

**Mary Dean’s Church of England Primary School English Policy**

**CONTEXT**

The school’s policy for English is based on the 2014 National Curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2.

At Mary Dean’s, opportunities for phonics, reading, writing and speaking and listening and the application of English skills are woven into all subjects through our thematic approach to planning. This enables us to maximise opportunities to develop children’s English skills and apply them into contexts creatively.

**INTENT**

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. At Mary Dean’s, we provide a high-quality education in English that will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.

**Aims**

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

* read easily, fluently and with good understanding
* develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
* acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
* appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
* write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
* use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
* are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

At Mary Dean’s we link our daily English lessons to our curriculum topics and English is central to the children’s learning across all the subjects including educational visits, author visits, assemblies and other activities which increase our English capital. We ensure that our English teaching and learning provides many purposeful opportunities for reading, writing and discussion. We use a wide variety of experiences, quality texts and resources to motivate and inspire our children. All pupils receive a daily English lesson. Teachers also ensure that cross-curricular links with concurrent topic work are woven into the programme of study.

• Teachers create a positive reading and writing culture in school, where both are promoted, enjoyed and considered ‘a pleasure’ for all pupils.

• Promotion of reading through teachers reading out loud regularly to their class.

• Pupils in EYFS and KS1 to have daily phonics sessions, using the Little Wandle synthetics phonics programme

• Pupils are taught to spell the common exception words and learn key rules for spelling in Year 2-6

• Age appropriate spellings sent home weekly for pupils to practise their words and to write a sentence containing each word at home.

• Daily reading sessions in all classes including whole class, guided and independent reading.

• Pupils are being adventurous with vocabulary choices.

• Pupils to acquire strategies to enable them to become independent learners in English (spelling rules and patterns and how to tackle unfamiliar words when reading).

• Pupils to discuss and to present their ideas to each other by talking, being able to elaborate and explain themselves clearly, make presentations and participate in debates.

• Working Walls – all classes aiding pupils and guiding them through the process of Reading and Analysing, Gathering Content, Planning and Writing.

• Vocabulary promoted through displays in class, all curriculum areas, enhancing and encouraging a wider use of vocabulary.

• Vocabulary mats to be used where needed and thesauruses and dictionaries, which are easily accessible for pupils to use.

• Teaching a range of genres across the school (progressing in difficulty) both in English and other curriculum areas; resulting in pupils being exposed to, and knowledgeable about, literary styles, authors and genres. They can express preferences and give opinions, supported by evidence, about different texts. Pupils are also taught poetry and our poetry spine is planned into the long term planning for English.

• Displays of writing, in class, shared areas and on the school website, giving a purpose and audience, to encourage pride in work and to show that work is valued.

• Reading and writing events (throughout the year) to encourage and promote enjoyment and opportunities to develop lifelong learning.

**Teaching**

In the Foundation stage, children have daily discrete phonics lessons. Children have opportunities throughout their day to develop their communication, language and literacy skills on a daily basis in both adult led and child initiated activities

In Key Stage One, children learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They are taught daily phonics and reading. Children learn to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They learn to use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds. Children are given opportunities to speak and listen throughout all subject areas. The children are taught a daily discrete phonics lesson (Little Wandle) in ability groups. Children have a daily English lesson. Children take part in both guided and individual reading sessions outside of the English lessons (e.g. with teachers, TA’s, Reading Buddies and parents) and have regular story times to develop a love of reading. Literacy skills are developed across the curriculum.

At Key Stage Two (Years 3-6) children learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They explore the use of language in literary and non- literary texts and learn how the structure of language works. In Key Stage Two Children have daily English Lessons.

English skills are developed across the curriculum.

In Key Stages One and Two, the time allocated to the teaching of English is an hour a day with extra time for phonics, spelling, handwriting and guided/whole class reading. Our thematic curriculum allows for Literacy to be taught through all subjects. Coverage spans the two-year rolling programme, with all text types covered in each cycle. Narrative and non- fiction are covered every term. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes, differentiated class teaching and differentiated Phonics sessions.

**Planning**

All learners at Mary Dean’s have access to quality first teaching. The learning objectives are taken from the National Curriculum. Long and Medium Term plans are used to link learning across curriculum areas and to ensure phases of learning are appropriate. Teams plan English in blocks that progress towards an intended unit outcome and texts are usually linked to topics. Planning clearly indicates differentiation and objectives covered. These objectives enable progression in learning. Children are taught a range of fiction (including poetry) and non-fiction units to prepare them for written and spoken communication. They develop their vocabulary through the texts taught and children build on their prior knowledge. Teaching is adapted based on summative and formative assessments and scaffolding is used to support the learning where appropriate. Teachers question pupils to probe pupil understanding and teachers identify misconceptions and address these within lessons or follow up sessions. The whole class will cover the main teaching activity and content with differentiated activities used to support and challenge pupils. Teaching assistants support the children with their learning and lead intervention activities.

**Spoken language**

The national curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils’ development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. To ensure the continual development of pupils’ confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills, teachers use the oracy sentence stems and promote the teaching of oracy. Through whole class reading sessions, guided reading and English lessons pupils develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They are assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others and teachers ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils are also taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

**Poetry**

At Mary Dean’s we ensure our children have exposure to a wide range of classic and modern literature including poetry. Children will learn poems from our poetry spine throughout their time in school and learn to perform them to develop their articulation, intonation and performance skills.

**Approaches to Speaking and Listening**

The Four Strands of Speaking and Listening: Speaking; Listening; Group Discussion and Interaction, and Drama permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

Opportunities to develop these skills include: class assemblies, presentations, Talk for Writing, talk partners, drama and performances including our Christmas Nativity and Easter Service.

Children who require extra support in speaking and listening benefit from the expertise of a Speech and Language Support, which is through our SENCO.

We recognise the need for all pupils to speak, read and write Standard English fluently and accurately, while acknowledging that a pupil's own dialect, or other language is of prime importance. It is our school policy to model our own language to the children, which encourages Standard English both in speaking and writing. The Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI) is a programme for children in Reception (4-5 years) which has been found to improve children’s language and early literacy skills. The programme involves a trained teaching assistant providing short small-group and individual teaching sessions to around 3-6 pupils for 20-weeks.

**Reading**

**Intent of reading:**

At Mary Dean’s, we see reading as the heart of our curriculum and the driver for the other subjects. Reading is valued as a key life skill, and we are dedicated to enabling our pupils to become lifelong readers. We ensure that our teaching of phonics and reading is taught using a high quality and consistent approach. Reading is key to academic success and so to ensure we have a holistic approach to the teaching of reading, we implement the following:

· Children in Foundation and Key Stage One take part in daily Phonics using ‘Little Wandle’ synthetic phonics to segment and blend sounds together to read and write words. Children participate in speaking, listening, spelling and reading activities that are matched to their developing needs. The teachers draw upon observations and continuous assessment to ensure children are stretched and challenged and to identify children who may need additional support. Children work through the different phases, learning and developing their phonics sounds and knowledge. Those children in Key Stage Two who still need phonics support take part in daily intervention sessions.

· In foundation and Year One children participate in routine guided phonics reading sessions

· Children develop their reading comprehension skills in Key Stage One and Key Stage Two through frequent Whole Class and Guided Reading sessions, where children are exposed to a range of different texts and can demonstrate their understanding and thinking behind these.

· Children who are working within the phonics phases are given a phonics reading book from a synthetic phonics scheme at the appropriate phase in addition to a home ‘sharing’ book. We provide a wide range of reading books in our school of all genres for children to share with an adult or for those who are free readers. We expect adults at home to read these books with their child daily and make comments in their child’s reading record.

· Each classroom will have a selection of books in their classroom from a range of authors and genres and books which are directly linked with the class topic. Topic books offer opportunities for the children to apply their reading skills across the curriculum.

· Children are read to from a class novel or other texts each day by their class teacher. This could be a book that the teacher recommends to the class or a recommendation from a child.

· Children in Key Stage Two are given time to read independently on a daily basis.

· Each classroom in the Early Years has a reading area that is filled with books suitable for their reading age. This is a comfortable place for children to read throughout the day.

· Children have the opportunity to take part in ‘Reading Buddies’, in which children mix with other children from different year groups and share a book together.

· By the time children leave Mary Dean’s they are competent readers who can recommend books to their peers, have a thirst for reading a range of genres including poetry, and participate in discussions about books, including evaluating an author’s use of language and the impact this can have on the reader.

· Children take part in a reading incentive scheme where they are awarded for the additional reading they do at home. Those who do not read at home are given additional support.

**Implementation of reading**

Teachers plan English lessons around a key text. As part of this planning process, teachers also plan for Whole Class and Guided Reading lessons using a wide range of different texts and a list of unknown vocabulary which appears in any texts used and that which has been identified as key to their topics. Teachers must assess children regularly against the Key Learning Objectives for reading Y1 – Y6 and Reading Early Learning Goal (in EYFS). These regular assessments inform planning and allow teachers to identify any gaps in learning. Teachers/teaching assistants also complete regular phonics phase assessments and plot children onto a tracking grid, which ensures children are grouped appropriately in phonics and support any falling behind. Children are assessed using the Rising Stars Progress in Reading Assessment tests to ascertain a reading age and standardised score and using the Standardised Assessment Tests in Y2/6 to support teacher judgement.

**Impact of reading**

Through the teaching of systematic phonics, our aim is for children to become fluent readers by the end of Key Stage One. This way, children can focus on developing their fluency and comprehension as they move through the school. Assessment results are measured against the reading attainment of children nationally. Attainment in phonics is measured by the Phonics Screening Test at the end of Year 1. However, we firmly believe that reading is the key to all learning and so the impact of our reading curriculum goes beyond the results of the statutory assessments. We give all children the opportunity to enter the magical worlds that books open up to them. We promote reading for pleasure as part of our reading curriculum. Children are encouraged to develop their own love of genres and authors and to review their books objectively. This enhances a deep love of literature across a range of genres, cultures and styles.

The programmes of study for reading at key stages One and Two consist of two dimensions:

* word reading
* comprehension (both listening and reading).

It is essential that teaching focuses on developing pupils’ competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why phonics should be emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners (i.e. unskilled readers) when they start school.

Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils’ experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction. All pupils must be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Reading widely and often increases pupils’ vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Reading also feeds pupils’ imagination and opens up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious young minds.

It is essential that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education.

**Writing**

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading:

* transcription (spelling and handwriting)
* composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

It is essential that teaching develops pupils’ competence in these two dimensions. In addition, pupils should be taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing have been incorporated into the programmes of study for composition.

Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words. Effective composition involves forming, articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting.

**Approaches to Writing**

We aim to develop the children’s ability to produce well structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the reader. Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. To support our teaching of writing we use school assessment criteria. Teachers model writing strategies and the use of phonics and spelling strategies in shared writing sessions. Guided writing sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals, whilst children have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions both during and at the end of each unit.

The children are given frequent opportunities in school to write in different contexts using quality texts as a model and for a variety of purposes and audiences. There are many opportunities for children to improve their writing inspired by drama, role play, hot seating and film clips. They may be asked to produce their writing on their own or as part of group. Children will also be given the opportunity to use ICT for their writing.

**Spelling, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation**

The two statutory appendices – on spelling and on vocabulary, grammar and punctuation – give an overview of the specific features that should be included in teaching the programmes of study.

Opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils’ vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing. As vocabulary increases, teachers should show pupils how to understand the relationships between words, how to understand nuances in meaning, and how to develop their understanding of, and ability to use, figurative language. They should also teach pupils how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than one meaning. References to developing pupils’ vocabulary are also included within the appendices.

Pupils should be taught to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English. They should be taught to use the elements of spelling, grammar, punctuation and ‘language about language’ listed. This is not intended to constrain or restrict teachers’ creativity, but simply to provide the structure on which they can construct exciting lessons. A non-statutory Glossary is provided for teachers.

Throughout the programmes of study, teachers should teach pupils the vocabulary they need to discuss their reading, writing and spoken language. It is important that pupils learn the correct grammatical terms in English and that these terms are integrated within teaching.

**IMPACT**

The impact and measure of this is to ensure children not only acquire the appropriate age-related knowledge linked to the English curriculum, but also skills which equip them to progress from their starting points, and within their everyday lives.

Pupils will:

• be confident in the art of speaking and listening and to be able to use discussion to communicate and further their learning

• be able to read fluently both for pleasure and to further their learning.

• enjoy writing across a range of genres

• Pupils of all abilities will be able to succeed in all English lessons because work will be appropriately scaffolded

• have a wide vocabulary and be adventurous with vocabulary choices within their writing

• have a good knowledge of how to adapt their writing based on the context and audience

• leave primary school being able to effectively apply spelling rules and patterns they have been taught

• make good and better progress from their starting points to achieve their full potential

Pupils of all abilities will succeed in all English lessons because work will be appropriately scaffolded.

**Assessment**

Assessment for learning underpins teaching and learning in Literacy. Literacy learning is built upon and cross-referenced in other subjects. Assessment of skills is ongoing. Every pupil has a Literacy book, which is marked frequently to give children improvement suggestions. Pupils are expected to respond to marking comments regularly. In addition, there are Literacy Progress Books, which are used for independent writing assessments every half term by every pupil from year 1. These are assessed against the National Curriculum learning objectives using the assessment frameworks for years 2 and 6. These judgments are moderated across year group teams and then by the whole teaching team. Progress is carefully checked and attainment is reported to parents in the child’s annual report.

Work will be assessed in line with the Assessment Policy and recorded on the School Pupil Tracker. All pupils will have Reading and Writing Targets and will know their ‘next steps’ to ensure progression. These targets are shared with Parents. There are opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress with their teacher. A termly progress meeting for parents is available in the Autumn and Spring Terms and a full reports are given in the Summer Term.

Phonics Assessments (Year 1) and SATs results (Year2 and Year 6) are published in accordance with Government legislation.

**Equality**

At Mary Dean’s we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of race, gender, disability, religion and belief, or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life. We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

• Use contextual data and personalisation plans to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;

• Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps;

• Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;

• Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;

• Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping;

• Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;

• Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;

• Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child’s education;

• Encourage classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;

• Include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. More able children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

**EAL**

For children whose home language is not English, we take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. However, we must also ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS, ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin Year 1. When assessing communication, language and literacy skills, we assess children’s skills in English. If a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, the school will explore the child’s skills in the home language with parents and/or carers, to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay.

**SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION**

Pupils are encouraged to reflect on issues of personal, social and health education through their individual reading of fiction and non-fiction texts and their responses, e.g. in their reading journals. Specific texts provide opportunities for focused response to texts during shared and guided reading.

**Home Learning**

We aim to involve parents in the development of children’s skills, knowledge and understanding in

English. Parents are involved in hearing children read, and are encouraged to discuss books with them. Parents are encouraged to read at home with their children and communicate with teachers through a home-school diary. The school recommends

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

Work will be assessed in line with the assessment policy and with age expected outcomes in the national curriculum. In addition a literacy progress task will be undertaken once a term and moderated by the whole school in an INSET session. The task will be recorded in the child’s Progress Book that will follow them through the school.

Marking is used to ensure children receive regular feedback on improvements, which can have an immediate impact on progress.

**The Role of the Subject Leader**

The Subject Leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in Literacy through:

* monitoring and evaluating Literacy:-
  + pupil progress
  + provision of Literacy
  + the quality of the Learning Environment,
* taking the lead in policy development,
* auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD,
* purchasing and organising resources,
* keeping up to date with recent Literacy developments.

This policy will be reviewed according to the emerging needs of our school.

Signed …………………………………………Date ………………

(Chair of Governors)

Signed …………………………………………Date ……………..

(Head teacher)