



# English Policy



*'Teachers should develop pupils' 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.'*

*DfE 2013 National Curriculum*

At Carr Head Primary School, we strive for excellence in English achievement throughout the school. We believe that literacy and communication are key life skills and the gateway to learning. Through the English curriculum, we will help children develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively through spoken and written language and equip them with the skills to become lifelong learners. Literacy is at the heart of all children's learning and enables children both to communicate with others effectively for a variety of purposes and to examine their own and others' experiences, feelings and ideas, giving these order and meaning. Because literacy is central to children's intellectual, emotional and social development, it has an essential role across the curriculum and helps pupils' learning to be coherent and progressive. We want children to enjoy and appreciate literature and its rich variety. Across all classes, pupils are given opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding and use of spoken and written English, within a balanced and exciting curriculum. There are lots of opportunities for children to consolidate and reinforce taught English skills and to apply them in a range of contexts.

## **INTENT**

- To extend and develop the knowledge of language children bring from home by providing a wide range of linguistic experiences.
- To promote high standards of language and literacy, reading, spelling, writing, speaking and listening.
- To equip pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.
- To teach pupils to read easily, fluently and with good understanding.
- To help pupils develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information.
- To ensure that pupils acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.
- To help pupils to appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage.
- To teach pupils to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.
- To enable pupils to use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas.
- To ensure that pupils are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

## **Statutory Requirements**

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are set out in the National Curriculum in England (2013) and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage (2021).

### **EYFS**

In EYFS (Reception / Oak) the curriculum lays strong foundations for the National Curriculum aims. The children are given opportunities to:

- use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum;
- become immersed in an environment rich in print and opportunities to communicate;
- access a wide range of reading materials to ignite their interest and develop a life-long love of reading;
- talk with adults about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them;
- enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together;
- develop language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing);
- Link sounds and letters and begin to read and write;
- develop early writing, articulating ideas and structuring them in speech before writing;
- speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities.

### **National Curriculum**

The aim for English in the National Curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by allowing children to develop a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature. From Year 1 to Year 6, the national curriculum for English (2013) aims to ensure that all children:

- 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; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

In the National Curriculum, programmes of study for English are set out year-by-year for key stage 1 and two-yearly for key stage 2. The single year blocks at key stage 1 reflect the rapid pace of development in word reading during these 2 years. Schools are, however, only required to teach the relevant programme of study by the end of the key stage. Within each key stage, schools therefore have the flexibility to introduce content earlier or later than set out in the programme of study. In addition, schools can introduce key stage content during an earlier key stage if appropriate.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

- Teachers will develop pupils' spoken language across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically.
- Spoken language will underpin the development of reading and writing.
- The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak will be used for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing.
- Teachers will ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills.
- Pupils will develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write.
- Pupils will be helped to make their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others and teachers will ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions.
- Drama, poetry and role play will be used to build pupils confidence and to practice their skills in speaking, listening, reading, writing and performing in front of others.
- The teaching of reading will focus on word reading and comprehension and it will be developed across the curriculum and phonics alongside other key strategies will play an important part in teaching pupils to read and spell.
- Comprehension skills will be developed through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with their teachers, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction.
- All pupils will be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum.
- Teaching will develop pupils' competence in transcription and composition and they will be taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing.
- Pupils will be taught to use the elements of spelling, grammar and punctuation correctly and to understand and use Standard English in their speaking and writing.
- Clear communication with parents will be made, informing them of and including them in their children's progress and explaining the school's approach to the teaching of English through parent conferences and annual written reports.
- Parent correspondence through the Reading Record and homework tasks, which are sent home/posted online in line with the Homework Policy for the school, will be evident.

## **Subject Organisation**

### **EYFS**

In EYFS, children have daily phonics lessons to develop skills like blending and segmenting in preparation for early reading and writing. A wide range of exciting learning experiences provide children with opportunities to develop their communication, language and literacy skills on a daily basis with a focus on child-initiated activities. As well as a reading and a writing area, which provide children with a range of books and materials with which to experiment and practice mark marking/letter formation (and eventually to practice taught skills), other learning areas are enhanced to provide children with the opportunity to read and write in a range of contexts. A range of resources in the outdoor area, including a mud kitchen menu and writing boards, provide valuable

opportunities to engage children in writing for pleasure. In the outdoor area children have constant access to reading and writing resources that children can use independently. They also have access to a wide range of texts, including fiction and non-fiction. Children enjoy daily 'story time' so they become familiar with stories and authors and begin to develop a love of reading. They will regularly hear and learn rhymes to widen vocabulary and awareness of language.

Adult led activities in EYFS are usually linked to stories, poems or nursery rhymes or to cross curricular topics. From when they start school, children learn that writing can have a range of purposes and they begin to explore the features of different types of writing.

## **Key Stage 1 (Year 1 & Year 2)**

In Key Stage 1, daily phonics lessons are continued and are taught in groups according to individual confidence, with an increased focus on spelling and spelling rules. The 'Red Rose Letters and Sounds' phonics scheme is followed systematically, enabling teachers to ensure progression and structure for phonic sessions. Children practice the application of their phonic knowledge and skills by reading books closely matched to the phonics they are learning and have already learnt.

In English lessons, children explore a variety of themes such as 'Stories in Familiar Settings', 'Instructions', 'Fantasy Stories' or 'Funny Poems'. They study fiction and non-fiction and begin to compare characteristic features of writing. Children learn how to apply these features in their own writing and begin to increasingly write at length. In Key Stage 1, children will write for a range of purposes, including (but not limited to):

- Stories
- Diaries
- Newspaper reports
- Instructions – recipes, 'how to' guides
- Explanation texts
- Poems
- Letters & postcards
- Labels, lists and captions
- Recounts
- Non-chronological reports

Children in Key Stage 1 will focus on the Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar objectives from the National Curriculum and learn how to use these taught rules in their own writing within the unit of work being studied. Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar lessons are integrated into the English unit as well as being taught through discrete lessons. This enables the children to develop spelling, punctuation and grammar knowledge and skills through reading example texts and through developing these skills during daily writing opportunities.

Writing skills are developed across the curriculum and children are given lots of opportunities for cross curricular writing. This may be linked to Topic (for example, Kenya, the Great Fire of London, Great Explorers) or other curriculum areas such as R.E or Science.

## **Key Stage 2 (Years 3 – 6)**

In Key Stage 2, children have English lessons in which they focus on a range of text types throughout the year. These may be linked to topic themes or to a book or poem. During Key Stage 2, children can expect to tackle a range of writing tasks, including (but not limited to):

- Stories (including a variety of genres such as myths & legends, adventure, mystery & suspense)
- Letters
- Play scripts
- Biographies
- Recounts
- Instructions
- Glossaries
- Explanations
- Debates
- Haikus
- Poems

Children will also learn to write in a range of styles, including;

- Writing persuasively
- Writing in a journalistic style
- Writing formally/informally
- Writing arguments

English, Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar is taught discreetly and is reinforced during writing-based lessons. Additional English sessions include guided and individual reading, handwriting and comprehension.

In Key Stage 2, children continue to have a range of opportunities for cross curricular writing. English skills are developed across the curriculum so children can apply what they know in a variety of contexts.

## **Approaches to Reading**

Our pupils are exposed to a rich reading environment and encouraged to read for pleasure, to read widely and with increasing independence. Children are encouraged to develop a love for reading through daily story time and through access to the school library. We use a balanced and engaging approach to developing reading, which integrates both decoding and comprehension skills. Phonic awareness helps the development of reading by segmenting and blending sounds. Our systematic phonics programme follows 'Red Rose Letters and Sounds' and begins when the children start school in EYFS. The children are heard reading on a regular basis both individually and in groups. Guided reading and Whole Class reading sessions use strategies for developing and monitoring reading comprehension and sessions cover both fiction and non-fiction books. Parents are given clear expectations about how they can support reading at home.

Reading strategies are modelled daily by teachers and teaching assistants, and children have the opportunity to develop these and discuss texts in detail.

In EYFS & KS1, children have the opportunity to read 1:1 with an adult at least once per week. This is more frequent for children who read less often at home, or who may need additional support to reach national expectations for their age. As children move through school, opportunities for sustained independent reading are provided. A range of reading schemes are used across the Key Stages. Children are assigned banded books which are aligned with phonic phases (up to Phase 6) beginning with early readers in which children rely on their Phonic decoding skills to read words, moving to reading longer texts independently and with fluency. In the early stages of the reading scheme, children are expected to read their home reading book more than once to build fluency and understanding. In KS2, it is expected that children will have worked their way through the colour banded texts and have moved onto reading 'independent readers' (books beyond the reading schemes) by the time they reach Year 6.

In EYFS and KS1, children take home a reading book daily to be shared with parents. Each child keeps a 'Reading Record' in which parents and teachers share information about a child's reading. Parents/Carers are encouraged to read with children as often as possible, preferably daily, and information is provided by teachers at the start of each school year to ensure parents know how best to support their child in reading.

In KS2, children have more responsibility for selecting books to take home and read. Children in KS2 who do not meet national expectations for their age may continue to read with a teacher or adult frequently, or intervention is put in place to support their reading. Although children in KS2 are likely to read without a parent/carer, we still encourage all readers to share books at home with their family as we want children to develop a lifelong love of reading.

As a school, we recognise the value of reading aloud to children to model appropriate use of story language and reading with expression. We want to enthuse them with a love of books and inspire them as writers. Children have the opportunity to participate in lots of exciting and rewarding activities linked to reading, including:

- Daily reading of a 'class novel'
- Visits to the local library for storytelling and book sharing
- World Book Day celebrations – activities linked to favourite stories or school themes

## **Approaches to Writing**

Our aim at Carr Head Primary School is to develop children's ability to produce well-structured writing with appropriate detail, in which the meaning is clear and the interest of the reader is engaged. Our approach to writing aims to instil the importance of transcription and composition, as required in the National Curriculum (2013).

Throughout the school, teachers are flexible in their selection of teaching models for English. We develop writing skills so that our pupils have the stamina and ability to write at the age expected standard. To support children in moving towards independent writing we provide a wide range of activities including use of film and imagery, modelled, shared and guided writing, peer editing and discussion. We use talk for writing to encourage pupils to express their ideas, exchange ideas and to develop more sophisticated vocabulary. Strategies for planning and monitoring writing composition are taught explicitly. Fluent written transcription skills are promoted by encouraging extensive and

effective practice, and by explicitly teaching spelling. We provide opportunities for writing for purpose and we encourage pupils to see themselves as authors. We promote the status of written work by providing opportunities for children's writing to be published and read by real audiences.

Children in all Key Stages are given daily opportunities to write in a range of contexts, for a variety of purposes, and have regular opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions. Our long-term planning for English covers the range of text types set out in the National Curriculum (2013), ensuring a breadth of coverage.

As a school, we use the Nelson Handwriting scheme to help children develop fluent, clear and legible handwriting. In late KS1/early KS2, children will begin to join their writing. Children are given extensive opportunities to practise their handwriting.

## **Approaches to Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar (S.P.a.G.)**

At Carr Head, we want our children to have a deep understanding of how our language works, enabling them to make choices and have greater control over their writing. We aim to equip our children with the skills they need to use Standard English confidently and effectively throughout their school career and into their lives beyond school. Explicit knowledge of grammar is very important, as it gives us more conscious control and choice in our language.

Once pupils are familiar with a grammatical concept we encourage them to apply and explore this concept in the grammar of their own speech and writing and to note where it is used by others. To achieve this, we do the following:

- Introduce, teach and model an objective. Objectives are mapped through Yearly SPAG Overviews and often linked to the genre being explored. Where appropriate, objectives are informed or amended through assessment for learning.
- SPAG objectives are explicitly embedded in shared writing in all areas across the curriculum.
- SPAG objectives are explored in texts and an intrinsic part of learning.
- Assessment is through everyday assessment for learning, low stake quizzes and regular summative testing.

In addition, daily phonics/spelling sessions are fundamental in developing children's spelling. Children are taught to segment to spell. From EYFS, children learn words which are not phonetically regular (common exception words). From Phase 5 (Red Rose Letters and Sounds), there is more focus on choosing the 'right' sound for spelling, and children learn alternative representations of graphemes and spelling rules. We use 'Spelling Shed' and 'No Nonsense Spelling' to support the teaching of spelling from Year 2 to Year 6.

When marking, we do not correct all spelling errors, instead focusing on common exception words, topic words and those studied in Phonics.

## **Approaches to Speaking & Listening**

Speaking and listening are fundamental to good communication for us all, and are independent of ability in reading and writing. We recognise the importance of being aware of skills children have already acquired in order to build on this foundation. From entry in EYFS, children are given opportunities to develop and learn new skills in formal and informal settings, both in and outside of the classroom.

Children are encouraged to speak clearly and listen carefully, and both speaking and listening are stimulated in a range of ways, including;

- Listening to and responding to stories, rhymes, poems, songs and games from various cultures
- Responding to visual and aural stimuli, such as pictures, paintings, radio or film clips
- Teaching specific vocabulary linked to units of learning
- Discussing and expressing opinions
- Giving and receiving instructions or information
- Using talk partners in all curriculum areas
- Describing/recounting events
- Storytelling and reading aloud
- Reciting lines, songs or poems learned by heart in school plays or presentations
- Imaginative play (not just in EYFS) for example, role play, use of puppets or drama
- Circle time
- Assemblies
- Debates (KS2)

We also realise that a rich variety of speaking and listening opportunities arise from literature and so we have a vast array of books in our school library and in each classroom including fiction and non-fiction.

We have adopted 'NELI' as an early year's intervention and use 'Time to Talk' to encourage language development for those children who need it. Any child thought to require the support of a Speech & Language therapist is referred in accordance with our SEND policy.

## **Cross-Curricular Opportunities**

Teachers plan carefully for children to practice and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum. Because of this, children from EYFS to Year 6 are provided with outstanding opportunities for cross curricular writing. Each class has a new topic each half term, focusing on Science, History or Geography.

These topics allow children to write for a range of purposes, in a variety of contexts. We believe that providing these cross curricular opportunities helps children to develop a love of writing, as well as instilling in them that all writing has a purpose.

## **Inclusion in English**

The needs of all children are considered carefully when planning and teaching English at Carr Head Primary School. We want children to reach their full potential. Where necessary, teachers identify which children are not making progress and take steps to improve their progress and attainment in English, usually in liaison with the SENDco. More-able and talented children are identified and suitable learning challenges are provided.



## **Equal Opportunities**

At Carr Head Primary School we have high expectations for every child, whatever their background, ability or circumstances. We know that children learn best when they are healthy, safe and engaged. In order to engage all children, cultural diversity is celebrated. Our English curriculum includes a wide range of texts and other resources which represent a variety of cultures and backgrounds. We value what each individual child brings to our school.

## **Role of the Subject Leader**

Our subject leader for English is Mrs Nicholson. The subject leader is responsible for maintaining/improving the standards of teaching and learning in English by:

- Monitoring and evaluating English; pupil progress, planning, marking & feedback, curriculum coverage, teaching, role of teaching assistants, English provision.
- Taking the lead in policy development
- Auditing and supporting colleagues in CPD
- Purchasing/organising resources
- Keeping up to date with developments in English

## **Parental Involvement**

We hope to involve parents as much as possible in school life, and thus in the development of children's skills, knowledge and understanding in English. In EYFS, parents have access to 'Tapestry' and this gives the adults in EYFS opportunity to share the children's learning with them.

At the start of each school year, parents are invited to a session in which they meet their child's new teacher and find out about expectations in English for the upcoming year. They are provided with information about the English curriculum, how it will be taught in school and what they can do to support their child. The importance of regular reading and writing is highlighted at these meetings. We also hold parent workshops where and when relevant.

Parents are welcomed into school on various occasions over the course of the year to see presentations of their children's writing. This is usually linked to the class assembly, or to the outcomes of a unit of work or topic.

There are parent's meetings twice a year in which the child's progress is discussed with the class teacher. Additionally, parents receive a full school report annually, detailing their child's achievements in English alongside other core curriculum subjects. The results of statutory assessments are reported to parents in accordance with government legislation.

## **IMPACT**

### **Assessment and Target Setting**

Formative assessments are carried out regularly to ensure that the teaching of Reading, Writing and S.P.a.G. is focused on children's needs.

On entry to our Reception class, the teacher uses their professional judgement, based on observations of individuals, to record the starting points for the children's level of development.

In the final term of the year the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is completed for each child. Teachers indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development (ELG), or if they are not yet reaching expected levels (emerging) across the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage including the areas of Communication and Language, and Literacy.

Children are assessed termly by their class teachers in Reading, Writing and S.P.a.G., and summative data is entered into the school's Assessment Tracker.

In Y1, children take a statutory Phonics Test to test their decoding skills. Any children who did not pass the phonic screening in Y1 are expected to retake the test in Year 2.

In Years 2 and 6, children will take statutory assessments in Reading, Spelling and Punctuation and Grammar.

NFER assessments take place towards the end of each school year in KS2. The results are used to inform teacher's summative assessments at the end of the year.

For more information, please see the school's Assessment Policy.

## **Review Framework**

The policy will be reviewed annually (or sooner in the event of revised legislation or guidance)

Next Review Date: February 2023