

# English Policy

## Yew Tree Primary School



<b>Date of Policy:</b>	September 2024
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Tamsie Mclean (English Lead)
<b>Review Date:</b>	September 2027
<b>Consultation:</b>	This policy was reviewed in consultation with staff and governors.

### ETHOS STATEMENT

It is the aim of the Governing Body of Yew Tree Primary School to develop policies and procedures which support the school's vision of:

**“Learning Without Limits”**

#### Aims:

The study of English develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, views and feelings. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

#### The aims of English at Yew Tree are:

- to provide a language rich environment that promotes a culture of reading and writing.
- to develop in pupils a love of books and high-quality literature that will not only support their learning across the curriculum, but also extend beyond the classroom environment and enrich their lives.
- to explicitly teach reading skills throughout the school which continually develops children's understanding and enjoyment of texts.
- to teach children the craft of writing in order to develop the confidence and skills to write well for a range of purposes and audiences.
- to teach the basics – spelling, grammar, handwriting and punctuation – well, so children have all the necessary tools.
- to foster in pupils the confidence, desire and ability to express their views and opinions both orally and in writing.
- to value and celebrate diversity in culture and language.

## Teaching and learning

### Writing:

At Yew Tree Primary School, we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in English. We develop these skills through daily English sessions. English is also taught throughout themed topics and non-core subjects. These sessions will include:

- a purpose and audience for each piece of writing which will be decided from the outset.
- writing that will be displayed all over the school.
- a stimulating first-hand experience, e.g. trips, storytellers and drama.
- writing that is taught as a sequenced activity.
- teachers providing regular helpful feedback through marking
- writing that is linked to creative topics to promote engagement.
- progression in complexity of tasks and reading material year on year.
- opportunities to write independently and for extended periods, that will build stamina for writing

Pupils have access to a wide range of writing opportunities that include:

- shared writing
- guided writing
- creative writing
- independent writing
- writing different text types and narrative styles
- writing in different curriculum areas
- handwriting practice
- collaborative writing
- writing related to own experiences and enjoyment
- writing from a variety of stimuli
- planning, drafting, editing and presenting
- using ICT

### Reading:

- Reading is a vital life skill and we are passionate about encouraging our children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers. Through contact with interesting, challenging, high-quality texts, we aim to develop both reading comprehension and reading for pleasure.
- Our library stock is constantly reviewed and updated. A wide selection of early reading books are available from age 4 and these are banded linked to the Sounds Write phonics scheme (for example initial code and extended code); children then progress through these. Once secure on the phonics reading scheme, pupils will choose books within their ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development) range to ensure that free reader books are matched to reading ability.
- Teachers and teaching assistants also read on an individual basis with children as necessary: how often and who is based on assessment of progress and how often they are reading at home.
- A progression of comprehension skills are taught throughout the school which focus on each specific Assessment Focus.
- Reading is encouraged throughout the school day in the following forms: Accelerated Reading time, guided reading and story time.
- Children, parents and staff record their reading on Boom Reader. This is an online reading record.
- Those children who are not making adequate progress are given one to one support.
- We are flexible with our use of scheme books. If a child is 'stuck' at a level and losing motivation, we will always look for alternatives, for example online short reads using Myon, to re-ignite enthusiasm.

### **Phonics:**

At Yew Tree, phonics is introduced through a linguistic phonics programme called Sounds-Write. This programme is successful in teaching children to read and spell because it starts with what all children know from a very young age – speech sounds. Then, using a very systematic approach, it teaches them how these sounds are coded within our writing system.

The four key concepts children need to learn are:

1. letters are symbols that represent sounds
2. sounds can be spelled using 1, 2, 3 or 4 letters
3. the same sound can be spelled in different ways
4. the same spelling can represent different sounds

The three key skills children need to master are:

1. blending
2. segmenting
3. phoneme manipulation

### **Spelling:**

- Key Stage One pupils are encouraged to 'have a go' in their first drafts and refer to class word banks when writing.
- We use the 2014 National Curriculum as a guideline as to which spellings should be taught in which year group. In addition to this, Key Stage 1 focus on common exception 'tricky' words.
- Children practise three spelling corrections in their English or spelling books - chosen by their teacher as 'ones they should know' - as part of their response to marked work.
- We link handwriting to common spelling patterns in KS1.
- Children learn to spell explicitly in weekly spelling sessions and through the English lessons.
- From Year One, children are actively encouraged and taught to proof read their writing for spelling errors.
- Sounds-Write resources continue to be used to support the teaching and learning of spelling throughout the school.

### **Handwriting:**

Handwriting is taught throughout the school using the Kinetic Letters® programme.

There are four main threads of:

- making bodies stronger,
- holding the pencil,
- learning the letters, and
- flow and fluency

It enables children to develop legible handwriting that is produced quickly and automatically. With the development of automaticity, handwriting becomes a valuable tool and not a hindrance to learning.

The Kinetic Letters® font covers all the letters in the alphabet and is based on a set of rules that have been made as simple as possible to enable fast learning. The order in which letters are taught recognises the cognitive development of children.

The Kinetic Letters® font is used on some resources and displays to support learning (e.g. PowerPoint slides, worksheets etc.)

### **English curriculum planning**

Class teachers complete weekly plans for the teaching of English. These detail the specific learning objectives, tools for success to be shared with the children, differentiated activities to support specific groups of children and assessment strategies to be used in each lesson. A whole school overview form is also completed, which details the genre, text and objective focus for each year group for the whole year. All planning is stored electronically and is monitored regularly by members of the Leadership Team.

### **Use of Information and communication technology (ICT)**

We use ICT to support the teaching and learning of English, in line with the school's ICT policy.

### **Teaching English to children with special educational needs**

Learning opportunities are provided that are matched to the needs of children with SEND. Planning for tasks in English takes into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Children with SEND receive help with communication and literacy through the use of:

- texts that children can read and understand;
- visual and written materials in different formats;
- ICT and other technological aids;
- alternative communication such as signs and symbols;

Children identified as having SEND are also supported in and outside of class through a range of interventions.

### **Assessment and recording**

Teacher assessments of writing take place three times per year, at the end of each term and an independent piece of writing is completed through APW, which is moderated internally and externally.

Reading is assessed using Accelerated reader six times per year. Pupils are given a ZPD which informs their reading material.

Children in Year 6 currently undertake the national assessment tests in Reading and Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG). Children in Year 2 complete SATs tests in reading, writing and SPAG. Year 1 children have a phonics screening check at the end of the year; this can be re-checked in Year 2 if they do not meet the criteria.

In order to track progress and attainment in reading and writing, teachers input assessment data at the end of each term. This is then analysed and used to inform next steps and focus groups.

### **Monitoring and review**

The English Leader is responsible for the regular monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in English. This includes: supporting staff with the planning and delivery of English lessons; lesson observations; whole school data analysis; ensuring current developments in the subject are shared to maintain high standards of subject knowledge. The English Leader reports to the Leadership Team and annually to the Governors' Teaching and Standards Committee on the subject's strengths and areas for development.

### **Equal Opportunities**

This policy is to be considered in line with our Equalities Duty and we will ensure that at all times we will seek to promote equal opportunities and good race relations, avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of ethnicity, disability or gender. Appropriate action will be taken in cases of harassment and discrimination.