



Langham Primary School

English Policy

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| Adopted | October 2022 | Author/ Owner/ Governor responsibility | <i>Liz Deller/ pupil related committee</i> |
| Last Reviewed | | Review Cycle | <i>Three Years</i> |

Language and literacy provide us with the building blocks not just for academic success, but for fulfilling careers and rewarding lives. Reading and writing, alongside an increasing vocabulary and proficient language development, is the key to unlocking the rest of the academic curriculum. At Langham Primary school, these vital literacy skills are developed across the curriculum as well as in English lessons. Over the years, we have worked hard to ensure that each of these skills has a high and consistent profile across our school, from EYFS reading, phonics and mark making to being able to read and write fluently and with confidence by the time children leave school and start secondary education. In developing our policy and approach to teaching English, we have taken into account the expectations of [The National Curriculum](#), departmental advice in the [Reading Framework](#) and evidence from [Education Endowment Foundation](#) guidance reports about improving literacy. *This policy is monitored every three years by the pupil related committee. The English subject leader is responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented, providing support and training where necessary and accounting for its effectiveness to the headteacher and governing body*

At Langham Primary School we aim to:

- ✓ **Ensure that no child leaves our school unable to read fluently and without an appreciation of value of the written word.**
- ✓ **Develop the children's fluency in reading through the teaching of phonics, and through whole-class reading lessons into KS2.**
- ✓ **Utilise the richness, depth and breadth of reading for enjoyment and to help children become to most fluent, skilled and attentive readers.**
- ✓ **Create rich bank of stories which children encounter while they are with us including stories by well-known, 'classic' children's authors, stories which represent diversity in modern Britain and new titles by acclaimed up and coming authors.**
- ✓ **Develop a range of thinking skills, including information processing, reasoning, enquiry, creative thinking and evaluation**
- ✓ **Motivate children and teachers as writers, deepening their understanding about writing and refining skills so that children make good progress and high standards are maintained.**
- ✓ **Give children a wide vocabulary, with an understanding of grammar and knowledge of conventions for reading, writing and speaking.**
- ✓ **Use language as a vehicle for personal development and fulfilment, and as a source of pleasure.**
- ✓ **Provide a structured, balanced and varied programme which takes account of individual starting points and progress, and which gives children the opportunity to use their developing language skills across the curriculum.**

Our approach to teaching English:

Strategies we use to teach **reading** may include (depending on the stage of learning):

- Whole class, group and individual sessions.
- Daily Phonics sessions (in KS1) using the recently updated and accredited 'Jolly Phonics'.
- Providing reading books and schemes which are tightly matched to children's phase of development.
- Whole class reading sessions in KS2 which focus on fluency and accuracy of reading as well as comprehension skills so that no child is left behind. *(See Appendix 1 about whole class reading sessions)*
- Access to a range of diverse and culturally rich texts from different places, cultures and periods as a whole class focus or 'essential class read'.
- The use of reading records to encourage parental involvement.
- Providing additional support for children who are starting to fall behind and those with Special Education Needs or English as an Additional Language (including additional phonics tuition and an 'assisted reading' programme where necessary)
- Providing regular opportunities outside English lessons to practice reading, writing and speaking and listening skills in context.
- SSR- Sustained Silent Reading in KS2.

Children are provided with a reading book to read at school and take home to practice. Reading books are carefully matched to their stage of development. We expect children to be able to read their reading book fluently before moving on to a new book. This is vital in making sure that children learn to develop comprehension skills and don't just learn to 'bark at print'.

Strategies we use to teach **writing** may include:

- Making it a positive and enjoyable experience by valuing children's written work.
- The adoption of the 3 'i's framework adapted to the needs of the age group and children in each cohort.

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| Imitation | Reading as a reader. Identifying language patterns and conventions. Learning new sentence structures by heart. Expanding vocabulary and learning about effect. Constructing a 'toolkit'. |
| Innovation | Shared writing to provide a good model. |
| Invention | Independent writing |

(More detail in Appendix 2, Talk for Writing Teaching Sequence)

- Daily, high-quality, shared writing activities.
- Support such as story maps, boxed up examples, shared drafts, word walls and displays of language work.
- Systematic teaching of toolkit or storymap to build up clear understanding of key features of writing for different purposes. A school-wide framework of texts (including class reads) in half-termly units to guarantee scope and progression
- A clear emphasis on writing for audiences and purposes.
- Focused lessons on grammar and punctuation.
- Regular and systematic formative assessment in the form of Cold and Hot Tasks which are kept in children's English exercise books.
- Giving children memorable, meaningful and repetitive teaching of language to help them internalise narrative and nonfiction patterns *(see Appendix 2 Talk for Writing Teaching Sequence)*.
- Opportunities to develop literacy across the curriculum using a cross-curricular approach.
- Fortnightly "Write to the top" opportunities in upper KS2 to develop stamina and revise previously learnt styles of writing. The stimulus for these writing sessions is varied with teachers using resources such as: the literacy shed, Pobble 365 and additional 'hooks' such as stories, films and music.

Handwriting

Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Children should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version. By Upper Key Stage 2 (Year 5 and 6), children should be sufficiently fluent in their handwriting that it does not provide a barrier to recording what they want to say through their writing. Children use pencil in key stage 1 (year 1 and 2) and progress to using a pen for all handwriting in lower KS2 (Year 3 and 4). Children use black ink for writing.

Strategies we use for handwriting may include:

- Regular sessions of 15 minutes (up to three times a week in EYFS, KS1 and lower KS2) for handwriting.
- Children record their practice in a handwriting book, with lines appropriate to their age/ability until they are using a style with the correct orientation, space and size and then an exercise book with normal lines to ensure that they can use the same style without the 'handwriting lines.'
- Children with additional motor skill difficulties are supported through small group interventions using resources such as 'Write from the Start'.
- Modelled, shared, guided and individual sessions – opportunities for independent writing.
- Teaching children how to plan, draft and proof-read/edit neatly and produce a neat copy of their work.

At Langham, we encourage all pupils to have high standards of presentation and handwriting. The handwriting expectations, including copies of the alphabet and relevant joins are displayed in the classroom.

We work on the skills needed for this in the following classes, and in the following way:

| Class | Focus | Resources |
|---------|------------------------------|---|
| Class 1 | Letter formation | https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/twinkl-handwriting-year-1-steps-to-progression-overview-t-e-2552153 |
| Class 2 | Positioning and Pre-joining | https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/twinkl-handwriting-year-2-steps-to-progression-overview-t-e-2552168 |
| Class 3 | Joining letters – cursive | https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/twinkl-handwriting-year-3-amp-year-4-steps-to-progression-overview-t-e-2552232 |
| Class 4 | Fluency – continuous cursive | https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/twinkl-handwriting-year-5-amp-year-6-steps-to-progression-overview-t-e-2552318 |

Spelling

We teach spelling weekly in school by introducing new spelling rules with opportunities to consolidate and practice these (in early morning work) before being tested.

Strategies for spelling and vocabulary learning may include:

- Games and activities with a spelling focus as part of the daily lessons.
- Review of mis-spelt words from our independent writing.
- Spelling tests.
- Spellings lists sent home for learning and activities.
- Planning using language lists in the new curriculum.

During the early stages of learning to write, children are provided with word lists so they can practice the correct spelling of common words as they write. Learning to spell is not just about learning lists of words for a test. Spelling patterns covered in spelling lessons and common irregular spellings need to make their way into children's writing. When marking children's writing, teachers will look for mistakes in these words and provide additional opportunities to practice as part of their feedback.

Not all children find it easy to learn how to spell. We provide additional support where necessary using a precision teaching technique where necessary. Children with SEN might have other curriculum adjustments and spelling aids identified in their One Plan.

Speaking and listening

We believe that developing confidence in speaking and the ability to listen actively is a core learning skill and is essential to preparing children for the rest of their lives. Our aim is to develop this through the whole curriculum. We aim to make all our classrooms language rich with teachers modelling and expecting precise and increasingly sophisticated responses from children.

Strategies we use to teach **speaking and listening** include:

- Drama.
- Taking part in debates and preparing presentations for different audiences.
- Open-ended questions etc. in every lesson throughout the curriculum.
- Classroom strategies such as learning and internalisation of language structures through an adapted Talk for Writing programme.

Some children experience a delay in acquiring functional language skills. Our aim is to identify and address this as early as possible with interventions such as ELKLAN and NELI. Some children with Special Educational Needs may also require the support of a programme developed by a Speech and Language specialist.

Assessment and progress

Summative assessment (providing a snapshot of current attainment)

- National statutory assessments (Key Stage 2 'SATs'; Key Stage 1 statutory teacher assessments; Year 1 phonics check)
- Standardised tests (Oxford Education Language Screen; Single Word Spelling Test; Suffolk reading test)
- Termly progress checks (Target Tracker)

Formative assessments (providing teachers with information about what needs teaching next)

- Termly progress checks (Target Tracker)
- Cold and hot tasks (usually for each English unit of work but at least half-termly). These are kept in English books and used to form individual/ group/ class targets.
- Reading records.
- Marking and feedback.

Whole class reading sessions

Well-structured whole class reading lessons are the most efficient and effective way of securing a good level of progress in reading.

Selecting the right book

Children need access to high quality reading material which should be slightly above the reading age of pupils (i.e. more challenging than individual reading books) in order to provide sufficient challenge and promote progress.

Structure of a reading lesson

Reading lessons **should not** be taking it in turns to read long passages of text. This does not provide sufficient opportunity to build vocabulary or develop a deeper understanding of the text. An effective whole-class reading lesson might include the following phases:

1. **Accessing and enjoying the text**

Teacher led (not round robin reading by children). Children follow the words, ideally using shared text. Teacher takes the opportunity to model reading aloud, paying particular attention to how punctuation helps convey meaning and expression can aid understanding (as well as enjoyment).

2. **Vocabulary Building**

Teachers choose approaches to build children's vocabulary which might include:

- *Find words you don't know and highlight them. What's your best guess? (Teacher to provide definition and explain any etymology or linked words).*
- *Find words which the author uses to describe...setting/ character/ emotions etc.*
- *Find words which mean the same as....dark/ happy/ sad etc.*

3. **Comprehension and deeper understanding**

Activities and short written responses which develop children's comprehension of the text which might include:

- *Placing events from passage/ chapter in order.*
- *Summarising events in the text. (In one sentence/ on a post it note/in a tweet)*
- *Giving the passage/ page/ chapter a title.*
- *Describing the mood of this page/ passage/ chapter?*
- *What might happen next? Give different possibilities.*
- *What advice would you give the characters?*
- *Find a word/ sentence/passage that tells us about a person/ a place/ and event and read it aloud.*

4. **Developing comprehension skills/ providing evidence**

These are extended comprehension exercises and do not take place every lesson.

- *Reading as a reader/ book talk grid (from T4W).*
- *Written comprehension exercise.*

Talk for Writing: The Teaching Sequence

The teaching of writing at Langham Primary follows the Talk 4 Writing project in its simplest form, but does allow for adaptations based on the age and needs of each cohort.

| KEY PROCESSES | CORE TEACHING SEQUENCE | COHORT-DEPENDENT ACTIVITIES |
|-------------------|---|--|
| PREPARATION | Cold Writing Task – based on the text type being taught. Setting of targets for each child based on their cold task. | Modelled practice of targets in KS2. |
| IMITATION | <p>Talk and learn the exemplar text – use of story maps for KS1 and LKS2.</p> <p>Reading as a reader: – introduce permanent printed version; turn text into a Big Book; read, re-read fluently and with expression, as a shared text ; – book talk and drama; – reading other examples/ snippets.</p> <p>Comprehension: – literal and inferential questions; - find the evidence in the text – mark up the text to identify key language features and discuss meanings and effects.</p> <p>Vocabulary: – check and explore meanings of words and phrases;; – magpie words and expressions –save for future use; – note spellings and spelling patterns as you go</p> <p>Working from the written version: – identify underlying sequence and pattern of text ready for innovation; – box up the text, labelling each section in sequence to capture its overall structure; – identify key elements of each section in generalisations that can be applied to other content; – co-construct toolkits focussing on how writers create an effect not a ‘level’ checklist of tick able ‘criteria’; – ensure that working walls or washing lines display maps, texts, word banks, sentence patterns, etc</p> | <p>UKS2: Reading as a reader: – introduce permanent printed version. Answer comprehension questions based on the text and how the author creates a picture / influences the reader through writing choices.</p> <p>Reading as a writer: Look at author’s vocabulary choices, punctuation and sentence structure and the text structure as a whole. Use this as a basis to co-create a toolkit.</p> |
| INNOVATION | <p>Introduce new stimulus: – to build content, e.g. develop a story idea; an experience as basis for poetry – or develop knowledge/views for non-fiction; – build in audience and purpose.</p> <p>Using the learned text structure, model drawing a new map – tell and retell new class version before groups work on own changes. – box up - complete planner, or for younger children, innovate on individual maps – retell.</p> <p>Shared writing – staged section by section, using model text, writing toolkits, planner or map. – teacher scribes helping children to suggest words and sentences, choose for effect, and bank other good ideas not used in this text – co-construction of each section not modelling writing for children to watch – active participation, discussion of choices, paired work and some independent writing to offer suggestions e.g. using mini-whiteboards – frequent re-reading to hear how it sounds, evaluate sense and impact.</p> <p>Built in modelling and direct teaching of the targets set and expectations from cold task.</p> <p>Guided writing: – differentiation to support children at varying levels – teaching to specifics arising from assessment – varying levels of innovation for more able writers Independent writing: – De-scaffolding in carefully managed stages e.g. children might</p> | <p>UKS2: Use of boxing up planning to write from, without the use of story maps.</p> <p>UKS2: Use of peer and self marking to analyse the success of their text, against the toolkit.</p> |

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| | complete or change a sentence or a paragraph; – weaker writers ‘hug closely’, relying on the original; – stronger writers use boxes and the toolkit. Daily feedback – marking: teacher and pupil dialogue, using pink and green highlighters, etc.; whole class discussion on what works. – Children share work with response partner. – Immediate improvement of writing in light of discussion. | |
| INVENTION | Children write independently – own topic labelled as a ‘ Hot Task ’. Teacher/children decide next steps, e.g. more work on feedback, further teaching or more independent writing to internalise patterns. – Further writing lessons focussing on progress + further independent writing. | UKS2: Hot Tasks are stored in a gold book – used as a basis for their portfolio for end-of-KS2 assessments. |
| PUBLICATION | Writing is displayed/ published / performed - illustrated mini books, class blogs, anthologies, scrapbooks, etc. | |

Spelling provision and expectations

| Class | Weekly | Half Termly | Assessment |
|---|--|--|---|
| <u>Class 3</u> Year 3 and Year 4 | Weekly spelling lists – stage 3 and stage 4 show progression of spelling rules. These are delivered with through the use of power point or video resources and then children practice these focus areas using the weekly spelling lists. | The Year 3 and 4 statutory spellings are split into half termly word lists for each year group and are sent home as a focus for home learning. | Children complete an annual SWST in Autumn 1 to track spelling ages. Weekly spelling lists are tested each week, before moving onto a new focus / spelling rule. Children’s writing is reviewed weekly to see spelling skills being applied independently. This also helps to see misconceptions in spelling and highlights any words that we can see need addressing or reviewing in class. For individual children, any mis-spelt words are addressed in marking feedback and opportunities to practice these spellings in the margin are provided. |
| <u>Class 4</u> Year 5 and Year 6 | Weekly spelling lists – stage 5 and stage 6 show progression of spelling rules. These are delivered with through the use of power point or video resources and then children practice these focus areas using the weekly spelling lists. | The Year 5 and 6 statutory spellings are split into half termly word lists for each year group and are sent home as a focus for home learning. | Children complete an annual SWST in Autumn 1 to track spelling ages. Weekly spelling lists are tested each week, before moving onto a new focus / spelling rule. Children’s writing is reviewed weekly to see spelling skills being applied independently. This also helps to see misconceptions in spelling and highlights any words that we can see need addressing or reviewing in class. For individual children, any mis-spelt words are addressed in marking feedback and opportunities to practice these spellings in the margin are provided. |

All resources to support this can be found in ‘Staffpool’ under the folder heading ‘Spellings’. These consist of the weekly spelling lists, half-termly statutory spelling lists and blank practice sheets.

The sending home of half-termly spellings, based on the statutory spellings for each year group, also allows parents to support their children’s learning and to understand the spelling expectations for the child’s year group.

Spelling displays in class are used to remind children of the current spelling rule being learnt alongside a word bank of spelling misconceptions – or common errors.