

HOWITT PRIMARY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Embark Multi Academy Trust



English Policy
March 2023



ENGLISH POLICY
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The English Subject Leaders are Hannah Snow (KS1) and Janine Marshall (KS2) with the support of Clare Rhodes (phonics) and Nicola Gregg (EYFS lead)

English plays an essential part in education and society as a whole. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and experiences, gaining an understanding and appreciation of thoughts of other individuals, communities and cultures. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Language is generated through the interaction of listening, speaking, reading, writing and practical experience. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society.

English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching. For the pupils, it is the understanding of the language that provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects.

The policy is matched to the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework and the National Curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2.

We aim for pupils to:

- develop the habit of reading a wide range of genres and text types for both pleasure and information;
- to see reading as a worthwhile experience and to give them the confidence to become independent readers;
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language and use both written and spoken language for a range of purposes and audiences, using a range of media;
- experience some of our varied literary heritage linking to some of our most famous authors, poets, screenwriters and journalists;
- develop the ability to listen attentively, with understanding and interest;
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences;
- have the opportunity to record experiences and imaginative thoughts through a variety of different mediums;
- use discussion in order to learn and be able to elaborate clearly explaining their understanding and ideas as well as making critical responses about the language they read, view and hear in a variety of media;
- be competent in the skills of speaking and listening by creating and presenting formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate;
- have the ability to speak with confidence, clarity and fluency, communicating independent views;
- have an increased understanding of how language is used in the world beyond school;
- have purposeful and enjoyable experiences of English.

Curriculum access and inclusion

We are an inclusive school, creating a sense of community and belonging through our:

- inclusive ethos and commitment to equality and opportunity for all;
- broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils;
- systems for the early identification of barriers to learning and participation, putting necessary interventions into place, monitored by the senior leadership team, class teachers, subject leaders and SENCO;
- high expectations for all pupils;
- setting of realistic targets and differentiated challenges for every pupil.

Phonics

Pre-phonics activities are taught on a regular basis across our two-year old provision and nursery. They have a focus on supporting the seven aspects of level one. The Reception classes, Year 1 and 2, have daily phonic sessions. We follow a DfE validated phonics scheme (Twinkl).

Throughout Year 2 and Key Stage 2, the pupils are taught the spelling rules as outlined in the National Curriculum that continue to build on a synthetic phonics approach and the teaching and learning of spelling patterns. Pupils in Year 1 take the statutory phonic check assessment in June. Throughout the year, assessments are monitored to ensure pupils are 'on-track'. For those pupils required to retake the check in Year 2, specific intervention groups are put into place. Any pupils requiring further phonic provision receive phonic interventions tailored to their individual needs.

Reading

Reading gives access to knowledge and creative thought and is a gateway to learning. It is our aim to cultivate a desire to read and promote all literature so that pupils become readers for life.

We aim to:

- help each pupil discover pleasure and satisfaction and, above all, meaning in the printed word;
- see reading as valuable and necessary, and give them confidence to become independent readers;
- enable each pupil to see reading as an effective tool for learning and for study in all areas of the curriculum;
- provide pupils with a wide range of texts including Media and IT texts from a variety of cultures and traditions;
- develop pupils' appreciation and understanding of the power and use of language and to be able to understand layers of meaning;
- develop the skills and strategies to read for a range of purposes through our varied reading diet and systematic phonics teaching;
- develop the ability to infer, interpret and deduce and also to reflect on the text;
- acknowledge that pupils learn in different ways and adapt the teaching methods to suit the needs of the individual pupil;
- monitor pupils' progress by keeping records which are formative and summative;
- develop a home - school partnership by informing parents through consultations and reading records.

Our objectives are to:

- provide a school environment which encourages enthusiasm for books and reading;
- provide a range of attractive quality reading material, appropriate to the needs and abilities of the pupils;
- provide opportunities to read, hear, share and discuss good examples of writing;
- provide opportunities to read silently and aloud for different audiences;
- to develop skills in using the library;
- to encourage pupils to use reading as a model for their writing;
- to encourage pupils to be sensitive to the use of language in different texts;
- to provide opportunities for pupils to explore and extend their ideas and to develop their own interests through the use of books, printed material and the internet;

- to develop pupils' skills to enable them to extract meaning and respond critically to a variety of texts;
- to encourage pupils to see reading as an activity for pleasure which is not just confined to school times and purposes.

Organisation

Reading is taught through a varied diet of whole class reading, group reading, booster sessions, VIPERS skills, silent reading, 1:1 with an adult, fluency lessons, buddy reading, phonic sessions, story sacks (EYFS) and story time across the whole school.

Progression and Continuity

Our reading scheme is progressive. It contains a range of books that challenge gender stereotypes and feature characters and people from a range of ethnic and social backgrounds, as well as those with differing abilities. The books give visibility and representation to all of our readers. The Collins Big Cat phonic level books are progressive through school from nursery to Key Stage 2. All pupils can access materials across the phases to suit their needs. In addition to our reading scheme, all children are given the opportunity to visit our school library which offers a further choice of reading material.

The progress made by the pupils in Key Stage 1 is built upon in Key Stage 2 through our progressive reading diet. Pupils are taught a range of reading strategies during time tabled lessons which are built into our curriculum. These skills are then applied into other subjects so that they become naturally embedded.

Writing

Writing is a complex activity that is essential for communication today. It combines the skill of composition and the skills of presentation.

At Howitt Primary Community School, we believe pupils need to be able to use different styles for different audiences and purposes and that they need to be able to write in a range of forms. Pupils need to write coherently and use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation to help make the meaning of their writing clear to the reader. Pupils also need to develop their vocabulary to express themselves with accuracy and to engage the interest of the reader. 'The writing sequence' is an essential part of our teaching which encompasses all of these skills.

We aim for pupils to:

- write freely, confidently and independently, developing distinctive and original styles;
- develop skills and knowledge of writing which allows them to write for a wide range of purposes and audiences;
- develop their knowledge and understanding of the conventions and structure of written English;
- develop their ability to write legibly and to adopt appropriate styles according to different contexts of writing;
- spell independently, most of the words they use frequently in their writing;
- make plausible attempts at unknown words;
- proof-read work to check for incorrect spellings and use a dictionary independently;
- develop editing skills in order to improve punctuation and grammar;
- reflect on their work re-drafting sections to improve the overall quality of the piece.

Our objectives are to:

- support pupils with their fine motor skills, using a range of activities and resources within both the indoor and outdoor provision;
- provide opportunities for pupils to write for a range of purposes and for different audiences;
- help pupils to become sensitive to differences between speech and writing;
- enable pupils to punctuate their own writing accurately and effectively;
- help pupils appreciate the needs of the reader through their own writing and in talking about the writing of others;
- provide pupils with the opportunity to write, using a variety of different text types;
- provide pupils with examples of a wide range of written material and opportunities to incorporate them in their own writing;
- enable pupils to learn new spelling, grammar and punctuation rules which are purposeful for the writing they are producing;
- enable pupils to discuss and respond critically to their own and others' writing, analysing strengths and weaknesses and justifying their comments;
- develop the pupils' skills, knowledge and vocabulary needed to enable them to write appropriately across all curriculum areas;
- develop skills and knowledge which enable pupils to make appropriate decisions in planning, composing, organising, drafting and editing their writing;
- encourage pupils to take pride in the presentation of their written work.

Organisation

Pupils begin learning the fundamentals of writing in EYFS through planned continuous provision which targets the pupils' interest. Throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, reading provides a model for our writing activities which are taught through our writing sequence. This involves providing the context and a purpose for our writing, looking at good examples, interrogating the structure and language features of the text type, exploring and applying new vocabulary, teaching and applying specific grammar skills appropriate to the style of writing, modelled examples by the teacher, opportunities to write independently, time to proof-read, edit and redraft where appropriate.

Progression and Continuity

At Howitt Primary Community School, clear progression and continuity is ensured through following our procedural knowledge documents which build on skills from EYFS to Year 6. This enables our pupils to become confident, independent writers in preparation of their next phase of learning.

Handwriting

The cursive handwriting style is used throughout the school being modelled by staff and displayed around the school. In EYFS pupils are given the opportunity to develop their fine and gross motor skills alongside mark making and letter formation. In Year 1, pupils learn how to write their letters in a pre-cursive style which then progresses to joining their handwriting. Pupils have opportunities to practise joins and high-quality handwriting is encouraged. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to use a pen as soon as they are able to write in a legible and clear form and pupils then achieve their pen licence.

Speaking and Listening

Pupils need to be able to express themselves orally in an appropriate way, matching their style and response to audience and purpose. They need to be able to listen and respond to literature and drama they have experienced and to give and receive instructions. They need to develop the skills of participating in group discussion.

We aim to:

- develop their abilities to communicate and express themselves effectively by speaking with confidence, clarity and fluency in a range of contexts;
- enhance the correct use of grammatical terms and use of Standard English;
- develop their abilities to explore their understanding and feelings and those of others through the medium of speech;
- encourage them to communicate their knowledge, ideas, opinions and feelings clearly and concisely for a range of purposes and to a variety of audiences;
- help them to develop the ability to listen attentively, with understanding and interest and to respond appropriately;
- provide them with the opportunity to create, adapt and sustain different roles in drama skills,;
- encourage pupils to explore the meaning of text through characters, actions, themes and emotions;
- encourage them to be aware of the use of non-verbal clues, facial expressions, pauses, music etc in creating atmosphere.

Our objectives are to:

- create a school environment where purposeful talk is encouraged through which the understanding, feelings and views of others are valued and respected;
- provide opportunities for pupils to develop positive listening skills and strategies;
- help pupils understand how to adapt their use of language and to vary the tone to suit different audiences;
- give pupils the opportunity to use spoken language for a range of different purposes;
- raise pupils' awareness of the difference between formal and informal discussions and the appropriate behaviour;
- encourage pupils to reflect on their own and others' use of language and understand that it is an important part of learning;
- provide pupils with opportunities to formulate and ask questions and to respond to questions of others;
- provide pupils with the opportunities to discuss and listen in a variety of group situations, and
- encourage pupils to evaluate their own and others' work.

Speaking and listening skills are embedded throughout the curriculum.

Cross Curricular Links

The teaching of all English skills and abilities is enhanced through links to other subjects across the curriculum. A range of reading materials, including fiction and non-fiction, support our creative curriculum and encourage pupils to read widely. Pupils are routinely given opportunities for extended writing in English sessions and across the curriculum, therefore evidence of pupils' writing will be found in a variety of pupils' books, with the same high expectations. Time for discussion and the expression of ideas are also given throughout the curriculum.

English Curriculum Planning

English is a core subject in the national curriculum, and we use the national curriculum as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the programme of study for English. We carry out the curriculum planning in English in three phases: long-term, medium-term and short-term. Differentiation is a key factor of our planning so that the learning needs of all pupils are met.

Resources

There is a range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school; all classrooms have dictionaries, thesauruses, tailor-made vocabulary mats and English working walls. All classrooms have a selection of fiction and non-fiction books to encourage pupils to read for pleasure and to aid the enrichment of the curriculum.

Marking

Marking in English is in accordance with the school's marking policy and encourages pupil to take more responsibility for improving their own work.

Assessment for Learning

In EYFS the pupils are assessed and moderated against check points throughout the year. These are progressive and lead to the Early Learning Goals.

In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 a variety of teacher and standardised assessments provide a summative record of what each pupil has achieved as well as informing ongoing planning. At Howitt Primary Community School, we use termly NFER reading assessments, and grammar, punctuation and spelling assessments. Salford Reading Age test and 'reading between the lines' comprehension exercises are used. Embark writing assessment grids are used termly for Years 1 – 6.

Statutory tests are in place for pupils at the end of Year 2 (for the academic year ending in 2023) and Year 6. Pupils in Year 1 take the statutory phonic check assessment.

Homework and the Role of Parents/Carers

We see parents/carers as important partners in the process of developing their child's English skills. They have an important influence on their child's language before they come to school. They provide valuable support at home in helping them to become readers and writers. They offer a useful audience for them in their development as speakers and listeners, readers and writers as they move through the school (e.g. phonics, reading, SATs revision).

Teachers encourage reading at home through a range of incentives. For example, the classroom reading reward scheme and the opportunity to visit the headteacher's office to choose a book if they have read 100 times at home. Each year, we also run a reading competition to inspire and encourage pupils to read more frequently.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of the standards of the pupils' work and the quality of the teaching in English is the responsibility of the headteacher and the English subject leaders. The work of the subject leaders also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, being informed about the current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school. They evaluate English provision through action planning and monitoring activities that inform the school's self-evaluation. The subject leaders meet regularly as a team and with the headteacher. They give the headteacher and governors an annual summary report that evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicates areas for further improvement. The subject leaders have allocated time, in order to enable them to review samples of the pupils' work and undertake lesson observations of English teaching across the school.

The Co-Chair (Carolyn Wood) meets regularly with the headteacher and English subject leaders to discuss the data. The Co-Chair (Jane Bowley) is also actively involved in the monitoring of books.

This policy will be used in conjunction with
Teaching and Learning Policy,
Marking Policy,
SEN Policy,
Assessment Policy,
Handwriting Policy,
Homework Policy
Equality Policy.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or as required.

Signed.....Co-Chair of Governing Board

Date.....

To be reviewed.....