

Whipman Woods Flying High Academy



English Policy

Approved by: Flying High Partnership **Date:** 26 September 2024

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English Policy

At Whipman Woods Flying High Academy, we believe that a quality English curriculum should promote high standards of literacy whilst developing our children's love of reading, writing and spoken language. We know that a secure basis in these core areas of English is crucial to a high-quality education and will give our children the tools they need to participate fully as members of society.

Our curriculum closely follows the aims of the Nation Curriculum for English 2014, to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Fluency in the core subjects, with reading at the heart, enables access to the full curriculum and is therefore integral to the implementation of our Enquiry Curriculum. Meaningful links are made between the progressive key knowledge, skills and understanding in English and the wider curriculum, with high-quality texts being a key feature unifying both. English learning sequences will relate to the theme of the enquiry, with some contributing directly to its authentic outcome; thereby providing an authentic and inspirational purpose to learning.

INTENT

English sits at the heart of the school's curriculum principles: BEE

Belonging
Excellence
Empowerment

At Whipman Woods Flying High Academy we are committed to ensuring that every child becomes an effective communicator, both in the spoken and written word. Putting Talk at the heart of the curriculum, we carefully plan opportunities for our children to develop their ideas over time, building on their thoughts, learning to express themselves clearly and deepening their understanding through discussion. We recognise that when we have high quality Talk alongside well planned skills lessons, we will see this reflected in written outcomes. Our curriculum enables children to read and write for a wide variety of purposes and audiences across subjects, giving them a passion to read and a reason to write.

IMPLEMENTATION

How we teach READING

Our reading curriculum is built around the three key areas which children need to develop in order to become effective readers:

- Decoding
- Comprehension
- Developing a love of reading

Decoding

Phonics

In F2 and KS1 we have explicit phonics lesson every day and have fidelity to No Nonsense Phonics Skills as our SSP program. Lesson start in F2 at 30 minutes and work up to 45 minutes in Year 1 and 2. Lessons follow a consistent approach using the NNPS teaching cycle and each new piece of code is taught over two days. To ensure there is consistency across our phonics teaching all lesson will include:

- A revisit of previously taught sounds using NNPS flashcards.
- Children are provided with a NNPS pupil book to complete their independent learning in.
- Use of finger tracing to support handwriting.
- Letter formation being modelled to children.
- A phonemic awareness puzzle to support oral blending.
- Modelled segmenting and blending.
- Modelled encoding for spelling.

Whilst all of our children will have been explicitly taught phonics at KS1, we recognise the importance of continuing to embed phonic knowledge throughout KS2. We want to ensure all children are secure in their phonic knowledge as soon as possible and our learning environments and interventions reflect this.

- In our early reading learning environment, phonics displays consist of a large alphabetic code chart and flashcards showing previously taught sounds, sounds being currently taught and any sounds that are being revised.
- In all classes, alphabetic code charts are available for all children to access and children receiving targeted interventions will have their own laminated copy.
- In all classes, children use sound dashes when encoding any unfamiliar words.

Decodable Reading Books

Children who are still receiving phonics teaching or need further phonics intervention will receive 2 decodable reading books that are matched closely to their phonics knowledge (one for home and one for school). The class teacher completes the NNPS assessment half termly to ensure that children's reading books are accurately matched to their reading ability. Decodable books sent home are at a 90% accuracy rate so therefore children should be able to read the majority of the books with little intervention. This is to firstly ensure children are enjoying reading but also it is to ensure children are building up their automaticity and gradually gaining fluency as they move through the book bands. All children are also sent home with 1 reading for pleasure book which they choose for themselves from their class reading corner. All children read with an adult at school to ensure their progress through the book bands is carefully monitored and that they are accessing suitable texts.

Comprehension

At Whipman Woods Flying High Academy, we recognise the importance of reading and it is therefore timetabled to be taught four times per week. Our rationale for the way we teach reading is to expose children to texts which include a wider, richer vocabulary and enables clear modelling and explicit teaching of the skills required to develop reading comprehension. Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explanation, Retrieval and Summarising/Sequencing are the key strands that are focused on. We use the KKPDs to ensure coverage throughout the year and to ensure that there is clear progression across the year groups, within each of the reading strands.

One lesson per week is based on the reciprocal reading approach to ensure that children have regular opportunities to apply a range of skills required for effective reading and to support them in their comprehension of a whole text. The remaining 3 lessons focus on developing children's understanding of a particular skill associated with reading. This may be achieved by exploring smaller sections of a text and using book journal approaches or practicing specific question types. Activities are planned to enable pupils to develop skills to support them at all stages of their development for example, matching activities, true or false or sequencing of events.

Developing a love of reading

In order for our children to become frequent readers, developing a love of reading is fundamental. Each classroom has an area dedicated to reading for pleasure; this is separate to decodable books. This is set up to include bestsellers, classics, up-and-coming authors and diverse themes, ensuring our children are exposed to a range of quality literature and varied vocabulary, regardless of their ability. We are constantly developing and evolving our reading areas to ensure books are up to date and relevant.

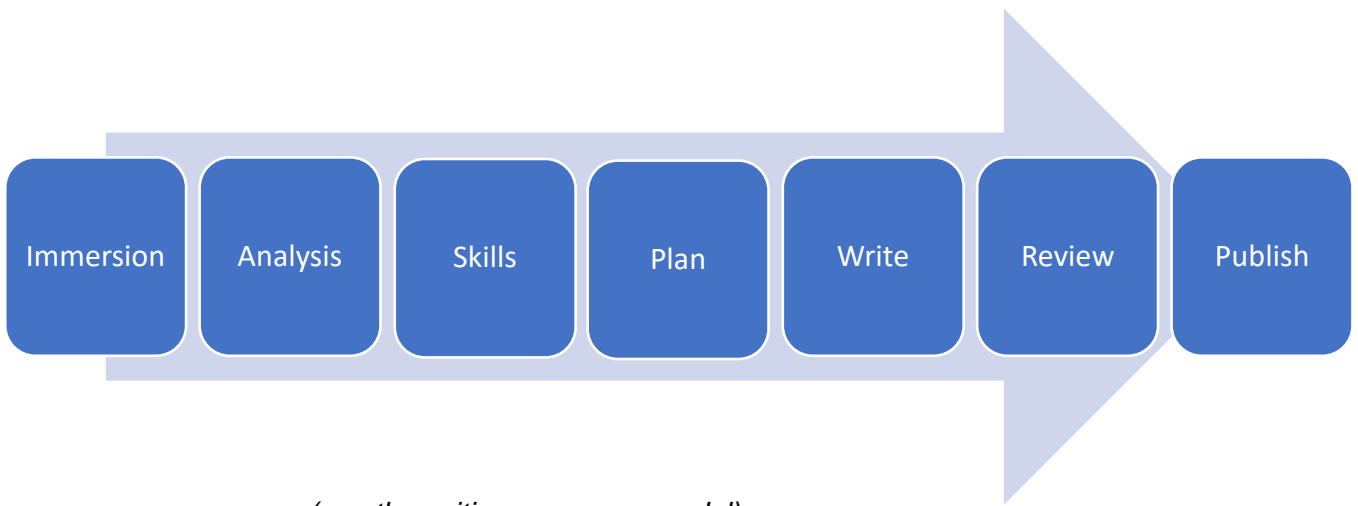
We also have a well-stocked school library which children have regular access to.

A reading culture is further promoted and celebrated throughout school in various ways:

- ELS (Education Library Service) subscription linked to enquiry themes
- Use of high-quality texts across the wider curriculum
- Consideration given to text choice to inspire all children
- Regular reading aloud sessions for pleasure
- A weekly Reading for Pleasure session where children's reading recommendations are promoted.
- Themed days and events e.g. World Book Day, Book Fair
- Teachers modelling a love of reading (talking about books, enthusing about books)

How we teach WRITING

We recognise writing as being a multi-layered process, which requires the development and application of skills over time. For this reason, our writing units are planned over approximately two weeks and progressively build skills, following the sequence:



(see the writing sequence model)

We recognise the importance of constantly building our children's **vocabulary**. Specific Tier 2 vocabulary to be taught is identified for each unit of writing and additional opportunities for vocabulary development are further embedded outside of the writing sequence.

Genre and Text Progression

Our *Genre and Key Text Progression* has been carefully mapped out across the yearly cycle, in conjunction with our enquiries. This ensures that our children are exposed to a wide range of relevant genres and texts throughout their time at Whipman Woods Flying High Academy and that these are built upon year by year.

To ensure that the content taught within each year group for similar genres is progressive, the *English KKPDs (Key Knowledge Progression Document)* are used in the planning process and are integral to developing our English Subject Maps which articulate a clear purpose for writing, audience and include previous and subsequent learning.

Handwriting

Handwriting is taught at least three times per week (during Autumn term this is taught daily) and follows the Letter Join teaching sequence. The handwriting style is cursive. Each lesson is intended to last only 15 minutes; doing little and often is the key. Our approach to handwriting is built upon the foundations of having good quality writing tools, correct body posture and pencil grip, and the need for teachers to have high expectations of themselves and their pupils (see the handwriting policy for further information).

In Year 5 and 6, children are encouraged to choose what to write with (including a pen). In Year 3 and 4, children are able to use a pen for writing if their handwriting is following the school's policy.

Spelling

At Whipman Woods Flying High Academy, Spelling is taught using the Purple Mash spelling scheme. Weekly word lists are identified and introduced on a Monday. These words are taught to the children so they understand the rule. Different activities take place throughout the week (see separate spelling information) and a spelling test is taught weekly on a Friday. In key stage one, phonics is taught daily; spellings from the statutory word lists for Year 1/2 are taught through English lessons and discreetly when appropriate.

In children's work, incorrect spellings are identified either by the word/end of the line where the incorrect word is located. The correct spelling is written in the margin for the children to correct.

In the 'Skills' part of the learning sequence, a discreet spelling lesson is taught, focusing on the key vocabulary we expect the children to use.

IMPACT

The impact of our English curriculum is seen in our children who are confident readers, writers and communicators, demonstrated through their work in books, classroom displays and discussions with children.

Regular assessment opportunities also support in measuring the impact of our English curriculum:

- Children receive regular feedback in all English lessons. Written and verbal feedback is given by teachers or peers and opportunities for self-reflection are built into lessons, enabling children to take ownership of their own learning development.
- Benchmarking is used at least termly to assess and track progress.
- NTS assessments are used termly to formally assess all children in Reading and Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar. The results of these assessments are used to identify gaps through timely question level analysis.
- The FHP Teacher Assessment Frameworks are used half-termly to formally assess all children in Writing. The results of these assessments are used to identify individual next steps for each child.
- Weekly spelling tests are used to ensure spelling rules are retained in children's long-term memories and identify children needing further support with this.