



ENGLISH POLICY

Reviewed Annually by the Pupil Progress and Pupil Welfare Committee

Date of last review:	Signature:
Summer 2017	

Introduction

At Alford Primary School, we recognise that competency in the four areas of English (Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing) underpin learning across the curriculum. Therefore the provision of quality teaching and learning opportunities for children to acquire these vital skills is central to our teaching practice. The four areas of English will be considered individually; however, since English is dependent on the inter-relationship between these four areas, teachers will build on links between them across units of work. We recognise that language and literacy learning is most effective in a meaningful and purposeful environment, through experiences and opportunities that contextualise learning and through excellent adult and peer modelling. We understand that in order to become confident users of language, pupils need to be able to write, speak and read Standard English with fluency and accuracy. We aim to support children in becoming keen, enthusiastic and competent readers.

Speaking & Listening

Pupils' understanding of the spoken word and their capacity to express themselves is central across the whole curriculum. We recognise the importance of spoken language in pupils' development, as it underpins the development of reading and writing and often forms the starting point for teachers when planning for progression in these areas.

Aims and objectives For children to be able to:

- Build on oral skills that have begun at home prior to children reaching school age, however limited;
- Develop a wide vocabulary and spoken grammar skills;
- Develop questioning skills when responding to speakers and texts;
- Interact purposefully with peers and adults;
- Express and justify opinions, using the conventions for discussion and debate;
- Listen attentively to each other and to adults in school;
- Work co-operatively in small and class groups with a variety of people, in different contexts
- Gain knowledge and participate in the artistic practice of drama;
- Improvise, devise and script drama for a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.

Phonics & Spelling

Pupils at our school use the Government published systematic phonics programme called 'Letters and Sounds' (alongside resources from the 'Jolly Phonics' and 'Read, Write, Inc' programmes), which support us in providing a multi-sensory approach to learning phonics. Children are taught within the phase that is appropriate to their level of development. For more information about phonics, including a video of how to pronounce the phonemes (sounds), please click here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LITw0oiLNys>

These 'pure' sounds help the children to blend and segment, therefore to read and write. Click [here](#) for our recommended online Interactive Phonics Games.

In addition to the phonics programme out-lined above, we also follow the spelling appendix to the Statutory National Curriculum. Details of the spelling requirements for each year group are detailed within this appendix. Please click here for a link to current National Curriculum:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/425601/PRIMARY_national_curriculum.pdf

- Children in EYFS complete a variety of directed phonics activities every day.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils receive 25 minutes phonics teaching every day; where children are streamed into smaller groups to provide intensive support. Pupils with specific needs may also receive additional interventions based around Read Write Inc.
- In Key Stage 2, children have dedicated spelling activities every week and some pupils will also take part in phonics lessons in order to meet their learning needs.

Reading

Competence in reading is the key to independent learning and is given the highest priority, enabling the children to become enthusiastic, independent and reflective readers. Success in reading has a direct effect upon progress in all other areas of the Curriculum and is crucial in developing children's self-confidence and motivation. We use a range of reading schemes including 'Big Cat', 'Pearson Phonics Bug', 'Oxford Reading Tree', 'Read, Write Inc.' and 'Rapid Readers'. As children gain the skill of decoding and begin to read fluently, we make sure that we deepen their understanding by questioning and working on children's comprehension skills. Each classroom has a range of 'real' books as well as access to our reading schemes.

Click [here](#) for a link to the Oxford Owl website, which is a free website built to support parents with their child's learning.

Aims and objectives For children to be able to:

- Provide all children with the necessary decoding skills / reading strategies to access texts;
- Become confident and fluent readers with excellent understanding of what they read;
- Read aloud, with expression and intonation, including reading as performance;
- Read with enthusiasm and develop a lifelong love of books;
- Access and effectively use a range of genres, including narrative, poetry and non-fiction;
- Develop competency in using electronic media to access meaningful texts;
- Develop a critical appreciation of what they read;
- Develop their own imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness;
- Monitor and evaluate their own reading and reading experiences;
- Develop reading and retrieval skills that allow them to use a text effectively;

Writing

We recognise that writing is an essential skill for children to learn in order to respond to their learning across the curriculum. We believe real life experiences that encourage children to write independently for a purpose are essential in developing the ability to communicate effectively through writing. It is a strength of the school that we provide writing opportunities within a rich, broad and purposeful curriculum.

Aims and objectives For children to be able to:

- Enjoy writing and be competent in communication through writing;
- Write for a variety of purposes and audiences;
- Organise and structure their writing so that meaning and purpose are clear;
- Achieve age appropriate objectives as a foundation to be built upon at each stage;
- Take pride in the presentation of their written work;
- Use a variety of media effectively as part of their writing skill base;
- Proof-read and edit their own writing to improve the quality of their written work.

Grammar & Punctuation

- In Key Stage 1, Grammar and Punctuation are taught discreetly, through writing lessons. Pupils with additional needs may receive extra support, as appropriate.
- In Lower Key Stage 2, children receive regular focused P&G sessions, though vulnerable learners may receive additional support during this time.
- In Upper Key Stage 2, children receive regular focused P&G activities during the week, though vulnerable learners may receive additional support during this time.

Handwriting

Pupils in Key Stage 1 follow the “Read, Write, Inc.” handwriting scheme, and receive 15 minutes focused practice four days per week. Key Stage 2 children follow the Nelson handwriting scheme; in Year 3/4, pupils practise three days per week, and in Year 5/6, pupils complete a short handwriting session every morning, before assembly (using the Year 5&6 word list words). Handwriting may be carried out as part of a focused group for children who are still not forming / joining their letters fluently and legibly.

Teaching and Learning

The approach to the teaching of English within the school is based on our Teaching & Learning Policy.

Displays

All classrooms have an English Learning Wall, which may not only shows the learning through a unit of work, key features of the text type and learning prompts, but may also have an interactive area (whiteboard) where children can show their understanding of current learning and next steps. Star Workers may also be displayed in this area, or in corridors / in the hall, where comments from peers and visiting adults are encouraged.

Assessment

Children in the Foundation Stage are assessed in accordance with the EYFS curriculum.

During June, all Year 1 children take the statutory ‘Phonics Screen’; any child who does not reach the expected standard will then re-take the phonics screen the following year. Children in Year 2 and Year 6 will be teacher assessed during the summer term, using the 2014 National Curriculum expectations for each of the attainment targets in English. In May, Year 6 children will also take the SATs (externally marked tests) in Reading and Spelling, Grammar & Punctuation (SPaG).

In all year groups, Teacher Assessments will inform end of year predictions as to each child’s attainment in Reading, Writing and SPaG; these will be made in December, March and June, supported by formal testing. In addition, all children will complete a standardised Single Word Spelling Test three times during the year.

Marking and presentation

Please refer to the Marking and Feedback Policy.

Homework

Pupils are expected to record three home reading sessions in their homework diary every week. In addition to this, parents are also encouraged to read to / with their children throughout their time in primary school. Age and ability-matched spellings are taken home to be learnt for a test during the following week, which may take the form of an activity for Key Stage 1 phonics. For school holidays and in the run up to SATs, Year 6 pupils may receive focused reading comprehension and writing practice in a variety of genres, as well as activities involving grammar and punctuation.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The curriculum leader, alongside SLT, is responsible for monitoring and evaluating curriculum progress. This is done through book scrutiny, planning scrutiny, lesson observations, learning walks, pupil interviews, staff discussions, regular audit of resources and attendance of cluster meetings. [↗](#)

Review

The English policy will be reflected in our practice. The policy will be reviewed annually.

Agreement date of policy

This policy was developed by the English curriculum leader in November 2014 and updated in June 2017. [↗](#)