



## **ENGLISH/LITERACY POLICY:-**

This policy supports our aim to assess and develop pupils' communication, ensuring all pupils are maximising their communicative potential, through communication supportive practice.

An effective learning environment is one which is communication-rich. Staff support pupils' development through a recognition of how communication underpins children's ability to learn and to build relationships. Utilising a Total Communication approach, staff know the appropriate combination of systems to support each pupil individually. Staff have regular communication training to ensure skills and knowledge are kept up to date.

This policy was adopted on:-\_Sept 2010 \_\_\_\_\_ Date

Chair of Governing Body:- Tim Mottram \_\_\_\_\_ Date

Reviewed May 2016\_\_\_\_\_Date

To Review:- May 2019\_\_\_\_\_ Date

# **THE FOREST SCHOOL ENGLISH / LITERACY POLICY**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

English is a vital part of everyday life. Everyone needs to be able to communicate feelings, thoughts and ideas and to interact effectively with others. The Forest school views communication as paramount and all pupils are supported to communicate as effectively as they are able in terms of spoken or written language.

The Forest school uses the National Strategy frameworks (primary and secondary) for English and the primary and secondary National Curriculum documents to plan a broad and balanced curriculum for its pupils. Early years plans its curriculum using the Early Years Foundation stage curriculum.

## **2. RATIONALE**

'Learning English encompasses all aspects of communication -non-verbal, verbal and written. Work in English promotes learning across the curriculum and underpins pupils' achievements and participation in all aspects of their lives.'

In particular, English offers pupils opportunities to:

- Develop the ability to respond, to listen and to understand.
- Interact and communicate effectively with others in a range of social situations.
- Make choices, obtain information, question and be actively involved in decision making.
- Develop creativity and imagination.
- Have access to a wide range of literature to enrich and broaden their experiences.

## **3. SCOPE**

This statement of policy relates to all pupils, staff, parents, carers and governors of the Forest school. The age range of pupils from 3-16 years must be acknowledged in the creation of the policy and the development of the literacy curriculum.

## **4. PRINCIPLES**

The principles of the Forest School for literacy are:

- Policy and provision are evaluated and reviewed regularly.
- Resources of time, people and equipment are planned, budgeted for and detailed when appropriate in the school improvement plan.
- The governing body of the Forest school discharges its statutory responsibility with regard to literacy.
- Cross-curricular links will be encouraged and implemented wherever possible.
- The planning of literacy ensures continuity and progression across all year groups and key stages.

## **5. AIMS**

## **5.1 General**

Our aims for literacy are in line with the school's general aims. We aim to produce individuals who are confident and creative within their ability level, and able to communicate effectively with adults and their peers. We aim to provide a stimulating environment with interesting and varied resources, so that individuals can develop their literacy skills to their full potential.

## **5.2 Curriculum content**

### **Speaking and listening**

Speaking and listening skills include all forms of communicative responses. Pupils are encouraged to use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences, to interact with others in play and to get things done.

Vocalization, whether spontaneous or imitative, is encouraged so that pupils are able to express their likes, dislikes, feelings, emotions and preferences in the classroom and in social situations.

Communication is aided where necessary with PECS (picture exchange communication system), printed visual aids using Communicating In Print, AAC resources (e.g. Dynavox) and Makaton sign language.

At The Forest School speaking and listening is developed with close links to speech and language therapy input, both through assessment and integral classroom teaching and the sharing of resources and ideas.

### **Drama**

Drama is an integral part of speaking and listening and is an important tool to explore real-life and imaginary situations. It is also used to improve social interaction within school, and explore social issues for the older children. Songs and games which include actions and turn-taking also form an important part of the speaking and listening process and are used widely in the literacy lessons.

Age-appropriate resources are used throughout the school; for example, dressing up costumes, puppets and story sacks. Visiting specialists are invited into school to deliver workshops and interactive productions. Groups of children in the secondary department are taken to performances at local theatres whenever possible. Drama is taught within literacy lessons and also as a separate subject in the secondary curriculum.

### **Reading**

Reading can incorporate any interpretation of objects, pictures, symbols and the printed word. Pupils are encouraged to engage with texts appropriate to their level of understanding, and these will be a range of fiction and non-fiction texts.

Resources include big books to share, story sacks, puppets, software on the smart board and the computer and sets of readers for more able readers. Phonic knowledge is taught as an integral part of the literacy lessons and Reading Intervention groups, across the age range together with activities which promote comprehension of texts, grammatical awareness and information gathering.

In Primary pupils have an individual reading book and are encouraged to read at home on a regular basis. In Secondary all pupils read regularly as part of ability based reading groups, accessing the range of reading schemes. Oxford Reading Tree is used throughout the school as the main reading scheme; however there are many complimentary schemes, including fiction and non-fiction, which are colour - banded in the library following a nationally accepted system. It is our policy that pupils read widely across a reading level, and make choices for wider reading from

the well resourced library. Age appropriate texts are made available to all pupils but it is recognized that some pupils may choose non-age appropriate materials for their reading choices.

## **Writing**

Writing is used to record information, experiences, events, thoughts and feelings. Methods of recording children's ideas and the level of support required will vary according to the needs and abilities of the child concerned. A range of ICT hardware and software is available in school to aid the recording process. Visual stimuli will often be used alongside writing to enable pupils to access the written word.

Examples of support can include:

Using objects, pictures, photographs, symbols and text to illustrate ideas

Scribing captions for work using ideas from the child

Providing text to copy or over write

Providing banks of words or phrases to support independent writing

Modelling writing structures and using writing frameworks

The teaching of letter sounds and phonics is taught through the use of various apparatus, games and activities and a range of ICT programmes available on the computers and Smart boards.

## **Handwriting and presentation**

The early steps in writing, including mark-making and coordination skills to enable the holding of a pencil, are developed using a range of practical activities which help improve fine and gross motor skills. When writing skills emerge, pupils are encouraged to form letters correctly and handwriting practice forms a regular part of literacy throughout the school. Where appropriate, pupils are taught joins between letters to develop a joined up style of writing.

Where possible, pupils are also encouraged to word-process some written work to improve presentation and to help with proof-reading work. Work is displayed in the classrooms and shared areas in school.

## **6. PROVISION**

In Early years foundation stage, literacy is delivered as part of a cross-curricular approach with the emphasis on communication skills. In key stage 1 pupils are taught literacy in mixed ability groups, while in key stages 2 and 3 pupils are taught in groups of similar ability, which take pupils from across the key stage. The lessons follow the format for the National Literacy Strategy with a starter, main teaching activity and plenary. The lessons provide for a range of learning styles and opportunities are given for whole class teaching, paired and small group work and individual work.

Pupils engage in:

- A range of speaking and listening activities.
- Spelling and phonics-based work.
- Individual work-box activities linked to own targets and abilities.
- Reading as a group or individually.
- Handwriting activities and coordination skills.
- Group or class discussion.
- Drama and role-play.
- Writing skills involving different genres.
- Sentence –building and grammar based work.
- Research and information-finding activities.

- Sequencing and planning activities.

Where possible, pupils are given opportunities to write for a purpose and for real contexts, and to address different audiences whenever possible.

At key stage 4 pupils are taught in year groups or mixed ability groups according to numbers of pupils. They continue to work on improving literacy skills alongside completing units of work for the Functional Skills Entry level certificate in English.

## **7. CURRICULUM ORGANISATION**

### **Planning**

- Planning is based on the early years foundation curriculum, primary and secondary frameworks and underpinned by the national curriculum.
- In the secondary department, work which encompasses all aspects of English is planned on a half-termly basis and each unit covers different reading and writing genres. Age-appropriate tasks are chosen and back-tracking of objectives is carried out using the primary framework. Objectives and success criteria are differentiated to meet the needs of pupils with different abilities.
- Planning incorporates pupils' IEP targets and speech and language therapy assessments and recommendations.
- Class teachers are responsible for short term planning. Medium term planning is provided by the English coordinator.
- Planning is done on a half term and weekly basis and is monitored by the coordinator. Cross-curricular activities are integral in order to promote and extend language and literacy throughout the day.

### **Assessment**

- Assessment is ongoing. B-Squared Connecting Steps is used across the school to monitor progress.
- Pupils are assessed twice annually against the P scales and National Curriculum level descriptors, and a summative statement forms part of the annual review report to parents.
- Ongoing reading records and B Squared records are kept and passed on at the end of each year.
- Regular speech therapy assessments are carried out prior to the annual reviews.
- Spelling records are kept in the secondary department.
- Medium-term and long-term planning assessments are stored on the server.
- Data analysis is carried out by the middle leadership team with feedback to staff.
- Lesson observations, both informally and as part of performance management directly assess teaching and learning within English.
- English targets for speaking and listening, reading and writing are set each year.
- Teacher assessment is made at the end of foundation stage, key stage 1,2 and 3.
- End of Early years foundation stage, key stage 1, 2 and 3 reports are compiled each year.
- Assessment at the end of Key Stage 4 is by teacher assessment and formal examinations; (WJEC Functional Skills E L Certificate).
- Internal moderation of pupils' work happens at least once a term across the school; External moderation happens at least once a year.

## **8. ROLE OF SUBJECT LEADER**

- To provide long term and medium term planning for literacy in school, in liaison with the assistant head in charge of the primary curriculum.
- To manage the English and library budgets.
- To organise and oversee moderation meetings for all teachers delivering literacy in school.
- To organise groupings of students at secondary level.
- To manage resources in school.
- To support colleagues teaching English to plan and deliver English lessons and assess their students.

## **9. ROLE OF ENGLISH TEACHER**

- To ensure progression in the acquisition of literacy skills.
- To plan appropriate work for individuals in their classes, on a weekly basis, using medium –term plans provided.
- To keep on-going records and monitor pupil progress.
- To develop their skills and understanding of the teaching of literacy.
- To attend inset sessions in school and take advantage of other training opportunities when possible.

## **10. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

All pupils have equal access to the curriculum regardless of gender. English skills are taught in many other subject areas and cross-curricular opportunities are actively taken up. Many multi-cultural and spiritual issues are covered in studies of stories from different countries and cultures.

## **11. PARENTAL/CARER INVOLVEMENT**

We encourage parents and carers to be involved by;

- Actively encouraging them to support their child in reading and writing activities sent home.
- Giving them the opportunity to meet with teachers twice a year at parents' evenings.
- Inviting them into school for their child's annual review.
- Giving advice and information about helping with their child's literacy.

## **12. GOVERNING BODY**

The governors are invited to take an active interest in the teaching of literacy. Governors regularly visit school and observe a range of literacy lessons.