



English Policy

Last updated: April 2020

A. English Policy Introduction and Rationale

Pattishall CE Primary School teaches an English curriculum based on the National Curriculum for primary schools. However, as with everything at Pattishall, we have worked hard to develop our own curriculum model and methods for teaching this important subject.

The three areas of English: reading, writing and spoken language have a key place in the education of pupils here at Pattishall CE Primary School. English is both an important subject in its own right and the medium for accessing the whole of the wider curriculum.

B. Aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure all staff, children, parents/carers and governors are aware of the aims for learning and teaching English at Pattishall School and that these are consistently applied.

School Staff have a responsibility:

- To promote a confident, positive attitude towards the learning and use of English, making it an enjoyable experience.
- To promote confidence and competence in the skills of speaking and listening; reading and writing.
- To promote the ability to communicate effectively in a variety of forms.
- To promote the skills of communication through speaking and listening in a range of contexts.
- To promote the range of skills required in reading in order for children to read for meaning, understanding and enjoyment.
- To provide opportunities for the development of skills in writing across the whole curriculum.

Children have a responsibility:

- To develop an enjoyment of learning through practical activity, exploration and discussion.
- To develop confidence and competence in the skills of speaking and listening, reading and writing.
- To develop the ability to communicate effectively in a variety of forms.
- To develop the skills of communication through speaking and listening in a range of contexts.
- To develop the range of skills required in reading in order for children to read for meaning, understanding and enjoyment.
- To develop a range of skills in writing across the whole curriculum.

Parents and Carers have a responsibility:

- To be understanding and supportive of our aims in learning and teaching English.
- To attend and contribute to parents' evenings
- To support their children with English homework activities (please refer to Homework Policy).

Governors have a responsibility:

- To meet with the curriculum Subject Leader at least once a year to find out about;



- the school's systems for planning work, supporting staff and monitoring progress;
- the allocation, use and adequacy of resources;
- how the standards of achievement are changing over time.
- To visit school and talk to pupils about their experiences of the English curriculum.
- To promote and support the positive involvement of parents in English learning.
- To attend training and other events relating to the English curriculum.

C. Organisation (Sectioned in to Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening)

Reading

Intention:

At Pattishall we are truly passionate about reading. Your child's reading experience is much more than the reading book which comes home from school. Reading is happening all the time in a classroom and in the school. It is taught in specific reading and English lessons, but children are practising and using their 'reading' constantly across all subjects too.

Parents can support this 'reading journey' through regular reading at home. Reading to and with your child every evening for at least ten minutes can make a dramatic difference to a child's achievement within school. A report from the Oxford University Press highlighted the importance of parents reading with their children. 'Children who read outside of class are 13 times more likely to read above the expected level for their age'.

As a school, we aim for ALL children to become readers by age 6. We do this through regular phonics teaching and "Book Talk" in every year group, every day. Once a child can read – they can learn anything – what a gift!

The Simple View of Reading provides the rationale for the structure of reading provision at Pattishall CE Primary School.

The Simple View of Reading, which is the conceptual framework that underpins reading in the new National Curriculum, sets out a model of reading that has two dimensions: word-reading and language comprehension.

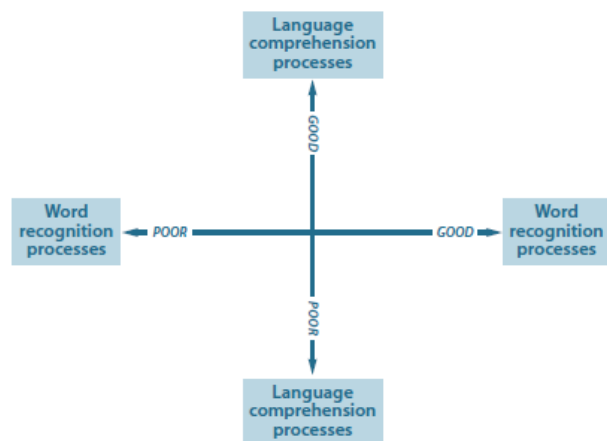


Fig 1- The Simple View of Reading



Word-Reading

Skilled **word reading** involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words.

(Rose review of the teaching of early reading, DfE, 2006)

At Pattishall, our pupils follow a system of synthetic phonics, based on the Read Write Inc. phonics scheme. This is in place throughout the EYFS and Key Stage One. Word-reading is assessed through continuous teacher assessment and validated by the phonics check in Year 1. Our regular monitoring processes ensure children who struggle with word-reading receive further support in other years if necessary, often through regular 1:1 intervention. Home reading books offer an opportunity for children to apply their decoding skills with books aligned to the Read Write Inc. phonics scheme. This is supplemented with other high-quality books that offer children opportunities to read a wider range of genres and styles. Children are encouraged to read at least five times a week at home to reinforce their learning in school.

Spelling across the school builds on the patterns children learn earlier in the school, both for phonetically plausible words and common exception words. Years 2, 3 and 4 follow the Read Write Inc. spelling scheme to teach the spelling rules appropriate to each year group. The scheme follows seamlessly from our phonics teaching. In year 5 and 6 the teaching of spelling is integrated within English lessons to allow children more opportunities to apply their learning within the wider context of writing.

Comprehension

Good **comprehension** draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction.

(Rose review of the teaching of early reading, DfE, 2006)

At Pattishall, comprehension is taught through English lessons and regular whole class reading sessions. English lessons are organised into units of work focused around high-quality texts. Pupils are expected to develop a range of specific comprehension skills, ranging from straightforward retrieval of information to quite sophisticated inference. The differentiation is provided by texts of increasing challenge. The texts children read in lessons provide the stimulus for much of their writing work. This year we have introduced Demonstration Comprehension lessons where the teacher will model how to answer comprehension questions successfully. The children can then apply their learning in their independent comprehension sessions.

Comprehension skills

- Recalling and retrieving
- Predicting
- Knowledge of vocabulary
- Activating and building upon prior knowledge
- Sequencing
- Summarising
- Deducing, inferring and justifying opinions



Comprehension is assessed against a set of criteria drawn from the new National Curriculum. In all years, pupils sit standardised reading comprehension tests to further validate teachers' judgements. In Years 2 and 6, this is in the form of National End of Key Stage Tests (often referred to as SATS).

At Pattishall CE Primary School, whole class reading sessions are often referred to as Book Talk. Book Talk is sharply focused on reading for meaning, listening to others and pupils talking about their understanding of books. Pupils are organised into attainment groups within the class and read an appropriate text for them. The focus each session will be targeted towards a different area of the reading curriculum so children can develop all reading skills. The teacher will work with each group closely on a regular basis to guide and challenge all pupils. Children work collaboratively with their peers to construct responses, share ideas and compete to earn points!

In addition to English lessons, guided reading and phonics, children have the opportunity to read independently and listen to books read to them by an adult. This supports their comprehension, develops their vocabulary and helps them to enjoy reading and lose themselves in a story. At Pattishall this is an issue of equity as not all children have the opportunity to read and enjoy books at home. There is protected time EVERY DAY for classes to share books, be it independently, with their peers or with an adult. You may hear this referred to as ERIS (Everyone Reading In School) and we often hold open sessions for family members to attend. We also have a warm and welcoming library space for children in all year groups to enjoy.

Writing

Intention:

We hope that by teaching the children at Pattishall CE Primary School to write well, they will have the skills to be able:

1. to understand the importance and purpose of formal and informal written language;
2. to communicate in standard written form;
3. to express themselves creatively and encourage reflection about the content of their work; and
4. to organise their thoughts and ideas logically that are appropriate for their intended audience.

Writing is divided into two interrelated areas: composition and transcription. It is our aim that all pupils who attend Pattishall leave us able to write clearly, accurately and coherently, with the ability to adapt their language and style to a range of contexts, purposes and audiences. Writing is taught through text-based units of work, with children given the opportunity to carry out an extended piece of writing as a final outcome. Pieces of writing are edited, honed and redrafted until it is the best it can be. The expectation is that the next piece of writing a child produces will be slightly better. Feedback is given throughout the writing process, so children can act on advice and have the chance to learn from what they are being told.

Expectations with regard to handwriting and presentation are high and children are encouraged to take pride in their work at all times in line with our school values, showing *care* and *respect* for their work and *seeking* to be their best. Handwriting is taught through a scheme called Kinetic Letters. We recognise that for various reasons, many children do not start school with the strength needed for writing so our chosen approach focuses on making bodies strong before writing. This enables children to build the core strength, gross motor skills and fine motor skills needed for writing.



Children are then taught the letters in a sequence of families that have similar movements. This begins in EYFS and is taught regularly in Key Stage One, with reinforcement in Key Stage 2 if needed.

The Writing Process

At Pattishall all pupils are supported to develop written work of the best quality that they can. Pupils have an opportunity to encounter high quality language, both from written texts and teacher interaction. Grammar, punctuation and other specific language elements are taught within the context of both reading and writing. There are five stages to the writing process:

- Modelling
- Planning
- Writing
- Editing
- Redrafting

Units often incorporate many of the elements from Pie Corbett's Talk 4 Writing. We use strategies from this approach across the year such as the use of model texts, story mapping and boxing up during the planning process. Teachers will also often carry out a "cold" and "hot" write to show the progress from the beginning to the end of each unit of work.

Assessment in the form of high quality verbal feedback and interactive marking enables children to improve their work, building towards the production of quality written outcomes. Children are formally assessed against age-related expectations several times a year.

Spoken Language

At Pattishall, oracy has a central place in our curriculum, reflecting the vital importance of spoken language in our pupils' development. Speaking and listening is fundamental to developing good communication, reading and writing skills and to ensuring children can access and achieve in all other areas of the curriculum. It is a critical prerequisite to learning to read and write and enables access to other areas of the curriculum. Pupils are supported to speak in Standard English at all times whilst at school. Most English lessons incorporate the opportunity to articulating ideas verbally as this is a key stepping stone to writing. Many of the strategies we use, such as story mapping using actions, enable children to develop their understanding of spoken language before seeing the written text.

Alongside this, there are opportunities to talk right across the curriculum as this is recognised as being a key way in which pupils develop their learning. Pupils are supported to talk about their ideas, helping to consolidate their learning. In addition to making formal presentations, performances and participating in debates, pupils are challenged to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas across all subjects.

Planning Formats



The School uses the English National Curriculum for long term planning. Teaching staff develop their own short-term planning in a weekly format following our whole school template.

D. Subject Leader

The role of the Subject Leader is to provide professional leadership and management for a subject in order to secure high quality teaching, effective use of resources and high standards of learning and achievement for all pupils. They will achieve this by affecting the following key areas: a) Strategic direction and development. b) Learning and teaching. c) Leading and managing staff. d) Efficient and effective deployment of staff and resources. During the academic year the Subject Leader has specific allocated time for subject self evaluation activities and regular monitoring of various aspects of the English curriculum including planning, lesson observations, assessment, marking and pupil interviews.

E. Inclusion

Please refer to the School's Inclusion Policy

F. Monitoring and Review

The Head teacher and English Subject Leader will monitor the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis. The Head teacher and English Subject Leader will report to the governing body on the effectiveness of the policy annually and, if necessary, makes recommendations for further improvements.

G. COVID

Teachers should NOT take books home for marking. Instead, they will leave children's books in a marking tray for the teacher to look at after a safe time has passed or ensure children wash their hands before touching books and teachers in turn will wash their hands before and after touching children's books.

Due to COVID, children will not be able to do as much group work as we would previously have encouraged. However, children can work in small groups for up to a limit of 15 minutes when working indoors.