

Stretton Handley CE Primary School English Policy



At Stretton Handley CE Primary School, we believe that English is a fundamental life skill. The National Curriculum states that English is part of the 'essential knowledge' needed in society.

'Teachers should develop pupil's spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects.'

The study of English develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes. The use of written and verbal language in the classroom enables children to communicate ideas, views and feelings creatively and imaginatively. As they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry, play scripts, non-fiction and media texts, children gain an understanding of how language works. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations. We teach children English to ensure they can effectively communicate through speech, language and writing in many different situations and environments.

Aims

Our aim is for all children at Stretton Handley CE Primary School to be able to:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- develop a wide vocabulary
- develop 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
- adapt written language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn
- explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- be competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate
- to use drama to express our understanding of texts and to deliver narratives
- integrate the key themes of regeneration, innovation and conservation throughout units wherever possible and appropriate.

Statutory requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum in England: English Programmes of Study – Key Stages 1 and 2 (December 2014) and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021)

In the Foundation Stage (Reception) children are given opportunities to:

- speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities;
- use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum; and
- become immersed in an environment rich in print and opportunities to communicate.

At Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) children learn to:

- speak confidently and listen to what others have to say.
- learn to read and write independently and with enthusiasm.
- learn to use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds

At Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6) children learn to:

- change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences.
- read a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetic texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them.
- explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works (using grammatical terminology).

What does this look like at Stretton Handley?

EYFS (Reception)

Children have opportunities to develop their communication, language and literacy skills on a daily basis in both adult led and child initiated activities. They have regular story times and shared text sessions to develop a love of reading. Children receive quality first teaching, within a group or individually - working towards the children's next steps in their learning. In Reception, children have a daily discrete phonics lesson and take part in both guided and individual reading sessions.

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1 daily discrete phonics lessons continue and are taught in ability groups. Children take part in both guided and individual reading sessions and have regular story times to develop a love of reading. English skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made to enable all pupils to access learning, according to their needs. Intervention programmes are planned appropriately along with differentiated class teaching and targeted teaching groups.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2 children have daily English sessions. Spelling and grammar skills are initially taught discretely before being embedded within creative writing sessions. Additional English sessions include guided reading, spelling, grammar, handwriting and opportunities to read for pleasure. English skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children who require extra support through targeted teaching; intervention programmes and differentiated class teaching.

Approaches to Speaking and Listening

We recognise the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum - spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. Opportunities to develop these skills include: debating, worship, discussions, talk partners, drama and dramatic productions as the National Curriculum says:

'All pupils should be enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils should be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role.' (pages 3, 4 and 7, 2014)

All of these speaking and listening skills are taught in English, across the curriculum and during extra-curricular activities too. We recognise the need for all pupils to speak, read and write Standard English fluently and accurately, while acknowledging that a pupil's own dialect, or other language is of prime importance. This promotes the acquisition of Standard English. Children who require extra support in speaking and listening benefit from small group sessions led by a NELI trained Teacher and draw on the expertise of a Speech and Language Therapist.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Some children may require additional support, without necessarily having a Special Educational Need.

We deploy a wide variety of strategies to provide this support to pupils with EAL. These will include:

- Creating a welcoming environment which reflects the cultural diversity of pupils (including the use of stories from other cultures)
- Visual support in class
- Pre-teaching and talk for writing
- Making efficient use of support staff o Pairing children with competent English speakers who speak their home language

Approaches to Reading

- To achieve the highest standards of reading for every pupil.
- To develop an effective partnership between home, school and child.
- To create an enjoyment and thirst for reading.

Reading at Foundation Stage

(Further reference should be made to the Foundation Stage Policy and curriculum documents and the phonics policy.)

- Early reading development is dependent upon effective communication and language development.
- Communication, language and literacy development is integral to planned activities in each area of learning.
- Children are immersed in an environment which is rich in print and possibilities for communication e.g. signs, notices, labels.
- High quality books are used in the reading corner, both for children to share with adults and to use between themselves.

- Children are encouraged to read in a variety of play, role play situations, individually and in small groups.
- Children learn the conventions of text and this is reinforced as they take books home to share.
- Phonic knowledge is developed through systematic synthetic phonics programme.

KS1 and KS2

Shared reading

- Teachers model reading strategies during shared reading sessions using a big book, enlarged text, smartboard resources or multiple texts are used to develop reading skills as part of the daily English lesson as well as across the curriculum.

Guided reading and reading tasks

Children have the opportunity to develop reading strategies and to discuss texts in detail during guided reading sessions:

- Children work in smaller groups with a teacher, classroom assistant or independently. The text is appropriate to the group's ability.
- Effective questioning is used as an important of exploring a text.
- Children will also work independently during the guided reading lesson to develop their inference and deduction skills- English Skills Box and First News
- Guided reading takes place outside of and additional to the daily English session.

Individual reading

Children read and take home a structured reading scheme book; other class or library books in addition to other reading material. This enables the teacher to monitor progress, provide guidance for learning and encouragement and to work on next steps. Comments are written in the Home/School reading record which parents are encouraged to contribute to. Children take home and have signed their reading record/homework diary weekly and this is monitored by the teacher.

- In Reception, Year 1 and 2, this is once a week to their class teacher or other adult;
- In Year 3 and 4, this is at least once per fortnight with their teacher or other adult.
- In Years 5 and 6, children are encouraged to read a book on their own or to discuss and share a book with a partner. As they become more confident, they are encouraged to read independently, making self-evaluative comments and choosing a range of fiction and non-fiction genres.

Home/School Links

We recognise the value of adults (both in school and at home) reading aloud to children, to improve their grasp of story language, enthuse them with a love of books and inspire them as writers. Each child has a book bag and a home school reading record/homework diary, that teachers and parents can use to share information about a child's reading. Parents are encouraged to read with their child daily. Our read to succeed challenge helps to encourage more reading at home.

Information is given on how to support their child in reading at parents' evenings and in curriculum resources sent out to parents. We still encourage all readers to share a book at home with their grown-ups. We believe that this not only helps to develop inferential skills, but also supports a lifelong love of reading.

Throughout the Key Stage, children become more independent in recording what they have read in their reading journals/homework diaries.

- Parents are given guidance on early reading development at meetings when children enter Reception.

- Teachers also discuss children's progress and offer guidance at parents' evenings.
- The Home-School Reading Record is a valuable way to communicate on a day-to-day basis.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Summative

- Reading assessments are carried out each half term alongside the teacher's observations of individual and guided reading sessions.
- In KS1/ KS2, Each term, standardised assessments are completed and these provide a standardised score; age standardised score and identify progress made and provide next steps to focus on for individuals.
- Statutory SATS are used in May in KS1 & 2. These enable us to report end of year statutory attainment for both Key Stages.
- All Year 1 children sit the statutory 'Phonics Screening' test in June.
- Children in Year 2 who did not achieve the required pass mark in the Year 1 'Phonics Screening' test will take the test in June
- Termly Phonics assessments from Rec- Year 2.
- Reception children assessed and observations gathered on Tapestry against ELG's.

Monitoring Evaluation and Review

- The teaching and learning of English is monitored annually by the English co-ordinator, focusing on specific and relevant aspects linked to the school's development plan.
- The assessment & English co-ordinators and Headteacher evaluate trends in attainment data.
- Other aspects of school improvement relating to English, are evaluated and reviewed by the English co-ordinator, Headteacher; Governors and whole staff team.

Resources

We use the Twinkl Phonics programme to deliver daily discrete phonics lessons in Reception and KS1 and continued into KS2 where necessary. A range of reading schemes are used to support early readers as well as guided reading. Teaching assistants support reading activities to ensure that children have more frequent opportunities to read with adults. Many exciting and rewarding activities are arranged in school to promote the pleasure and knowledge that can be gained from books e.g. Read to Succeed, Book Fairs, performances by professional theatre groups, making books and using drama, dance and music to illustrate texts.

Approaches to Writing

We believe that the ability to write with confidence and accuracy is an essential life skill. Writing is a complex process that draws upon more than handwriting and spelling. It is the ability to effectively communicate ideas, information and opinions through the printed word in a wide range of contexts. Successful writers understand the social function and characteristics of writing in order to use different genres appropriately, matching it to audience and purpose. Writing also requires the writer to understand and accurately apply the conventions of syntax, spelling and punctuation. We aim to equip children with the skills necessary to achieve this, throughout the curriculum.

We aim to develop the 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. Our approach to teaching writing covers the 'transcription' and 'composition' requirements of The National Curriculum (2014)

Teachers model writing strategies and the use of phonics and spelling strategies in shared writing sessions. Guided writing sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals, whilst children have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions at the end of each unit.

The children are given frequent opportunities in school to write in different contexts using quality text as a model and for a variety of purposes and audiences. These text types are outlined in our long-term plans for each year group to ensure that there is a breadth of coverage. Children may be asked to produce writing on their own or as part of group.

Aims

- To write with confidence, clarity and imagination;
- To understand and apply their knowledge of phonics and spelling;
- To understand how to write in a range of genres (across fiction, non-fiction and poetry), using the appropriate style, structure and features;
- To plan, draft, revise and edit their own work, and learn how to self- and peer-assess against the success criteria;
- To develop a technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their writing;
- To develop their imagination, creativity, expressive language and critical awareness through their writing.

Teaching and learning

Writing at Stretton Handley CE Primary School is taught and celebrated in a range of ways, and is taught daily across the school and across a range of subjects. We aim, wherever possible, to create cross-curricular writing opportunities, as we believe that in order for children to see themselves as successful writers they need to be involved in writing for a purpose. The National Curriculum (2014) ensures that a range of genres are covered, including narrative (e.g. extended stories, stories by the same author, myths and legends, adventure stories and traditional stories), non-fiction (e.g. persuasive texts, non-chronological reports, information texts, recounts, 8 reports and letters) and poetry (e.g. rhyme, nonsense rhymes, shape poems, acrostic and descriptive poetry).

Genres are taught and learnt considering the:

- purpose
- form
- audience

Throughout each unit, the links between reading and writing are made explicit – we read as writers and we write as readers. The progress throughout each unit of work shows the transition between reading as writers (focusing on structure, characterisation, and language features etc...) to writing as readers (word play, describing, composition, planning, editing, revising etc...). Integral to the process of writing is speaking and listening. 'Talk for writing' is essential to enable children to articulate their thoughts, retell stories, orally create new stories and orally rehearse what they are going to write and re-read what they have written. This underlines and runs alongside the writing process.

Good writers:

- enjoy writing and find the process creative, enriching and fulfilling;
- read widely, recognise good writing, and understand what makes it good;
- are aware of the key features of different genres and text types;
- learn about the skills of writing from their reading and draw (consciously or unconsciously) upon its models in their own work
- have 'something to say' (a purpose) and know how to say it for the specific audience;
- know how to develop their ideas;

- know how to plan and prepare for writing;
- make informed choices about what they are writing, as they write (for example, about vocabulary, grammar, text structure, etc.);
- understand how to reflect upon, refine and improve their own work; and
- can respond to the constructive criticism of others.

Writing is taught in a range of ways:

Modelling Writing

The teacher talks aloud articulating the thought processes as a writer. They model strategies in front of the children, communicating the strategies being used. Teachers may model writing skills such as punctuation, rehearsal, proof reading, editing, word selection, sentence construction and paragraphing.

Shared Writing

This is a collaborative approach in which the pupils contribute their ideas and thoughts for the teacher to write. The teacher models and teaches specific writing skills and there is the opportunity for discussion to choose the most effective or suitable ideas.

Supported Composition

The children work in pairs to provide the next sentence of the text. This may follow from the modelled or the shared writing process.

Guided Writing

Pupils are grouped by writing ability. The teacher or other adult works with the group on a carefully selected task appropriate to that group's needs and targets. This will focus on a particular aspect of the writing process rather than writing a complete piece.

Independent Writing

Children are given opportunities to apply their understanding of the text type in their own writing. They are encouraged to plan, draft, write, edit and assess their work, applying the skills they have learnt throughout the unit of work on that particular genre. The teaching and learning of writing varies across the age range in school.

In the early years mark making is encouraged through the use of different writing materials as well as writing in the role-play areas. Alongside this, children take part in activities to encourage and develop gross and fine motor skills necessary to write in a legible script. Dough Disco activities happen daily to support muscle development. Finger Gym activities are used each week to improve fine motor skills, language and handwriting. It helps to develop strong, flexible fingers, hands and arms. It promotes better hand-eye co-ordinations, differentiated movement and manual dexterity.

As children progress throughout the school, they are given many opportunities to write independently and to apply the skills they have learnt and practised in shared and guided writing. Wherever possible, writing is made meaningful by being planned for a specific purpose or in response to a particular experience. Grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS) is planned and taught as integral part of each unit of work and in discrete lessons. Where possible, the objectives are carefully matched to the unit of work to enable them to be taught and learnt within a meaningful context. We also recognise the important role that computing has to play in our school in the development of English skills. Interactive technology is used on a daily basis to enhance the teaching of English.

Home/School Links

Parents and carers are strongly encouraged to be actively involved in their children's writing at all ages, by encouraging them to write for a range of purposes such as shopping lists, diaries, notes, letters, cards, stories etc... Next steps of learning are shared with parents and Carers throughout the year at parents' evening and through next steps in books.

Assessment, recording and reporting

Children's progress is measured through teacher assessment in the following aspects of writing:

- Transcription
- Handwriting
- Composition: Composition and effect
- Composition: Text structure and organisation
- Composition: Sentence structure
- Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation

Assessment against these criteria takes various formats:

- Individual sheets to record progress and achievements. Writing levels ('Emerging', 'Developing', 'Expected' or 'Exceeding') are discussed each half term during pupil progress meetings;
- Success criteria created by the teacher and the children, which is used to self- and peer-assess;
- KS1 (and less able KS2 pupils) termly phonics tracking assessment, in which children are assessed against the Twinkl Phonics Levels and gaps in learning are identified;
- In KS2 termly SPaG assessments to ascertain gaps in learning;
- SATs Writing Assessment at the end of Key Stage One (Y2) and end of Key Stage Two (Y6);
- In KS1, termly SWST (Single Word Spelling Test) to track the children's ability to spell common exception words as stated in the National Curriculum (2014)

Approaches to Handwriting

Aims

- for all children to develop a fluent and legible style of handwriting in both joined and printed styles, with increasing fluency, confidence and speed.
 - to instil a positive attitude towards handwriting.
 - for children to be aware that different forms of handwriting are used for different purposes (e.g. drafting, rough work, final presentation etc.)
 - to make provision for left-handed children to develop free-flowing writing.
 - to make provision for any children with special educational needs affecting their fine or gross-motor skills.
-
- In order to achieve this, children are taught to:
 - Develop fine and gross motor skills.
 - Be confident in mark making.
 - Understand the importance of correct posture (including having feet on the floor) and paper position according to whether right or left-handed.
 - Use a pen / pencil and hold it effectively.
 - Write from left to right and top to bottom on a page.
 - Start and finish letters correctly.
 - Form letters of regular size and shape.
 - Know the language of writing and use the correct terminology (e.g. ascenders).
 - Put regular spaces between words.
 - Form upper and lower case letters.

- In Reception children are introduced to a flick up to the letter.
- Year 1 children develop and consolidate the use of flicks to begin to join letters.
- Year 2 children use a flick to join their letters.
- Key Stage 2 children develop fluency with their own cursive joined handwriting style.
- Write legibly in both joined and printed styles.
- Use different styles of writing for different purposes
- Understand the importance of neat and clear presentation in order to communicate effectively

Teaching and learning

At Stretton Handley CE Primary School, we aim to develop handwriting through systematic and regular practice and teaching. The use of our agreed script ensures a consistency of style and approach, which leads to an effective teaching.

Handwriting at Foundation Stage

- Practical mark-making activities in the Foundation Stage, leading to correct letter formation.
- Emphasis on physical development in the Early Years to ensure core strength, ability to hold mark making tools accurately- dough disco, finger gym, mark making resources and provision
- In Reception activities to promote fine motor skills and consolidate correct letter formation are linked through the Twinkl Phonics Programme and letter formation of lowercase and uppercase letters is taught alongside the learning of new phonemes/graphemes.

Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are encouraged to make marks and ascribe meaning to them. Good starting points for writing are the child's own name, labelling familiar objects all using the agreed script formation. The class teacher uses a variety of appropriate resources e.g. sensory activities, Finger Gym, Dough Disco, Digit Dance, alphabet friezes, practice workbooks/sheets, tactile letters, chunky pencils, various felt-tips, crayons, letters in the air, tracing in sand to develop fine and gross motor skills etc. In the EYFS children are introduced to letters and sounds and these initial sounds begin to appear in their own writing. Writing patterns are practised in order to encourage a flowing style, with a rhyme for the formation of each letter and children are taught to produce letters. We want to encourage children in EYFS to write freely and confidently.

Handwriting at Key Stage 1

Year 1 children are taught to produce letters which finish with flicks to encourage a flowing style where necessary (b,g,j,p,q,s,y,v,w,x,z). As children become more familiar with the correct formation of individual letters they are encouraged to consider size and position (with regard to lines) of letters. The teaching of capital letters continues as Year 1 progresses and their writing development, demands knowledge of simple punctuation. Ascenders and descenders are pointed out in relation to positioning of letters on lines. Lined paper is used for all written work. Shared and guided writing must always be on lined paper to be able to show ascenders and descenders.

Year 2 children begin to join letters appropriately with horizontal and diagonal joins to letters with and without ascenders in a cursive script. Letter formation using a cursive script is reinforced in family groups as outlined. It is important that all staff working with Key Stage 1 children write comments in workbooks as clearly and closely to the agreed script as possible.

Handwriting at Key Stage 2

- Year 3/4 children are to revise and consolidate the four main joins in handwriting and any appropriate points from the above.
1. Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. ai ,ar, un.

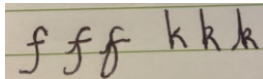
2. Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. ou, vi, wi.
 3. Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. ab ,ul, it.
 4. Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. ol, wh, ot.
- Year 5/6 children to use a joined cursive style developing fluency, accuracy, sameness (consistency in size) and speed in handwriting.
 - Children to know when to use a clear, neat cursive hand for finished, presented work.

Further opportunities to develop handwriting

- Combining handwriting and spelling practice.
- Independent group work across all areas of the curriculum.
- Writing for pleasure
- Display work such as:
 - Headings
 - Labels
 - Explanatory texts
 - For school handwriting / presentation display board
 - Captions

Progression of letter formation

Letter formation of 'f' and 'k' from Reception to KS2.



REC

- Letter shapes forming with correct orientation

KS1

- Year 1- Letters correctly formed and flicks on the end of each letter
- Year 2 joining handwriting in cursive style
- Capital letters the correct size and not joined

KS2

- Year 3 & 4 ensuring letters are the correct size & cursive joining consistently
- Year 5 & 6 using orientation for effect

General presentation

Children use a handwriting pen when they have developed a clear, cursive script – except in mathematics or for the drawing of charts and tables when pencil should be used.

Children are discouraged from inappropriate use of felt and gel pens.

Monitoring and review

Termly moderation, within school, through work scrutiny of writing by the Senior Leadership Team will monitor the handwriting and presentation of children's work in all subjects. Intra-schools moderation with cluster schools will also happen each term. It is also the responsibility of the Governors to monitor and review this policy every three years, or more frequently if there are significant changes in national guidance or expectations.