



# Kings Meadow School

Believe and Achieve



## English Policy

Reviewed: February 2018

Next review: February 2019

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of Governors

### Our Beliefs

At Kings Meadow School we believe that spoken language, reading and writing are essential skills for everyday life. As such we strive to make sure that pupils enjoy and appreciate literature and endeavour to provide pupils with the means to develop their literacy skills and knowledge and understanding so that they can communicate effectively and creatively through spoken and written language.

In fact we believe literacy skills are central to our pupils' intellectual, emotional and social development and so incorporate them across the curriculum.

By using the Programmes of Study from the New National Curriculum (DfE 2014) it is our aim to develop in all pupils:

- ❖ a positive attitude towards spoken language, reading and writing
- ❖ an enthusiasm for books
- ❖ a memory bank of familiar stories
- ❖ confidence in orally retelling stories
- ❖ a magpie mind for selecting good ideas, adapting and using them
- ❖ a varied vocabulary and curiosity about new words
- ❖ secure phonetic awareness and application skills
- ❖ secure awareness and application of basic grammar rules
- ❖ a comfortable pencil grip and legible handwriting
- ❖ an ability to work both independently and with others.
- ❖ an ability to use and apply spoken language, reading and writing skills across the curriculum and in real life.

### School Policy and the National Curriculum

#### Knowledge Skills and Understanding

All teachers use our school's scheme of work, which is taken from the New National Curriculum (DfE 2014), and the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (March 2017) in order to ensure that all objectives are taught, in correspondence with the year group each pupil is working at,

irrespective of their chronological age.

### **Breadth of Study**

Through careful planning and preparation we aim to ensure that throughout the school pupils have the opportunity for:

- ❖ listening to and reading a range of stories, genres and text-types
- ❖ using different resources to support learning e.g. word-banks, writing frames, Clicker 7\*
- ❖ hand and body strengthening exercises to aid handwriting
- ❖ 1:1 support with phonics and spelling
- ❖ 1:1 reading with a teaching assistant or teacher.
- ❖ Drama and practical activities, e.g. role play, to develop spoken language
- ❖ individual, group and whole class discussions and activities.
- ❖ using ICT as a English tool e.g. easispeak\* and Clicker 7.
- ❖ reflecting on their progress and identifying their own strengths and target areas.

### **Scheme of Work**

Our school scheme of work is a working document based on the New National Curriculum, the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundations Stage and the needs of our pupils. Teachers plan for progression within each unit of English and continue to adapt plans and teaching strategies as necessary to ensure that they respond effectively and meet the needs of individuals, whilst maintaining challenge and progress for each individual.

### **Spoken Language**

At Kings Meadow School we consider speaking and listening skills of paramount importance and provide a wide range of contexts for spoken language rehearsal and development throughout the school day such as:-

- circle time
- snack time
- role play
- oral story-telling
- Lego therapy
- Book Talk
- Use of Blank questioning\*

Teachers and other adults in school model speaking clearly. This includes clear diction, reasoned argument, using imaginative and challenging language and use of Standard English. Listening is modelled, as is the appropriate use of non-verbal communication and respecting the views of others. Teachers are also sensitive to encouraging the participation of retiring or reticent children.

### **Cross-curricular links**

Throughout the school teachers seek opportunities to promote, consolidate and extend English learning through the teaching of other curriculum areas and the continuous provision.



Mark-making in the continuous provision

Individual class plans for the Continuous Provision also indicate English learning opportunities.

### **Teachers' planning and organisation**

The core teaching and learning areas of reading and writing are broken down into four aspects.

Phonetic awareness and spelling – At Kings Meadow School we follow the Letters and Sounds scheme for the teaching and learning of phonics and spelling. As such the class teacher or teaching assistant will plan, deliver and monitor 1:1 sessions at least 2 x per week to each pupil in line with their assessed needs.

Reading- We use a colour banded reading scheme which correlates to the pupils reading age and ensures reading books are appropriately matched to each pupils' decoding ability. The aim is for each pupil to read with a class teaching assistant or the class teacher on a 1:1 basis at least 3 x per week. In addition to this pupils take part in daily whole class story time during which pupils can experience being read to and then engage in discussions around the text.

Handwriting – Teachers and teaching assistants follow the Kinetic Letters scheme of work in order to map out individual learning journeys for each pupil in terms of their progression in making their bodies stronger, pencil grip and letter formation.



Making our bodies stronger so that we have the stamina for writing.



Making sandwiches after being inspired by the Light House Keeper's Lunch and then writing our own instructions.

Talk for Writing (T4W)– Our core English teaching and learning follows the Talk for Writing approach within which pupils: -

- 1) Learn a set text – oral rehearsal
- 2) Adapt the learnt text – text mapping
- 3) Write a version of the text type – Big write

Through this T4W approach pupils are exposed to a range of different elements of English teaching and learning such as book talk\*, drama conventions and magpie-ing\* as well as grammar, spelling and handwriting. As such these sessions can vary in style depending on the learning intention and the needs of the pupils, hence teaching may remain 1:1 or small group.

As we operate in mixed-age classes, planning includes the full age and ability range and typically one unit plan, based on a common planning format, for the core English teaching and learning is produced which is then shared across the classes. Each class teacher is then responsible for the English teaching and learning in their classroom and so determine the individual learning journey for each of their pupils based on the unit plan. All teachers use the school's scheme of work and Statutory Framework for the Early Years and Foundation Stage, which they annotate as objectives are covered and achieved.

In order to accommodate these 4 aspects of English within our weekly teaching and learning we plan according to the following structure:-

- ❖ T4W English lessons to be taught discretely at least 2 x per week with evidence gathered in books to reflect each pupil's individual learning journey.
- ❖ Phonics learning to be taught discretely at least 2 x per week with evidence gathered in books to reflect each pupil's individual learning journey.
- ❖ Reading to take place as a focus session 1 x per week with additional opportunities for 1:1 reading throughout the week as well as daily Book Talk.
- ❖ Kinetic Letters to be taught discretely 1 x per week with additional opportunities for fine and gross motor skills through the continuous provision and daily 'wake and shake'.

In addition, across these 4 aspects of English we ensure the following:-

- ❖ English lessons are taught as a whole class, small group or 1:1 depending on the needs of the pupils.
- ❖ English lessons have clear objectives which are shared at the start of the lesson and success criteria which the pupils reflect on at the end of the lesson.
- ❖ The pace of the English lesson varies depending on the needs of the individual pupil.
- ❖ Ongoing and termly assessments are used to ensure that teaching responds to, supports and challenges all pupils.

### **Differentiation**

Differentiation should be incorporated into all English lessons and can be achieved in various ways. For example:-

- Pace within and across lessons which ensures individual pupils move on at a pace to suit their level of understanding and learning needs.
- Resourcing which is used to support and deepen understanding and is used in different ways depending on the needs of the individual pupil eg. Word banks, Easispeak, Clicker 7.
- Self-selection Activities which encourage the pupils to reflect on their learning needs and push themselves to meet the challenge.
- Common Tasks which are open ended activities/investigations where differentiation is by outcome and linked to support needed.
- Additional teacher support is given to assist different abilities to ensure progress and challenge at all levels.

### **Targets**

Every term pupils' Individual Learning Plans are reviewed and updated. This includes the reviewing and setting of specific English targets, which relate to each pupil's Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) or their latest Annual Review. These targets are shared with parents, carers and the pupils. Once a week, through morning folder work, the pupils are given the opportunity to complete tasks in relation to these specific targets. Furthermore teachers work with the pupils as needed to help secure and deepen understanding so that they will successfully meet their target. We do however recognise that pupils progress at different rates and so targets are only updated when individual pupils are assessed by the teacher as having met a current target and are ready for a new one.

### **Resources**

All classrooms have English tools and vocabulary displayed where needed to support learning both within the English lesson and the continuous provision. Each classroom also celebrates English

successes by displaying work on the 'Special to...' and 'Wow' boards\*.

Teachers use interactive whiteboards and computing activities within the English lesson and continuous provision as needed as a tool to stimulate and engage the pupils in order to promote progress, deepen understanding and to encourage further exploration.

### **Special Educational Needs**

We recognise that all of our pupils have significant barriers to learning as well as some pupils having specific learning difficulties. Through careful planning, ongoing assessment and the use of suitable resources, we teach English that can be accessible to all learners by considering the aforementioned methods of differentiation.

### **Challenging the more able**

We also recognise that some of our pupils may show particular strengths in English and we provide appropriate challenge opportunities for this through careful planning, ongoing assessment and the use of suitable resources.

### **Equal Opportunities**

At Kings Meadow School we work hard to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to access English. In daily English lessons we support pupils with a range of difficulties such as having English as an additional language, delayed processing skills and learning disabilities in a variety of ways. For example by discussing key vocabulary, repeating instructions, speaking clearly, using picture cues, recording verbal ideas electronically.

### **Evidence of Learning**

Throughout English lessons we provide pupils with various methods of showing their learning. As a result of this we expect there to be a variety of evidence of learning within books following every English lesson. This can take many forms such as photos, speech bubbles with pupils' verbal responses or pupils' own written recordings either directly in the English book or on worksheets.

At Kings Meadow School we are not opposed to the use of worksheets as we realise that for many of our pupils worksheets can help to provide a framework and a sense of security when carrying out learning tasks. We do however also use practical resources to support learning and ensure that there is still a sense of progression e.g. if a pupil shows they have met the objective within the first few questions, they do not need to complete the rest of the worksheet but are instead ready to move on to something more challenging.

### **Exercise Books for Recording**

It is school policy that English books have lined paper inside. The width of the lines should match the handwriting ability of the individual pupil. Different coloured paper might be used to meet individual learning needs.

All pupils are encouraged to organise their work so that it is neat and can be understood.

### **Marking**

At Kings Meadow School we believe marking should be used for three key reasons:-

- 1) Celebrate successes
- 2) Identify progress and next steps
- 3) Inform teaching and learning

Overall the marking of English follows the school's own marking policy which includes the following key points:-

- ❖ Marking includes a stamp for the pupil to celebrate successes.
- ❖ There is evidence of pupils' self-evaluation through the completion of red, amber, green colour coding against the success criteria.
- ❖ Marking includes a longer comment to reflect progress *e.g. You showed that now you can use a full stop to show the end of a sentence.*
- ❖ Pupils are encouraged to read and respond to the teachers' comments by leaving smiley faces.
- ❖ Where appropriate pupils are encouraged to check and tick their own work *e.g. using a calculator to check computational exercises.* This fosters independence in the pupils and a reminder that work should always be checked first before declaring it complete.

Where appropriate forward marking is used to challenge a pupil further. For example *Excellent Tom! You can use a full stop to show the end of a sentence. Can you spot where a sentence can be improved by using a ! instead of a full stop?*

(See the Marking Policy for further details)

## **Assessment**

Teachers are expected to make ongoing regular assessments of each pupil's progress and to record these systematically. As a school we have two waves of assessment, which are as follows:-

### **1) Ongoing assessments**

This involves the teacher's use of assessment opportunities within lessons to determine pupils who require further support and intervention and those who are ready to progress further thus ensuring that the learning journey is personal for all. The outcomes of this are recorded through annotations on planning and are used to inform future lessons.

### **2) Formal Assessments**

Writing - At the start of the year we carry out base lining assessments in the form of a basic skills in writing assessment. This is then repeated half way and at the end of the academic year in order to assess progress.

At the end of every English unit, pupils produce at least one 'Big Write' which is a piece of independent writing. These are then assessed and used to inform data collection, progress and future needs.

Reading – Every big term, the pupils complete a single stage reading paper, which will be marked by the class teacher in order to determine a reading age. This will be used to inform planning, update progress against key objectives using Curriculum Monitor and data entry.

In addition at the start of every year pupils also complete a phonics assessment, this is then repeated

half way through the year and at the end of the academic year to show progress against sound recognition and application.

( See Assessment policy for further information)

### **Involving parents/carers**

All teachers are expected to form a good relationship with parents and carers and to encourage a two-way open dialogue regarding accomplishments or concerns.

Every term updated Individual Learning Plans are shared with parents and carers so that they can see the pupil's success against a previous English target, their new target and suggestions of ways to support their pupil's English learning at home.

Also coffee afternoons are held termly, at which the pupils are encouraged to share their success in English with their parents and carers. As needed teachers may also take this opportunity to discuss pupils' general performance in English and highlight any areas for development or particular concerns. If appropriate teachers may also use this time to suggest ways parents and carers can support their pupils in their English learning at home.

At the end of the year an annual report is also shared with parents, which indicates whether the pupil is working above, below or at national expectation as well as a general comment about their pupil's attitude towards English.

### **Homework**

At Kings Meadow School we acknowledge that our pupils already have a number of obstacles to overcome both in school and at home and so homework is not expected. We do however respond to the pupils and will provide homework as requested.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Members of SLT and the English subject leader monitor and evaluate the quality and standards of English throughout the school, through learning walks, lesson observations, planning scrutinies, book monitoring and data analysis. The English subject leader provides feedback to staff and works alongside teachers to ensure English is taught most effectively.

Regular staff meetings also provide the opportunity for all teachers to review the scheme of work, policy and published materials as well as training regarding the teaching and learning of English.

### **The Governing Body**

The governing body take an active role in working with the senior leadership team and English subject leader in order to ensure approve policies and appropriately challenge the existing practise.

### **Please also refer to the following policies:**

Assessment

Marking and Feedback

Teaching and Learning

## **Glossary**

Easispeak – a sound recording tool for collecting spoken language and playing it back. This can aid independent learning, speaking and listening skills and also be used as an assessment tool.

Clicker 7 – a computer programme to support pupils when collecting ideas and creating sentences. This is especially useful for pupils who struggle to either share ideas verbally, produce legible handwriting, recognise sounds and make grapheme correspondences or produce writing without an over-reliance on adult support.

Blank questioning – An approach to language development as designed by Marion Blank who studied the language used by teachers in the classroom and found that there were different levels of questions used. Basic questions ask for simple concrete information whereas more complex questions ask for abstract information. As such 'Blank questioning' refers to a systematic and progressive approach to questioning children which enables teachers to assess the child's level of language understanding.

Book Talk – this is a daily activity achieved through story time whereby books are celebrated and the pupils develop the ability to talk about books, deepen their understanding and therefore move their comprehension forwards. This then contributes to improvements in writing skills and confidence.

Magpie-ing – a T4W term used to indicate when pupils are encouraged to take ideas from texts, other writers or even their peers as a means of recognising what works well and using it to improve their own writing.

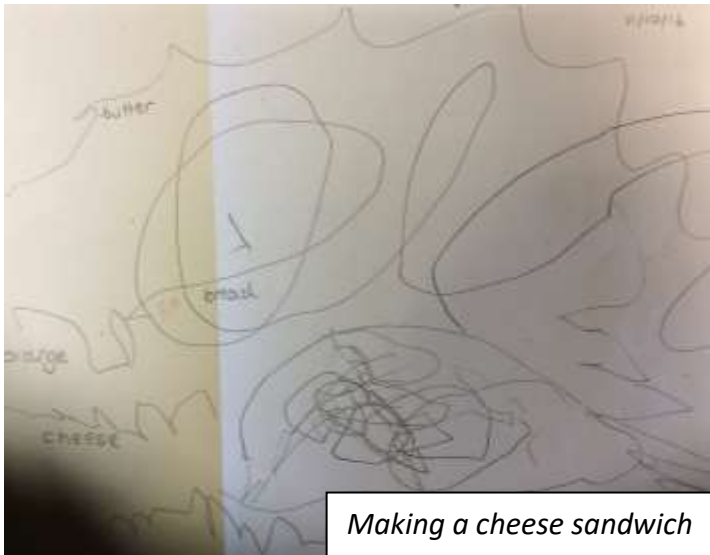
'Special to...' boards – display boards in the classroom used by pupils to self-select and share learning they are proud of.

'Wow' boards – display boards in the classroom used by the class teacher to select learning they feel pupils should be proud of.

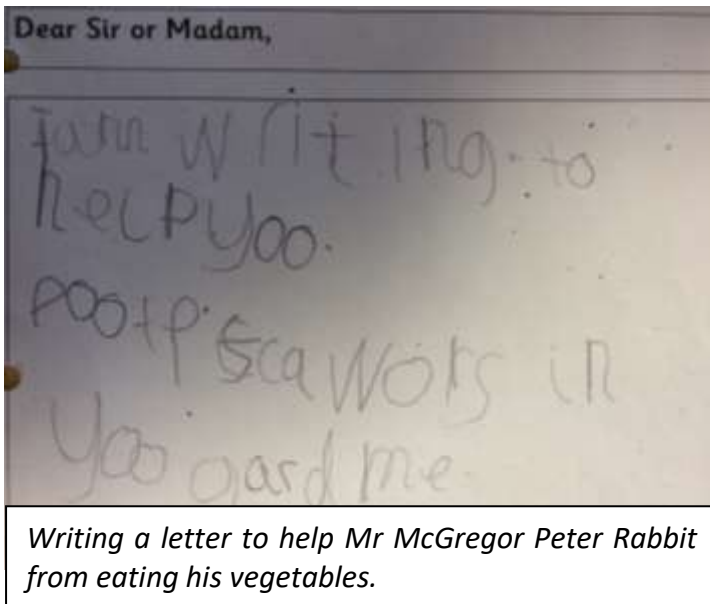


## Appendix

Samples of pupils writing to reflect progression and the current ability range in terms of handwriting, phonetic and grammatical understanding and writing composition.



Early stages of writing demonstrating mark making and an awareness that marks on a page carry meaning.



Creating sentence structures verbally and in writing by using word banks, writing frames and independent use of phonetic knowledge.

