



## **Minsterley Primary School English Policy**

Policy written:	Summer 2015
Approved by Governors:	Autumn 2015
Reviewed by Governors:	Spring 2018
To be reviewed:	Spring 2020

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

- Curriculum 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 through-out school life and beyond. It is part of the 'essential knowledge' (p6 National Curriculum) that is needed in society:

'Teachers should develop pupil's 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
- Public speaking/poetry recital at the annual Minsterley Eisteddfod

## 2. Reading

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Reading is singled out as of extreme importance since through it 'pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually' (p13) Reading allows pupils to 'acquire knowledge' and to 'build on what they already know' (p13).

Schools are expected to have library facilities and support and encourage reading at home.

The 2014 Curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions:

- Word reading/decoding
- Comprehension

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, writing, grammar and vocabulary. We also understand that reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning and we encourage and praise children at every stage of it.

Our provision for reading:

- In classes 1, 2 and 3 pupils learn to read easily and fluently through daily phonics work using the Letters and Sounds programme. Guided reading texts closely match learning focuses for phonic sessions. Independent reading books give children the opportunity to develop fluency and enjoyment and are carefully matched to their decoding ability. 'Take home' books include decodable books, guided reading books for children to reread and share with parents/carers and 'real' books selected by children to enjoy at home. The purpose and expectations for reading are made clear to parents/carers.
- Progress in reading and phonic knowledge is monitored closely in Reception and KS1 classes. All Y1 pupils take part in the Phonic Screening Test in June of each year.
- If KS2 pupils need continued help with phonic decoding they have the opportunity to work with a specialist teacher on a regular basis. Additional phonic based reading books are allocated and weekly homework set to reinforce work covered in these focus lessons.
- **Accelerated Reader.** From Years 1 to 6 the children's reading development is enhanced by Accelerated Reader. This is a reading system which is designed to facilitate pupil reading growth and reading comprehension. Each child's reading

level is assessed through a standardised test which is then used to direct the pupils to an appropriate range of books based on their complexity.

Most of the school's reading books have been levelled for their complexity using the ATOS reading formula which includes average sentence length, average word length, vocabulary grade level, and number of words in the book.

Once a child has read a book their understanding of the text is assessed by means of a computer-based quiz that tests their comprehension in a multiple choice format of 3-20 questions. This provides a range data that details their progress.

Pupils in KS2 initially choose books from our levelled book boxes housed in the school library and classrooms based on their Accelerated Reader ATOS.

- All pupils have a reading diary in which the title of their book, how much they have read and comments on how to improve fluency are recorded. The reading diary is completed by both parents/carers and adults in school and provides a useful home/school link.
- Pupils are encouraged to read widely and may choose texts from class book boxes. Our school library houses a wide range of non-fiction books. The Shropshire Library Service provides topic linked texts and also supports our Y5 and Y6 readers through the Book Quest project. Our school has two book fayres each year where children can purchase a range of quality books. Pupils enjoy taking part in sponsored reading challenges either linked to book fayres or organised by local libraries during the summer holidays.
- Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure using reading partners, guided reading sessions, daily quiet reading time when they have the opportunity to read to an adult, listening to stories and the various methods outlined above.
- Interactive White Board resources such as Curriculum Visions provide opportunities for children to read IT texts to research topic work. Computer work in class is also used as an opportunity for pupils to skim and scan websites and extract information.
- Formal assessment is undertaken through termly comprehension tests and recorded on the iTrack system. All data is closely analysed by the Head Teacher, Literacy Coordinator, Governor responsible for English and all class teachers.
- Key Stage Two pupils who are struggling with reading or making slow progress are given accelerated reading support by our reading volunteers.

### 3. Writing

The National Curriculum states that pupils should:

- Develop the stamina and skills to write at length
- Use accurate spelling and punctuation
- Be grammatically correct
- Write in a range of ways and 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 dimensions:

- 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. Spelling lists are taken from the spelling appendix in the 2013 National Curriculum for English. Pupils are tested weekly.
- We teach grammar as a separate lesson where necessary
- We correct grammatical error orally 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

#### 4. 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- accurate 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
- Carrying out systematic testing and providing feedback to pupils
- Targeted one to one/small group support, where appropriate

#### 5. Planning and Assessment

##### Planning

- Long term overviews can be found online for Key Stages One and Two
- Planning shows differentiation by ability and by age in mixed year group classes
- Medium term planning is stored centrally.
- English is planned for separately to other subjects with reference to the school's long term curriculum plans
- 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 streamed by ability for some sessions/types of homework/support
- Pupils entitled to Pupil Premium funding will be given additional English support 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
- Independent, extended writing tasks are regularly assessed and this is tracked on the school tracking system, iTrack
- Formal assessments of Reading Comprehension ability are carried out using Rising Stars Reading Tests (PIRA), tracked and monitored at least termly
- Star Reader (a computer adaptive assessment) is used for Years 1 to 6 each half term. This measures students' reading comprehension, monitors achievement and growth and tracks understanding of focus skills.
- Star Early Literacy. Emerging readers participate in Star Early Literacy which assesses key skills, for example, phonics, naming letters and reading speed.
- Staff attend moderating sessions within the Local Authority including the local School development Group
- End of Key Stage Assessments are analysed by the Co-ordinator 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 slow 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. This academic year able Y6 writers have attended a weekly writing workshop with our in-school author and 'Patron of Reading', Catherine Cooper.
- 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.

#### 6. Professional development

- The English Co-ordinator 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 and book scrutinies are undertaken by the Head Teacher/English Coordinator to ensure the quality of English teaching.