



## *The Reddings Primary and Nursery School*

# **English Subject Policy**

### **Subject Statement**

English is of paramount importance in the education of the children that we teach; the skills of reading, writing and speaking and listening are the foundations in which all other learning can take place effectively. Through high-quality teaching of English and high expectations, our aim is to enable our children to be able to communicate and express themselves clearly and accurately to empower them to be successful in their future lives. All staff have a critical role to play in ensuring that the children that we serve can read, write and speak clearly and develop a life-long passion for the subject.

### **Writing**

#### **Progression of skills**

Teaching staff use the Herts for Learning assessment steps (Appendix 1) to pitch the teaching of grammar, spelling and punctuation at age-related expectations for each year group. In years 1, 3, 4 and 5, teachers are encouraged to use the HfL exemplification documents (Appendix 2) to ensure that teaching and expectations of the children are pitched accurately. By using these tools as a guide, we ensure that progress is clearly evidenced as the children make their way through the school system.

Children are encouraged to apply the skills of proof-reading and editing their work in partners, small groups and independently. In KS1, we introduce the children to editing and proof-reading skills. In KS2, the expectation is that the children will be taught to proof-read and edit their work with increasing independence with differentiation achieved through levels of support given to children in which to do this (see Marking and Feedback policy). By the end of KS2, children are expected to proof-read and edit their work independently.

#### **Planning/Curriculum**

We teach the skills of writing through the selection of carefully chosen texts (including picture books and film clips) as stimuli. Where possible, these texts link to the curriculum theme being studied in each school term. The texts that are chosen are written onto our curriculum maps at the beginning of the year. Both fiction and non-fiction styles of writing are covered across the year to ensure ample coverage of the range of genres and writing styles that are required to be taught including: narrative, poetry, information texts, explanation texts, persuasive texts, recounts and discussions (in upper KS2).

As per our Teaching and Learning policy, it is a requirement that all teaching sessions, including whole class, groups and one to one sessions, are planned for and a clear planning process based on the teaching sequence for writing is required to be evident in learners' books. A recommended planning format (Appendix 3) is used should books not demonstrate logical, sequential planning and evidence of sufficient pupil progress; teaching staff who are new to the school are also given this to support their practice.

Teachers are also expected to provide regular opportunities for children to write in subjects across the curriculum. These cross-curricular writing opportunities are planned for in our termly timelines. Children are encouraged to apply the skills that they have been taught in English lessons to their cross-curricular writing; by doing so, they demonstrate that they have secured the skills necessary to be considered age-related writers.

### **Assessment**

Assessment is an on-going, formative process in writing. Teachers use their classroom assessments and annotations to adapt planning to ensure effective support and challenge. Teachers in Years 1, 3, 4 and 5 use the HfL TAFs (Teacher Assessment Frameworks) to measure attainment and progress; writing in Years 2 and 6 is assessed against the national Teacher Assessment Frameworks. Evidence against the statements is collated as part of an ongoing process using sheets which are glued into the back of each child's English book and monitored in pupil progress meetings half-termly.

### **Handwriting**

At The Reddings, we follow the Nelson Handwriting scheme. Children learn a semi-cursive style of writing in which some descenders do not join other letters (Appendix 4). Children are expected to take pride in the presentation of their work and follow the presentation expectations which are stuck in the front of all exercise books. When children demonstrate consistently neat, legible semi-cursive writing over the course of a half term, they are awarded their pen license by the class teacher. This is monitored by the subject specialist on a termly basis.

### **Spelling and Phonics**

At The Reddings, we use Read Write Inc to teach phonics (EYFS and Year 1) and spelling (Year 2 onwards).

Phonics takes place daily across EYFS2 and Year 1 in small groups led by teaching assistants and teachers. Children are grouped by ability with on-going assessment used to ensure that children are grouped according to their learning needs. These groups may also include children in Year 2 who did not pass the phonics screening test and children in KS2 who are working significantly below age-related expectations in reading and writing.

From Year 2 onwards, children are taught spelling in daily 30-minute sessions that follow a bespoke spelling scheme that has been designed by the subject specialist and members of the senior leadership team. The units of work are based around the Read Write Inc. spelling scheme and are taught over 2 weeks. These are mapped out by the subject specialist at the beginning of the year and are written on long term plans (Appendix 5). These include key words that follow the given spelling rule for that unit of work and words from the National Curriculum spelling lists Spelling homework is set weekly and relates directly to what has been taught in class. Assessment in spelling is an on-going process and may be gathered through dictation exercises, spelling tests and correct application of learned words in their written work across the curriculum.

## **Reading**

### **Progression of skills**

Reading is predominantly taught in Early Years and Year 1 through the teaching of Read Write Inc phonics. Through regular assessment, children in these year groups are grouped accordingly to ensure targeted teaching and learning.

As children progress through the school system, the emphasis shifts from the teaching of decoding to comprehension. Statements are taken from the HfL reading assessment steps (appendix 6) to support accurate pitch of lessons and ensure progression of skills.

All children are encouraged to read for pleasure at home and are given a reading book by their class teacher. We use books selected from a range of reading schemes including Oxford Reading Tree and Project X. PM Benchmarking is used to ensure accurate assessment of reading for children in KS1 and those in KS2 who still require it; this information is used to identify the appropriate book band for each child. It is the teachers' responsibility to ensure that children take home reading books that are pitched accurately to their current reading level; the books that children read at home should be able to be read fluently and with no adult intervention required to enable the child to access the book. Once children can read books fluently at grey band level (HfL step B3), they become "free-readers." Class teachers monitor the books that children select for themselves, again ensuring that the difficulty of the book is appropriate for the child.

### **Planning/Curriculum**

From Year 2 to Year 5, children are taught in guided reading groups in which children are grouped by their reading ability according to teacher assessment. Texts are organised using the book banding system and are pitched at an instructional level (one book-band above what the children can access independently). Guided reading

(including whole-class guided reading) is timetabled four times a week and is delivered in the way that best meets the needs of the learners in a given class.

Reading is also modelled and taught at a whole-class level through the shared reading of texts as part of the teaching sequence for writing across all phases.

### **Assessment**

In Early Years, children are assessed against the Early Years foundation stage profile. In Years 1, 3, 4 and 5, assessment is a formative and on-going process. Staff use the HfL reading assessment steps to inform assessment and track children's progress and attainment using Classroom Monitor. Teachers use NFER summative tests once every term to ensure that assessments are robust. At the end of KS1 and KS2, children sit the SATs for reading.

### **Speaking and Listening**

Opportunities for children to develop their speaking and listening skills is planned for in both English lessons and in subjects across the curriculum. Speaking and listening skills are developed through activities such as: classroom debates, drama activities and games that develop vocabulary.

### **Monitoring**

Monitoring of English is in line with the Core Plan and takes place at least termly. This is led by the English subject specialist and reports are produced as part of the Core Plan monitoring process. Outcomes of monitoring are fed back to the staff and teacher specific feedback forms part of the 'teaching over time' document. Monitoring of English includes: moderation of writing, learning walks, book looks, formal "drop-in" observations and pupil voice.

Governors will monitor the policy through their Governor visit programme which may include work scrutiny, pupil voice and progress data analysis.

### **Renewal of Policy**

This policy should be reviewed at a minimum every three (3) years. Should key changes occur in the curriculum or with English teaching pedagogy, the policy should be reviewed earlier if necessary.

### **List of appendices**

Appendix 1: Herts for Learning writing assessment grids

Appendix 2: Herts for Learning exemplification documents

Appendix 3: English planning proforma

Appendix 4: Nelson handwriting ready reference guide

Appendix 5: KS2 spelling long term planning sheet

Appendix 6: Herts for Learning reading assessment sheets