



Literacy Policy

The Woodlands

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1. Aims

This policy is for the staff in our school. It aims to set out:

- Our approach to teaching, monitoring and assessing English and literacy knowledge and skills
- How we will make sure our provision for the teaching of English and literacy is of consistently high quality

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements and expectations set out in:

- The [National Curriculum programmes of study for English](#)
- The [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice 2014](#)
- The [Equality Act 2010](#)
- Where appropriate The [National Curriculum programmes of study for English](#)

3. Our vision for English and literacy

Our school aims to develop pupils' skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening. By the time that pupils move on from our school, our aim is for them to:

- Be fluent readers and writers
- Have a positive attitude towards books and reading, reading widely for pleasure and information
- Enjoy writing in different contexts and for different purposes and audiences, adapting their language and style for different purposes
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting language and style accordingly
- Be curious and creative when it comes to reading and writing, for example by being interested in learning the meaning of new words
- Have a wide vocabulary, and understanding of grammar and linguistic conventions
- Competently speak in group discussions and be able to clearly explain their understanding and ideas
- Listen carefully and sensitively to those around them

4. Our guiding principles for teaching English and literacy

We teach English and literacy best when:

- There's a culture around reading in the school
- All staff feel they have the knowledge, skills, understanding and professional support they need to teach English and literacy effectively
- There's sufficiently detailed and frequent ongoing assessment of pupil progress
- We expose pupils to different types of reading material, such as through stimulating, high-quality and curiosity-inspiring classroom displays
- We involve families in supporting their children's reading and writing
- The English curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced
- We identify where pupils have learning gaps or aren't making the expected progress, and make sure interventions target these
- Teaching resources are available, up to date, varied and diverse, and match pupil and curriculum needs
- We engage pupils in high-quality back-and-forth interactions
- We model new language and accurate grammar to pupils
- We support pupils with speech, language and communication needs, for example with extra small-group activities

- Pupils have plenty of opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills via activities such as small-group work, presentations and role-plays

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The Executive Headteacher / SLT

The Executive Headteacher / SLT is responsible for:

- Building a team of expert teachers who know and understand the processes that underpin learning to read and write fluently and effectively
- Providing teachers with the appropriate training and resources so that they can competently deliver the English curriculum
- Creating a stimulating school environment where pupils are exposed to different types of reading material, such as through displays, books and other resources

5.2 Head of Department

Our Head of the English / Literacy Department is responsible for providing leadership and management for English and literacy to secure:

- High-quality teaching and subject knowledge of staff
- A coherently planned and sequenced English curriculum
- Consistent assessment and accurate teacher judgements within English and literacy
- Effective use of resources

5.3 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Planning effective English and literacy lessons
- Providing opportunities for pupils to apply their English and literacy skills in a variety of ways
- Completing the relevant marking and assessment
- Making sure that support staff have:
- Access to planning materials and resources
- The knowledge and skills they need to support and challenge pupils

6. Curriculum

- At Primary, pupils often arrive disengaged with writing and schools have very little evidence of their ability. The pupils are often working below the age-related expectations in reading and writing. Staff re-engage pupils by carefully choosing topics which excite them. A range of lessons are planned which embed all the strands of literacy. There is a strong focus on phonics in Key Stage 1, with pupils receiving personalised interventions based around Little Wandle.

At KS3, pupils often arrive with levels below national and age-related expectations and are lacking in confidence and self-esteem. This can lead to disengagement and 'fear' of failing in subject areas. Staff develop pupils' confidence and effectively break down the barriers to learning by creating a safe and stimulating learning environment based on individual needs. Renaissance Reader is fully embedded to ensure pupils access and respond to a range of literacy texts. To support with Renaissance Reader there are dedicated planned phonics sessions within the curriculum using the Abigail Steel scheme.

At KS4, the aim is to provide a curriculum that meets the needs of a diverse group of young people. Qualifications offered include GCSE English Language, GCSE English Literature and Functional skills. We promote 'Reading for Pleasure' by providing homework packs for holiday periods and displaying books that our staff enjoy reading. We have fiction books available for loan from the English department, and there's a designated reading area for both staff and students

At The Bridge, pupils in both Key Stages follow the English Curriculum with a focus on improving skills. Pupils follow The Woodlands phonics programme where appropriate. Reading is encouraged and pupils access the library on a weekly basis to encourage the reading of fiction and non-fiction texts. Many of the KS4 pupils continue to complete work provided by English departments from their referring school to ensure a smooth transition upon their return.

At EHN, The EHN team strive to provide a balanced, diverse and compelling curriculum at both KS3 and KS4. Our cohorts have diagnosed medical and health issues which prevent them from accessing mainstream education full-time. Therefore, it is our role to ensure the learning of these students stays in line with their peers and they are given the opportunity to fulfil their academic potential, despite their health needs. Themes and key texts have been mapped out across Key Stage 3 and by 'Teaching Through the Text', a plethora of Literacy skills are taught. Each half-term, a core reading and writing skill is the focus so that students can leave us having gained invaluable knowledge that will serve them into further education and beyond. At KS4, students are thoroughly prepared to sit GCSE examinations in Language and/or Literature, whether their time with our service is long-term or short-term. We also offer Entry Level and Functional Skills to those students with additional Literacy needs.

All APs offering a three-day academic placement have been trained in and use The Abigail Steel Phonics scheme to promote literacy skills and reading.

Speaking and listening

We want our pupils to develop confidence and competence in speaking and listening so that they are able to:

- Speak clearly and confidently in different situations;
- Adapt their speech for different audiences and purposes;
- Listen with understanding and empathy and respond sensitively and appropriately;
- Build on others' viewpoints and attitudes as well as having their own personal opinions.
- Prepare and deliver their GCSE Speaking and Listening exam, which will be filmed and sent to the exam board.

The Woodlands will:

- Provide planned opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to engage in purposeful talk, both formally and informally;
- Use a wide range of questioning techniques and strategies to elicit improved spoken responses from pupils;
- Reinforce the differences between Standard English and non-standard forms of the language where appropriate;
- Reinforce the importance of accuracy in spoken or written language – for example, correcting 'we was...' in students' speech.
- Where appropriate, give pupils regular opportunities to speak and listen in the following contexts:
 - in pairs with a working partner;
 - in small groups with opportunities to take on the roles of chair or
 - scribe,
 - with the teacher or another adult, in whole class discussions.

In these contexts, some of the following activities should take place, exploring and describing events, activities and problems, exploring and developing ideas with others, asking questions as well as answering them, speculating, hypothesising and imagining, planning, organising and reviewing activities. In addition, pupils should practice,

investigating and solving problems collaboratively, evaluating experiences and reflecting on learning, talking at length and adopting the 'expert' role.

Reading

We want our pupils to enjoy reading, to be able to use reading to help them learn and to develop increasing confidence and competence in reading so that they are able to:

- Read fluently, accurately and with understanding;
- Develop comprehension skills, including inference and deduction.
- Become independent and critical readers;
- Select information from a wide range of texts and sources including print, media and Internet, and to evaluate sources;
- Use of phonics and phonemes to support reading.
- Develop the skill of prediction when exploring fiction.

The Woodlands will:

- Assess reading and spelling on a regular termly basis;
- Use available data on pupils' reading ability to plan appropriate support for pupils in order that they may successfully access texts;
- Understand the importance of checking the readability of materials used with pupils against their reading ages;
- Promote phonic and phoneme awareness;

Provide planned opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to:

- read and follow written instructions;
- read and engage with narratives of events or activities;
- question and challenge information and views;
- read with understanding descriptions of processes, structures and mechanisms;
- read and explore ideas and theories;
- learn how to scan for overall meaning and scan for key points, words and phrases;
- use reading to research and investigate a variety of texts;
- Read and evaluate a range of literature with all pupils;
- Use of Abigail Steel Phonics scheme

Writing

Most lessons include and depend on written communication. We want our pupils to develop increasing confidence and competence in writing so that they are able to:

- Write in a range of styles for different audiences and purposes;
- Develop ideas and communicate meaning to a reader using wide-ranging and technical vocabulary where appropriate;
- Organise and structure sentences grammatically and whole texts coherently;
- Use paragraphs to aid meaning;
- Present their writing clearly using accurate punctuation, correct spelling and legible handwriting.
- Develop the skills of formal / informal letter writing to assist with assessment outcomes;

The Woodlands will:

Ensure that when teaching extended writing, the purpose and audience of each piece of writing is explained.

For example, writing to explain a scientific principle to a younger audience, writing guidance for peers on an aspect of the subject, conventions of layout in a formal letter, encouragement to use persuasive techniques;

- Model writing techniques and writing processes to the pupils;
- Share models / exemplar material of writing where appropriate;
- Identify spelling needs and where appropriate encourage the pupils to develop a range of strategies to correct spellings;
- Help pupils to use a range of strategies to learn spellings;
- Identify phonics needs and support pupils in developing phonemic awareness;
- Use thinking maps and planning templates with pupils when planning for extended pieces of writing to promote sequencing and structuring of ideas;
- Identify subject specific terminology and key vocabulary and ensure that these are in planning and used in lessons. These words should be referred to regularly and updated and revised for each main topic;
- Reinforce the differences between Standard English and non-standard forms of the language where appropriate;
- Ensure pupils have planned opportunities to complete extended writing where appropriate. This will be across the curriculum, for example, writing a recount of an SMSC experience or Outdoor Education activity;

- Promote high expectations of pupil's presentation. Work should always be dated, titles underlined, and students to be encouraged to be neat with their handwriting.

Literacy homework

- At Primary a creative homework grid is provided linked to the current topic. Within the grid, there are literacy tasks, which include a reading comprehension and writing opportunities.
- At KS3, pupils are given the opportunity to complete Literacy homework when appropriate. This may involve 'Takeaway Homework' where pupils are given a menu of differentiated homework tasks from which they select one activity to complete or a literacy challenge booklet which can be completed over a period of weeks and sometimes over school holidays.
- At the Bridge, Reading has been incorporated into the daily timetable with 'In the Zone' sessions supported by all staff each day using texts accessed from the library. Some pupils continue to complete additional literacy work provided by their referring schools
- At KS4, homework is issued each half term, sometimes more often if appropriate. Themed homework packs are given to each pupil with GCSE relevant material. Rewards are given for any completed homework. Pupils are encouraged and rewarded for reading any books from the bookshelves in The Maples during unstructured time
- At EHN, a guide to structured revision and the relevant resources are offered to those students who wish to continue their learning at home when preparing for GCSE examinations. At KS3, homework is provided depending on the need or desire of the young person. Online platforms, such as Fiction Express, are encouraged to give students autonomy of their learning. Pupils have access to a library where they are encouraged to read for purpose and pleasure.

Literacy Interventions:

- At Primary, Little Wandle is used as an intervention requiring further support.
- At KS3, additional support will be discretely tailored to suit the pupils needs and may involve extensive one to one support in the classroom and reading intervention sessions, in addition to the timetabled English curriculum.
- At KS4, additional support will be discretely tailored to suit the pupils needs and may involve extensive one to one support in the classroom and reading intervention sessions, in addition to the timetabled English curriculum
- The Bridge has developed the use of a library to help pupils access a range of literature.
- Formal Reading sessions are timetabled for functional English groups in year 10 & 11.
- All students across The Woodlands bases will have access to termly reading and spelling captures. This will be used to measure progress and to inform the interventions that will best support individual students effectively.
- At EHN additional support will be discretely tailored to suit the pupils needs and may involve one to one support in the classroom and reading intervention sessions, in addition to the timetabled English curriculum.

6.1 Timetabling

Literacy activities are timetabled across all bases to support and promote Literacy.

6.2 Cross-curricular links

We will facilitate cross-curricular learning of English and literacy skills, making sure the links with other curriculums are natural and not forced. This will be achieved through activities in other subjects, such as:

- Annotating sources
- Group discussions
- Comprehension
- Topic-based research

6.3 Adaptive Teaching

We will adapt teaching to make sure that every pupil makes maximum progress in English and literacy, by:

- Recognising where some pupils need specific help with their English skills, e.g. if they are dyslexic
- Providing resources such as writing frames to scaffold pupils' learning
- Identifying pupils who would benefit from more support in an area of their English learning, and running small intervention groups for targeted support to aid their progress and attainment. We will monitor these closely to move pupils in and out of these groups as needed
- Making sure pupils who need it are extended through the use of additional, more-demanding and open-ended tasks and planned challenges within each lesson

7. Marking and feedback

Feedback will clearly explain to pupils what they're doing well, and what they need to do next to continue to improve their work and will follow the Marking & Feedback Policy

8. Monitoring and Assessment

8.1 Monitoring

We will monitor teaching and learning in our school to make sure that all of our pupils make the best possible progress from their starting points.

SLT / Head of Department will monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning through:

- Conducting learning walks
- Reviewing marking and feedback
- Termly pupil progress meetings
- Gathering input from the school council
- Planning scrutinies
- Book scrutinies

8.2 Assessment

We will track pupils' progress through the curriculum using a combination of formative and summative assessment termly for example, through ongoing formative assessment, in-school summative assessment such as termly tests/ mock exams, and formal summative assessment

We will provide regular targets for pupils, and termly verbal reports. Pupils will receive a written report inline with the report writing and assessment policy

Staff at Primary and KS3 effectively use a wide range of formative and summative assessment tools to regularly check on the literacy progress of pupils and to provide a full profile of the pupils needs. Staff use a range of strategies to support pupils and ensure outstanding progress is made:

- Use of writing and reading progression grids;
- Regular APP tasks are planned into English lessons;
- Spelling and Reading age tests for all pupils
- Phonics test as and when appropriate - based on the need of the pupil (on entry, exit and at the end of a term);
- Use of Guided reading and reading journals;
- Clear, focused planning;
- PLPs with Literacy targets;
- Marking of pupils work;
- Assessment for Learning used to support accelerated progress.
- Renaissance Reader in KS3

Staff at KS4 use both summative and formative assessment to check progress of pupils. Within GCSE controlled mock or final examinations, pupils are encouraged to use the literacy skills that they have acquired, alongside assessment criteria to complete work for functional tests. Literacy spans the curriculum which is evidenced in planning and marking within pupil's books/files.

Staff within the EHN use both summative and formative assessment to check progress of pupils. Within GCSE controlled mock or final examinations are completed in group lessons and one to one sessions, pupils are encouraged to use the literacy skills that they have acquired, alongside assessment criteria to complete work for functional and GCSE tests. Literacy spans the curriculum which is evidenced in planning and marking within pupils books/files.

9. Learning environment

Pupils will learn English and literacy in spaces that:

- Are well-organised
- Contain appropriate and good-quality resources for pupils to refer to (in a space where they can find or see them easily)
- Are quiet
- Have minimal distractions, for example not containing a distracting amount of decoration

10. Resources

10.1 Books

As well as the core texts set out in the GCSE programmes of study, we will select and use books in our school library that:

- Engage pupils emotionally
- Cover a wide range of subjects
- Elicit a strong response, such as curiosity, anger, excitement, laughter or empathy
- Have a strong narrative that will sustain multiple readings
- Extend pupils' vocabulary
- Have illustrations that are engaging and reflect pupils from all backgrounds and cultures
- Help pupils connect with who they are
- Help pupils to understand the lives of people whose experiences and perspectives may be different from their own
- Include stories set in both the UK and around the world
- Include both modern and traditional stories
- Include fiction and non-fiction

8.2 Dictionaries and Thesauruses

To support with writing and spelling, we will make sure that pupils have access to dictionaries and thesauruses

Having at least 1 dictionary and thesaurus available in each classroom

- Allowing pupils to use the computer during lessons to look up word meanings and synonyms

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed every year by the Executive Headteacher / SLT. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Management Committee.

12. Links with other policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- Curriculum policy
- SEN/SEND policy and information report
- Marking and feedback policy
- Home-school agreement
- Assessment policy Equality information and objectives
- Behaviour policy