



Policy for English

Pickhurst Academy

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Document Purpose

This policy document sets out the school's aims, principles and strategies for the delivery of the English Curriculum. It will form the basis for the development of English in the school over the next year. It gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment. This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the National Curriculum 2014, which gives details of what pupils in each age group, will cover. This policy was updated in the Spring term by the English subject lead.

English Policy

This policy describes our practice in the teaching of English: reading, writing, phonics, spelling, grammar and speaking and listening. It is defined by current national guidance on best practice, CPD, staff discussion and professional judgement. The teaching of English is evaluated through the Subject Leader Action Plan, data from assessments and the School Development Plan.

Our approach to teaching of English is multi-faceted, incorporating speaking & listening, drama, real contexts, and good quality literature. Most importantly, we want to create fluent readers and writers with all the skills and knowledge they need to be confidently literate in life. We want all children to leave Pickhurst Junior School with a lifelong reading habit and a love of books because we believe this has a significant impact on the quality of their writing. We teach the editorial skills needed for this (spelling, grammar and handwriting) within real contexts wherever possible so children see their relevance. Teachers plan creative and relevant links to their class topics as a vehicle for writing.



Aims:

- To build on our children's experiences of language learning, recognising their individuality, considering their personal experience and acknowledging differences in their linguistic and cultural backgrounds.
- Acknowledge the essential role parents have in the development of their children's language learning and to encourage them to take an active role in this learning.
- To provide a language rich environment that promotes a culture of reading and writing.
- To develop a love of books and high-quality literature that will not only support learning across the
- curriculum, but also extend beyond the classroom environment and enrich our children's lives.
- To teach children the craft of writing, in order to develop the confidence and skills to write well for a range of purposes and audiences.
- Make appropriate assessments and keep meaningful records to ensure progression and continuity.

Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are set out in the National Curriculum English Document (2014) and in the Communication, Language and Literacy section of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014). Further advice has been outline in the Writing Framework (2025) although it is not statutory.

Intent

English is a core subject in the National Curriculum: it is a prerequisite for educational progress across the entire primary curriculum. At Pickhurst, we follow The Literacy Tree, a complete, book-based English scheme rooted in high-quality children's literature and closely aligned with the National Curriculum. English teaching and



learning are centred around a carefully selected core text, typically studied over a half term. This immersive approach allows pupils to engage deeply with rich, meaningful texts and to develop a genuine love of reading. We use the Literacy Tree to achieve our aim to equip our pupils with the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to become well-rounded, lifelong linguists with a real enthusiasm for reading and writing.

Our aim is to expose pupils to a wide range of high-quality texts and developing pupils' vocabulary, grammar and punctuation skills in context. English lessons at Pickhurst act as building blocks leading up to final pieces of writing in which pupils demonstrate the wide range of skills they have learnt, promoting their 'Cultural Capital' as lifelong readers and writers. Our lessons take pupils through a learning journey which equips them with the knowledge they require to become skilled readers and writers, by covering a range of skills: speaking and listening through drama and role play; analysis of high-quality texts; developing grammar and punctuation in context; and reading VIPERS challenges. The work in pupils' books illustrates a build-up of skills through word and sentence-level work, paragraph-level application, final writing pieces, editing/up-levelling and publishing. We aim for our pupils to have the necessary stamina and understanding to write at or above the expected standard. By the time pupils leave Year 6, they will each see themselves as authors with the knowledge and skills of choosing language, structure, and form to achieve a range of writing purposes.

At Pickhurst, through recognition of the need to prepare our children for their futures and the world of work, our curriculum is broad, balanced and inclusive. It has defined end points with a clear sequence and progression, with children attaining the crucial knowledge and skills they need by the time they leave our school.

Intent Statements	Aims	
Statement 1: <u>To foster effective learning behaviours (Pickhurst Core Values).</u> To develop the behaviours that learners need to succeed in the world such as: pride, respect, confidence, kindness and inquisitiveness.	<i>To be proud</i>	Evaluating their progress and meeting/exceed age related expectations. Being enthusiastic and motivated readers who are confident. Expressing a love of reading. Celebrating their reading achievements. Evaluating their achievements in writing and celebrating improvements. Celebrating and sharing their achievements and those of others. Taking care in their presentation, including handwriting.
	<i>To be inquisitive</i>	Being encouraged to love literature and the enjoyment of reading for pleasure whilst being able to express and explain this. Being knowledgeable about the purpose and organisation of books. By reading to themselves or to others (peers and adults). Showing an awareness of the link between reading and writing. Collaborating and sharing ideas with their peers. For example, generating vocabulary banks, narrative sequencing and plot and character development.



		Taking on roles when editing, including proofreading, checking punctuation and grammar, spell checking and checking for sense and meaning. Coaching and learning from each other.⁶ Respecting and learning from each other.
	<i>To be confident</i>	Developing confidence in reading a wide variety of genres and text types which are thought provoking and immersive.⁶ Answering questions using the correct format for answering. Developing the confidence to write freely and independently. Developing over time the ability to write autonomously and to take responsibility for their own writing, increasingly taking initiative. Being encouraged to write for purpose and for pleasure and to share when appropriate. Developing self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence in writing. Being reflective about their writing development, including proofreading and editing.
	<i>To be kind</i>	Reading and writing improves ability to empathise with others whilst also improving our relationships with others and informing our moral compasses. Reading allows children to be educated and learn about new



		places in the world and cultures different to their own. This learning enables kindness and understanding to happen.
	<i>To be healthy</i>	Reading and writing improves focus, memory, empathy and communication skills, whilst also reducing stress and improving mental health.
	<i>To be understanding</i>	Reading texts that are thought provoking and will challenge their reading skills whilst allowing them to empathise and tolerate ideas and characters.
	<i>To be respectful</i>	Engaging in texts that are thought provoking and challenge their preconceptions and ideas. Progressing to becoming selective in their choice of reading material Reading regularly and develop a respect for books. Respecting the constraints placed on the writing process within different genres and grammatical structures. Engaging in their writing and moving it forward. Managing their time to produce writing, including editing and publishing. Taking ownership of pen licenses and upholding the expected standard. Accepting responsibility for the quality and presentation of their work.



	<i>To be successful</i>	Experiencing reading in a variety of situations so that it becomes a pleasurable and a productive experience. Embracing the opportunity to write and develop within a variety of genres and striving to meet not only the non-negotiables but to also include all elements of the increasingly demanding success criteria. Celebrating and sharing their achievements and those of others.
	<i>To be trustworthy</i>	Engaging in texts that are thought provoking and challenge their preconceptions and ideas. Progressing to becoming selective in their choice of reading material Reading regularly and develop a respect for books. Respecting the constraints placed on the writing process within different genres and grammatical structures. Engaging in their writing and moving it forward. Managing their time to produce writing, including editing and publishing. Taking ownership of pen licenses and upholding the expected standard. Accepting responsibility for the quality and presentation of their work.



Statement 2:

To nurture our children's learning journey.

To develop the appropriate subject specific knowledge, skills and understanding as set out in the National Curriculum. Layering knowledge across subjects so that it becomes embedded and children can flourish, reach and exceed their potential academically, physically, emotionally and artistically.

- Subject specific knowledge and skills, built around objectives within the National Curriculum, identified within Knowledge Organisers. The skills are built upon which activates prior learning.
- Rationale for the way in which English has been organised to best layer knowledge and concepts within and across year groups.
- English has been used to allow for meaningful links to be made across other subject areas.
- 'Sticky learning' (prior learning and key concepts) is addressed at the start of each unit and lesson. The children are encouraged to recall and retrieve prior learning to support with their new knowledge & skills

Reading:

In order to support the delivery of the 2014 National Curriculum, metacognition strategies and techniques are explicitly taught and modelled by teachers at Pickhurst during the acquisition and development of reading skills.

Metacognition, defined as "thinking about thinking," engages students as active assessors of their own learning. When students use metacognition, they think about their thinking as they read. This ability to think about their thinking is critical for monitoring comprehension and fixing it when it breaks down. This added to cognitive ability (phonological awareness, processing, memory and sequencing) are key to becoming proficient, confident readers who can read fluently and with strong comprehension skills.

The English Progression Document details the key reading skills that pupils will gain at each stage of the curriculum. It allows for Viper skills to be embedded, layered and built upon. This document is used as a powerful tool to allow all children to make progress in reading.

Teachers can activate prior knowledge about what to include in their answers; drawing on their knowledge of the features relevant to the question. As reading underpins many elements of the school curriculum and is an essential life-skill, the knowledge and skills acquired in reading sessions must be transferable to other curriculum areas. This will be achieved through:

-careful selection of high quality and engaging texts from 'The Literacy Tree' which are used as a stimulus for writing across many different genres



-children are regularly exposed to texts (both fiction and non-fiction) which link with the wider curriculum to reinforce knowledge and skills are transferable across the curriculum

Writing:

With all written work, children are encouraged to think about the purpose and audience of their writing and consider how they will approach the task.

This will include:

- ensuring they understand the intended purpose of the task
- activating prior knowledge about what to include in their writing; drawing on their knowledge of the features relevant for a particular genre and identifying the grammatical skills previously taught.
- success criteria to assess their own work and determine whether they have been successful and where improvements could be made.

As writing underpins many elements of the school curriculum and is an essential life-skill, the knowledge and skills acquired in writing sessions must be transferable to other curriculum areas. This will be achieved through:

- careful selection of high quality and engaging texts from 'The Literacy Tree' which are used as a stimulus for writing across many different genres
- children are regularly exposed to texts (both fiction and non-fiction) which link with the wider curriculum to reinforce knowledge and skills are transferable across the curriculum
- grammar, punctuation and spelling objectives will be taught within English lessons, but the expectation is that these skills will be applied in all written work
- teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities to make cross-curricular links and will plan for pupils to practise and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired from English lessons to other areas of the curriculum so that they become embedded.

Implementation



At Pickhurst, we use the Literacy Tree to ensure a wide range of text types are taught throughout each year of a child's education at our school. Each term, pupils are taught reading and writing through a variety of fiction, non-fiction and poetry units, which ensures a depth and breadth of understanding as our pupils are able to learn, explore and apply key skills from the National Curriculum in a range of contexts and for different purposes. Furthermore, extended writing takes place each half term, which provides an opportunity for pupils to apply their learning to a range of writing purposes, cross-curricular contexts. At Pickhurst, we endeavor to relate children's learning to real-life experiences as often as possible. As a result, links are often made to practical activities, 'Hooks' into the text, school trips and pupils' own experiences. Our English curriculum is firmly grounded in a quality first book-led approach, with units linked to carefully selected, quality texts, which enables pupils to learn in context and encourages their passion for reading. Key reading skills are taught within English sessions through Reading Skills VIPERS: Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explain, Retrieve, Sequence and Summarise.

Impact

The impact of our curriculum is measured through a range of assessment tools. Teachers continually formatively assess their pupils through the use of self and peer assessment techniques and by using our marking and feedback policy. At Pickhurst, summative assessments are completed to monitor the children's reading and writing progress in-line with the standards outlined in the National Curriculum and are used by teachers to formatively assess on a half termly basis. Pupils are given clear, individual outcomes based on their own skills to develop their literacy skills. At Pickhurst, we have also created our own Writing Moderation pack, which establishes clear guidelines for what 'working towards' and 'working at' the expected standard looks like in Year 3 – Year 6.

Learning and Teaching Strategies

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Knowledge, understanding and skills are taught daily within the English lesson. Lesson planning is guided by the 2014 National Curriculum and Literacy Tree lesson plans. Using strategies and resources from 'The Literacy Tree', teachers plan units of work towards writing outcomes across a range of genre linked to reading, writing, drama and speaking and listening. Teachers use quality texts which support the termly class topic where possible and, therefore, the wider curriculum. There is an exploration of different genres and writing styles which children read in class to produce their own examples of fiction, non-fiction and poetry.

Teachers use a variety of teaching methods to deliver the curriculum and achieve set learning objectives. They are provided with clear expectations for teaching English. Teaching and learning takes place within a whole class setting and, in the main, differentiation is by outcome and through setting different expectations. The teacher may lead smaller ability led guided reading and writing groups during a lesson. Within guided groups, teachers move children forward by focusing specifically on reading and writing targets which are particular to that group of children. Teachers are expected to plan time within extended writing lessons for children to reflect on their marked work, and independently respond to teacher prompts to improve their writing.

Reading

Our priority is both the teaching of reading skills and the enjoyment of literature, enabling children to become lifelong, confident readers. As children begin to read, we focus on decoding, primarily through phonics in addition to other strategies, e.g., whole word recognition, rhyme and context.

As children build fluency, comprehension skills become our main area of focus and questioning looks at skills such as retelling, inference and prediction. We believe that high-quality literature is key to motivating children to read and instilling in children a love of literature. Children throughout the school are encouraged to read widely.

Phonics



Any child who is not secure in their phonic knowledge by the time they reach KS2 continues to have regular phonics sessions and reads books that are phonically decodable. These children also read daily to an adult in school.

What this looks like at Pickhurst Junior School

The teaching of KS2 reading skills begins in Year 3 where the key reading skills are introduced. Through story time and individual reading of books children have chosen to take home from our reading scheme Bug Club. Children are taught during shared and whole class sessions using structured, guided texts and short stories. Teachers and Teaching Assistants also read on an individual basis with children, assessing children's progression in reading and their understanding of the text. Children who are not making adequate progress are identified and given additional support. We are flexible with our use of scheme books. If a child is 'stuck' at a level and losing motivation, we will always look for alternatives to re-ignite enthusiasm.

Developing a love of reading

We hold a termly 'book cover' competition and select winners from each key stage as someone who has reimagined the book cover with creativity and imagination. There has also been an implementation of 'Book Bingo' which rewards children who read widely. We have a dedicated library area and each class in the school has a collection of books within their reading corner. We set up visits from authors who provide assemblies / workshops for our children.

There is lots of talk and discussion about reading in a variety of contexts, both formal and informal. We have School Book Fairs and always celebrate World Book Day.

Children are expected to read every night at home, with Boom Reader to keep a record of what they are reading. This is monitored very systematically by staff who liaise directly with parents if it is not happening.

Speaking and Listening

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We believe that speaking and listening form the foundations of all learning in English. Informal and informal situations, we create and facilitate opportunities for conversation, discussion and talk around learning. Questioning forms the basis of our teaching and we strongly encourage children to be inquisitive and to share their thoughts confidently in a supportive environment. Speaking and Listening takes place in all areas of our curriculum; it is particularly evident within our own bespoke curriculum delivery of P4C which takes place during assemblies on a Wednesday.

What this looks like at Pickhurst Junior School:

- Questioning and taking risks with language.
- Presenting in front of an audience – class assemblies and special events or curriculum days
- Reciting and reading aloud.
- Re-telling, role-play and drama productions.
- Listening to and participating in stories, poems, rhymes and songs.
- Drama activities to enliven and enrich children's understanding of character
- Talking the text – opportunities for children to talk about and discuss their reading and writing.
- Debate.
- Collaborative work and reporting back following group work.
- Talk is valued highly in the classroom as a tool for learning.
- Intervention is used to support pupils with speaking and listening skills below age related expectations.

Writing

Teachers carefully plan pieces of writing ensuring that there is a purposeful outcome to each piece. To ensure that all pupils learn to be confident writers, we encourage children to write creatively whilst teaching key writing skills explicitly and systematically. Writing takes place daily within English lessons and in other lessons linked to the wider curriculum.

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What this looks like at Pickhurst Junior School

Writing is taught as a sequenced activity based on The Literacy Tree scheme. We ensure that across the year, children are exposed to different types of writing and their necessary features. We have high expectations for quality and presentation. We provide stimulating firsthand experiences e.g. trips, visitors and special curriculum days. Teachers provide regular helpful feedback through conference marking. We ensure progression in complexity of tasks. Younger pupils, or those with a special educational need, are offered word mats, sentence stems and other resources to enable them to write independently.

Each half term, pieces of work from each class will be 'published', i.e. re-drafted in neat and displayed in their Pickhurst Portfolio. Peer marking is encouraged as an additional way for children to respond to writing.

Spelling

Understanding how to spell correctly is important in supporting children to organise their thinking around language. Knowing how to apply spelling rules and recognising key words is empowering for children. Spelling plays a significant part of standardised assessment and is taught throughout the school as part of our English Curriculum within the context of our core-reading text.

What this looks like at Pickhurst Junior School

We use the 2014 National Curriculum as a guide to which spellings should be taught in which year group. In addition to this, Key Stage 2 focus on high frequency and common exception words. Children practice spelling corrections in their literacy books - chosen by their teacher as part of their response to marked work. Spelling tests take place twice a half term and select words from the half termly spelling overview. Tests are recorded in the same book to show the impact of learning them. Children learn to spell explicitly in daily spelling teaching woven into English lessons. In Key Stage 2,



spelling sessions incorporate Etymology, consolidation practice of High Frequency words, dictionary work, the study of spelling patterns and the statutory words set out for each year group in the national curriculum for English. Children are actively encouraged and taught to proof read their writing for spelling errors. We use Vocabulary Ninja to have a clear and systematic approach to spelling across Year 3-6. They have a range of engaging activities for children to practice their spellings. These activities can be seen during English lessons and Reading Carousel weekly.

Handwriting (see handwriting policy)

We place value on children taking pride and care over their work and handwriting is a key part of this. In the early years, there is a big emphasis upon fine motor skills and we use a range of resources to practice these basic skills.

Grammar

An understanding of how to use grammar correctly, use relevant meta-language and identifying word classes and sentence types is taught both in the context of a piece of writing and explicitly in whole class. Grammar skills are embedded within reading and writing sessions to ensure that children's knowledge of these language elements is applied to a variety of different contexts.

Assessment and Monitoring

Children are provided with Success criteria for every piece of written work. Each term an assessment week is identified. Every class from Year 3 to Year 6 carries out assessment for all aspects of English and tracks progress using our internal Assessment System. Class teachers indicate new learning and next steps based on children's individual learning outcomes.

Staff moderate within school using our internal writing moderation system at least twice per half termly. Teachers may use a range of testing materials as part of their on-going teacher assessment. In association with the Senior Leadership Team, the subject leader will analyse data and monitor teaching and learning. There are Learning



Walks, book scrutiny and moderation opportunities planned throughout the year and detailed in the Subject Leader Action Plan. Using this information, the subject leader will identify priorities and set appropriate targets. Insight is used as a tool to review pupil progress in areas of the English Curriculum: Reading, Writing, Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar.

Pupil feedback is given against learning objectives is given verbally and follows our conference marking policy. Pupils are able to use feedback given by their teachers to address misconceptions, or are given an opportunity to extend and broaden their understanding of a particular writing skill.

	should refer to either the most urgent need or used to extend the child's learning & understanding. The next-step must be a task that the child responds to in purple pen.
✓	should be used to indicate when something is correct.
•	should be used to indicate when something is incorrect.
VF	should be used when giving a child verbal feedback. VF can be used to address handwriting, presentation or concerns over quantity of work completed.
Sp	should be used in the margin to address up to 3 spellings in a piece of writing. Years 3 & 4 have the word spelt for them in the margin. The child then copies it out 3 times. Years 5 & 6 have 'Sp' written in the margin on the line of the spelling error. The child should then practise the spelling under the 'Sp' 3 times after looking it up in the dictionary.
Gr	should be used when a sentence has a grammatical error and may not make sense.
P	should be used if there is a punctuation error.
//	should be used to indicate when a new line or paragraph should begin.
^	should be used to indicate a word, or group of words, is/are missing from a sentence.

Differentiation including SEND and Equal Opportunities

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We undertake to provide equality of access to all aspects of the curriculum to all members of the school community. Staff endeavor to help all children to reach their full potential irrespective of race, gender, age or ability in accordance with the school's Equal Opportunities and Inclusion policies. We aim for all children to participate in mainstream lessons. Work is differentiated and extra support is in place for children with SEN. Where it is felt necessary, a pupil is withdrawn from class to receive specialist help from school devised intervention programmes, or support from the Speech and Language Service.

All children receive quality first teaching. Different stages in English are addressed during whole class adaptive teaching through strategies such as, planning various levels of input, differentiated questioning and expectations, the use of teaching assistants to support EAL or children experiencing difficulties, visual teaching aids such as story props and word cards.

Our English delivery at Pickhurst works hand-in-hand with the Inclusion and SEND team within the school where opportunities for all children to excel within lessons is our priority.