

*Holly*



*Primary School*

**English Policy**

## Introduction

This policy outlines the teaching, organisation and management of English teaching and learning at Holly Primary School. That includes all aspects of reading, writing and spelling. We believe that English is fundamental to learning across every area of the curriculum, and that the ability to speak, listen, read and write is the greatest gift that we can give to the children at our school. We are providing them with the means to become lifelong learners.

## Our Aims

We aim to develop pupils' abilities through an integrated programme of speaking and listening, reading and writing in accordance with the English National Curriculum 2014. Pupils are given opportunities, within a broad and balanced curriculum, to consolidate and reinforce literacy skills that they have been taught.

## Our aims in English are:

- To continue to develop a consistent whole school approach to the teaching of reading, phonics and spelling.
- To improve standards in spelling.
- To improve reading progress.
- To continue to emphasise the importance of handwriting and presentation.
- To use respond to marking in all lessons, including reading.
- To nurture a love of English and enjoyment in all areas.
- For our children to read and write with confidence and enthusiasm, demonstrating fluency, understanding and an ability to use a range of independent strategies to self-correct, edit and improve.
- For our children to enjoy reading and develop a love of books.
- For children to have an interest in the morphology of words, allowing them to develop a growing vocabulary in both spoken and written forms.
- For children to understand that there are different text types and genres and that they can apply this knowledge to their written work.

- For the children to be able to understand the technical elements of writing, alongside an ability to use flare and imagination.
- To improve standards for all groups in school so that each child can reach their full potential.
- To enrich and support other areas of the curriculum.

## **Subject Organisation**

The English curriculum is delivered using the National Curriculum 2014, following the statutory requirements for teaching and learning.

Our planning system includes a long-term plan, as set out in the English curriculum, to be achieved by each year group. Our medium-term plan includes half termly units of work which include the main teaching objectives and when they will be taught. These have been developed by staff to deliver the curriculum in a fun and exciting way, and include texts to be used and key outcomes. Short term plans are generally made by staff in specific year groups, to cover the objectives but to be adapted to specific class groups as appropriate. They include the support of SEND children and the role of teaching assistants.

## **We will achieve these aims by:**

### **Spelling**

This is closely linked to our phonics programme (see separate phonics policy). From the earliest stage, children are taught to apply their phonic skills to read and spell unknown words until that knowledge becomes embedded. Errors are corrected consistently and promptly, thereby allowing children to spell independently and confidently. We follow the Letters and Sounds programme which introduces GPCs that children apply to their spelling. The children in Foundation and Key Stage 1 are taught phonics/spelling for 25 minutes each day. In Key Stage 1 each child has an individual spelling programme, based on a baseline assessment of abilities. Each child is given a personalised programme whereby they are given key words each week, tested on them and then set new words, according to the number that they learn and apply. This sits alongside

consistent correction of errors in their work and spelling patterns and rules taught, based on Letters and Sounds.

At Key Stage 2, those children who are working below age related expectations are provided with phonics teaching alongside individual interventions which focus on their specific area of need. This focuses on their individual need and may include rapid reading. Those children working at the expected standard are assessed and tracked within the writing assessment framework, and follow the Twinkl spelling programme.

Throughout school, children are set spelling homework. In class, spelling errors are identified and corrected in all books to encourage an understanding of the importance of correct spelling across the board and to raise the profile of spelling throughout school. Similarly, spelling rules and patterns are on display in each class to remind the children how and when to apply various spelling strategies.

## Writing

Throughout school, a cross curricular approach to writing is used. We aim to inspire children to write by providing a strong stimulus, often linked to a high-quality text. Writing is taught through a wide variety of means, to inspire every type of learner. These include shared, guided, modelled and independent writing across both key stages. Grammar is embedded within writing sessions as well as being taught discretely. Our constant aim is to improve standards in writing alongside an understanding of the purpose of writing. Success criteria are used to facilitate differentiation and to give the children a clear focus. They allow opportunities for progression and ensure all children are challenged accordingly. A strong emphasis is placed on the importance of planning and how to edit successfully in order to improve the quality of writing. Response marking is successfully used to allow individuals to closely focus on areas for improvement. School has a clear and consistent marking policy which makes transition from one class to another seamless. Similarly, we have a thorough writing assessment in place, which passes from one class teacher to the next.

Handwriting follows a clear policy and is taught both overtly and discretely from Foundation and upwards. We use the Read, Write inc. handwriting formation to support correct letter formation. Teachers model handwriting in their marking.

## Speaking and listening

At F1 speaking and listening is at the heart of early years learning. Language is modelled and early speech problems identified. Those children with specific needs are given an individual programme and supported by a highly trained TA alongside SEND support. All F1 children follow the Letters and Sounds phase 1 programme.

Throughout school, speaking, listening, group discussion and interaction, paired talk and drama are used to permeate the whole curriculum, encouraging a safe environment in which all opinions and ideas are valued. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise standards in reading and writing. Pupils are encouraged to speak confidently with intonation, clear diction, accurate grammar and with a regard for their audience.

## Reading

At Holly Primary we are determined that every child will learn to read, regardless of their background, needs or abilities. To this end we put reading at the heart of our curriculum. In Key Stage 1 reading is generally taught through smaller guided reading groups. Pupils are taught to read fluently with good comprehension, which is then reflected in the appropriate use of expression and intonation. They access a broad range of texts and become children who choose to read for pleasure and develop a wider cultural capital, through questioning and discussion. By Key Stage 2 most children access a whole class approach, following one text but completing a variety of different activities to embed the reading skills needed, as appropriate to their year group according to the national curriculum. Children complete written activities and speaking and listening tasks in order to internalise the text and how it is structured. This approach aims to improve the quality of written responses to comprehension questions, as well as deepening their understanding of how reading feeds into writing. By understanding an author's word choice, they also understand the power of language that they use in their writing.

## High quality texts

As a school we invest heavily in high quality texts that will be valued by children and parents alike and nurture a love of books and what lies within. These take the form of phonetically matched books, colour-banded books once children no longer rely on phonetically decodable books and a range of beautiful, high quality texts that parents can share with their children. We also have texts that are used within school as part of a guided reading programme.

## Reading stars

We want every child to have the opportunity to practice their reading skills at home as well as at school. They each have a reading diary and are encouraged to read daily, discuss what they have read and fill in the diary. Each class has a wall of reading stars and the children move along with every read in their diary. When a child reaches 100 reads at home they receive a gift and a certificate. At 200 reads they are able to choose their own, brand new book to keep and at 300 reads they are invited to a party to celebrate their commitment to daily reading. We are aware that not every child is able to read at home for a number of reasons. The system allows us to see where this occurs and to intervene by creating opportunities for those children to read in school.

## Little free library

We understand that not every child has access to books beyond school. So we have set up our Little Free Library where parents and children can borrow books to read. This library has books for the parents as well as for the children and is providing another opportunity to explore and enjoy a range of texts, without the expense.

## Education Library Service

As a school we made the decision to fund 220 texts from the education library service. These texts are pre-ordered to match the programmes of study in each year group. Each phase of school has 50 high quality texts delivered each half term, to be used alongside the topic being studied. They may be in the form of guided readers, non-fiction texts or fiction, to support both the children and members of staff. Alongside this they deliver 20 newly published texts which staff have the opportunity to read, in order to keep up to date with new publications. Over the school year we therefore have 1320 texts in school that

we wouldn't otherwise have access to. On top of this we also pay for the Education Library service mobile library to come to school for three days in an academic year. This houses a vast array of books and allows our children to visit a library at a time when cuts in the local library service makes access difficult.

### World Book Day

Although we celebrate books and reading throughout the year, we always take part in the nationwide World Book Day so that children can see that they are part of a bigger picture. We vary our theme year on year and always encourage the children to redeem their free book token.

### Reading intervention

Every child in school has numerous opportunities to read as part of their school day. We encourage quiet reading times, paired reading and reading aloud to the rest of the class. But some children require a little more targeted time, either in a small group or on a one to one basis. To this end we have skilled teaching assistants who tailor programmes for children who may not be reaching the expected level of progress. They may work on a rapid reading programme, a systematic comprehension programme or as part of an after school reading club to boost confidence and nurture a love of reading. They may also work with a literacy volunteer, funded by school, who provides additional opportunities for our vulnerable pupils to enjoy books.

### Cross curricular opportunities

Teachers seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross curricular links. They plan for pupils to practice and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through literacy lessons to other areas of the curriculum. Through topic work, children are given a purpose for writing. ICT plays an integral part in the learning of English. Lessons are often, though not solely, taught using an interactive whiteboard and children will also use laptops and ipads to research and present their work.

## **Inclusion and Equal Opportunities**

Our aim is that all children achieve in English according to their individual abilities. Pupils underachieving are identified and provided with support. Interventions are put in place according to need. Those with special needs in any area of English have Individual Education Plans and their class teacher will be engaged in an ongoing dialogue with their parents. All children receive input from the class teacher, differentiated work to ensure progress, support from teaching assistants where possible according to need and appropriate and achievable targets. Teachers use ongoing assessment to identify target groups or individual children who work with teaching assessments on targeted interventions. All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum, regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

## **Role of English lead**

The subject leader is responsible for improving and monitoring the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

- Monitoring and evaluating English
- Pupil progress
- Observations and feedback
- Auditing provision
- Purchasing and organising resources
- Keeping up to date with English developments
- Moderation of children's work

## **Parental Involvement**

Our parents are supportive and keen to work with their children at home. We ask them to read with their children each day and complete their reading diary. We encourage them to discuss the text with their child. Weekly spellings are also sent home, with the expectation that the parent supports them when learning these. Regular book fairs are held and the parents are encouraged to use the Little Holly Library. We celebrate reading with them through World Book Day activities.