



## Minsterley Primary School English Policy

Spring 2020

This policy needs to be read alongside other school policies including:

- Curriculum policy
- Phonics policy
- Reading policy
- Early Years policy
- Gifted and talented policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Assessment policy
- Marking policy
- Homework policy

This policy also should be read alongside the new National Curriculum in England (published September 2013) and other documents from the Standards and Testing Agency.

### Rationale

The National Curriculum (2014) clearly states that teaching the English language is an essential, if not the most essential role of a primary school.

At Minsterley School we recognise that without effective communication, little achievement can be made. We know that we have a duty to ensure that English teaching is a priority and we recognise that this is necessarily cross-curricular and a constant throughout school life and beyond. It is part of the 'essential knowledge' (p6 National Curriculum) that is needed in society:

'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.'  
(p10 National Curriculum)

We are an inclusive school; we set high expectations and recognise the importance of accurate and regular assessment in order to support individuals at every part of their learning journey and in whatever circumstances. We use one to one support, small

groups and cross-phase work to help with this. We plan teaching opportunities to help those for whom English is an additional language and those with disabilities outlined in the SEND code of practice. We agree with the statement of the National Curriculum, that 'pupils...who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised' (p13)

## 1. Spoken Language

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

Our aims and provision:

We encourage our pupils to speak clearly and confidently and articulate their views and opinions. We teach that children need to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose, listening and responding to literature and giving and receiving instructions.

They develop the skills of participating effectively in group discussions.

Ways in which we support this include:

- Activities which are planned to encourage full and active participation by all children, irrespective of ability
- Children with specific speech and language and auditory problems will be identified and specialist help sought, where appropriate.

Opportunities to encourage clear and confident speaking include:

- School Plays
- Class debates
- Weekly assemblies
- Events within the community
- School Council
- Talk partners
- Book talk sessions
- Drama and role play
- PSHE and circle time

## 2. Writing

The National Curriculum states that pupils should:

- Develop the stamina and skills to write at length
- Use accurate spelling and punctuation
- Write grammatically accurate sentences
- Write for a range of 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 Curriculum divides writing skills into two aspects:

- Transcription (spelling and handwriting)
- Composition (articulating ideas in speech and writing)

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, reading, grammar and vocabulary.

Our provision for writing:

- Spelling is taught in a systematic way in all classes using the Spelling Shed scheme which offers comprehensive coverage of all the requirements in the National Curriculum through engaging online spelling challenges. Weekly assignments are set by class teachers and regular spelling tests are carried out to ensure that learning is actually being retained.
- We teach grammar and punctuation skills as separate lessons where that is appropriate and more effective for the learners.
- We correct grammatical errors through verbal feedback whenever possible, or through written comments (where appropriate)
- We have a systematic approach: we revisit key learning and build upon it in all areas from phonics, through to grammar and spelling
- We use high quality texts, modelling and shared/collaborative writing to demonstrate good practice
- We ensure that pupils have the opportunity to write in a range of genres using the appropriate features and style of writing
- We encourage and promote 'talk for writing'
- We provide writing frames for support when appropriate
- We provide time for planning, editing and revising
- We mark extended pieces of work in-depth and set targets with the pupil
- We use checklists for pupils to self assess or peer assess, when appropriate so they can evaluate effectively
- We encourage joined handwriting to support spelling and speed
- We use drama and hot-seating to help pupils to think about another point of view

- We provide support for pupils with learning and motor difficulties
- We meet with parents to help them support their child
- Opportunities for extension activities are provided for gifted and talented writers

### 3. Vocabulary Development

The National Curriculum makes clear that learning vocabulary is key to 'learning and progress across the whole curriculum' (p11) since it allows pupils to access a wider range of words when writing and for them to understand and comprehend texts efficiently.

Vocabulary teaching needs to be:

- Active
- Progressive/ systematic
- Making links from known words
- Develop understanding of shades of meaning
- Subject specific- for example, mathematical and scientific words

Our aims and connected provision:

We encourage our pupils to have a wide and growing vocabulary in a number of ways, these include:

- Spelling lists/key words to take home and learn
- Display of key words linked to topics and subjects
- Using the correct vocabulary orally
- In-depth word-based lessons looking at patterns
- Using dictionaries, thesaurus and similar ICT tools
- Using texts from other times and cultures to explore vocabulary choices and the effect they have
- Targeted one to one/small group support, where appropriate

### 4. Planning and Assessment

#### Planning

- Planning shows differentiation by ability and by age in mixed year group classes - where this is necessary to meet pupils' learning needs and to ensure good rates of progression.
- English is planned for separately to other subjects with reference to the school's long term curriculum plans
- Resources such as No Nonsense English and Literacy Shed Plus are in place for all year groups. Teachers use these resources as a basis and reference point for most English skills teaching. This ensures balanced, progressive and consistent coverage of all the skills required by the National Curriculum throughout the school. These schemes also promote the use of a wide

variety of high quality texts to illustrate and underpin pupils' language development.

- However, wherever possible teachers also strive to teach English skills within the context of other curriculum areas. In this way children gain valuable experience in making links across different areas of learning. Children are offered many and varied opportunities to practise and develop their writing skills through engaging and motivating topic work.
- Furthermore teachers use whole class reading material, such as a whole class novel, as a basis for teaching all aspects of writing.
- The teaching of phonics, spelling and grammar follow the format of the National Curriculum and ensures that developmental learning builds on prior knowledge
- Short term planning is flexible allowing for assessment for learning after each session/group of sessions
- Pupils may be grouped by ability for some sessions/types of homework/support
- Pupils entitled to Pupil Premium funding will be given additional English support, where appropriate, which is tracked and monitored termly
- Pupils with EAL will be given additional English support when needed which is tracked and monitored termly

#### Assessment:

- Staff assess pupils learning during and as part of every session; they adapt their practice accordingly
- All children complete two Time to Shine pieces of extended writing - one fiction and one non-fiction - each half term. These are assessed against year group specific writing checklists in order to ascertain progress in writing skills.
- Staff regularly participate in moderation of children's independent writing - both within school and with colleagues in our partner schools.
- Key staff (English Lead, Y6 and Y2 class teachers) also attend training in writing moderation offered through the Local Authority.
- End of Key Stage Assessments are analysed by the English Lead and Head teacher and feed into the school self-evaluation, development plan and performance management

#### Specific groups:

- Analysis of English achievement is carried out termly. Pupils who are making less than expected progress are discussed and plans made
- Pupils entitled to pupil premium may be given additional English support and this is monitored for effectiveness termly
- Pupils with EAL are given additional support in all aspects of English where needed

- Pupils who are gifted and talented will be encouraged to extend their English work by accessing a differentiated curriculum.
- SEND pupils may have English based targets on **their IEP**. These are reviewed termly
- Provision maps will give detailed information on English support and achievement. These will be updated every half term.

## 5. Professional development

- The English Lead attends termly training with the Local Authority
- Staff are expected to attend relevant courses during the school year
- Moderation takes place in-house, within the School Development Group and with support from the Local Authority
- Local Authority English advisors are consulted for help and advice on English initiatives in school
- Lesson observations, book looks and discussions with pupils are undertaken by the Head Teacher/English Lead to ensure the quality of English teaching.