



Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him.  
They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream.  
It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green.  
It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.

Jeremiah 17: 7 - 8

## **English Policy**

### **Introduction**

At The Federation of Middleham (VA) and Spennithorne (VC) CE Primary Schools, we believe that language and English is fundamental to the overall development of the child and their access to the curriculum in all its aspects. We recognise that the acquisition of English, both spoken and written, will empower our pupils and provide the foundation for all future learning. We promote a culture of reading, not simply as a life skill, but to also develop in pupils a love of books and literature that will not only support their learning across the curriculum, but also enrich their lives. We aim to provide our pupils with a wide experience of literature throughout the Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2.

Our core aims are to provide teaching and learning opportunities through the English curriculum that empowers the children to be:

**ASPIRATIONAL  
RESPECTFUL  
RESILIENT**

We believe that by having these three aims at the root, will equip our pupils to **LIVE FRUITFUL LIVES** and to **LEARN, LOVE and GROW**.

### **Curriculum Intent**

At the Federation of Middleham (VA) and Spennithorne (VC) CE Primary Schools, we have created our own long term and medium term planning which follows the National Curriculum and Early Years documentation to ensure that knowledge, skills and understanding are taught throughout all key stages.

Aims of the English curriculum:

- Provide a language rich environment that promotes a culture of communication, reading and writing;
- Enable children to be articulate speakers and good responsive listeners in a variety of situations;
- Develop understanding and skills to enable children to become independent, enthusiastic readers and writers;
- Provide opportunities for children to plan, draft, revise and edit their own writing in a variety of contexts;
- Enable children to develop an understanding of the link between reading and writing by using high quality texts as a model for writing for different purposes and audiences;

- Teach children to use a range of spelling strategies and apply them in their independent work;
- Immerse the children in ‘booktalk’ to develop a love of books and enjoyment in reading that will not only support their learning across the curriculum, but will also enrich their lives;
- Enable children to develop a fluent, legible handwriting style and take care with presentation of their work

### **Curriculum Implementation**

Our English curriculum is driven by aspirational, high quality texts, carefully selected to ensure that children explore and enjoy the work of a wide range of authors, poets and illustrators. We immerse the children in these rich texts, drawing out ambitious vocabulary and grammatical features before using texts as a model to inspire writing for different purposes and audiences.

### **Writing**

It is important for pupils to develop as independent, enthusiastic and expressive writers, who are able to write in a meaningful way. They should be able to use a range of forms for a variety of purposes and audiences and be confident in their choice of genre and language style for a specific purpose. Pupils should also regard themselves as writers and value their own work and that of others.

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed through two main strands:

- 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. 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.

In key stages 1 and 2, each writing unit is planned around a high quality text, enabling the children to first evaluate and analyse model texts as both readers and writers. These units follow the same teaching sequence:

- Create Interest: there is a ‘book hook’ to introduce the text and engage the children in its content
- Reading: children explore and respond to the text in various ways, including drama

- Content Gathering: children study features of the genre and gather content leading towards their final writing outcome, e.g. setting/character descriptions. This step often draws in other key texts and the pupils' own wider reading
- Learning to Write: key grammar skills are taught within the context of the model text and writing outcome
- End Outcome: children work towards drafting, editing and revising their writing for a purpose/audience. The CUPS (capitals, understanding, punctuation, spelling) and ARMS (add, remove, move, substitute) approach is used across the school as a model for editing and revising work.

Children will complete short writing tasks throughout this sequence in addition to extended writing outcomes.

### **Spelling, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation**

In Reception and Year One, spelling is taught through our phonics scheme, Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised (further details below). From Year One, children are taught to 'grow the code' as they learn more alternative spellings. Alongside their understanding and application of segmenting to spell using correct graphemes, children are taught to spell common exception words in a sequence. Additional spellings from the National Curriculum Appendix 1 are planned into writing units, including using the prefix –un and suffixes –ing, -ed, -er and –est. In the first term of Year Two, these spellings are consolidated and children are assessed to ensure that they are ready to start our spelling programme.

From the second term in Year Two onwards, children are taught spelling through the Read Write Inc. Programme which follows on from our phonics programme and makes links to segmentation and phonological awareness in its approach.

Grammar and punctuation objectives for each year group are planned into their writing units (see long term planning). Where possible, these objectives are taught using the high quality text as a model or starting point, with other demonstration texts being brought in as examples.

Through our 'golden thread of language', children are encouraged to explore and discuss new and ambitious vocabulary encountered in their reading across the curriculum. Throughout all the steps in our writing teaching sequence there is an emphasis on vocabulary, from analysing an author's use of words and contextualising their meaning to making informed vocabulary choices in the writing process.

### **Handwriting**

Children in Reception are taught handwriting in discrete lessons with handwriting formation rhymes linked to our phonics programme. The mnemonics provided when children learn their letter sounds also aid their understanding of letter formation.

From Year Two, children are introduced to letter joins and they are taught to form their letters with lead ins and lead outs. When they are confident with letter formation, they are taught

to join their letters in a cursive style of handwriting. Handwriting objectives for each year group are included in English long term planning.

### **Reading**

Pupils are encouraged to become confident, enthusiastic, critical and independent readers.

The programmes of study for reading at Key Stages 1 and 2 consist of 2 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.

### **Phonics**

See phonics policy for additional information.

Our school has chosen the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised Systematic Synthetic Phonics Programme to use in our teaching and learning of phonics and early reading in Reception and Year One. From Week 2 in Autumn term of Reception, phonics is taught daily in 20-30-minute sessions, followed by group reading practice sessions three times a week. We follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress:

- Reception children are taught Phase 2, 3 and 4 by the end of summer term. They will learn new GPCs in Phase 2 and 3, consolidating their learning and reading longer words and words with adjacent consonants in Phase 4.
- Year 1 children revise Phase 3 and 4 in autumn term then begin learning new GPCs and alternative pronunciations/spellings in Phase 5.
- Children who are identified as needing additional practice then participate in short Keep Up sessions (group/individual) which are led by fully trained members of staff. Keep Up sessions match the progression and teaching steps of the programme.

All staff are fully trained in the teaching, learning and assessing of phonics through the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised SSP programme. This is to ensure consistency across the year groups, including in Keep Up sessions. Resources and texts are also consistent throughout the schools in order to aid children's learning and prevent cognitive overload.

### **Decodable reading books**

All books used to teach children to read are fully decodable to allow children to concentrate on the skill of decoding and blending to read words. The books are matched to the children's phonic stage so they will not encounter any sounds that they do not know. During our reading practice sessions at school, children will read the same fully decodable book three times in one week. Each reading session will have a different focus as outlined below.

Read 1 Decoding	Revise GPCs and read words from the book.
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	The children read the book independently at 90% fluency while the teacher 'taps in' to listen. They are able to decode and blend any unfamiliar words accurately.
Read 2 Prosody	Revise GPCs and read words from the book. Model 'prosody' – reading with meaning and expression. The children echo the teacher's intonation and expression. Children read independently and the teacher 'taps in' to listen.
Read 3 Comprehension	Revise GPCs and read words from the book. Children read independently and the teacher 'taps in' to listen. Discuss pre-prepared comprehension questions about the content of the text including literal retrieval and simple inference.

Once the children have read the book three times in school, the same book will be sent home for them to practise. They should now be confident to read this book independently at 95% fluency.

### **Whole class and group reading**

In addition to three group practice reading sessions per week, children in Reception and Year One participate in whole class story time. This is planned to include a range of texts including fiction and non-fiction books.

In Year Two, children will begin the year continuing with three small group reads a week using decodable books. Once they are reading fluently, they will participate in one small group reading session per week in addition to whole class story time.

In KS2, children participate in Whole Class Reading sessions three times per week. These are planned using a range of text extracts from different genres. Children who are not yet reading fluently have 1:1 or small group reading intervention sessions in line with our phonics programme.

### **VIPERS**

From Year One, story time and Whole Class Reading sessions are planned using both National Curriculum objectives and Reading VIPERS, taken from the KS1 and KS2 content domains.

V = Vocabulary

I = Inference

P = Prediction

E = Explain

R = Retrieve

S = Sequence (KS1) Summarise (KS2)

## Independent Reading

Once children are reading fluently in Year Two, they will take home an independent reading book from a selection of texts chosen by teachers and the Reading Lead. In KS2, each year group has a carefully selected range of texts including fiction, non-fiction and poetry books for the children to choose as their independent reading book. The children have the opportunity to explore a variety of writing styles and authors throughout the reading scheme, including new releases and classic texts. The reading scheme lists for each class will be revised annually through discussions with class teachers and the Reading Lead.

Example reading scheme:

### Reading Scheme Books 2022 – Year 4

Fiction and Poetry				
Adventure	Funny Stories	Fantasy	Other Cultures	Animal Stories
The Land of Roar by Jenny McLachlan	The Great Chocoplot by Chris Callaghan	Zombierella by Joseph Coelho	The Girl Who Stole an Elephant by Nizrana Farook	I Cosmo by Carlie Sorosiak
Sky by Holly Webb	Aliens Invaded my Talent Show by Matt Brown	Starfell by Dominique Valerie	The Boy at the Back of the Class by Onjali Q. Rauf	
The Highland Falcon Thief by MG Leonard	The Accidental Prime Minister by Tom McLaughlin	Krindlekrax by Philip Ridley		
		The Dragon in the Library by Louie Stowell		
Scary Stories	Classics	Graphic Novels	Picture Books	Poetry
Coraline by Neil Gaiman	The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by CS Lewis	Dogman series by Dav Pilkey	How to Live Forever by Colin Thompson	Welcome to my Crazy Life by Joshua Seigal
	Peter Pan by JM Barrie		The Barnabus Project by The Fan Brothers	Apes to Zebras by Liz Brownlee
	The Railway Children by E Nesbit			

Non-fiction
Shackleton's Journey by William Grill
Young, Gifted and Black by Jamia Wilson
Amazing Animals by Sabrina Weiss
The Big Book of the UK by Imogen Russell Williams

## **Reading for Pleasure**

We place reading at the heart of the curriculum and value reading for pleasure greatly. At The Federation of Middleham (VA) and Spennithorne (VC) CE Primary Schools, we are developing our reading for pleasure pedagogy by:

- Reading to our children every day. Class texts can be fiction, non-fiction or poetry and they are carefully chosen by the class teachers
- Making links between texts the children have read, links to their own experiences and links to wider curriculum areas
- Reading poetry for pleasure to our children once a week on Poetry Friday
- Creating dedicated reading spaces in each classroom. Our class libraries contain a range of titles for children to explore and these are organised by genre, author or recommendations;
- Modelling 'booktalk' and encouraging children to engage in conversations about their current reading and book recommendations;
- Purchasing 'recommended read' books for each age group and sending these home for children to enjoy

## **Reading and writing across the curriculum**

Opportunities for reading and writing across the curriculum are planned into each of the foundation subject areas, with subject leads selecting high-quality fiction or non-fiction texts to complement each area of study. Texts selected for Whole Class Reading and Reading for Pleasure also make links with wider curriculum areas where appropriate. Writing skills taught in English are transferred across curriculum areas where opportunities are planned for extended writing outcomes, such as explanations in science or geography. In EYFS, book selections are made linked to curriculum topics and mark making and writing opportunities are available in each area of learning.

## **Equal Opportunities and Special Education Needs and Inclusion**

All children are given opportunities to access the National Curriculum requirement. All children regardless of ability, ethnicity, religion or gender, will be given equal opportunity to access all aspects of the History curriculum. Any child experiencing difficulty in accessing part, or all, of the curriculum, will be supported with the time, materials and equipment to access the activity at their own level where this is practically possible. Planning, resources and displays will reflect positive images of all communities represented in our society.

## **Curriculum Impact**

### **Assessment for Learning**

At The Federation of Middleham (VA) & Spennithorne (VC) CE Primary Schools assessment is an integral part of the teaching process. The assessment of children's work is on-going to ensure that understanding is being achieved and that progress is being made. Teachers take time to review pupil knowledge, and take the time to use these assessments to inform and adapt future planning.

Feedback is given to the children as soon as possible, and marking work will be guided by the school's Marking Policy.

Teacher's update the assessment tracker twice in the autumn term and then termly for English (reading, writing and phonics).

### **Writing**

Every half term, children in Year One and above will complete a piece of independent writing (Big Write) which will be assessed against National Curriculum objectives using a tracker. For formal assessments, the National Curriculum objectives have been broken down into termly expectations so that teachers can judge whether a child is working at the expected level for autumn, spring and summer terms. The summer term expectations for Year Two and Year Six are taken from the statutory Teacher Assessment Framework. Additional statements accompany the expected standard for assessments in summer term to make a secure judgement for those children working towards the expected standard or working at greater depth within the expected standard.

Each term, children in Year One and above complete a GAPS test to assess spelling, grammar and punctuation.

### **Reading**

The assessment of children's reading is ongoing through individual reading, group reading and whole class reading sessions.

Towards the end of each term, children in Year Two and above complete a PIRA test to assess word reading and comprehension skills.

### **Phonics assessment in Reception and Year One**

Assessment for learning:

- Children are assessed within daily phonics lessons to identify those at risk of falling behind. There are further assessment opportunities in weekly review lessons.

Summative assessment:

- Every six weeks, children are assessed on the half term's learning to enable the class teacher and SLT to identify gaps and ensure that the appropriate Keep Up sessions are in place.

Statutory assessment:

- Children in Reception are assessed against the ELGs
  - ELG9: word reading:
    - Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs;
    - Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending;
    - Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.



- Year One children take the Phonics Screening Check during the summer term.

Children in Year Two onwards who are not yet secure in their phonic knowledge will continue to participate in short individual or group phonics sessions following the same progression and teaching steps set out in Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised.

### **Subject Leaders monitoring**

The subject leader reviews standards and monitor the impact of the curriculum provision whilst also ensuring training and resources are up to date.

### **Monitoring and review**

We are aware of the need to review the school teaching and learning policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, pupil needs, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school