# The Federation of Middleham and Spennithorne CE Primary Schools

# 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 CE (VA) Junior School and Spennithorne CE (VA) Infant School, 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 (through our golden thread of language and pre-teaching vocabulary);
- 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.

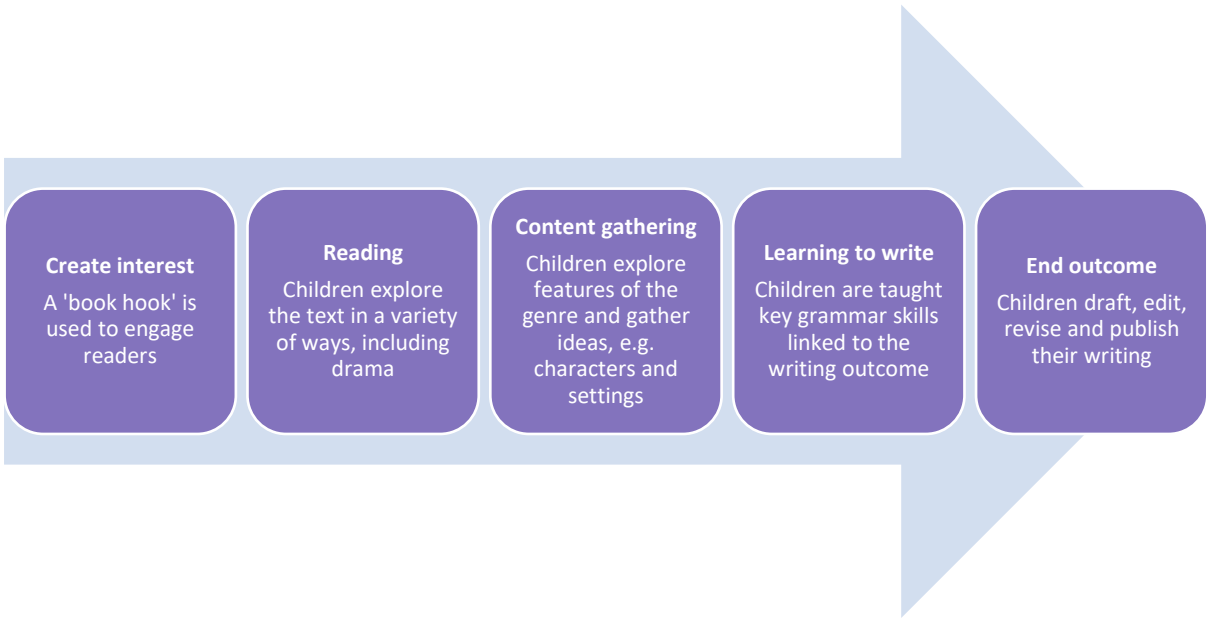
## Writing

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.

In key stages 1 and 2, the writing process is taught by planning around a high-quality text, enabling the children to first evaluate and analyse model texts as both readers and writers. Each unit follows the same teaching sequence:




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 through to Year Six, 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.

**Sentence Progression**

We introduce sentences orally to our children from Reception year, and begin to rehearse and write sentences towards the end of Reception. We teach sentences in a systematic way so that children build a strong foundational understanding of what a sentence is. We start with the idea of 'who' the sentence is about, and 'what they are doing'. We colour code parts of a sentence throughout school.

| Reception | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Year 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Oral rehearsal of sentences. Basic sentences modelled. | Simple sentences – always start with 'who'. Introduction to joining word 'and'. | Sentences still start with 'who'. Subordinating conjunctions are introduced, as well as different sentence types: statement, command, exclamation, question. | A wider range of conjunctions are introduced and subordinate clauses embedded. | Subordinate clauses used to start sentences. Fronted adverbials introduced. | Relative clauses are introduced. | Passive voice (object first in the sentence) |
| The cat sat on a mat. | The cat sat on a mat and flicked its tail. | The cat sat on a mat because it was tired. | The cat sat on a mat as soon as it felt tired. | As soon as it felt tired, the cat sat on the mat. Yesterday, the cat sat on the mat. | The cat, who was tired and grumpy, sat on the mat. | The mat was sat on by the cat. |

**Handwriting**

Children in Reception are taught handwriting in discrete lessons with handwriting formation rhymes from the Little Wandle Handwriting Programme. The mnemonics provided when children learn their letter sounds also aid their understanding of letter formation. Children in Reception start following the Little Wandle Handwriting Programme when they have learnt the single letter sounds in phonics.

From Year Two, children are introduced to letter joins in a systematic, progressive order. Handwriting objectives for each year group are included in English long-term planning, and we have devised a handwriting progression document to support which can be found on the website.

# 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.

All staff are fully trained in the teaching, learning and assessment 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.

## Whole class and group reading

Whole class reading is taught from Year 2 – Year 6. It is planned alongside the writing curriculum, and the wider curriculum, to make links where appropriate. Whole class reading includes a range of texts in each year: poetry; non-fiction; picture books; extracts from novels and children's classics.

In Year Two, children will begin the year continuing with three small group reads a week using decodable books in addition to whole class reading and story time. Once they have completed fluency assessments (Little Wandle), they will continue to read early chapter books in small groups with a focus on fluent reading and comprehension.

In KS2, children participate in Whole Class Reading sessions once 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 Two, Whole Class Reading sessions are planned using both National Curriculum objectives and Reading VIPERS, taken from the KS1 and KS2 content domains.

| Vocabulary | Infer | Predict | Explain | Retrieve | Summarise |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Find and explain the meaning of words in context. | Make and justify inferences using evidence from the text. | Predict what will happen based from the details given or implied. | Explain how content is related and contributed to the meaning as a whole.<br>Explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of language.<br>Explain the themes and patterns that develop across the text.<br>Explain how information contributes to the overall experience. | Retrieve and record information and identify key details from fiction and non-fiction. | Summarise the main ideas from more than one paragraph. |

In Reception and Year One, these domains are addressed through comprehension sessions following the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised phonics programme.

## 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.

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

| Non-fiction |
|---|
| Shackleton's Journey by William Grill<br><br>Young, Gifted and Black by Jamia Wilson<br><br>Amazing Animals by Sabrina Weiss<br><br>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. 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; we display our 'reading journey' of books we have enjoyed this year
- Modelling 'booktalk' and encouraging children to engage in conversations about their current reading and book recommendations; we use 'book blankets' to encourage and open discussions about books with the class
- Purchasing 'recommended read' books for each age group and sending them 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 English 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. We have expanded our class and library collection of books to include a diverse range of representations and authors.

We made adaptations within planning and lessons to support every learner. Adaptations may include:

- providing writing frames, sentence stems, planning proformas, word banks
- marking sound buttons
- pencil grips, writing slopes
- visual prompts, e.g. Widgits, pictures

We also run intervention groups (1:1 or small group) to support children who are not meeting age-related expectations. Interventions may include:

- Phonics (Little Wandle Keep-Up Programme, Little Wandle Rapid Catch-Up Programme, Little Wandle SEND Programme)
- Colourful semantics
- Echo reading
- Focussed spelling groups
- Squiggle while you wiggle
- Fine motor interventions

**Curriculum Impact**

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 use their assessments to inform and adapt future planning. Feedback is given to the children as soon as possible, either verbally or through marking, which will be guided by the Marking Policy.

Teachers update the assessment tracker Insight termly for reading and writing. Phonics assessments are carried out half-termly and updated on the Little Wandle Assessment Tracker. We carry out standardised tests for spelling and grammar (GAPS) and reading (PIRA) and use these to inform our teacher judgements.

Children in Reception are assessed using the statutory Baseline at the start of the year, and the GLD at the end of the year.

Children in Year One take the statutory Phonics Screening Check during the summer term. Year Two children who did not achieve the pass mark in Year One will take the PSC again.

Children in Year Six take the statutory SATS papers for reading and GPS.

**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