

Learning is fun at

Park Hill Infants' School



ALL different, ALL equal, ALL achieving

ENGLISH POLICY

November 2024

Version 1.3

Review date: November 2027

Version Control

Version	Date	Notes
1	November 2017	Original Policy
1.1	October 2019 February 2020	Policy updated by C Clarkson
	July 2020	Approved at FGB
1.2	October 2021	Policy updated by C Clarkson - Updates to Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework changes
	November 2021	Approved at Progress and Attainment Committee 15.11.21
1.3	October 2024	Policy updated by L Newell. Equalities statement added. Approved by Subject Lead. - Updates to Reading policy section to reflect current Phonics teaching/programme

(To be read in conjunction with our policies on other subjects, Early Years Foundation Stage and English as an Additional Language; this policy also contains, specifically, our policy statement about the teaching of early reading – see Section 5.)

Equality Statement

At Park Hill Infant School, we continue to teach our children about what it means to be strong, positive and productive members of society. We have always taught our pupils about equality and this remains an important part of our curriculum. We ensure that we always celebrate diversity, promote equality, demonstrate respect and stand together to challenge all forms of discriminatory language and behaviour.

We recognise that education is a vital tool for powerful, permanent and informative change. Our continuously evolving curriculum demonstrates our determination to use education to tackle issues of racism and inequality. We strive to ensure our curriculum and supporting resources reflect values of inclusivity, diversity, equality and belonging. We do this by planning to meet the needs of all genders, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all socio-economic backgrounds, children from different ethnic groups, religion and cultural backgrounds, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Aims and objectives:

The English curriculum develops children's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, opinions and feelings. Children are enabled to express themselves creatively and imaginatively as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in speaking and writing across a range of different situations and across the breadth of the Curriculum.

Our objectives in the teaching of English are:

- For all groups of pupils to be able to read, write and communicate coherently, enabling them to succeed as a member of modern-day society;
- To equip all pupils with an effective command of spoken and written English which will support them to access learning across the rest of the curriculum and future education;
- For all pupils to develop a love of reading and literature which will continue to develop and enhance their independence and cultural capital;
- to equip all pupils with a deep phonic knowledge and comprehension skills to enable them to be confident and independent readers, developing their understanding of meaning conveyed at word, sentence and whole text level;
- for children to become reflective readers, through contact with a wide range of different types of material, including challenging and substantial texts;
- to encourage children to listen with concentration, in order to identify main points, and appropriate detail, of what they have heard;
- to show children how to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands;
- to foster the enjoyment of writing for a wide range of meaningful purposes, and to develop a recognition of its value and purpose;
- to develop understanding of English grammar and the effective use of Standard English;

- to confidently spell all common exception words as set out in the National curriculum and independently extend their vocabulary through the use of dictionaries and thesauruses;
- to develop skills in planning, drafting, evaluating and editing their writing;
- to develop effective handwriting skills, including forming joined writing;
- to engender in children a love of literature and an appreciation of our literary heritage.

Teaching and learning:

We use a variety of teaching and learning approaches in our English lessons, and develop these in accordance with the objectives outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework (2024) and the National Curriculum (2014) for English. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in relation to English language and literature. Pupils have a substantial session each day which focus specifically on the development of literacy skills, for example; engaging in a purposeful whole-class writing activity, a whole-class focused word or sentence analysis activity, or a whole class drama focus and presentation. Whilst there is a high proportion of whole-class and group teaching, the independent activities also provide opportunities for talk and collaboration, whilst embedding and enhancing pupils' learning. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of high quality, engaging texts, and to support their work with a variety of resources, such as word banks, phonic GPC resources, dictionaries and thesauruses. Children often use computing in English sessions where it enhances their learning, such as when using multimedia resources to study how words and images are combined to convey meaning. Wherever possible, we encourage children to use and apply their English learning in other areas of the curriculum, and will use incidental opportunities to teach and reinforce literacy skills in other subject areas, particularly involving speaking, listening and written work for recording.

In all classes, children have a wide range of abilities, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons, we use differentiated group work, while in others, we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas. We use teaching assistants to support children of all abilities, and to enable work to be matched to the needs of individuals. Children are taught to independently extend their own understanding and develop an intrinsic love for learning.

English curriculum planning:

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum. We use a broad range of resources, books and websites, as the basis for implementing the statutory requirements of the Programme of Study for English as stated in the National Curriculum.

We carry out curriculum planning in English, in three phases (long-term, medium-term and short-term). The National Curriculum 2014, details the statutory long-term teaching objectives. These are then distributed across the year groups by the English Leader to ensure clear progression and development of knowledge and skills. Focus 'teaching texts' are carefully chosen alongside these objectives to fit effectively with the current topic and context for learning for each year group each half term.

Our medium-term plans give details of the main teaching objectives for each half term. Teaching sequences are developed by the English leader (in the form of half termly 'text webs') in liaison with each Year Group teaching team, and encompass a range of schemes and strategies, incorporating and adapting the '*CLPE: Power of Reading*', and '*Pie Corbett: Talk for Writing*' concepts. These plans define the content and genre of what we teach over a half term unit, and ensure an appropriate balance, range and distribution of work across each term. The subject leader is responsible for overseeing and reviewing these plans and ensuring a good balance between opportunities for speaking and listening, drama, writing, reading, phonics, grammar, spelling and handwriting.

Class teachers complete a weekly (short-term) plan for the teaching of English. This lists the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson, giving details, ideas and strategies outlining how the lessons are to be taught. It also includes details of what each group of children will be learning and their differentiated challenges/adaptive teaching strategies. The class teacher keeps these individual plans and uses them as a working document which is reviewed, adapted and evaluated on a daily basis. The class teacher and subject leader discuss and feedback to each other on the overall effectiveness of planning on a regular, informal basis.

We plan the activities so that they build on the children's prior learning, while ensuring progression in the schemes of work, so that there is an increasing challenge for the children as they move up through the school.

The Early Years Foundation Stage:

We teach literacy skills in our Reception year as an integral part of the EYFS curriculum. Progressive skill development is outlined in Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL), one of the six '*Areas of Learning*' in the EYFS curriculum. In particular, in the EYFS, the CLL curriculum cannot be covered in isolation from the other five areas of learning. Opportunities to practise literacy skills, for example, reading labels, responding to written instructions, mark-making and early writing as part of play-based learning will be provided throughout the learning environment in the Reception classroom and outdoor area. Children have a discrete, daily phonics lesson as a crucial element in developing their early reading and writing skills.

We plan the teaching and development of English to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals, which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged 0 to 5. We give all children the opportunity to talk and communicate in a widening range of situations, to respond to adults and to each other, to listen carefully, and to practise and extend their vocabulary and communication skills. They have the opportunity to explore words and texts, to enjoy them, to learn about them, and to use them in various situations.

Reading Policy:

The teaching of reading and children's acquisition of reading skills is the bedrock of our English curriculum. Becoming an effective and proficient reader is the gateway to learning for our children, and success in most other subjects of the curriculum is dependent upon learning to read well and independently.

It is essential that our approach to teaching phonics and reading is accessible to all learners, regardless of background.

Intent

Phonics (reading and spelling)

At Park Hill Infant School, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic synthetic phonics programme. From Reception, we follow the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression](#), which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school.

As a result, all our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At Park Hill Infant School, we also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

Comprehension

At Park Hill Infant School, we value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us, they read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure. Our readers are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary. We encourage our children to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose.

Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have a Reading Leader who drives the early reading programme in our school. This person is highly skilled in teaching phonics and reading, and they monitor and support our reading team, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* programme.

Implementation

Language and nursery rhymes in Reception

- Research tells us that nursery rhymes can support children to develop their language, their awareness of sounds within words and even their later reading ([Bryant et al. 1989](#)).
- We use the Little Wandle Rhyme time films and accompanying phonological awareness planning to complement and reinforce our Phase 2 teaching.

Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

- We teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to full-length lessons as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.
- Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in Week 2 of the Autumn term.
- We follow the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress](#):
 - Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.
 - Children in Year 1 review Phases 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

Daily Keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read

- Any child in Reception and Year 1 who needs additional practice has Daily Keep-up support and is taught by a fully trained adult.
- Daily Keep-up lessons follow the Little Wandle progression and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition so that every child secures their learning.

Daily phonics and spelling in Year 2

- Year 2 begins by using assessment to ensure that children have completed the Little Wandle Year 1 progression. Any gaps in teaching are addressed through daily phonics lessons until the programme is completed. Corresponding summative assessments are carried out to ensure this content is secure.
- Once all the Year 1 content has been taught and assessed, we teach a five-week Phase 5 review. This ensures that children secure the trickier elements of Phase 5 and can apply this alphabetic knowledge in both reading and spelling.
- We use the Phase 5 review assessment before teaching in Year 2 to identify any children who may need more support when teaching. We reassess after teaching the Phase 5 review.
- Once the Phase 5 review is secure; we teach the Bridge to Spelling before moving to the Spelling units.
- Children with larger gaps in their phonic knowledge than their peers have daily phonics teaching and follow the Rapid Catch-up programme.

Children in Year 2: Rapid Catch-up

- We timetable daily phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 who is not at age-related expectations for reading or has not met the benchmark for the Phonics Screening Check. These children urgently need to catch up, so the gap between themselves and their peers does not widen.
- These short, sharp lessons last 15 to 20 minutes daily and have been designed to ensure children quickly catch up to age-related expectations in reading.
- We assess children who are new to our school, new to the country or new to English using the Rapid Catch-up assessments to quickly identify their needs.
- We use the Rapid Catch-up assessments to identify the gaps in children's phonic knowledge and teach these using the Rapid Catch-up resources – at pace.
- We assess children every four weeks using the Rapid Catch-up summative assessments to assess progress and inform teaching.

Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions

- We teach reading practice sessions each week. These:
 - are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately six children
 - use books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments and book matching grids on pages 11 to 20 of 'Application of phonics to reading'
 - are monitored by the class teacher, who rotates and works with each group on a regular basis.
- Each reading practice session has a clear focus, so that the demands of the session do not overload the children's working memory. The reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills:
 - decoding: teaching children to use phonic knowledge to read words

- prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
- comprehension: using dialogic talk to help children to understand the text.
- In Reception, these sessions start in Week 4 of teaching at the latest. Initially, children will read wordless books. In these sessions, children review GPCS and are taught blending using teacher-led blending. Once children can blend, they progress onto decodable books matched to their secure phonic knowledge.
- Children read each book three times to develop phonemic awareness, vocabulary and comprehension as well as book behaviours.
- In Year 2, we ensure children complete reading the core programme decodable books (up to Phase 5 Set 5). To exit the programme, we complete the final fluency assessment to ensure children can read with adequate speed and accuracy: approximately 60 words per minute with 90%+ accuracy.
- Reading in Rapid Catch-up lessons mirrors the core programme. Children following the Rapid Catch-up programme are taught to read using the 7+ fully decodable books. These follow the same progression as the core programme but are more appropriate for older readers.

Home reading

- The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.
 - Reading for pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read to children. We share the research behind the importance and impact of sharing quality children's books with parents through workshops, leaflets and the [Everybody read!](#) resources.
 - We use the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised parents' resources](#) to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and through workshops.

Additional reading support for vulnerable children

- Children in Reception and Year 1 who are receiving additional phonics Daily Keep-up sessions read their reading practice book regularly to an adult in school.
- We prioritise children who may not have reading support at home or who may not have access to books. We ensure that they have individual reading times with volunteers and staff to share quality children's literature to promote a love of reading.

Ensuring consistency and pace of progress

- Every teacher in our school has been trained to teach reading, so we have the same expectations of progress. We all use the same language, routines and resources to teach children to read so that we lower children's cognitive load.
- Weekly content grids map each element of new learning to each day, week and term for the duration of the programme.
- Lesson templates, prompt cards and 'How to' videos ensure teachers all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.
- The Reading Leader uses checklists and templates to regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children who need additional support and have gaps in learning.

Ensuring reading for pleasure

'Reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child's success' (OECD 2002).

'The will influences the skill and vice versa' (OECD 2010).

We highly value reading for pleasure and work hard as a school to grow our reading for pleasure pedagogy.

- We read aloud to children every day. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including those that reflect the children at Park Hill Infant School and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.
- Every classroom has an inviting book corner that encourages a love for reading. We curate these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books.
- In Reception, children have access to the reading corner every day in their free-flow time and the books are continually refreshed.

- Children choose from our range of carefully chosen books to take home and share with an adult.
- As children progress through school, we take time to get to know them as readers and ensure that we engage in meaningful conversations about the books that they have read. By doing this we can recommend authors and genres of books to expand their interests.
- The school library is made available for classes to use at protected times. Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, Book Week, author visits and workshops, national events etc).
- We use the Everybody read! resources to grow our teachers' knowledge of current books, the most recent research and to grow our own Reading for Pleasure practice.

Impact

Assessment

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it.

- **Assessment for Learning (AfL)** is used:
 - daily within class to identify children who require Daily Keep-up support, as well as words and GPCs that need additional teaching
 - to plan repeated practice throughout the day to ensure all children secure learning
 - weekly in the Friday review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.
- **Summative assessments** are uploaded onto the Assessments tracker for Reception and Year 1. These are used:
 - to generate visual reports (pupil heatmaps, pupil trends and books levels, and a summary analysis) for individual children, classes and whole year groups
 - by teachers and the Reading Leader who drill down and look at the data at GPC, word, tricky word and sentence level
 - by the Reading Leader to scrutinise and plan how to narrow the attainment gaps between different groups of children and to put in place any additional support for teachers.

We assess:

- every six weeks to assess progress and to identify gaps in learning that need to be reviewed or retaught
 - to establish if learning is secure for more than 70% of children before new content is taught
 - to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Keep-up support that they need
- **Fluency assessments** measure children's accuracy and reading speed in short one-minute assessments. They are used:
 - in Year 1 and Year 2, when children are reading the Phase 5 Set 3, 4 and 5 books
 - with children following the Rapid Catch-up programme in Years 2, when they are reading the Phase 5 Set 3, 4 and 5 books
 - to assess when children are ready to exit their programme*

*Year 2 children can exit the Rapid-Catch-up programme when they can read the final fluency assessment at 60–70+ words per minute.. At these levels, children should have sufficient fluency to tackle any book at age-related expectations. After exiting their programme, children do not need to read any more fully decodable books.

- A **placement assessment** is used:
 - with any child new to the school in Reception and Year 1 to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and to plan and provide appropriate extra teaching.

Statutory assessment

- Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check. Any child who does not meet the benchmark for the check resits it in Year 2.

English and Inclusion:

All children, whatever their ability and individual needs, have a basic entitlement to be taught essential literacy skills, and to have the opportunity to develop those skills to the best of their ability. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our teaching of literacy skills, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to make good progress. We strive hard to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details, see separate policies on: Special Educational Needs; Disability Discrimination; Gifted and Talented Children; English as an Additional Language (EAL).

When progress falls significantly outside the expected range, the pupil may have special educational needs. Our assessment process looks at a range of factors – classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching style, and differentiation, adaptive teaching strategies – so that we can take some additional or different action to enable the child to learn more effectively. Assessment against the National Curriculum allows us to consider each child's attainment and progress against the national standard. This ensures that our teaching is matched to the child's needs.

For some children who require SEND support, additional provision will be based on a pupil's Individual Education Plan (IEP), where appropriate, for children with special educational needs. Depending on the pupil's needs, the Provision map may include specific targets relating to English. This is evidenced through provision maps and in some cases an EHCP.P

Adults provide support for English through:

- individualised guided writing and reading;
- differentiated texts that children can more easily read and understand;
- visual prompts and written materials in different formats;
- physical resources such as pencil grips and over lays;
- I Pads, computers, recordable devices and other technological aids;
- alternative communication such as signs and symbols;
- word banks and phonic banks;
- translation and amanuensis.

Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas:

The literacy skills that children develop are linked to, and applied in every area of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work at school.

Mathematics and Science:

The teaching of English contributes significantly to children's mathematical understanding, in a variety of ways. Children in the EYFS develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these matters with adults and other children. Children in Key Stage 1 meet stories and rhymes that involve counting, pattern spotting and sequencing. They explain and present their work to others during review and plenary sessions, and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language.

History, Geography and Religious Education (RE):

While these humanities subjects involve significant subject specific knowledge, skills and conceptual understanding, the medium for researching, learning about and communicating is, of course, the English language. Pupils will constantly call upon and develop their literacy skills in finding information, ordering and making sense of what they have learned and communicating it in writing and orally.

Art and Design Technology:

Art is often used as a visual prompt in English sessions as a starting point to engage and develop their ideas creatively. Children may use art to express their opinions and understanding of different texts. When children learn about the lives of famous artists they will use their reading and research skills and writing skills to create written reports and captions. The children use their analysing and debating skills to evaluate products and use their language skills to explain their ideas and processes sequentially.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship:

The teaching of English contributes to the teaching of PSHE and citizenship by encouraging children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. Older children also research, debate and write about topical social problems and events. They discuss lifestyle choices, and meet and talk with visitors who work within the school community.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development:

The teaching of literacy skills enables our children to offer critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their life, both within and outside school. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts bring them into contact with their own literary heritage and with texts from a diverse range of cultures. The organisation of our lessons and break times allows children to work and play together, giving them the chance to use their speaking and listening skills in developing social collaboration and understanding.

Computing:

The selective use of computer software, with clear learning objectives, will promote, enhance and support the teaching of English at word, sentence and text levels. It also offers ways of developing learning which are not always possible with conventional methods, for example, through individualised interactive learning. Software is used to support independent reading such as identifying graphemes using a key board, and writing (predictive word processors, word banks and spell checkers). A range of software is used to develop specific grammatical and spelling skills. Pupils frequently use word processing facilities to record and edit their writing, and have access to I pads and computers in the classroom.

Assessment

Teachers assess children's work in English in a range of ways. Daily assessments are made by teachers as part of every lesson to help them to adjust their daily plans and these are noted after every session. They match these short-term assessments closely to the half termly learning objectives. Written or verbal feedback is given to help guide children's progress. Children are encouraged to review their work and make self-assessments about how they can improve their own work, including through the 'bubble and block' system. Teachers also use colour coding systems in writing books when assessing pupil's outcomes in order to monitor progress and ensure that pupil's stay 'on track' to meet their potential. The children each have an individual writing and reading target to which they work towards. This is reviewed by the teacher and evidence is found to meet the objective.

Teachers make formal termly assessments and use these to assess progress against year group and national targets developed by the English Leader through *Development Matters*, the *National Curriculum*, and the *KS1 Teacher Assessment Framework*. With the help of these long-term assessments, they are able to set targets for the next term and/ or school year, and to summarise the progress of each child before discussing it with the child's parents or carers. The next teacher and year group team then uses these long-term assessments as the planning basis for the new school year. These long-term assessments are based on teacher assessments, supported by national assessment guidelines. Pupils participate in the Year One Phonics Screening Check.

The English leader and assessment leader keep samples of children's work in a moderation portfolio. These demonstrate what the expected level of attainment is in English in each year of the school. Teachers meet regularly to moderate assessments across a range of writing and other activities to ensure that our teacher assessments are accurate and in line with national standards. This happens across Year Groups every half term, and across the whole school and key stages termly. The English Leader also works as a Local Authority moderator to ensure accurate judgements across the borough.

Staff are continuously developing their English subject knowledge and the English leader takes an active role in disseminating best practice, modelling new strategies and concepts and providing staff training.

Resources:

We have a very wide range of resources to support the teaching of English across the school. All classrooms have dictionaries and a variety of age-appropriate learning materials including a broad selection of fiction and non-fiction texts. Each classroom has reading and speaking and listening areas, with access to audio texts. Children have access to the internet in the classroom, the class and whole school library and the Computing suite.

Monitoring and review

The co-ordination and planning of the English curriculum are the responsibility of the English Subject leader, who also:

- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping abreast of current developments in English and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
- gives the Headteacher an annual Subject Development Plan in which she evaluates the strengths and areas for development of literacy in the school, and indicates areas for further improvement;
- uses regular management time to review evidence of the children’s learning, and to observe and review literacy lessons across the school.
- Monitors effectiveness and challenge of English teaching and learning across the key stages in order to ensure consistency and to enhance subject knowledge, creativity and enthusiasm for the subject for all teaching staff.
- Monitors rates of progress for pupils of all groups and abilities and analyses written work and planning to monitor areas of strength and development in the teaching of English across the whole school.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or sooner if necessary. At every review, it will be approved by the Subject Lead.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____