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Date policy written: 4th March 2015

Date approved by the full Governing body:

Date to be reviewed: as changes occur

ENGLISH AND LITERACY POLICY

1. MISSION STATEMENT

At Whitefield , we help our school community to be the best they can be, striving for academic excellence within our safe, happy and positive environment.

We enable self belief, care and respect for all; learning together and to be proud of every achievement reached.

2. AIMS

Language is, without doubt at the centre of a human's existence, from the moment of birth throughout the rest of its' life. It is through language that we are able to communicate thoughts, ideas, feelings and opinions to those around us; to come to terms with our own fears, anxieties and problems and to develop a deeper understanding of the world and society we live in and what must be expected of us.

We understand that English is the basic language of communication in this country and as such is a prerequisite for educational progress. We aim to:

- Provide a wide range of activities and experiences which involve speaking and listening, writing and reading in an integrated approach;
- Develop understanding and insight to the nature of all forms of English/Literacy;
- Provide a full range of teaching styles and management of various groupings of children, including individual work, pairs, small groups and whole class;
- Provide for the needs of children with Special Educational Needs;
- Provide for the needs of bi-lingual children;
- Emphasise the relationship between English and other curriculum areas;
- Develop an understanding of usages , constructions and spellings of English;
- Develop legible handwriting, speedily and easily produced;

- Create environments and situations where language can occur in purposeful contexts;
- Encourage enjoyment of all aspects of literacy.

3. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum in England: Primary Curriculum (2013) and **in the Communication, Language and Literacy section of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage (2000).**

In the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) children should be given opportunities to:

- speak and listen and represent ideas in their activities;
- use communication, language and literacy in every part of the curriculum;
- become immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication.

At Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2), children should learn to speak confidently and listen to what others have to say. They should begin to read and write independently and with enthusiasm. They should use language to explore their own experiences and imaginary worlds.

At Key Stage Two (Years 3-6), children should learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They should read a range of texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They should explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works.

THE GOVERNING BODY

Regular reports are made to the governors on the progress of English provision and to our Literacy Governor.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or in the light of changes to legal requirements.

4. SUBJECT ORGANISATION

The English Curriculum is delivered using the National Curriculum in England: Primary Curriculum. The Early learning Goals are followed to ensure continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage through to the National Curriculum. Pupil provision is related to attainment, not age.

Work is organised within classes per year group and differentiated by the teacher and shown on the school's lesson planning format. The school uses the curriculum plans produced by Lancashire County Council as part of the Learning Excellence Family. Long term and medium term plans are taken from these documents in addition to documentation produced by the LEA regarding spelling and grammar work (*Key skills documents for writing and reading, Supporting Spelling and Supporting Grammar*) Phonics teaching follows the Letters and Sounds Document.

5. APPROACHES TO 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. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

6. APPROACHES TO READING

In school pupils are: encouraged to develop as enthusiastic and independent readers, introduced to a wide range of literature, given progressively more challenging and demanding texts and encouraged to read and use a wide range of sources of information.

- Provision for shared, guided and independent reading is made within the school day.
- Phonics is taught discreetly, every day, following the Letters and Sounds Programme and the National Curriculum Guidance, from Foundation Stage upwards. The greater emphasis being on Key Stage 1 pupils.
- The school reading schemes follow the book bands system and current schemes are Phonics Bug, Bug Club and Treetops.
- Reading activities are regularly set as homework and the Big Club scheme is available online for children to access. Each child has a reading record which they are encouraged to fill in each night as they read at home
- The school has an excellent library available to all children on a class timetabled basis. Children are encouraged to take books from the library to read for pleasure as much as possible
- The school partakes in various reading activities throughout the year, World Book Day, Class Novels, Extreme Reading and Book Fairs to promote reading.
- Children are encouraged to read at home as much as possible through the aforementioned activities.

7. APPROACHES TO WRITING

In school pupils are given opportunities to: write for a varied purpose, using writing as a means of developing and communicating ideas, write for an extended range of readers, write in response to a wide range of stimuli, use the characteristics of different kinds of writing and use features of layout and presentation.

- Phonics and spellings are taught as part of English Lessons in line with statutory guidance as laid down in the 2014 Curriculum.
- Children in Foundation stage are encouraged to "write" from entering school. This emergent writing develops as the children become more proficient in the mastery of English until they are able to write simple sentences.
- Shared, Guided and Independent writing are all integral parts of the English lessons in school
- Extended writing takes place after a unit of work has been completed, in order to assess children's abilities. Staff may choose to add more if needed.
- Handwriting (see Appendix 1)

8. CROSS-CURRICULAR LITERACY OPPORTUNITIES

Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links. They will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through literacy lessons to other areas of the curriculum.

9. THE USE OF ICT

Opportunities to use ICT to support teaching and learning in Literacy will be planned for and used as appropriate. See also ICT Policy

10. ASSESSMENT AND TARGET SETTING

Work will be assessed in line with the Assessment Policy. In addition to this: on the completion of each unit of work an assessed piece of writing will be completed by all children. At present writing is assessed using the Progression in Writing Document as per LCC. Ongoing assessment takes place by the class teachers and this feeds in to target setting and planning.

11. INCLUSION

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

See Inclusion Policies for details

INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES

ELS, Quest and Yr 5 intervention all run in school and come under the direction of the Inclusion Manager, as do BRP and other reading interventions. (See Inclusion Policy)

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

12. ROLE OF SUBJECT LEADER:

The Subject Leader should be responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in Literacy through:

Monitoring and evaluating Literacy:-

- pupil progress
- 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 Literacy developments

13. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to support their child with their Literacy work throughout the school by:

- Reading the school reading book regularly with their child and completing the Reading Record.
- Working with their child to learn any spellings that come home.
- Reading books for pleasure with their child.

14. CONCLUSION:

This policy also needs to be in line with other school policies and therefore should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

Teaching and Learning Policy
Assessment and Record Keeping
Marking policy
Inclusion Policy
ICT Policy
Equal Opportunities Policy
Health and Safety Policy

15. APPENDICES

These may include:

Scheme of work

List of resources

Additional advice specific to the subject

Update to policy record sheet

Update to Policy Record Sheet

Date	Reference / aspect of policy to update	Suggested amendments to consider at next review.

Appendix 1: Handwriting

Handwriting as part of the English Policy at Whitefield

This policy should be cross referenced with the Literacy Policy.

At Whitefield we believe that handwriting is and important part of the English policies for the following reasons:

- Teaching of handwriting should explicitly link it with representing units of meaning: writing letter strings rather than isolated letters is and early priority: exit strokes must be learned from the start.
- The three dimensions of writing should consciously be taught in order to foster real fluency: the ergonomics (the sequence of movements needs to be right), the semantic function and the "feel" of the act of writing (it should be pleasurable and aesthetically satisfying)
- Handwriting is a route to spelling and to reading and must be taught in conjunction with them.

How letters are to be formed.

Letters of the alphabet can be sorted into four groups and these will be taught in school.

The groups are as follows:

- Down and off in another direction, exemplified by the letter **l** (**long ladder**): letters **i, j, l, t, u (y)**.
- Down and retrace upwards, exemplified by the letter **r** (**one-armed robot**): letters **b, h, k, m, n, p, r**.
- Anti-clockwise round, exemplified by the letter **c** (**curly caterpillar**): letters **c, a, d, e, g, o, q, f, s**.
- Zig-zag letters: (**k**) **v, w, x, y, z**.

(See Developing Early Writing p 159 for comprehensive explanation)

Each letter taught should be taught in association with its key letter (**l, c** or **r**) with emphasis on the **movement** of how a letter is formed rather than its look. This should avoid problems with **b** and **d**.

Letters are to be printed initially with children moving to learn joined writing by the end of year 2 and continuing in year 3.

Agreed "patter" to accompany movement in early stages

When children are being taught letter formation the teacher should keep talking about the movements they make in the letter patterns.

Sharing with parents:

The schools preferred style of handwriting is shared with parents at Induction meetings when handwriting formation sheets are given out and the schools policy regarding handwriting is discussed.

Individual Writing Styles

Children are taught handwriting in accordance with this policy and they will not be discouraged if they develop their own handwriting style as long as it is clearly legible with letters formed correctly.

Provision for left handed children

No major provision is needed for left handed children. Staff need to follow a few simple strategies.

- Model letter formation specifically for left handed children.
- Make sure that left handed children sit on the left of right handed children.
- Put a mark at the left side of the page to indicate where writing starts (to stop mirror writing)
- Left handed children need to have the paper slightly to the left of the centre of the body.
- Check correct seat height whenever possible.
- To avoid smudging their work:
 - Left handed children should be encouraged to position their fingers about 1.5 cm away from the end of the pencil.
 - The pencil should sit in the V between thumb and forefinger, sitting parallel to the thumb;
 - The wrist should be straight.
- They should be given more attention in class to ensure they do not learn bad habits.

How is Handwriting to be taught throughout school?

Children will be taught handwriting based on the Charles Cripps “A Hand for Spelling” scheme, once they have developed adequate gross and fine motor skills.

Writing Materials and Implements

As children begin to write letters, having practised the letter shapes through skywriting and other large-scale activities, they should work on large pieces of paper with a single line.

Lined paper is important because so much of handwriting is about the letters orientation to the line.

As the children become more adept at letter formation the distance between the lines should decrease. Below is a rough a guide depending on ability;

- Year 1: 15mm moving to 12mm
- Year 2: 12mm moving to 8mm
- Key Stage 2 8mm

Line guides are useful for older children from about the age of 7

The children are taught to write with pencils and use pencils for all their class work until it is deemed by the class teacher that a child is ready to use ink constantly, usually Year 5.

However children should be encouraged to use a variety of implements for writing throughout the school whenever possible.
Pencil grips should be used with children who struggle to hold their pencils correctly.

Writing in the classroom

Writing in the classroom should reflect the writing that the children are doing. Cursive writing should be displayed when the children start cursive letters along with print. Children also need to be taught that writing can be in different fonts and when it is appropriate to use these.

Classroom Management.

Managing handwriting in the class is up to individual teachers, although it is expected that most of the work will be whole class based, some will be carried out in group work sessions or even with individual pupils if there are difficulties. Furniture layout should encourage good posture and children must be able to see the board clearly if they are expected to work from it.

Work in the classroom

Written work produced by the children should reflect this policy. Expectations by staff should be high and children should be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their handwriting.

Children who join the school after Reception.

Children who join the school after reception with a different style of handwriting will not be encouraged to change it unless they are encountering problems.