



ENGLISH POLICY

1. AIMS

At Pennyhill we aim for excellence in English achievement throughout the school. We aim to develop pupils' abilities within an integrated programme of Speaking & Listening, Reading & Writing. Pupils will be given opportunities to develop their use of knowledge and understanding of spoken and written English within a broad and balanced curriculum, with opportunities to consolidate and reinforce taught English skills.

Pupils at Pennyhill Primary School will leave Year 6:

- reading and writing with confidence, fluency and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to take responsibility for their own learning including self-monitoring and correcting their own errors;
- with a love of reading and a desire to read for enjoyment;
- with an interest in words and their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in relation to grammatical terminology;
- understanding a range of text types, media types and genres;
- able to write in a variety of styles and forms appropriate to the situation;
- using their developing creativity, imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness;
- having a suitable technical vocabulary to respectfully articulate their responses in any discussion.

2. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum in England: English Programmes of Study – Key Stages 1 and 2 (2013) and in the Communication and Language and English sections of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2012).

In the Foundation Stage (Nursery/Reception) children are given opportunities to:

- speak, listen and represent ideas in their activities;
- use communication, language and English in every part of the curriculum;
- become immersed in an environment rich in print and opportunities to communicate.

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

At Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6) children learn to change the way they speak and write to suit different situations, purposes and audiences. They read a range of fiction, non-fiction and

poetic texts and respond to different layers of meaning in them. They explore the use of language in literary and non-literary texts and learn how the structure of language works (using grammatical terminology).

The Governing Body, receives regular reports on the progress of English provision and often visits classes to keep abreast of classroom practice. English lead reports to the Standards and Achievement committee and also to the Full Governing Body.

3. SUBJECT ORGANISATION

Reception

In Reception children have daily discrete phonics lessons. Children have opportunities to develop their communication, language and English skills on a daily basis in both adult led and child initiated activities.

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1 daily discrete phonics lessons continue and children are taught in ability groups, children also have daily mixed ability English lessons with an emphasis on real texts. Children take part in both guided and individual reading sessions and have regular story times to develop a love of reading. English skills are developed across the curriculum. Provision is made for children requiring extra support to have this through intervention programmes, differentiated class teaching and targeted teaching groups. English is also a key focus throughout the Cornerstones topic curriculum which promotes cross curricula links.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2 children have daily English lessons. Spelling and grammar skills are initially taught discretely before being embedded within English lessons as part of the whole learning journey. English skills are developed across the curriculum using the Cornerstones topic curriculum. Provision is available to enable students with additional needs to have extra support through targeted teaching; intervention programmes (e.g. RWI, Rapid Reading, Write Away and Lexia) and differentiated class teaching.

4. TEXT CENTRED APPROACH

At Pennyhill we use a text centred approach to teaching English. This uses high quality texts and promotes reading, writing, use of new vocabulary, grammar and an understanding of authorial techniques. Comprehension are developed from these texts and we use content domain type questions to develop children's understanding.

5. APPROACHES TO SPEAKING AND LISTENING

We recognise the importance of spoken language to support pupils' development across the whole curriculum - spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life. Opportunities to develop these skills include: debating, class assemblies, talk partners and drama.

All of these speaking and listening skills are taught in English lessons and across the curriculum.

Children who require extra support in speaking and listening have targeted interventions, either in 1:1 situations or in small groups.

We recognise the need for all pupils to speak, read and write Standard English fluently and accurately, while acknowledging that a pupil's own dialect, or other language is of prime importance. We have become a word aware school where knowing new words and meaning will provide the students with new words to enhance the written and spoken communication skills.

6. APPROACHES TO READING

We use the Letters and Sounds programme to deliver daily discreet phonics lessons in FS and KS1, enabling children to decode efficiently. This is continued into KS2 where necessary.

Teachers model reading strategies during shared reading sessions, whilst children have the opportunity to develop reading strategies and to discuss texts in detail during guided reading sessions or comprehension lessons. In KS1 children also have the opportunity to read 1-1 with an adult at least once a week. As the children move through the school, opportunities to read independently or for a larger audience, are promoted.

A range of reading schemes are used to support early readers. Teaching assistants support reading activities to ensure that children have more frequent opportunities to read with adults.

Many exciting and rewarding activities are arranged in school to promote the pleasure and knowledge that can be gained from books, i.e. 'world Book day'. This includes visitors from outside of school reading to the children, making books, secret readers; using drama, dance, music to illustrate texts and class swap readers.

Children in the Foundation Stage classes take home a book every day to be shared with parents. Children in upper key stage 2 read once a month with children from reception to support their love for reading.

In KS1 children take home a book from a reading scheme, usually 'The Oxford Reading Tree' schemes, or a levelled easy reader chapter book according to their ability. In addition to this, children have the opportunity to choose a book from the library. Each child has a home school reading diary that teachers and parents can use to share information about a child's reading. Parents are encouraged to read with their child daily. Information is given on how to support their child in reading at Bug Club reading workshops and also on the school's curriculum letters.

In Key Stage 2 children choose books to take home and read. We have a selection of banded books in each reading corner; online books in Bug Club and a wide selection in our school libraries for children to choose from. Those children still learning to read also have access to the 'Rapid' series; which are at an appropriate interest age, but are at an accessible reading age. These help lower attaining and SEN children to continue to grow in confidence as readers with a text that appears appropriate for their age group.

We still encourage all readers to share a book at home with their grown-ups. We believe that this not only helps to develop inferential skills, but also supports a lifelong love of reading. Throughout the Key Stage, children become more independent in recording what they have read in their reading diaries.

We recognise the value of adults (both in school and at home) reading aloud to children, in order to improve their grasp of story language, enthuse them with a love of books and inspire them as writers.

7. APPROACHES TO WRITING

We aim to develop the children's ability to produce well structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the reader. Attention is paid throughout the school to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. Our approach to teaching writing covers the 'transcription' and 'composition' requirements of The National Curriculum (2013).

At the beginning of a writing unit, children are asked to do a 'cold write'. Teachers use these to plan work that meets the needs of all children to ensure they make progress by the end of the unit. Throughout the unit, teachers model writing and teach elements of grammar and spelling strategies throughout shared writing sessions. Guided writing sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals, whilst children have opportunities to write at length in extended independent writing sessions at the end of each unit 'hot write' so that they can share their progress with others. This is also used as an assessment tool by teachers.

The children are given frequent opportunities in school to write in different contexts using quality texts as a model and for a variety of purposes and audiences. The text types which are required to be covered by The National Curriculum (2013) are outlined in our long term plans for each year group to ensure that there is a breadth of coverage. They may be asked to produce their writing on their own or as part of group.

We recognise the important role that computing has to play in our school in the development of English skills. There are many opportunities for children to improve their writing inspired by drama techniques and film clips.

We use the Oxford Owl online handwriting scheme in school to help children develop fluent, clear and legible joined up writing.

8. APPROACHES TO GRAMMAR AND SPELLING

The teaching of Grammar and Spelling is in line with the requirements of The National Curriculum (2014). Grammar skills are also embedded within English lessons where appropriate.

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 use the Read Write Inc programme to support the teaching of spelling patterns. As part of this programme we 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.

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. 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/tricky words)

From year two and into KS2 the children move towards using their phonic knowledge to help them to understand spelling rules and patterns. We teach children to use their growing understanding of the morphology and etymology of words to support their spelling. Helping the children to understand how to use and apply known spelling patterns (and to develop strategies to tackle tricky words) is the key to helping them to become successful spellers. Spelling skills are taught daily and are also embedded in English lessons so as strategies and rules can be taught in the context of writing.

When actually writing children should be concentrating on higher order thinking skills and should simply 'have a go' at spelling. When marking children's work, we do not correct all spelling errors, instead we focus on high frequency words, topic words and those studied in spelling sessions. Children are encouraged to up-level their own work and to find correct spellings themselves.

Each year group have a list of the common exception words for their year, which they have to learn. Every class (years 1-6) participate in a whole school Spelling Bee competition. This encourages the children to learn tricky words and participate in competition.

Grammar and spelling are assessed every term using the 'Rising Stars' programme.

9. CROSS-CURRICULAR ENGLISH 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 English lessons to other areas of the curriculum. The Cornerstones Curriculum is used and has created more opportunities to use and apply key English skills throughout the topics. Writing is also seen in other subject areas, eg RE.

10. ASSESSMENT

Phonics assessment

- Reading comprehension and SPAG is assessment termly using the Rising Star Progress in reading assessment (PIRA) from years 1-6.
- In KS1 Building blocks assessment is used half termly to assess writing.
- The assessment for writing in Years 3-5 is measured by the use of the Key performance Indicators (KPIs).
- Writing in year 6 is assessed against the interim statements.

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 in liaison with the Class Teachers, SENCo and Phase Leaders. Children who are working at greater depth will have differentiated activities to promote their progress.

12. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Pennyhill has universal ambitions for every child, whatever their background or circumstances. Children learn and thrive when they are healthy, safe and engaged.

In order to engage all children, cultural diversity, home languages, gender and religious beliefs are all celebrated. Our curriculum includes a wide range of texts and other resources which represent the diversity and backgrounds of all our children.

We believe in valuing what the child brings to school and recognise the importance of supporting a child's first language, not only to foster self-esteem, but to assist in the learning of English. We celebrate diversity throughout the school.

13. ROLE OF SUBJECT LEADER

The Subject Leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in English through:

- Create a yearly action plan and evaluate half termly
- Work alongside Governors
- Work alongside colleagues who work within the English team, coaching and mentoring them on subject leadership skills – promoting capacity for leadership within the school.
- monitoring and evaluating English:
 - pupil progress
 - feedback, marking, and planning
 - curriculum coverage
 - provision of English
 - the quality of the learning environment,
- taking the lead in policy development,
- Support delivery of staff training in all areas of English,
- auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD,
- keeping up to date with recent English developments.
- Organise and sometimes deliver parent workshops.
- Work alongside outside agencies to promote English within Pennyhill (eg Teaching Schools, SIPS)

14. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We aim to involve parents directly in the life of the school, and thus in the development of children's skills, knowledge and understanding in English. Parents are involved in hearing children read, and are encouraged to discuss books with them.

In Nursery parents are invited in to take part in 'Story' sessions which involve parents coming into to share a reading session to support their children. In Reception, phonics workshops support parents in understanding how to read with their child.

There are opportunities each term when parents can discuss their children's progress with their teacher. Termly curriculum letters provide information about the English curriculum and how parents can support their children. They also emphasise the importance of reading. Parents are encouraged to read both with and to their children at home in order to promote

reading. Bug Club workshops are delivered to parents so that they understand the value of reading online.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Feedback policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years or if changes are required.
