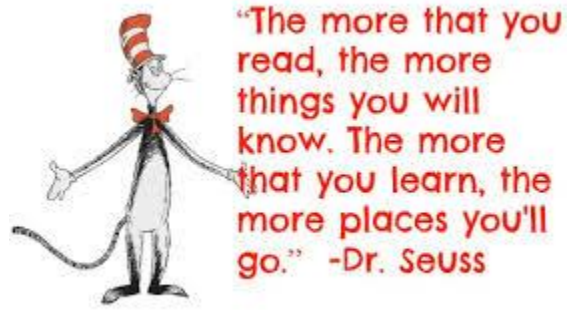
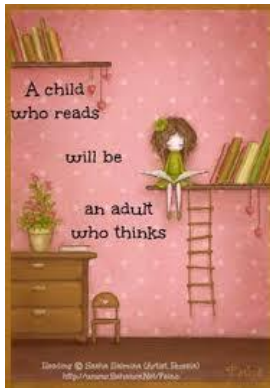


# English Policy



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*Date of review: Autumn Term 2020*



"It wasn't raindrops at all. It was a great solid mass of water that might have been a lake or a whole ocean dropping out of the sky on top of them, and down it came, down and down and down, crashing first onto the seagulls and then onto the peach itself, while the poor travelers shrieked with fear and groped around frantically for something to catch hold of- the peach stem, the silk strings, anything they could find- and all the time the water came pouring and roaring down upon them, bouncing and smashing and sloshing and slashing and swashing and swirling and surging and whirling and gurgling and gushing and rushing and rushing, and it was like being pinned down underneath the biggest waterfall in the world and not being able to get out."

## **1) Aims and Objectives**

At Stoke Holy Cross Primary School we are committed to promoting a positive attitude towards English as a stimulating and creative subject. Our English curriculum develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a range of purposes and audiences and enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively; recognising the value of the subject in their everyday lives.

English will develop children's abilities to communicate confidently and effectively in speech and writing, and to listen with understanding. Our children are able to become enthusiastic, responsive and critical readers across a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts.

Children are provided with opportunities to display their skills, knowledge and understanding, not just within the daily English lesson, but across the entire curriculum.

## **2a) Reading Aims**

We do not use one single structured 'reading scheme' in our school, but believe in guiding and supporting children to read 'real' books with text of an appropriate level of difficulty. Our objectives in the teaching of reading skills across the school are:

- To build on the children's language experiences and early reading skills that they have already acquired.
- For pupils to emerge from inexperienced readers to independent readers who read a variety of texts for different purposes.
- For children to develop as readers and to be able to enjoy reading for pleasure, alone or as a shared experience with an adult or their peers. We want children to be able to read independently and be able to follow personal interests and to use their research skills to extend their knowledge and understanding.
- We aim to provide books from a variety of cultures in order for pupils to develop a healthy knowledge of cultures other than English and allow pupils of that culture to celebrate their heritage.
- To ensure that our children are able to use a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual) and be able to correct their own mistakes.
- To engender a love of reading and ensure that children can recognise the enjoyment which reading can bring.
- To help children become more confident and independent readers; reading accurately, fluently whilst developing their understanding of meaning conveyed at word, sentence and whole-text level.
- To enable our children to read, analyse, evaluate and reflect on a wide range of texts, including challenging and substantial texts and literature from other cultures and traditions.

### **b) Teaching Reading in Foundation and Key Stage 1**

Children in the Foundation Stage class take home a book from school according to their reading attainment. Parents are encouraged to hear their child read the book and then record how they have got on. This encourages teacher - parent communication. As children complete the 'levelled book' stages, they move onto selected books from the library and then onto a 'free-choice' from the library. This continues throughout Key Stage Two.

Letters and Sounds will be used to teach synthetic phonics to children in Foundation and Key Stage 1. All children in Foundation will follow the phonics programme as soon as they enter our school. Children are 'streamed' according to their ability in the spring and summer terms and those not reaching the expected standard will receive additional support.

### **c) Guided Reading in Key Stage 2**

The goal of guided reading is to enable learners to become independent, able readers, who understand and appreciate texts on their own without the teacher's help. Guided reading takes place in a small group, with a teacher or teaching assistant, and focuses on developing pupil's ability to become independent readers, thinkers and learners. The teacher is acting as the expert who guides the children through the text, providing signposts to the most important and most helpful features of the textual landscape.

Within guided reading, teachers will develop children's comprehension skills through focused questions. The pupils are grouped by ability and read individual copies of the same text, which matches the reading level of the group. Texts are selected from the school's guided reading resources.

Key questions from the text will be planned for in advance and recorded on the plans. Class teachers will have a good knowledge of the text they have chosen for a particular group in order to plan effective questioning. Questioning will allow pupils an opportunity to extend and consolidate their reading skills. Questions should develop children's understanding by using the school-agreed DERIC (Decode, Explain, Retrieve, Infer and Choice) as a model:

- ✓ Checking the text makes sense.
- ✓ Asking questions to improve understanding.
- ✓ Drawing inferences.
- ✓ Making predictions.
- ✓ Summarising the main ideas (and the key details that support the main idea).
- ✓ Commenting on how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning.

All teachers at Stoke Holy Cross Primary School will plan their questioning with Bloom's taxonomy in mind - this is to encourage children to extend their thinking skills.

Class teachers will plan a guided reading schedule to ensure that every child has an opportunity to be heard read and/or discuss text, on a bi-weekly basis. The minimum expectation is that Guided Reading sessions will take place three times a week.

While the class teachers/teaching assistants are reading with groups, the other pupils will need to be engaged in reading activities. Pupils will stay with their guided reading group and may move through a variety of activities during the week. The activities include word check (children using words within their own sentences), follow-up activity, comprehension questions, 'free-writing', independent reading and a guided activity.

#### **d) Library**

The library is part of the overall purpose of our school, accessible to all children, used to enhance the learning and interests of all.

#### **Aims**

- To encourage and foster a love of reading and a spirit of enquiry by providing a wide range of fiction and non-fiction suitable for the age and ability of the children.
- To provide resources which are easily accessible in the right kind of child-friendly environment.
- To support the curriculum.
- To develop sequential, cumulative handling skills from entry into school through to Year 6, using fiction and non-fiction books.

- To encourage the use of the library within and outside school.
- To provide equal opportunities for all pupils (as stated in the Teaching and Learning Policy).

### **3a) Writing Aims**

Our objectives in the teaching of writing skills across the school are:

- To develop pupils in becoming efficient and effective writers who are able to write appropriately for a variety of audiences.
- To develop pupils in acquiring the knowledge and skills to communicate effectively within a range of contexts.
- To plan English with a clear 'Teaching Sequence' in mind. This structure will typically begin with reading and immersion within a text type or book to gain a deep understanding. Once this has been gained, the children are then able to manipulate this text type to produce a piece of writing linked to that text type. The units typically last for two-four weeks (using the Pie Corbett and Talk 4 Writing model: imitation - innovation - invention).
- To make sure that a minimum of 5 lessons per week English teaching is observed by all classes. Throughout the week, word level, sentence level, text level, handwriting and speaking and listening skills are addressed by each class.
- To ensure all pupils can use the conventions of written language and grammar.
- To ensure that all pupils experience a range of purposes and forms of writing.
- To ensure all pupils have opportunities to plan, edit, draft and present their work.
- To develop pupils to become aware of and appreciate the writer's craft.
- To develop pupils' love of writing.

### **3b) Modelled and Shared writing**

Shared writing is a whole class activity where the teacher models the writing of the text. In shared writing, the pupils will contribute to the text by suggesting words or sentences to be used. The teacher demonstrates how to write and explains decisions. S/he will model thinking, rehearsing sentences, writing and re-reading constantly generating words and ideas. Across the key stages, teachers will focus on the purpose, audience, level of formality, structure and organisation of the text. A particular aspect of word or sentence level work provides an additional focus depending on the objectives and targets being worked on at that time.

### **3c) Guided Writing**

Guided writing is an excellent way to use AFL and aid children in achieving their targets and making progress. Guided writing is a mini lesson within a literacy lesson itself. Guided writing groups are fluid and change all the time. They may include children from all different attainment groups. They may also be target based (so those children who have the same writing target may be included in one guided

writing session). The guided writing session may have a separate learning objective to that of the main teaching (for example, the children may be learning to write using different sentence starters; however, a group of children may still not be using full stops and capital letters properly. The guided writing session will involve those children learning to use full stops and capital letters properly so they can make the most progress).

### **3d) Grammar and Punctuation**

At Stoke Holy Cross Primary School, we want our children to be confident at not only knowing the names for grammar and punctuation but also how it affects the reading and writing process. We aim to follow the Pie Corbett model of teaching grammar and punctuation (within context), although we acknowledge that, at times, lessons will be discrete.

- ✓ Use assessment to identify grammar skills needed in a unit (cold task).
- ✓ Try to ensure your model text includes these features.
- ✓ Introduce grammar through games and activities linked to text type and progress.
- ✓ Demonstrate how to use grammar features in shared writing and investigate in shared reading.
- ✓ Expect children to use the features in their own writing.
- ✓ Help the children to discuss these features so that they can lead the discussion.
- ✓ Use feedback to check on how effectively it was used and what needs to be taught.
- ✓ Build in progression across the years.
- ✓ Staff to have a clear understanding of the expected SPAG content to be covered within their year group.

### **e) Handwriting**

Children in Foundation and Key Stage 1 are encouraged to write in the style of Charles Crips. Teachers will model this style when working with the class. As children travel through our school, they will be encouraged to adopt their own neat, cursive handwriting style.

### **Aims**

- To produce clear, concise, legible handwriting.
- To provide equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve success in handwriting.
- To present work to a variety of audiences neatly.
- To develop accuracy and fluency.
- To help children recognise that handwriting is a form of communication and as such should be considered important in order for it to be effective.
- To display neatly presented work around the school and in classrooms as a model of excellence for others to aspire to.
- To encourage children to take pride in their work.

## **f) Spelling**

Teachers at Stoke Holy Cross Primary will support the teaching of spelling in a variety of different ways - primarily through the context of spelling embedded within normal classroom practise. Children in yrs2-6 use the 'Spell Zoo' programme, and if children are finding spelling difficult, they can access a range of support programmes within school including: Sound Discovery, Nessy, Lexia and SNIPP.

## **4) Speaking and Listening**

Our objectives in the teaching of speaking and listening skills across the school are:

- To enable children to formulate, clarify and express their ideas clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners and audience.
- To develop our children's ability to adapt their speech to a widening range of circumstances and demands.
- To encourage children to listen with concentration, understand and respond appropriately to others - evaluating their own and others' contributions.
- To enable children to become more effective communicators, both verbal and non-verbal, through a variety of drama activities.

## **5) Teaching and Learning**

Our philosophy on teaching and learning is encapsulated in our Teaching and Learning Policy to which reference should be made. For our teaching to be effective, we need:

- ✓ Well planned lessons with clear objectives which can be shared with pupils.
- ✓ Well-structured lessons with good pace.
- ✓ Appropriately high expectations for all pupils, challenging and motivating.
- ✓ Differentiation and planning which takes account of assessment.
- ✓ A range of teaching and learning styles involving direct teaching of whole class, group, paired and individual work.
- ✓ Appropriate emphasis on speaking and listening activities.
- ✓ The inclusion of a plenary - time for the pupils to reflect on their own learning.
- ✓ Setting common tasks which are open-ended and have a variety of responses, allowing pupils the freedom to make personal choices and decisions within the learning process and about the final outcome.

## **6) Access**

Children of all abilities benefit from a broad, balanced and relevant English curriculum whatever their age, ability, ethnic group, disability, gender or social background. Children who have special educational needs, including the high achiever, will be supported by the Class Teacher, Teaching Assistants, the use

of appropriate intervention programmes, the Special Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and the School Support Team (SST).

We aim to include everybody as fully as possible in the daily English lesson by providing:

- Careful planning of oral questioning to accommodate less able/more able.
- Manageable differentiation.
- Visual elements, resources and modelling on the board/flipcharts.
- Clearly assigned tasks for support staff.
- Computing, ICT and other technologic aids.

Adults in our school are entitled to support from:

- Colleagues and subject leaders.
- In service training within school and from outside agencies.
- Provision of materials and resources.

## **7) Resources**

### **Books:**

- Reference library containing books coded by colour and numbers.
- Reading Scheme books.
- A fiction and non-fiction library for the more able readers, alphabetically arranged.
- Dictionaries and thesauruses in classrooms.

### **Reference:**

- Photocopiable material.
- Audio and visual materials.
- Posters and displays of vocabulary to enhance the learning environment.
- A range of CD and Art materials.
- Internet resources, eg film.

### **Hardware:**

- Computer suite.
- Interactive whiteboards.
- Chromebooks and iPads.
- Headphone bank.
- Radio, CD and DVD players.
- Digital still and movie cameras.
- Digital Microphones.



## **8) Assessment**

Assessment takes place at three connected levels: short-term, medium-term and long-term:

- \* Short-term assessments are an informal part of every lesson to check pupil understanding and inform future daily planning. This AfL is recognised as an invaluable tool to inform intervention needs across the class. This intervention then takes place as quickly as possible and the 'gap' is closed before children move onto the next concept. Next-step marking is used as a tool to further understanding and as an opportunity for children to edit and improve their work.
- \* Medium-term assessments in reading and writing measure progress and are linked to the 2014 National Curriculum levels. These are recorded termly onto the school tracking system. Writing and reading assessments are also recorded termly on Pupil Asset. These aid planning for the next units of work allowing the teacher to set appropriate group and individual pupil targets.
- \* Long-term assessments review pupils' progress and attainment. These will be made by use of class records, Foundation Profile Score, SAT tests for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils and supplemented by Optional NFER (September baseline and May) tests for Years 3, 4 and 5.

Attainment from all classes is plotted on the school tracking system to monitor progress on a termly basis. Progress meetings attended by teaching staff allow information to be shared on those pupils making excellent progress and those making slower rates of progress.

In Foundation children are assessed against the Foundation Stage Profile steps throughout the year.

Teachers record attainment using the agreed school Assessment Grids for both writing and SPAG. Regular moderation sessions ensure standardisation when teachers use this evidence to make final judgements on each pupil. The school takes part in external moderation annually. This annual attainment (from all classes) is then plotted on the school tracking system to monitor progress within each year and key stage. This information is used in staff progress meetings, used to inform performance management and also reported to parents at Parents' Evenings and in the individual Annual Report to parents.

## **9) Parental Involvement**

Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in their child's literacy development in a variety of ways. In particular parents are encouraged to listen to their children read regularly and to help their children learn spellings. Communication between home and school is encouraged, either through the home/school reading journals (Foundation, Key Stage 1) or through parents' evenings or informal meetings which provide valuable information on how to best support learning.

## **10) Subject Leader**

The English Subject Leader will:

- ✓ Provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.
- ✓ Be informed of current developments, new documents and resources.
- ✓ Monitor provision (lesson observation, work sampling, talking to staff) and progress using pupil tracking systems and school data.
- ✓ Support colleagues in the teaching of English.
- ✓ Fully inform the head and governors.

### **11) Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the general curriculum review programme.