combined School, we will follow guidance and the programmes of study from The National Curriculum for English when planning and delivering our curriculum. We will also make links to the IPC wherever possible. This ensures that pupils have opportunities to apply their English skills in other areas of the curriculum.

RATIONALE FOR THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF SPOKEN LANGUAGE

Children’s ability to speak and listen is fundamental to their language development, learning in school and social development. Talk underpins learning and thinking. A richness and variety of works and texts is important for all children. A lot of speaking and listening takes place naturally throughout the day between teacher and pupils through didactic teaching, and between the pupils themselves whilst they are working on activities independently or in groups. However, all pupils, especially children for whom English is an additional language, need to have the opportunity to work with good language models.

In order for children to become successful independent speakers and listeners, they need to possess a variety of speaking and listening skills and knowledge.

At Loudwater Combined School, we aim to enable pupils to:

- communicate effectively by speaking and listening with increasing confidence, clarity and fluency;
- speak appropriately in a variety of settings for a range of audiences;
- develop a wide range of speaking skills on increasingly complex subjects;
- think carefully and organise thinking before speaking;
- respond sensitively and reflect upon what has been heard;
- reflect on their talking.

During each Key Stage, pupils are taught knowledge, skills and understanding through the following range of activities:

- speaking for different audiences, which will include friends, class, teachers and others in the school;
- listening and responding, both to people and media texts;
- discussion and group interaction, in settings with different numbers of participants and different levels of formality;
- drama activities and role play;
- planning across the curriculum.

RATIONALE FOR THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF READING

Loudwater School believes that in order for children to become successful independent readers, they need to possess a variety of reading skills and knowledge. These are:

- a familiarity with syntax (sentence structure and grammatical arrangement) of English text;
- a familiarity with the genre of stories and an ability to make links between stories and related illustrations;
- a good comprehension of a rich vocabulary;
- a good visual memory;

- a recognition of letter names and sounds;
- a knowledge of the grapho-phonetic constructions of words;
- developing knowledge of children's literature, both narrative and non-narrative;
- developing their ability to talk about characters, events and language in texts;
- develop the ability to use information texts and locate, extract and use relevant information.

Our overriding aims in the teaching of reading are that children make good progress, become reflective about their reading development and ultimately want to read for pleasure.

Reading will be undertaken through a variety of methods. These will include modelled reading through regular guided and shared reading sessions, reading with individual pupils, paired reading, independent reading and reading through cross-curricular links. Pupils in Year 6 are designated Reading Ambassadors and support younger children with their reading particularly if children do not read at home and would benefit from a reading role model.

Our aim is to encourage all our children to become fluent, independent readers and to read as widely as possible. To this end, the children are encouraged to read books within the classroom from Book Boxes, Reading Corners and the School Library as a source for both fiction and non-fiction right from the beginning. On starting school in the Foundation Stage, children access the main reading scheme – Oxford Reading Tree. At Key Stages 1 and 2, this is supplemented by texts from other schemes. Running alongside these schemes, all teachers teach Guided Reading sessions to each group of children of similar abilities once each week.

RATIONALE FOR THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF WRITING

We use a text-based approach to planning writing activities to ensure that writing is relevant and pupils can engage positively with tasks. The purpose and genre of the writing will be made clear and the audience will be identified. Often children's perception is that they are writing for the teacher. Class teachers will look across the curriculum for opportunities to stimulate writing activities for authentic purposes.

Loudwater Combined School believes that in order for children to become successful independent writers, they need to possess a variety of writing skills and knowledge. These include:

- writing is closely linked to reading; pupils draw upon a wide range of reading experiences and use them to model writing
- the process of planning, interaction, collaboration, support and feedback helps a writer to move forward through the process for writing
- an extensive range of purposes, forms and audiences for writing need to be created so that pupils understand the choices facing a writer and how to make appropriate choices
- the teacher plays a crucial role in the development of writing through modelling the process of writing and teaching at the point of writing (e.g. guided writing) – this includes developing drafting skills
- when undertaking writing tasks, children will be encouraged to identify with their audience (other than the teacher) in order to stimulate writing activities and write for a purpose
- the process of writing can be made easier if it is broken down into steps – the process of this is known as *drafting* and the steps are as follows:

planning – where pupils make a plan of their work in note form, putting initial ideas on paper or screen;

initial draft – pupils develop the ideas in their plan into structured and coherent text;

revising to improve draft – pupils amend, delete, insert and re-order the text to improve it;

proof reading – pupils check the revised draft for errors of spelling, grammar and punctuation and for repetitions. At this point, links should be made with work being studied in formal English lessons;

presentation – pupils re-write or type a neat, clear, correct and final copy for presentation to the audience. This may include artwork or diagrams to enhance or clarify the text.

- use of VCOP (Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation) to encourage pupils to uplevel their work with independence.

At Loudwater Combined School, we aim to enable pupils to:

- know, understand and be able to write in a range of genres and text types;
- write for real or imagined purposes;
- plan, draft, discuss, revise, edit and publish their own writing and to develop into reflective writers;
- know that writing is different from speaking;
- recognise that writing should have a clear purpose and audience;
- develop understanding that writing is both essential to thinking, investigating, organising and learning and is enjoyable in its own right;
- make connections between pupils' reading and writing so that they have clear models for writing;
- develop their powers of imagination inventiveness and critical awareness through reading and writing;
- have fluent and legible handwriting;
- use punctuation correctly;
- develop accurate spelling through class, group and individual spelling programmes.

RATIONALE FOR THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF SPELLING

At Loudwater Combined School, spelling is viewed as one aspect of a child's writing ability.

Approaches to the teaching of spelling are varied, including using phonics programmes, Letters and Sounds and strategies outlined in the National Curriculum.

Phonics and Spelling are taught in 15 minute daily sessions throughout years FS to Year 6.

RATIONALE FOR THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF HANDWRITING

Effective handwriting instruction must take place where children can clearly see a correct demonstration of how letters and joins are formed.

As children begin to discover their preferred hand for holding a pencil, and once they are confidently using flowing movements, they can be introduced to smaller, more controlled activities. The school has developed a handwriting style which all teachers and teaching assistants are expected to follow. In KS2 once pupils can demonstrate a consistent use of neat, regular, joined handwriting they will be awarded a pen licence, which will allow them to write with a handwriting pen.

ASSESSMENT

English is assessed by the Class Teachers using the objectives from the National Curriculum as they are organised into year groups. For children with SEN and an EHCP Pivats are used, when appropriate to provide a more finely graded progression. Pupils are teacher assessed on a half-termly basis using Target Tracker to record their progress against the year group objectives. Pupils write an independent piece of work at the end of each unit in their Extended Writing book. This will be assessed using school writing assessment criteria and will inform the data for assessment inputted on Target Tracker each half term.

Regular moderation meetings are held for writing where assessment criteria is used and developed by the teaching staff.

Grammar, spelling and punctuation are teacher assessed as part of the pupils' writing assessments; however, Rising Stars half-termly progress tests are also used to inform this process.

Reading is assessed on an ongoing basis during guided reading sessions. Pupils and Teachers update and assess when targets have been met during Independent and Guided Reading sessions, on a regular basis. Half-termly progress tests, focusing on written responses to demonstrate comprehension, are used to help inform the process of teacher assessment

THE MANAGEMENT OF THE SUBJECT

Planning

Effective planning ensures:

- that there are achievable learning objectives for all pupils;
- that work is matched to pupils' abilities and experiences;
- that the teaching is differentiated by task(s) or outcome;
- that the teacher's and teaching assistant's time is employed effectively throughout the lessons;
- that there is progression and continuity related to previous learning;
- balanced coverage of the Scheme of Work throughout the year;
- that pupils are appropriately grouped; e.g. in ability or mixed ability groups/pairs for collaborative activities, or individually for independent work.

Cross-Curricular Opportunities

English is linked to the other subjects in an integral way, as it is the medium through which pupils learn. Therefore, we also recognise that the principles of teaching English can be applied to the teaching of other subjects across the curriculum, e.g. in-group discussion, using writing frames across the curriculum, reading for understanding strategies, communication and using ICT. Medium term planning will make clear links between English and other subject areas.

Equal Opportunities

All pupils will have equal opportunity to reach their full potential across the English curriculum regardless of their race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability. Equality of opportunity is essential in this curriculum area as it provides pupils with access to other curriculum areas in the primary years and in the future.

Special Educational Needs

Some pupils experience difficulties that affect their progress in literacy, while other pupils are more able. Class teachers are responsible for identifying any difficulties pupils may have or any areas of special ability, which will help pupils to make further progress. Therefore, through early intervention these pupils can be helped.

In line with the school's policy on Special Educational Needs, the SENDCo, the English Co-ordinator and class teacher will be involved in ensuring that pupils identified as having special educational needs will have learning and activities planned accordingly. Pupils with significant literacy weaknesses will have specific literacy targets on their Provision Maps. In some cases, a specialist support teacher or educational psychologist may be involved.

Resources

The Co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring that effective resources are purchased and that money is spent wisely. She will be responsible for producing proposals on how resources purchased can help facilitate the raising of literacy standards in Loudwater Combined School and present these to the Senior Leadership Team.

ROLE OF THE SUBJECT CO-ORDINATOR

The subject co-ordinator for the Literacy Curriculum is Mrs. Olcot who is responsible for the development and monitoring of the English Curriculum to ensure a coherent literacy strategy for Loudwater School. Her role is to:

- support teachers with their planning
- be responsible for updating the school's Policy and Scheme of Work and the school's English Action Plan
- assist teachers by leading staff meetings, planning and leading INSET activities, provide consultancy and advice and by supporting teachers in the classroom

- be responsible for implementing changes required by government guidelines and new initiatives and ideas which affect the teaching of English in Loudwater School
- attend training courses in line with changes and developments within the subject and impart that information to colleagues through regular staff meetings and on INSET days
- monitor approaches within this document. This will include lesson observations, work-sampling and plan sampling

Reviewed April 2016