



Multi Academy Trust

English Policy

White Cliffs Primary College for the Arts

Policy reviewed and ratified:	07 December 2016
Policy review date:	31 January 2020

White Cliffs Primary College for the Arts is an exciting and inspirational place to work and learn where children are at the heart of everything. Embracing our diversity and interests, we work hard, behave well, and care for one another. We treasure the unique contributions made by all members of our White Cliffs Family and strive for excellence in all things. (College Mission Statement)

There are four main aims

1. Introduction

This policy is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of English at White Cliffs Primary College for the Arts. It forms the basis of the approach to the teaching of English across the college.

2. Aims

At White Cliffs Primary College for the Arts we firmly believe that English is a fundamental life skill and therefore we aim for **excellence** in English achievement throughout the college. English develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes and will be enhanced and supported through 'Learning for Life' opportunities as well as through the classroom based learning. 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 across all curriculum subjects and through a range of different situations.

3. Objectives

We expect all our pupils to have high standards of literacy; equipped with a strong command of the written and spoken word and a love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

To enable this, pupils need to be able to:

- Read and write with confidence, fluency, accuracy and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to take responsibility for their own learning including self-monitoring and correcting their own errors;
- Use a full range of reading cues to monitor their reading and correct their mistakes;
- Be interested in books, read with enjoyment and evaluate and justify their preferences;

- Have an interest in words and their meaning and develop a growing vocabulary in relation to grammatical terminology;
- Have a fluent and legible handwriting style and present work to a high standard;
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences;
- Plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing;
- Have a wide vocabulary and an understanding of grammar so that they can express their ideas, opinions and views with clarity and confidence.

4. Planning and Organisation

The English Curriculum at White Cliffs Primary College for the Arts is planned and delivered using the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and the Programmes of Study from the National Curriculum (2014) as well as other guidance to enable quality learning and teaching to take place. This provides a broad and balanced curriculum and gives opportunities for a wide range of genres to be covered, and ensures continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage through to the end of Year Six.

Planning at White Cliffs Primary College for the Arts is carried out in three phases: a long-term plan which is the National Curriculum (2014); a medium-term plan which provides a detailed outline of the lessons to be taught during the half-term and objectives to be covered, along with vocabulary lists and a termly overview; and daily plans which give details of the learning objectives, teaching activities, differentiation and assessment focus. Plans are linked to other areas of the curriculum whenever appropriate. We believe that both the medium-term and daily plans are working documents and as such will be amended during the life of any given unit of work, in order to reflect progress and assessment of learning along the way.

All plans are electronically stored on the Teachers Shared Area of the school's network in order to allow ready access by all members of staff involved in the planning, teaching and/or evaluation of English.

At White Cliffs Primary College for the Arts we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in our English lessons in order to meet the needs of all of our pupils. Over the year each year group will cover a balance of Narrative, Non-Fiction and Poetry text types. Lessons are structured to ensure independent learning along with guided, modelled group/class work. The independent learning sessions are differentiated to meet the needs of the children, with appropriate learning challenges set. Groups or individual children may be supported by Study Support Managers or Teaching Assistants.

Members of the Senior Leadership Team and the Director of English, in line with the cycle of monitoring, will carry out the monitoring of planning, teaching and

assessment in English.

5. Teaching and Learning

We will use a range of learning approaches to promote pupils' knowledge and understanding in English.

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. Staff model the correct use of Standard English and the children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

Children who require extra support in speaking and listening benefit from small group or individual interventions of Speech Link and/or Language Link which provide precision teaching opportunities by Study Support Managers. These interventions are also supported through Speech and Language Therapists.

We aim to:

- Offer the children opportunities to talk and listen for a range of purposes and communicate effectively with different audiences
- Enable children to express their ideas and opinions confidently and clearly in a wide range of situations
- Involve children in a range of music and drama activities
- Help children express their ideas using standard English, where appropriate, through discussion
- Teach children to listen carefully to each other and to recall accurately ideas and information that they have heard
- Enable the children to listen to each other, question, seek clarification and challenge others with appropriate care and sensitivity.
- Teach children to respect the views and ideas of others, particularly when they differ from their own
- Teach children to respect and appreciate the range and diversity of dialects and accents

Reading

From their earliest years we want our children to see books as a source of enjoyment and information. The ability to read fluently, and with understanding and enjoyment should be the goal of all of our children. As teachers, we must be enthusiastic about books ourselves and use a variety of strategies to promote books and reading.

We aim to:

- Encourage children to enjoy books
- Enable children to read for a range of purposes, e.g. for pleasure, to find information, to discover models for own writing, to explore the views and attitudes of others, to support other subject areas etc.
- Ensure that early experiences with reading are carefully structured and monitored whilst remaining fun
- Encourage children to form the habit of voluntary and sustained reading, both for pleasure and for information
- Develop a growing confidence and competence in reading texts with increasing accuracy, fluency and comprehension
- Bring critical thinking skills to reading so that children can predict, compare, evaluate and question texts
- Ensure that all children have access to a wide range of high-quality literature
- Involve parents/carers actively in the support of reading and literacy activities, thereby developing the home/school partnership.

The importance of reading is such that extra time is given to it outside the literacy sessions.

In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 there is a strong and systematic emphasis on the teaching of phonics and other word level skills. Children are taught to: discriminate between the different sounds in word; learn the letters and letter combinations most commonly used to spell those sounds; read words by sounding out and blending their separate parts; and write words by combining spelling patterns of their sounds. These are taught in a variety of ways, and involve the use of multi-sensory activities to capture their interest, sustain motivation and reinforce learning. The children progress through books from different Oxford Reading Tree schemes using a balanced variety of approaches. Parents are involved through the use of a reading record book and parent partnership meetings. Children take part in guided/group reading lessons when appropriate. High attaining children are assessed against the Accelerated Reader Star test programme.

Children assessed as working below their age related expectation are supported with a range of reading interventions. The Sounds Write Reading Scheme supports the decoding and the development of blending and segmenting; paired reading interventions support the increase of oral reading frequency and Lexia Core 5 provides explicit, systematic, personalised learning in the six areas of reading instruction, targeting skill gaps as they emerge, and providing teachers with the data and student-specific resources they need for individual or small-group instruction.

In Key Stage 2, as the pupils gain fluency, the Accelerated Reader scheme plays a vital part within the college and allows for personalised learning through the use of

Star tests to provide levelled reading ranges and individual target setting. To develop and enhance reading fluency class teachers focus on teaching the skills of reading through a range of high quality texts. The pupils are able to experience a variety of reading opportunities such as shared reading, whole class reading, guided/group reading and reciprocal reading. Reading comprehension skills are taught and developed by the class teacher. The pupils learn how to understand, engage, make connections and critically evaluate the texts and reflect upon the responses shared.

Many exciting and rewarding activities are arranged in college to promote the pleasure and knowledge that can be gained from books. 'Book Week' is celebrated every year where the children have the opportunity to meet published authors, skilled story tellers and theatre groups, and enjoy the activities arranged to celebrate the joy of reading. Buster's Book Club is a weekly collection of data where the children are encouraged to read for a period of time and discuss their book with their parents.

Writing

Our approach to teaching writing covers the 'transcription' and 'composition' requirements of the New National Curriculum (2014). The development of writing is taught daily during either English lessons or across the curriculum.

We aim to:

- Teach children that writing is an effective means of communication
- Recognise that writing has a clear purpose
- Enable children to write in English that is accurate as well as appropriate to the task and audience, be it standard, non-standard, formal or informal
- Value and display children's writing, encourage a high standard of presentation
- Encourage children to experiment with a wide range of written forms using specific features
- Establish a supportive environment in which children collaborate using the full range of their linguistic diversity
- Develop children's skills in peer and self-assessment using learning objectives and success criteria as measurements
- Develop drafting, planning and editing skills
- Allow the children to learn using different techniques, including pictorial plans (graphic organisers) and mind-mapping

We promote a stimulating and language-rich environment with opportunities to write for a variety of purposes. Teachers model writing strategies and the use of phonics and spelling strategies in shared/guided writing sessions. Guided writing sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals, whilst the children have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing

sessions.

The children are given frequent opportunities in college to write in different contexts using quality texts as a model and for a variety of purposes and audiences. Where appropriate, trips and visits play an important part in 'bringing the topic alive' and support and enhance the writing process.

To support the development of writing further with targeted pupils we provide a highly scaffolded learning experience where the children have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the genre through trips and visits and practical activities. Language through Colour is a colour-coded resource which helps the children understand the meaning of words and develop their reading and writing.

Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS)

The teaching of Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling is in line with the requirements of the National Curriculum (2014) and draws on all aspects of the writing process, so that pupils can clearly understand how GPS is a necessary component of the writing process.

We aim to:

- Teach grammar, punctuation and spelling in line with National Curriculum guidelines
- Ensure that young children are well-placed to read and spell words with fluency and confidence by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 1
- Develop children's confidence in their ability to write/spell
- Enable children to become effective communicators of writing
- Create within children an informed interest in words
- Teach children strategies to spell unknown words correctly
- Enable children to identify their own misspellings
- Teach children spelling systematically

We understand that grammar and punctuation is learnt naturally and implicitly through interactions with other speakers and from reading. At White Cliffs Primary College for the Arts we ensure that the explicit building blocks of grammar and punctuation are taught through reading, writing and speaking. Once pupils are familiar with a grammatical concept they are encouraged to apply and explore this concept in the grammar of their own speech and writing and to note where it is used by others.

In conjunction with the National Curriculum the teaching of grammar and punctuation is supported by an activity planning document, which outlines that progression of grammar and punctuation from Reception through to Year 6. The National Curriculum glossary is used by all staff and shared with the parents on the College's website. The teaching of grammar is taught both discretely and embedded

within both English and cross-curricular subjects. Both low and high level questioning opportunities are built into the lessons to ensure the development of language and understanding. No Nonsense Grammar has been purchased to support the teaching of grammar and punctuation as it is an effective grammar teaching programme from Year 1 to Year 6.

To be able to spell correctly is an essential life skill. When spelling becomes automatic, pupils are able to concentrate on the content of their writing and the making of meaning. Whilst we note that spelling is not the most important aspect of writing, confidence in spelling can have a profound effect on the writer's self-image. We aim to use explicit, interactive teaching which draws children's attention to the origins, structure and meaning of words and their parts, the shape and sound of words, the letter patterns within them and the various ways they can learn these patterns. The NO NONSENSE SPELLING programme is being used from Year 2 to Year 6 and it offers teachers a comprehensive yet accessible progression in the teaching of spelling. Guidance, rather than prescription, is provided on how to teach the strategies, knowledge and skills pupils need to learn.

In Reception and KS1, daily phonics is the key to the children's learning of spelling. This is taught using the Letters and Sounds programme alongside the New National Curriculum. Interventions are supported through the delivery of Sounds-Write, which is a quality first phonics programme. This continues for those children who need further Letters and Sounds intervention in Key Stage 2. Children are taught to blend sounds to read and segment to spell. At the same time they learn words which are not phonically regular (common exception words).

In Key Stage 2 dedicated time is allocated for teaching and investigating spelling, as well as word level work linking to a related text in the main English session. Each week, children are taught National Curriculum spellings and patterns appropriate for their year group as well as differentiated for their ability.

Handwriting

We believe it is important for children to develop a fluent, legible handwriting style so that they are able to communicate effectively, have a high self-esteem, develop automatic motor control of spelling patterns, and write without conscious thought regarding handwriting.

We aim to:

- Teach children that the correct posture, paper position and pencil/pen hold facilitates correct letter formation, leading to a clear, legible and fluent cursive style

In The Foundation Stage children are given the opportunity to develop fine motor control through painting, salt/sand trays, tracing handwriting patterns, tracing/copying/writing their name. They are taught the schools agreed letter formation. Children are given the opportunity to write for a variety of purposes in play situations and have available a wide range of writing material.

In Key Stage 1 children continue to develop their fine motor control through some of the Foundation Stage activities. They have weekly handwriting practice (using the Penpals handwriting scheme) and joined handwriting is introduced by Year 2.

In Key Stage 2 handwriting practice continues on a weekly basis (using the Penpals handwriting scheme). Children's own styles are allowed to develop once they have become fluent writers. Children write on lined paper in books or with line guides and pens are introduced when the children are ready.

6. Cross-curricular English Opportunities

At White Cliffs Primary College for the Arts we seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links, in which the children can practice and apply skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

We also aim to provide extra-curricular opportunities to enhance English, e.g. drama workshops, visiting authors, special book day activities, reading clubs, film clubs etc.

7. Use of ICT

We aim to ensure that all children are primary IT literate by the time they leave Key Stage 2. We believe that computers and other forms of IT can play a key role in enhancing the learning experience and support effective teaching of English.

All classrooms are equipped with an interactive whiteboard and computers. Each class has the opportunity to use desktops, laptops and iPads during English lessons as well as timetabled ICT lessons.

8. English and Inclusion

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English, according to their individual abilities. English lessons, tasks and materials are differentiated by the class teacher to meet the needs of individual children. Learning Ladders, which provide specific scaffolded steps to support the children's attainment of the learning objective, are routinely designed and provided for each child.

By means of on-going assessments and tracking we can highlight a difficulty or

identify which individuals or groups are under-achieving and for what reasons, and will take steps to improve their attainment. Lexia Core 5 provides explicit, systematic, personalised learning in the six areas of reading instruction. Targeted children in Key Stage 2 are educated in a small group where precision teaching is targeted to their individual need.

Likewise, able and gifted children are identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

All children will be given opportunities to participate on equal terms in all areas of English. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

9. Assessment, Recording and Reporting

A variety of assessment strategies are used, based on a range of evidence collected, including oral contributions, reading fluency and comprehension, and material recorded digitally and in books. On-going assessment is recorded on Connecting Steps, which tracks and analyses each child's learning journey. This, alongside the teacher's professional judgement and knowledge of each child informs where a child is placed on Target Tracker.

Children are formally assessed at Year 1 with the National Phonics Screening, and at Year 2 and Year 6 according to SATs tests and teacher assessments.

Termly assessments are carried out using the Accelerated Reader Star Test which gives the teacher access to an accurate set of data to inform the teaching and children's reading practice.

Termly Pupil Progress Meetings robustly analyse and agree the data and establish the next steps.

Parents are made aware of the ongoing progress their child is making via two parental consultations and a written report at the end of each academic year.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

The Director of English is responsible for monitoring the standards of teaching, learning and assessment in English through:

- monitoring and evaluating English:-
 - pupil progress
 - marking and planning
 - curriculum coverage
 - 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 English developments.