



Willow Bank Junior School

English Policy

Non-statutory policy

<i>Version</i>	<i>Last Review</i>	<i>Next Review</i>	<i>Committee</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1.0	October 2011	April 2015	L&T	Next review after the introduction of new National Curriculum in Sept 2014.
1.1	October 2015	October 2016	L&T	No changes
1.1	September 2016	September 2017	L&T	
1.2	June 2019	June 2022	L&T	
2.0	May 2022	May 2025	L&T	Change of reference from 'Literacy' to 'English'. Summative assessment details added

Rationale

Willow Bank Junior School aims to provide a supportive, stimulating and secure environment where children are encouraged to express themselves and where their contributions are valued. We all share the same understanding that without effective communication, little achievement can be made. We know that we have a duty to ensure that English teaching is a priority (which is in line with the National Curriculum (2014)) and aim to do this through our creative curriculum, where children use the skills being taught for a purpose and through discrete English sessions.

This policy should be read alongside the National Curriculum in England (published September 2014)

Aims

- To promote a positive attitude to reading, writing and oracy skills (speaking and listening)
- To develop children's ability to become confident users of language, both oral and written
- To ensure children have access to a broad, balanced and creative English curriculum
- To provide clear and consistent teaching throughout the school
- To raise the standards of English for all pupils
- Support our children to have rich oracy skills that will support children's confidence and ability to communicate now and in the future.

Key Objectives

Key objectives for English follow the National Curriculum 2014. It is expected that teachers will use the objectives to form their medium and short-term plans.

Provision and Practice

Key Stage 2 is set out as two-yearly programmes of study. Within each year group, teachers demonstrate in their planning, their knowledge of upper or lower KS2 objectives as well as year group specific requirements for spelling and grammar, as outlined in English Appendices 1 and 2.

In formulating and executing plans it is expected that teachers take into consideration the following principles and attitudes.

- Teachers have high expectations and children are encouraged to share them.
- Previous skills and knowledge are the foundation for future development.
- Classrooms and resources are organised to encourage independence and efficiency.
- Lessons have pace and rigour.
- Lessons have clear learning objectives and they are shared with the children.
- Teachers have acquired a good personal knowledge and understanding of the material before commencing teaching.

- Teachers recognise the importance of modelling as a teaching tool, including it prominently in their plans.
- Teachers' plans need to show provision for a range of abilities.

ORACY (Speaking and Listening)

"[Oracy] is what the school does to support the development of children's capacity to use speech to express their thoughts and communicate with others, in education and in life"

Professor Robin Alexander

At Willow Bank Junior School our wish is for every child, regardless of their background, to find their voice for success in school and in life. In order for us to succeed with this, Oracy is highly valued. We are part of a group of schools taking part in the Voice 21 Oracy project and we have two champions that have, or are taking part in, training to ensure that Oracy opportunities are fully planned for and that children are developing, progressing and becoming confident language users and speakers. It is our belief that by supporting children with Oracy skills both their emotional and academic skills will develop. As Ros Wilson says, "If you can't speak it, you can't write it."

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be 'taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently in Standard English' (p10). They should:

- Justify ideas with reasons
- Ask questions to check understanding
- Develop vocabulary and build knowledge
- Negotiate
- Evaluate and build on the ideas of others
- Select the appropriate register for effective communication
- Give well-structured descriptions and explanations
- Speculate, hypothesise and explore ideas
- Organise their ideas prior to writing

School Environment

We aim to provide a school environment where children feel relaxed, accepted and affirmed. Our school will often have a buzz about it where the children are engaged in talk-based learning activities that support other learning. Our classrooms take on a dialogic approach: "Dialogic Teaching" means using talk most effectively for carrying out teaching and learning. Dialogic teaching involves ongoing talk between teacher and students, not just teacher-presentation. One assembly per week is planned to be talk-based and revolves around a current news issue using the resource 'Picture News'.

Teaching approaches:

- There will be planned opportunities for both presentational and exploratory talk
- Teachers are aware of the oracy framework and use this when planning talk-based activities
- All classrooms will have discussion guidelines that have been discussed and agreed upon together and displayed
- All classrooms use sentence stems to support discussion

- Children will regularly have opportunities to have a real-life audience for their oracy activities other than school plays and assemblies, such as debates being watched by parents, or podcasts that families can listen to at home.
- Teachers plan for as many opportunities for talk in all areas of the curriculum
- To vary classroom organisation, eg use of small groups, large groups and pairs
- Teachers model good language
- Strong links with reading and writing

READING

“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.” Dr Seuss

Our aims are that children will learn to read, will enjoy a wide variety of texts and will become independent, critical, lifelong readers.

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Reading is singled out as of extreme importance since through it ‘pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually’ (p13). Reading allows pupils to ‘acquire knowledge’ and to ‘build on what they already know’ (p13). Schools are expected to have library facilities and support and encourage reading at home.

The 2014 National Curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions: Word reading/decoding comprehension. We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, writing, grammar and vocabulary. We also understand that reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning and we encourage and praise children at every stage of it.

School Environment

We seek to provide environments in which reading is given importance and prestige. The school library has been redesigned to attract pupil engagement; children are encouraged to write recommendations for others to read which are displayed clearly by the book. We engage with external role models and facilitators such as the libraries, authors, poets and theatre companies to provide fresh and exciting opportunities for the children.

Teaching approaches

- Whole class shared reading in English lessons
- Guided reading
- Independent reading at school and home
- Teacher modelling of reading more challenging books
- Discussing stories, poems and non-fiction texts
- Intervention programmes such as Rapid Read
- Uninterrupted sustained silent reading
- Opportunities to visit the library and choose books for pleasure
- Shared story time in all classrooms
- Opportunities to share stories outside using the story teller chair

Colour Band Reading Books

Reading books are graded according to nationally recognised book band levels. To establish a start point, teachers assess children's reading age using a standardised test in Year 3. Progression through the book band levels is monitored by the class teacher.

WRITING

We believe that writing is an essential tool in the learning process. Children write to express their emotions, to convey their thoughts and opinions and to present evidence. By developing these skills, we can equip our children to use writing across the range of curriculum activities in which they are involved.

The National Curriculum states that pupils should:

- Develop the stamina and skills to write at length
- Use accurate spelling and punctuation
- Be grammatically correct
- Write in a range of ways and purposes including narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations
- Write to support their understanding and consolidation of what they have heard or read

The 2014 National Curriculum divides writing skills into two dimensions:

- transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing)

School environment

We seek to ensure that, where possible, writing is done for a purpose and is taught as part of our new cross-curricular topic; by doing this children will be engaged and will see a purpose. Writing is celebrated through displays in the school.

Teaching approaches

- Teachers aim to make writing exciting, stimulating and relevant.
- Pupils are given opportunities to write independently and imaginatively through the teaching of a variety of genre as well as in Big Write sessions.
- Grammar skills are taught daily within English lessons. Each year group has specific work, sentence, text and punctuation terminology to learn. The details of the content is taught as per National Curriculum 2014 English Appendix 2.
- Spelling rules and patterns are taught using the National Curriculum 2014 English Appendix 1.
- Children are expected to write with a neat handwriting style and this is modelled.
- Handwriting is taught discretely in the lower school and practised throughout the school.

Marking

Marking in English is in accordance with the school's Marking Policy.

Assessment

Teachers use formative assessment strategies in English on a daily basis in order to progress the children's learning. This might include: discussion, marking and peer assessment. Termly Pupil Progress Meetings identify pupils who require support to improve their rate of progress.

Summative assessments are undertaken each term in Reading and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling. These assessments follow the format of the end of KS2 assessments and test against the age-related skills from the National Curriculum. Scores are standardised and are used alongside teacher assessment to measure attainment and progress for all pupils.

Writing, and reading judgements will be recorded in line with the school's Assessment Policy.

Spelling

Pupils are given weekly spelling lists to learn, following the rules and patterns outlined in the National Curriculum 2014. Half-termly word lists are given to assess pupils' knowledge of words they often use in their writing and often misspell. These word lists are taken directly from the National Curriculum 2014 Appendix 1.

Special Educational Needs

Differentiation and support forms the basis of our special needs provision. It is the policy at Willow Bank Junior School to try and include all children whatever their circumstances. For some children this may mean the teacher will have to provide additional material to meet their needs. In other cases it may mean seeking advice from the SENCO and discussing possible interventions.

ICT

ICT is recognised as an important tool to develop English and all teachers in their medium and short term planning should include ICT. ICT can enhance learning in three ways:

- i) as a stimulus;
- ii) by providing an alternative means of learning;
- iii) for presentation purposes.