



# Ashtree Primary School and Nursery

## English Policy

Date of Policy	September 2015
Next Review Date	September 2018
Person/s Responsible	Staff and Governing Body

At Ashtree Primary School and Nursery we believe that every pupil has the right to be able to read and write effectively and to be able to communicate with others eloquently. In order to achieve this aim the teaching of English has a high profile within the school.

We follow The 2014 Primary National Curriculum in England, for English, ensuring that all pupils:

- 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
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening.

This policy applies to all pupils, regardless of their race, gender, religion or the presence of Special Educational Needs of any sort (including those who are Gifted and Talented). The curriculum is differentiated to ensure that all pupils progress in their learning at an appropriate pace supported by enrichment or reinforcement activities.

Within the National Curriculum for English skills are broken down into reading, writing and spoken language.

### **Reading**

We believe that 'knowledge and imagination grow with reading,' and that all pupils should be taught to read fluently and expressively and be encouraged to enjoy reading both for pleasure and for information.

### **Phonics**

In order to teach all our pupils to become fluent, confident readers, who have a love of reading, we follow a phonics first policy. All pupils within the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 receive phonics teaching in line with the DFES

Autumn 2015

document 'Letters and Sounds'. From Reception onwards, pupils receive a twenty minute daily phonics lesson, targeted at their current level of attainment, and are encouraged to apply this learning in their reading and writing.

Pupils continue to receive daily phonics teaching until they are confident with using and applying the skills taught within phase five of the 'Letters and Sounds' document. Pupils within Key Stage 1 are taught in groups split by current attainment. In addition, they receive one phonics lesson per week at age appropriate level with their own class teacher to allow access to age appropriate phonics work.

Discrete phonics teaching continues into Key Stage 2, and for as long as necessary, for pupils who require extra support and learning time to focus on securing their phonics knowledge.

We work within all Key Stages to ensure that all pupils who would benefit from extra phonics teaching receive it. Any pupil who has not reached the expected phonics level by the end of Year 1, as assessed by the national screening check, receives additional phonics intervention within Year 2, so that they can catch up with their peers.

Pupils at Ashtree Primary School benefit from a high level of phonics knowledge by all staff, the consistent use of language throughout the school and the high emphasis that phonics receives in all reading and writing activities.

### Individual Reading

Although phonics gives pupils the best start in learning to read, at Ashtree Primary School and Nursery, we also recognise that pupils need to practise reading regularly in order to become proficient.

All pupils within the school are placed on a book band that is appropriate to their current reading attainment. They read regularly in school with an adult (at least weekly) and at a minimum will be heard read by their class teacher once every two weeks. As part of our home school agreement with parents, we ask that parents also support this journey by reading with their children as regularly as possible and at a minimum of three times a week. Each pupil also has access to the online reading books at their current level via the Pearson website 'Bug Club'.

At each book band pupils become fluent and confident both within decoding (saying the words) and in comprehending the text. Pupils are assessed with an individual miscue to ensure that they have secured both of these skills before changing the colour of their book band (from red book band onwards).

### Guided/Reciprocal Reading

Teaching of reading also occurs within 'shared reading' sessions in whole class English lessons and within small group guided reading sessions. Pupils begin guided reading when they are ready to read books at red book band. In EYFS, children

Autumn 2015

discuss and read books in groups with their teacher once they have completed the Wellcomm Screening activities. In KS1, children take part in regular guided reading/reciprocal reading sessions with the teacher or a TA (from Spring term onwards in Year 1).

In Key Stage 2 the children use Reciprocal reading to discuss and analyse books in groups.

The structure of a guided reading session varies depending on the attainment and needs of the pupils within the group.

### Enjoyment of reading

By giving reading a high profile within the school and within each classroom we hope to encourage a lifelong relationship with reading, which allows our pupils to enjoy and experience a wide variety of literature from many genres.

We encourage the enjoyment of reading in a wide variety of ways that continue to be adapted in order to gain and maintain the enthusiasm of the pupils within the school.

The school provides a wide variety of high quality resources to support the teaching of reading.

### **Writing**

At Ashtree Primary School we believe that being able to write coherently not only enables pupils to communicate effectively, but also allows them to experience the joy of crafting their own individual stories and articles that express their points of view clearly.

It is important that pupils learn to write independently from an early stage and this is encouraged through emergent writing within the EYFS. During Key Stage 1 the teaching of phonics, spelling and handwriting complements this process and is used systematically to support writing and to build up accuracy and speed.

We know that for pupils to become successful writers they need to:

- experience a wide range of written texts, which is the primary source of knowledge about the written word and how it 'sounds'
- orally tell and retell stories and other texts
- experience both shared and guided writing, where the teacher focuses attention explicitly on the technicalities of writing
- regularly practise writing independently.

Therefore when planning English activities we ensure that all pupils have access to these experiences. Within Key Stage 1 pupils' writing work is based on high quality texts which the children respond to in a variety of ways (story recall, diary entry, non-fiction information texts in line with the National Curriculum). Within Key Stage 2 we follow a broad curriculum for writing which revisits different texts types every year to ensure that pupils become confident writers of different genres.

Autumn 2015

In order to ensure effective teaching of writing, teachers at Ashtree Primary School develop the curriculum around the needs of the pupils in each class (this may involve streaming by attainment). There are regular planned opportunities for talk for writing and for the shared writing process.

We also recognise the value of visual literacy both as a stimulus for writing and as media through which pupils can present their own ideas.

### Handwriting

Handwriting and presentation of work within our school is important in all areas of the curriculum (see Presentation and Layout of Work Policy). Pupils are taught handwriting from Reception onwards using the Collins Focus Handwriting resource. In EYFS and Year 1 (Autumn/Spring) the pupils develop a clear 'printed' style of writing. The majority of pupils are taught to join letters and develop cursive writing in the summer term of Y1. As they progress through the school they are supported in generating an individual style which is both efficient and neat. Children who need extra fine motor development are supported in their classes.

### Spelling

In order to become confident writers pupils also need to become proficient at spelling. In EYFS and Key Stage 1 spelling is intrinsically linked to reading. Therefore the spellings sent home are based on phonics being learnt in class, along with key words from the lists in Letters and Sounds.

In KS2 pupils receive a minimum of 1 hour and 30 minutes spelling teaching in each two week cycle. Spelling lists are provided for children to learn in line with the 2014 National Curriculum, including the Word Lists.

Pupils requiring additional support with their spelling may take part in a 'TRACKS' programme run by the SEN team to improve their spelling of high frequency words.

### Grammar

We also recognise that pupils need to be taught to write grammatically accurately and therefore pupils at Ashtree Primary School receive discrete grammar lessons on a regular basis. Pupils receive a minimum of 1 hour and 30 minutes grammar teaching in each two week cycle.

### **Spoken Language**

At Ashtree Primary School we recognise the importance of being able to communicate orally and to understand what others are saying. We will teach pupils to use language precisely and coherently. This involves giving pupils opportunities to experience a rich language environment to develop their skills in expressing themselves, and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Autumn 2015

They should be able to listen to others, and to respond and build on their ideas and views constructively.

Pupils are given opportunities to participate orally in groups and in the whole class, including:

- using talk to develop and clarify ideas;
- identifying the main points to arise from a discussion;
- listening for a specific purpose; discussion and evaluation.

Pupils are also given opportunities to speak in front of a wider audience during assemblies and Christmas productions.

### **Including all pupils**

There are pupils of differing abilities and needs in all classes at Ashtree Primary School. We provide suitable learning opportunities for all pupils by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the pupil. We use Teaching Assistants to support relevant pupils in order to meet their needs.

### **Assessment**

Effective assessment is essential to quality teaching and learning. Assessment for Learning (AfL) is a tool utilised by the school to raise attainment and accelerate progress. Good assessment practice ensures lesson planning is relevant and is based on a sound knowledge of the pupils' learning styles, attainment, progress and the next steps in their learning. We use HFL guidelines to assess the progress of groups within each class on an ongoing basis.

Regular feedback is given to pupils (see the schools' Marking Policy) and helps them to understand how to be successful, what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve further.

The pupils at Ashtree Primary School take summative assessments in line with statutory requirements. They take part in a phonics screening test in Year 1; reading and writing SATs in Year 2 (which supports the teachers' overall assessment of their attainment); SPaG (spelling, punctuation and grammar) and reading tests in Year 6 (as well as their writing attainment being assessed by their teachers, from ongoing work)

Other summative assessments are used throughout the school for example to test pupils' progress within spelling and grammar.

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

The teaching of English develops skills through which our pupils can give critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their work. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts brings them into contact with their own literary

Autumn 2015

heritage and texts from other cultures. The organisation of lessons allows pupils to work together and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and results.

Laid out below are a variety of details giving more detail about certain areas of the English curriculum.

## Appendix 1

### Language used in relation to phonics

In order to achieve consistency for the pupils in our school all staff use the following language in relation to phonics.

- **blend** (vb) — to draw individual sounds together to pronounce a word, e.g. s-n-a-p, blended together, reads snap
- **cluster** — two (or three) letters making two (or three) sounds, e.g. the first three letters of 'straight' are a consonant cluster
- **digraph** — two letters making one sound, e.g. sh, ch, th, ph.
- **trigraph** — three letters making one sound e.g. igh
- **quadgraph** — four letters making one sound e.g. ough
- **vowel digraphs** comprise of two vowels which, together, make one sound, e.g. ai, oo, ow
- **magic 'e'** — This is the term used in this school to describe a split vowel digraph with the children — two letters, split, making one sound, e.g. a-e as in make or i-e in site
- **grapheme** — a letter or a group of letters representing one sound, e.g. sh, ch, igh, ough (as in 'though')
- **grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC)** — the relationship between sounds and the letters which represent those sounds; also known as 'letter-sound correspondences'
- **mnemonic** — a device for memorising and recalling something, such as a snake shaped like the letter 'S' or a saying to help remember the order of the letters in a word i.e. 'silly animals in Devon' = said
- **phoneme** — the smallest single identifiable sound, e.g. the letters 'sh' represent just one sound, but 'sp' represents two (/s/ and /p/)
- **segment** (vb) — to split up a word into its individual phonemes in order to spell it, e.g. the word 'cat' has three phonemes: /c/, /a/, /t/
- **VC, CVC, CCVC** — the abbreviations for vowel-consonant, consonant-vowel-consonant, consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant, and are used to describe the order of letters in words, e.g. am, Sam, slam.
- **Short Vowel** — /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/ or /u/
- **Long Vowel** — a phoneme which represents the name of the vowel /ay/ /ee/ /igh/ /ow/ /you/
- **Consonant** — All letters of the alphabet that are not vowels
- **Phoneme frame** — Boxes used to help with spelling in phonics sessions. One box is used for each phoneme.
- **Robot arms** — Used in Reception for reading and spelling but only for reading from Year 1 onwards. Children stand like a robot and move arms for each sound that they see/hear. This helps them to blend the sounds together to create the word they are reading
- **Fred talk** — Saying the sounds in a word separately.

Autumn 2015

- **Fred fingers** – Pointing to one finger for each sound that can be heard in a word. Used for spelling from Year 1 onwards as it helps children to identify how many sounds they need in a word.
- **Dots and Dashes** – A dot is used under a single letter phoneme and a line (or dash) underneath a digraph/trigraph etc to help the children segment a word to sound out.

Sayings and mnemonics used to help the children remember phonics:

- “When two vowels go out walking the first does the talking”
- “Cry baby q never goes without u”
- “Silly animals in Devon” = said
- “Big elephants can always understand small elephants” = because

Autumn 2015

Appendix 2

### **Structure of Reciprocal Reading sessions**

It is likely that children working in KS1/Y3 will need teaching explicitly the skills required to be a good comprehender including: visualising, making connections, unpicking vocabulary, analysing, predicting and questioning. This will take place when the teacher reads aloud to the children describing what their mind is doing while they are reading.

It is likely that children in KS2 they will need to use their guided reading time to reason, justify, verbalise and validate their thoughts about a text. Therefore it is likely that the majority (if not all) of the guided reading session time will be spent in discussion and that the children read a section of text in preparation for the session.

The most important factor of any guided reading session is that it is targeted at the specific learning needs of the children.

It is helpful to include visual prompts in guided reading sessions, for example using word cards for tricky words for children, or using a feelings graph, visualising prompts and discussion cards at higher levels.

Autumn 2015

Appendix 3

### **Ways in which we Encourage an Enjoyment of Reading.**

In order to achieve our aim that all pupils should be taught to read fluently and expressively and be encouraged to enjoy reading both for pleasure and for information, we:

- Have made reading high profile in the school
- Have a reading certificate reward scheme in KS1 & KS2
- Are running a reading challenge to encourage children to read at home with certificates to gain for reaching certain levels.
- Maintain two well stocked libraries with books appropriate to the age of the children
- Have a reading area in each classroom with books for the children to choose to read. These have recently been updated with money raised by the pupils taking part in a sponsored read
- Celebrate World Book Day every year with fun activities
- Run a Book Fair once a year to enable our children to buy books for enjoyment and to raise money to help update stock in the libraries and book corners
- Subscribe to the Bug Club website allowing our children access to e-books at an appropriate book band
- Have Year 6 Reading Buddies who read with some of the children in Year 1 ,2 and 3 at lunchtime to pass on their love of reading.
- Run an after school reading club for Key Stage 1 pupils and their parents
- Offer a space for children to read at lunchtime on one day every week
- Hold parent drop in sessions where parents can stay with their children in the morning to hear them read or read them a story.
- Have a variety of storybooks in a 'Storysack Library' which parents can borrow to enjoy at home with their children.
- Have a 'reluctant readers' library.

Autumn 2015

Appendix 4

## **Resources for Teaching Reading**

Book Banded books from various publishers including:

Pearson Bug Club,

Collins Big Cat,

Oxford University Press,

Nelson Thornes,

Bug Club online reading zone - [www.bugclub.co.uk](http://www.bugclub.co.uk)

Guided reading books organised by book band in the Infant Hall.

Guided Reading Books published by Badger Publishing in Key Stage 2

Infant, Junior and Class libraries containing a wide variety of age appropriate texts.

**Sentence Type, Organisation and Structure and Text Type Coverage  
within Ashtree Primary School**

	Sentence Types	Organisation and Structure	Text Types
Reception	Who, what  When, who, where, what, why	Sentence like phrases  Capital letters/Full Stops	Narrative  Recount
Year 1	1A (Adjective)  BOYS (But, Or, Yet, So)	Sequencing Ideas - Time Connectives Beginning and ending Pronouns	Narrative Recount Information Instructions
Year 2	2A (Adjective)  List  Simile	Sequencing ideas with beginning and ending Pronouns Paragraphs to change time or place in narrative Paragraphs to organise thoughts in non- fiction Topic sentences in non-fiction	Narrative Recount Information Instructions Explanations
Year 3	Noun, which/who/where.  Emotion word, comma  3 -ed  Verb, person	Paragraphs to change time or place in narrative Paragraphs to organise thoughts in non- fiction Topic sentences in non-fiction Introduction/Conclusion in non-fiction pieces	Narrative Recount Information Instructions Explanations
Year 4	Short  The more, the more  Imagine 3 examples  Many questions	As Year 3 Plus LINKED introduction and conclusion in non-fiction pieces Links between paragraphs particularly in narrative Higher level sequencing eg consequently, subsequently etc	Narrative Recount Information Instructions Explanations Persuasion Discussion
Year 5	Some:Others Double ly ending Ad, same Ad If, If, If; then O(I) 2 Pairs	As Year 4 Plus LINKS within paragraphs Control and sequencing Maintaining perspective	Narrative Recount Information Instructions Explanations Persuasion Discussion
Year 6	DE:DE 3 Bad - ? Personification P.C -ing, -ed Irony	As Year 5	Narrative Recount Information Instructions Explanations Persuasion Discussion

### **Responsibilities of the English Co-ordinator**

The English co-ordinator will co-ordinate the Area of Learning 'Language & Literacy' within the school, aiming to secure high quality learning and teaching, effective use of resources, and the highest standards of achievement for all pupils.

Key Tasks:

#### **Strategic Vision**

1. Have a strategic vision for English development within the school
2. Have a good knowledge of issues related to English
3. Keep up to date with developments eg. Teaching methods, resources, assessment issues and record-keeping procedures
4. In consultation with the LMT and staff to devise the school's English policy based on statutory requirements
5. Ensure that there are schemes of work for English in place. The scheme should outline progression from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 2. These should be updated on a regular basis
6. Encourage displays of children's work and celebrate children's achievements
7. Promote opportunities for children to use their English skills for a range of purposes and audiences other than the teacher eg. Involvement in competitions, writing for other children and parents
8. Devise an annual action plan for the development of English.

#### **Monitoring & Evaluation**

1. In consultation with the LMT, monitor the implementation of the policy
2. Support staff, in collaboration with the LMT, in analysing all available data to inform learning and teaching
3. In consultation with the LMT and staff, evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and scheme throughout the school
4. Ensure that pupils' assessment records are kept up to date, in line with the school's Assessment Policy
5. Lead on Internal Standardisation and moderation
6. Liaise with the school's SENCO regarding pupils with literacy difficulties  
Keep records of meetings connected with the subject
8. Present reports to LMT and the school governors on the effectiveness of improvement measures

#### **Resource Manager**

1. Be responsible for organising, maintaining and cataloguing resources and equipment
2. Keep abreast of suitable new resources to support classroom strategies

#### **Professional Development**

1. Identify and facilitate the professional development needs of staff
2. Disseminate information from INSET and provide updates to staff
3. Ensure parents are informed of the school's approaches to teaching English and advise on how they may support their child's English development

Autumn 2015

Appendix 7

### **Responsibilities of the English Governor**

The named governor responsible for English will:

1. Liaise with the Subject Co-ordinator, Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher as appropriate
2. Visit the school and see the subject/area in operation (if possible)
3. Discuss the existing use of resources and future needs
4. Regularly report to the Governing Body on developments and progress
5. Attend appropriate training