



## English Policy

April 2022

Version	Date	Author	Status	Summary
1.0	April 2022	E.Walker	Approved	English Policy and appendixes for terminology and practice

Last Reviewed By: E.Walker

Date of next Review: April 2024

# Southwood Infant School

---

## English Policy

### Vision Statement

Here at Southwood Infant School we put the children at the centre of all we do. We want all our children to enjoy their time here and to make excellent progress both academically and personally. We recognise that every child is unique and deserves the opportunity to be happy, feel valued and experience success. We believe that children learn best through first-hand experience and our curriculum is designed so that pupils are stimulated and motivated to learn. We have high expectations of our children and promote the highest standards of behaviour, based on our strong school values of

### EXCELLENCE - RESPECT – ENJOYMENT

This policy supports and reinforces the aims of Southwood Infant School, valuing all children and staff equally and as individuals.

### Principles

The study of English develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, views and feelings. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations.

### Aims

The aims of teaching English are:

- to enable children to speak clearly and audibly, and to take account of their listeners;
- to encourage children to listen with concentration, in order to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- to show children how to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- to teach children effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal, through a variety of drama activities;
- to help them become confident, independent readers, through an appropriate focus on synthetic phonics, word-, sentence- and text-level knowledge;
- to develop enthusiastic and reflective readers, through contact with challenging and substantial texts;
- to foster the enjoyment of writing, and a recognition of its value;
- to encourage accurate and meaningful writing, be it narrative or non-fiction;
- to improve the planning, drafting and editing of their written work.

### Teaching and learning style

Teaching plans have CLEAR and SPECIFIC learning objectives. Teaching is flexible and responds to the needs of the pupils. Tasks are MEANINGFUL, giving pupils real audiences and contexts. A good variety of activities are planned to interest and engage pupils, especially in encouraging discussion and using small group work. Good support for pupils is provided to become independent learners, and to develop research and study skills.

# Southwood Infant School

---

Good use of assessment criteria and constructive feedback help students identify areas of weakness and improve their learning.

Within the National Curriculum for English skills are broken down into reading, writing and spoken language.

## **Reading**

Our aims are that our children will become fluent readers; they will enjoy a wide variety of texts and will become independent, critical, lifelong readers and learners. We will secure pupils' reading skills by the end of Key Stage 1 and develop clear systems and policies for promoting the love of reading.

## **Phonics**

In order to teach all our pupils to become fluent, confident readers, who have a love of reading. All pupils within the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 receive phonics teaching in line with Government guidelines. From Reception onwards, pupils receive a twenty minute daily phonics lesson, targeted at their current level of attainment, and are encouraged to apply this learning in their reading and writing.

We work to ensure that all pupils who would benefit from extra phonics teaching receive it. Any pupil, who has not reached the expected phonics level by the end of Year 1, as assessed by the national screening check, receives additional phonics intervention within Year 2, so that they can catch up with their peers.

Pupils at Southwood Infant School benefit from a high level of phonics knowledge by all staff, the consistent use of language throughout the school (see Appendix 1) and the high emphasis that phonics receives in all reading and writing activities. (see phonics policy).

## **Individual Reading**

All pupils within the school read books that are appropriate to their current reading attainment according to their current phonic ability. A copy of the child's Practice Read (Little Wandle Letters and Sounds revised) book is sent home for them to celebrate reading achievement with their parent. The selection of phonically decodable books is available for any child or teacher to use in addition to the practice read book. Children also have the opportunity to take home reading for pleasure books, these books are not always matched to their phonic ability and as such may need support at home to help them decode. Parents are encouraged to support their child by asking and answering questions and helping them understand what they have read.

## **Practice Reading**

Teaching of reading also occurs within 'shared / practice reading' sessions for 25 minutes a day. Books are closely matched to the current phonic level and all books are phonically decodable with a selection of additional tricky words. Three sessions per book are taught in school and the fourth session is a read at home celebration session with a parent.

Children who have completed the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds revised phonic scheme, usually by the end of Year 1, will have Guided Reading sessions that are structured to consider author intent, inference, comprehension and vocabulary building focuses.

KS1 children will have Big Book Guided Reading sessions once every half term. These big picture book sessions aim to consider author intent, inference, comprehension and vocabulary building focuses.

# Southwood Infant School

---

## **Enjoyment of reading**

By giving reading a high profile within the school and within each classroom we hope to encourage a lifelong relationship with reading, which allows our pupils to enjoy and experience a wide variety of literature from many genres, so they can escape into the world of a book or learn something new.

We encourage the enjoyment of reading in a wide variety of ways that continue to be adapted in order to gain and maintain the enthusiasm of the pupils within the school (see Appendix 3)

## **Writing**

At Southwood Infant School we believe that being able to write coherently not only enables pupils to communicate effectively, but also allows them to experience the joy of creating their own individual stories and articles that express their points of view clearly.

It is important that pupils learn to write independently from an early stage and this is initially encouraged through emergent writing within the EYFS. During the teaching of phonics, letter formation, spelling and handwriting is part of the session and is used systematically to support writing and to build up accuracy and speed.

We know that for pupils to become successful writers they need to: experience a wide range of written texts, which is the primary source of knowledge about the written word and how it 'sounds' orally tell and retell stories and other texts experience both shared and guided writing, where the teacher focuses attention explicitly on the technicalities of writing.

Therefore when planning English activities we ensure that all pupils have access to these experiences. In order to ensure effective teaching of writing, teachers develop the curriculum around the needs of the pupils in each class (this may involve grouping by attainment). There are regular planned opportunities for: talk for writing, planning writing, modelled writing, shared writing, supported composition and guided writing. These techniques are outlined further in Appendix 4.

## **Handwriting**

Handwriting and presentation of work within our school is important in all areas of the curriculum (see Handwriting Policy).

## **Spelling**

In order to become confident writers pupils also need to become proficient at spelling. In EYFS and Key Stage 1, spelling is intrinsically linked to reading, as the pupils learn to use phonics for both of these activities - see phonics section for further details. Pupils are encouraged to apply their phonics to spelling throughout the curriculum.

## **Grammar**

We also recognise that pupils need to be taught to write grammatically correctly and accurately and this is taught as part of the English curriculum.

## **Spoken Language**

At Southwood Infant School we recognise the importance of being able to communicate orally and to understand what others are saying. We will teach pupils to use language precisely and coherently. This involves giving pupils opportunities to experience a rich language environment to develop their skills in expressing themselves, and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

They should be able to listen to others, and to respond and build on their ideas and views constructively.

# Southwood Infant School

---

Pupils are given opportunities to participate orally in groups and in the whole class, including:

- using talk to develop and clarify ideas;
- identifying the main points to arise from a discussion;
- listening for a specific purpose; discussion and evaluation.
- teacher in role
- role play
- drama for talk

Pupils are also given opportunities to speak in front of a wider audience during assemblies and Christmas productions.

## **Including all pupils**

For further information please refer to the schools inclusion policy.

## **Assessment**

For further information please refer to the schools assessment and marking policies. The roles of the English Leader and Governor are outlined in Appendices 7 and 8

## **Cross Curricular Learning Opportunities**

The teaching of English develops skills through which our pupils can give critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their work. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts brings them into contact with their own literary heritage and texts from other cultures. The organisation of lessons allows pupils to work together and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and results. We endeavour to provide opportunities for children to develop and apply their English skills through other subjects.

## **Appendix 1**

Language used in relation to phonics In order to achieve consistency for the pupils in our school, all staff use the following language in relation to phonics.

blend (vb) — to draw individual sounds together to pronounce a word, e.g. sn-a-p, blended together, reads snap

cluster — two (or three) letters making two (or three) sounds, e.g. the first three letters of 'straight' are a consonant cluster

digraph — two letters making one sound, e.g. sh, ch, th, ph.

trigraph – three letters making one sound e.g. igh

vowel digraphs comprise of two vowels which, together, make one sound, e.g. ai, oo, ow  
split vowel digraph – this is the term used in this school to describe a split vowel digraph with the children — two letters, split, making one sound, e.g. a-e as in make or i-e in site

grapheme — a letter or a group of letters representing one sound, e.g. sh, ch, igh, ough (as in 'though')

grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC) — the relationship between sounds and the letters which represent those sounds; also known as 'lettersound correspondences'

mnemonic — a device for memorising and recalling something, such as a snake shaped like the letter 'S' or a saying to help remember the order of the letters in a word i.e. 'silly animals in Devon' = said, 'big elephant can always use small exits' = beacuse.

# Southwood Infant School

---

phoneme — the smallest single identifiable sound, e.g. the letters 'sh' represent just one sound, but 'sp' represents two (/s/ and /p/)

segment (vb) — to split up a word into its individual phonemes in order to spell it, e.g. the word 'cat' has three phonemes: /c/, /a/, /t/

VC, CVC, CCVC — the abbreviations for vowel-consonant, consonant-vowel-consonant, consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant, and are used to describe the order of letters in words, e.g. am, Sam, slam.

Short Vowel – /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/ or /u/

Long Vowel – a phoneme which represents the name of the vowel /ay/ /ee//igh/ /ow/ /you/

Consonant – All letters of the alphabet that are not vowels

Phoneme frame – Boxes used to help with spelling in phonics sessions. One box is used for each phoneme.

Freddy fingers – Pointing to one finger for each sound that can be heard in a word. Used for spelling from Year 1 onwards as it helps children to identify how many sounds they need in a word.

Sound Buttons.– A dot is used under a single letter phoneme and a line (or dash) underneath a digraph/trigraph etc to help the children segment a word to sound out. Sayings and mnemonics used to help the children remember phonics:

“When two vowels go out walking the first does the talking”

“Cry baby q never goes without u”

“Silly animals in Devon” = said

“Big elephants can always use small exits” = because

## Appendix 2

Structure of Practice Reading sessions

Session 1 – Decoding (sounding, blending and recognising and reading phonetically decodeable words and tricky words)

Session 2 – Prosody – (the patterns of speech, sound, stress and intonation in a language.)

Session 3 – Comprehension

Session 4 - Follow up activity –Comprehension or grammar activity related to the book

Session 5 - Independent reading for pleasure

## Appendix 3

Ways in which we encourage an enjoyment of reading.

In order to achieve our aim that all pupils should be taught to read fluently and expressively and be encouraged to enjoy reading both for pleasure and for information, we:

- Have made reading high profile in the school
- Maintain a well-stocked library with books appropriate to the age of the children.
- Have a reading area in each classroom with books for the children to choose to read.
- Celebrate World Book Day every year with fun activities
- Run a Book Fair once a year to enable our children to buy books for enjoyment and to raise money to help update stock in the libraries and book corners.

# Southwood Infant School

---

## Appendix 4

Explanations of the techniques used to teach writing across the school:

### Talk for Writing

Talk for Writing is the exploration, through talk, of the thinking and creative processes involved in being a writer. Children struggle to write well because they are juggling so many different elements of transcription and composition. By talking the text they begin to internalise the common language patterns of narrative and non-fiction, freeing up more cognitive space for composition.

### Planning Writing

We value the importance of allowing children to plan their writing before they begin. This enables them to focus more on the transcription elements of the writing process, rather than having to also think about the composition of the whole piece as they go along.

### Modelled Writing or Writing Aloud

In modelled writing, teachers share their thinking as they compose a piece of writing in front of students, helping make the writing process visible and concrete. The important point is that the teacher makes his or her thought process visible to students as he or she proceeds through the writing process. In this way the teacher is able to explicitly demonstrate the writing process and directly teach key writing skills and concepts.

### Shared Writing

In shared writing, the teacher and students compose text together, with both contributing their thoughts and ideas to the process, while the teacher acts as scribe, writing the text as it is composed. The purpose of shared writing is to model the thought process involved in writing and allow students to engage in and focus on the process. The teacher, acting as scribe, frees students from that aspect of the writing process so that they can focus exclusively on the thinking involved in writing. Shared writing is also a powerful method for direct teaching of key skills and concepts needed in the writing process.

### Supported Composition

This strategy can be used after modelled writing or shared writing, or both, to give children an opportunity to write in a very structured context before they 'have a go' independently. They may compose the next sentence on whiteboards and then check it makes sense or discuss the next sentence with their talk partner.

### Guided Writing

Guided writing is when the teacher works with a focus group in the classroom, providing an additional supported step towards independent writing. It focuses on specific learning objectives with a group of children working at around the same level.

## Appendix 5

### Responsibilities of the English Leader

The English Leader will co-ordinate the Area of Learning 'Language & Literacy' within the school, aiming to secure high quality learning and teaching, effective use of resources, and the highest standards of achievement for all pupils' Key Tasks:

### Strategic Vision

- Have a strategic vision for English development within the school

# Southwood Infant School

---

- Have a good knowledge of issues related to English
- Keep up to date with developments e.g. Teaching methods, resources, assessment issues and record-keeping procedures
- In consultation with the SLT and staff to devise the school's English policy based on statutory requirements
- Ensure that there are schemes of work for English in place. The scheme should outline progression from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1. These should be updated on a regular basis
- Encourage displays of children's work and celebrate children's achievements
- Promote opportunities for children to use their English skills for a range of purposes and audiences other than the teacher e.g. Involvement in competitions, writing for other children and parents
- Devise an annual action plan for the development of English.

## **Monitoring & Evaluation**

- In consultation with the SLT, monitor the implementation of the policy
- Support staff, in collaboration with the SLT, in analysing all available data to inform learning and teaching
- In consultation with the SLT and staff, evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and scheme throughout the school
- Ensure that pupils' assessment records are kept up to date, in line with the school's Assessment Policy
- Lead on Internal Standardisation and moderation
- Liaise with the school's SENCo regarding pupils with literacy difficulties
- Keep records of meetings connected with the subject
- Present reports to SLT and the school governors on the effectiveness of improvement measures
- Resource Manager
- Be responsible for organising, maintaining and cataloguing resources and equipment
- Keep abreast of suitable new resources to support classroom strategies

## **Professional Development**

- Identify and facilitate the professional development needs of staff
- Disseminate information from INSET and provide updates to staff
- Ensure parents are informed of the school's approaches to teaching English and advise on how they may support their child's English development