



## **Dallimore Primary and Nursery School**

### **English Policy**

#### **Introduction**

The English curriculum at Dallimore Primary and Nursery School is broad, balanced and creative with an emphasis on ensuring that children leave our school being confident and skilled readers and writers who are well-prepared for the next phase of their education. We understand the importance of a knowledge and vocabulary-rich curriculum; English is a strong feature of all lessons, imperative to helping children develop their key knowledge and skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

The importance of English is emphasised by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) who state that good literacy skills provide us with the building blocks not just for academic success, but for fulfilling careers and rewarding lives. Yet despite this, a disadvantaged child in England is still more than twice as likely as their classmates from more advantaged homes to leave primary school without reaching the expected levels in reading and writing. The importance of English is further highlighted by the 'Moving English Forward' document published by Ofsted in 2012. Ofsted recognise the essential role that English plays in the curriculum; they state that mastering English skills are crucial to children's learning in other subjects across the curriculum.

#### **Planning and lessons**

Discrete writing lessons take place daily and children follow a clear and repetitive structure to the teaching of writing to allow them to grasp key concepts and become increasingly skilled writers. Children become familiar with the selected genre of writing, develop key authorial techniques, apply appropriate grammar and punctuation objectives before drafting, editing and publishing writing where appropriate.

Each phase of school has a clear long-term writing overview which maps out the selected texts and genres that they will cover across the year. Teacher genre knowledge organisers are used to support planning, coverage and progression in writing and these map our key authorial techniques, grammar and punctuation objectives that could be taught in addition to capturing the key features, audience and purpose of a chosen genre. Each genre covered is linked to a class novel or class topic, allowing children to apply previously taught knowledge or use background knowledge from the class text to support their writing. Often, a stimulus for writing is chosen as a means to engage children in their writing.

Handwriting lessons are taught daily throughout school and the Letterjoin scheme is used to support the planning of these sessions.

#### **Phonics**

High quality phonics sessions are taught daily in FS2 and Key Stage 1. These sessions follow the Song of Sounds scheme of learning. Song of sounds captures 3 main stages of phonics. In Key

Stage 2, sessions are taught depending on need. For any children at risk of falling behind in phonics, appropriate interventions or additional support is provided.

### **Spellings**



We use the 'Sounds and Syllables' system to teach and develop spelling knowledge skills from the end of Year Two onwards. This involves breaking down words into syllables and sounds, focusing on the smallest units of sound and whereabouts within a word that children go wrong, rather than on the entire word being wrong. Children see greater degrees of success with the accuracy of their spelling, knowing that they may spell three quarters of a word correctly. They are taught four steps: say it, snip it, sound it and target it.

### **Punctuation and grammar**

In addition to daily writing lessons, children in KS2 are taught discrete punctuation and grammar lessons three to four times per week. Long-term overviews are used to ensure coverage and progression. Where appropriate, objectives are taught and linked to the class text or topic. This provides children the opportunity to work on key concepts with a clear context.

In KS1, punctuation and grammar is taught exclusively through the writing sequence.

### **Reading**

Children at Dallimore Primary and Nursery School are given the opportunity to read at school on a daily basis. This happens through shared reading of class novels, during whole class and group guided reading sessions and through one-to-one reading sessions where appropriate.

We place a high importance on the children's ability to not only read a text but also to be able to comprehend what they have read. We focus on developing a child's ability to make inferences about what they have read and to link this to their own background knowledge in addition to developing their vocabulary. All children have access to a range of high-quality texts within classrooms which they can choose from and take home.

We place a real emphasis on developing reading fluency and children in KS1 and KS2 engage in reading fluency lessons at least twice per week. These sessions focus on developing children's speed, accuracy and prosody in order to ensure that they become fluent readers.

We continually strive to raise the profile of reading at Dallimore and run initiatives to boost engagement in reading such as 'Get Caught Reading', Breakfast reading club and regularly rewarding children for reading. Golden time is a weekly treat on a Friday as a reward for reading a minimum of three times per week. We also offer parents workshops to support their knowledge and understanding of the teaching of phonics and how they can support their child with reading at home.

Where teachers recognise that a child is finding an aspect of reading difficult, we act quickly to address this and an appropriate intervention is put into place. In KS2, Boosting Reading at Primary (BR@P) is used to support children who may lack confidence and skills, need to boost their reading age or improve their understanding of what they've read. A fluency intervention is used when fluency is identified as a barrier to children's successful reading. In KS1, precision teach is used to target specific digraphs and common exception words that children are having difficulties with. We also have a reading teacher who targets those children who are behind or at risk of falling behind. This might target phonics, fluency or a child's ability to comprehend what they have read.

### **Assessment**

In writing, end of year objectives are used once per term to track success against year group expectations. These are used in addition to ongoing formative assessment and form part of a teacher's judgement about where a child is currently attaining.

In reading, we assess children's reading rate, their accuracy and prosody; we also benchmark children's reading to ensure that they are being provided with the correct level of reading book and book band level. This, alongside test materials, is used to ensure teachers make informed judgements on children's attainment and progress.

### **Monitoring and Assessment of Learning and Teaching**

Monitoring of children's progress begins with pupil progress meetings following an assessment point, with the subject co-ordinator, teachers and teaching assistants discussing current provision and identifying next steps to support children's progress in reading and writing.

Book scrutiny, learning walks and pupil voice are used to monitor the provision of English teaching and feedback is given regularly to support the development of the teaching of English across the school. CPD opportunities are made available where these are deemed valuable. These might take the shape of inputs during staff meetings or by a variety of other means. Where specific initiatives have been put in place through action planning for school development, these are monitored by the subject co-ordinator in order to evaluate their impact. Findings are reported to the headteacher and governors.

### **Parents and Homework**

Children are expected to regularly read at home and are encouraged to use their home reading diaries to record reading. Spellings are provided regularly in KS1 and KS2 for children to work on at home and parents have the opportunity to find out more about how we teach spellings at school through parent workshops.

**Reviewed – May 2024**

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