

Primaries English Policy

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1. Introduction

The aim at West Norfolk Academies Trust is to enable every child to fulfil their potential. Being able to communicate effectively through both the written and spoken word - a key life skill - is central to this, as outlined in the National Curriculum for English.

The aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims 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.

At West Norfolk Academies Trust, we strive to promote opportunities for children to make connections in their learning. All schools within the trust know the importance of developing core knowledge that can be applied across the English curriculum.

2. Purpose

At WNAT we firmly believe that English in all its forms should be at the centre of children's learning. High quality teaching and learning in all aspects of English should enable children to write and speak fluently therefore allowing them to communicate their ideas and emotions to others. English is a key skill which is essential for all aspects of everyday life including independent learning and the world of work.

Children should:

- Develop a love for English through their enjoyment of reading, writing, speaking and listening.
- Develop skills to communicate effectively in speech and writing.
- Listen with understanding.
- Be responsive, enthusiastic and knowledgeable readers.

We will enable children to achieve this passion for English through providing stimulating and exciting experiences based around high quality materials and opportunities for learning which will lead to every child reaching and fulfilling their full potential.

3. Aims

Our aim is to provide high quality teaching and learning experiences so our children become enthusiastic, confident and independent users of language in the spoken and written word.

Therefore, we will:

- Set high expectations so our children will achieve their full potential.

- Develop pupil's abilities and enthusiasm with a rich programme of speaking, listening, reading and writing.
- Provide pupils with opportunities to: consolidate, practise and develop new English skills across the curriculum.
- Encourage confidence and enjoyment in writing, reading, speaking and listening.
- Have an interest in words and their meanings and develop a growing vocabulary.
- Through the teaching of phonics, develop an understanding of the spelling system.
- Understand how grammar and punctuation is used, building on skills throughout school and applying this knowledge when reading and writing.
- Develop a legible, fluent writing style.

WNAT aim for all our children to:

- Practise, consolidate and develop English skills across the curriculum.
- Speak and listen confidently and respond appropriately to different audiences.
- Be effective, competent communicators within a range of groups in both formal and informal contexts.
- Have an interest in books and read for pleasure whilst developing the skills to read a range of texts fluently and with good understanding
- Read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding for a range of purposes and audiences.
- Use a range of strategies to self-assess, edit and refine their own writing.
- Develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and critical awareness.

And ensure that staff:

- Are informed and confident and know how to get the best out of pupils.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Head teacher and senior leadership will:

- Set high expectations and monitor teaching and progress.
- Ensure school targets are challenging but realistic.
- Ensure a whole school approach, keeping parents, governors and all staff well informed of current thinking and policy.
- Provide support for the subject coordinator and all support staff.
- Regularly review the action plan.
- Ensure staff are informed of national policies and enable appropriate training to occur.

The Subject Lead will:

- Lead by example, showing a thorough understanding and enthusiasm for the subject.
- Identify needs and organise relevant training within the school.
- Offer support to relevant staff in planning, teaching and assessment.
- Develop an assessment programme in line with the revised curriculum.
- Work alongside the SLT to monitor the effectiveness of English across the school.
- Maintain the profile of English across the school and ensure that it is delivered well.
- Monitor and review progress towards end of Key Stage expectations.
- Demonstrate exemplary teaching and methodology to colleagues in school.
- Ensure coverage of English against the Long Term Plan.
- Audit and maintain appropriate resources.

Teachers will:

- Ensure First Quality Teaching is used in all activities.

- Use appropriate assessment materials to track children's progress and identify needs.
- Live mark pupils' work to provide instant feedback to children in line with the school's marking policy.
- Ensure regular opportunities are provided to enable children to use and apply their skills and knowledge in a range of contexts.
- Monitor progress and identify pupils that need support to improve their progress.
- Work with the policies provided to ensure consistency and progression across the whole school.

The children will be encouraged to:

- Enjoy English and be able to apply their skills and knowledge across the whole curriculum.
- Develop a sense of stamina and endurance towards reading and writing.
- Apply their English skills across the curriculum
- Make connections between ideas and topics.
- Share their thoughts and ideas confidently.

The SENDCO will:

- Support the English lead and classroom teachers in allowing all children to access appropriate learning.

Support staff will:

- Have the opportunity to attend relevant training.
- Understand the objectives and English taught in each lesson.
- Be confident in their use of vocabulary, methodology and questioning techniques.

5. Curriculum

At West Norfolk Academies Trust the 2014 National Curriculum for English is followed. This document provides the objectives and coverage taught in the main part of each lesson. In EYFS the 'Development Matters' framework is used to support planning with assessments made against the Early Learning Goals (ELG).

To implement West Norfolk Academies Trust English Curriculum, we immerse children in quality literature and develop a love of reading and writing amongst our children. We want to ensure all children become confident, fluent and passionate readers who can use the language and structures found in books to help develop as masterful writers and develop appropriate speech and language skills. In line with our aim, we want the children to care about their learning and each other and show this through their efforts and support of others to become flourishing readers, writers and orators.

6. Phonics

We begin the teaching of phonics from EYFS through to Year 2 through **Read Write Inc.** This includes a methodical approach to building phonetic awareness and understanding combined with segmentation and blending skills to support early reading. Children have opportunities to develop their communication, language and English skills on a daily basis in both adult-led and child-initiated activities. Supporting each stage of the RWI phonics program are home reading books for children to develop their skills as readers outside of school. Children are regularly assessed to ensure they are making rapid progress and moving to the next stage of their phonics development when they are ready.

Those children who do not obtain the required level set by the Phonics Screening Check in Key Stage One, will be further supported with phonics teaching in Key Stage Two using Read Write Inc Phonics (LKS2), Read Write Inc. Fresh Start (UKS2), 1-1 tutoring and/or a spelling intervention programme.

7. Writing

The programmes of study for writing at Key Stages 1 and 2 are: constructed transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

The **Talk 4 Writing (T4W)** approach underpins the teaching of writing in WNAT Infant and Primary Schools from Nursery to Year 6. T4W breaks down the writing process into three sections: **Imitation, Innovation and Invention**, therefore children understand how to structure a piece of writing. Within the teaching of writing children internalise the language structures needed to write through 'talking the text' as well as close reading. The approach moves from dependence towards independence. Teacher's use shared and guided teaching to enable children to write creatively and powerfully. Our schools use a core reading spine of quality fiction, poetry and non-fiction that all children experience and draw upon.

Teaching is focused by initial assessment. Teachers use what is known as a 'cold' task or 'have a go'. An interesting and rich starting point provides the stimulus and content but there is no initial teaching. The aim of this is to see what the children can do independently at the start of a unit, drawing on their prior learning. Assessment of their writing enables teachers to work out what to teach the whole class, different groups and adapt the model text and plan. By the end of the unit, pupils complete a 'hot' task or 'show us what you know' which is an independent task on a similar type of writing. Progress should be evident; this encourages pupils and helps schools track the impact of teaching.

We aim for children to be given the 'tools' to compose, whilst building a bank of text types in their heads and acquiring language patterns to draw upon when writing. As a result, pupils build independence, produce well structured, detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and engages the interest of the reader. Also, they will be able to apply their writing skills across the curriculum. Attention is paid to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. Teachers model writing strategies and the use of phonics and spelling strategies in shared writing sessions. Planned writing sessions are used to target specific needs of groups and individuals, short burst, modelled, independent and creative writing opportunities provide children with regular opportunities to practice and contextualise skills before using them in longer writing. Consequently, children build confidence in themselves as writers. Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities for pupils to apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English and use their writing skills within The Core Knowledge Curriculum.

8. Handwriting

Handwriting is taught through using the Penpals scheme; this is a complete handwriting scheme for 3–11 year olds, offering clear progression through five developmental stages. It teaches children a fast and fluent handwriting style to help them achieve their potential in writing.

Having a flexible, fluent and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with confidence and creativity. Handwriting is practised both discretely and in the context of other learning. Associating handwriting movement with visual letter patterns and aural phonemes will help children learn to spell.

At the Foundation stage, children focus on developing the necessary fine and gross motor skills in readiness for handwriting. They will practise a range of patterns dots, waves and zig zags to prepare them for letter formation. Children will spend time learning and practising how to hold a pencil with a firm tripod grip and how to direct their formation correctly in letter families using the Penpals

scheme. Children will write in books at a table. However, page 50 of The Reading Framework - Teaching the foundations of literacy July 2021, should be taken into account.

Learning to form letters and spell words requires considerable effort and attention. Schools, therefore, should consider the advantages to children of delaying the teaching of joined handwriting. Nearly all the head teachers in the schools Ofsted visited for its 'Bold beginnings' survey did not teach a cursive or pre-cursive script in Reception. They told inspectors that they believed: ... it slowed down children's writing, at a point when they already found manual dexterity tricky and the muscles in their shoulders, arms and hands were still developing.

During year 1, correct letter formation should become an automatic habit. At the very end of this year, children will begin to join some pairs of letters within a word.

In Year 2, children will learn all of the basic handwriting joins. However, if children are not confident when forming all letters yet, they should concentrate on this before they worry about joining. Children will gradually be introduced to more pairs of letters that are joined in the same way. At first, they are only asked to copy joins that they have seen before, but gradually they are encouraged to explore and experiment, joining more and more letters with the joins they know.

During Years 3 and 4, pupils will be introduced to the idea of joining most of the letters in a word and to trickier joins such as joining from r, s and f. As the movement for joins becomes more familiar and fluent, the focus moves to develop a neat and even style by looking at size and proportion, parallel downwards strokes and spacing.

Year 5 sees children working on a more sloped style to enable speedier writing. All of the letters and joins taught previously will be revisited to enable children to practise the slope in familiar contexts.

In Year 6 children are at a stage where they develop a personal, fast, fluent and legible handwriting style. There is a focus on legibility and speed as well as styles and writing tools for different purposes. At the end of this year the expectation is that children maintain legibility, fluency and speed in handwriting.

9. Reading

a) Talk 4 Reading (T4R) underpins the teaching of reading in WNAT Primary Schools. T4R breaks down the reading process into three phases:

10. Phase 1 – Introduction: getting to know the text/s

A “hook” and context give children the opportunity to “show what they know”.

The phase continues with the following:

Activate prior knowledge

- Contextual reading e.g. non-fiction knowledge
- Read, reread, respond and discuss vocabulary for basic comprehension
- Decoding/word recognition
- Teacher models reading with fluency and expression
- Prediction
- Initial responses
- Literal retrieval and comprehension
- Teacher and children raise and set questions/challenges

By the end of this phase, children can access and read the text/s with basic understanding.

11. Phase 2 – Investigation: deepen understanding

Comprehension –making inference

- Model being a reader, line-by-line reading, deepen knowledge of vocabulary morphology, annotate texts etc.
- Response activities.
- Drama, hot-seating, freeze-framing etc.
- Writing in role.
- Reading performances with fluency and expression.
- Teach comprehension purpose/focus.
- Shared writing and practice of activity and answers.
- Paraphrasing and summarising.
- By the end of this phase, children can access and read the text/s with fluency and expression, and show understanding at a deeper level.

12. Phase 3 – Independent application

- Children independently complete a reading activity/answer questions in relation to comprehension foci.
- Children have-a-go using same/similar texts/s applying the knowledge and techniques taught.
- Teacher works closely with those who require further guidance and support.

13. Feedback

- Teacher feeds back to whole class, groups or individuals refining and improving answers and responses.

14. Destination Reader

Destination Reader principles are used to compliment Talk for Reading in KS2.

Destination Reader blends a range of learning behaviours and reading strategies which, brought together, allow children to explore and understand texts independently, at a deeper level. These include: supporting and actively listening to others and discussing and explaining their ideas. Once these learning behaviours have been embedded, the children learn 7 key reading strategies in turn which help them deepen their understanding of texts.

Reading strategies:

- Predicting
- Inferring
- Asking questions
- Evaluating
- Clarifying
- Making connections
- Summarising

15. Echo Reading

To further support the development of children becoming independent fluent readers the echo reading strategy is used. Echo reading is designed to help readers develop expressive, fluent reading. Echo reading encourages children to understand that what is written on the page matches

the words that are produced orally. In echo reading, the teacher reads a short segment of text (sentence or phrase) modelling skills to become a successful reader by using voice inflection, appropriate rate of reading, and by paying attention to punctuation marks while reading. Pupils echo back the same sentence or phrase while following along in the text.

This technique aims to develop a child's expression, fluency, and decoding skills. It also supports improvements in several other areas such as comprehension, listening skills, confidence, identification of unknown words, vocabulary, and proper phrasing. When adults read small parts of the text aloud, they focus on fluent, expressive reading. When the child echoes the text back, they will do it by modelling the adult, therefore learning to incorporate fluency and expressions into their reading.

16. Text Marking

So that pupils can develop as fluent readers, they also need to understand the purpose of the punctuation used within a text. Punctuation helps a reader to navigate and make sense of what is written; it is vital in the development of reading comprehension and provides the link between spoken-like language and the more formal written language. To develop pupils understanding of punctuation in the reading process, teachers' work with children, reading through a text to identify (text mark) the key punctuation marks in order to know when to pause, make changes to intonation and volume when encountering different types of punctuation marks. Children also need to understand why the author chose to place a punctuation mark in that particular position.

17. Vocabulary

Words very much form the content of English teaching so time is given to building pupils vocabulary. For children to understand a text and ensure that they comprehend what they have read they must know the meaning of 95% of the words in a text. Our pupils are faced with challenging texts on a daily basis and a good deal of the reading in our classrooms will include vocabulary that is unfamiliar and difficult. The words we use can be organised in to three tiers:

- **Tier 1:** most basic words which typically appear in oral conversations, e.g. warm, cat, girl, swim. Children are exposed to these words a lot, from a very young age, so readily become familiar with them.
- **Tier 2:** words which are of high utility for mature language users and are found across a variety of domains, e.g. precede, auspicious, retrospect. As these words are characteristic of written text, and used more rarely in conversation, pupils are less likely to learn the words independently. In addition to being cross-curricular, tier two words often have multiple meanings, making them an integral component of reading comprehension. By learning tier two words, pupils will be more able to comprehend text that contains those words. Therefore, planned vocabulary sessions are included in English lessons where pupils will find the etymology of words, use the word in context and explore the derivatives, synonyms and antonyms of the word.
- **Tier 3:** words rarely used, which are limited to specific topics and domains, e.g. photosynthesis. These words are learnt when a specific need arises.

Alongside T4R, time is given to independent reading. It is expected that children will engage in independent, sustained reading - providing an opportunity for pupils to read and enjoy a range of texts and to apply reading strategies. Each class has a stimulating reading area, a range of books and text types for children to access independently. Teachers will seek to take advantage of opportunities for pupils to apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired through English and use their reading skills within The Core Knowledge Curriculum.

18. Reading Ambassadors

Reading Ambassadors are used to further raise the profile of reading in each school. Pupils chosen to be Reading Ambassadors have a love of reading, a willingness to share this passion with others and enthusiasm to promote reading throughout the school.

Reading Ambassador roles and responsibilities:

- Promote a love of reading across the school.
- Recommend books to others and talk about their favourite authors.
- Demonstrate exemplary reading behaviours and be an excellent role model for others.
- Support pupils with reading in the library at lunchtimes.
- Keep the library and book areas tidy.
- Be the voice for pupils across the school.
- Read with KS1 children.

19. Reading for Pleasure

A love of reading is developed through the use of high-quality texts from a variety of authors, Celebrating National Poetry Day and World Book Day. Teachers provide opportunities for children to take part in: book talk (Aiden Chambers), opportunities to read as a reader, read as a writer and listen to stories. All children, from early readers to those who are fluent, have a rich and varied reading diet, which promotes both reading pleasure and an appreciation of the written word. All children take home their reading books and are encouraged to read with their parents.

Each class has a dedicated, exciting reading area containing a range of books and text types for children to access independently. Every class has a range of books including: poetry, plays, fiction –picture books, graphic novels, non-fiction, featured authors and books that reflect realities.

Across the school every class is read to by an adult on a regular basis, fostering a love for reading by exposing the children to high quality literature. Teachers are encouraged to choose challenging texts that will uncover new vocabulary and themes, opening up discussions around the language of books. Teacher models reading with fluency and expression in class and in reading assemblies, using books that promote SMSC.

“Reading is the gateway for children that makes all other learning possible.”

Barack Obama

20. GPS

The Progression in Grammar document is used to ensure that all aspects are taught from Yr. 1 to Yr. 6. Building on RWI phonics **RWI spelling** is used from Yr. 2. This uses a continuation of the concept of all words being constructed of syllables and sounds that can be broken down and analysed and understood.

21. Speech and Language

Speech and Language (oracy skills) are vital to the implementation of an appropriate English curriculum. Whether through the purposeful performance of poetry or plays, sharing and discussing ideas and views effectively or careful choice of language by teachers and children in the classroom, we value the development of oracy as the children progress through their education so that they may have all the requisite skills to succeed in the outside world. Oracy skills are developed through the use of our oracy toolkit, which is comprised of a range of strategies including: Think-Pair-Share, Debate, Socratic Seminars, Role Play, Public Speaking and Reflection. Our progression in oracy document further supports the implementation of this.

22. Monitoring and Assessment

At West Norfolk Academies Trust, teaching and learning is monitored via the triangulation of lesson observations, book scrutiny and tracking data. The SLT and subject leader will use data to identify trends and patterns for overall cohorts and specific groups of pupils.

Each term, year groups will complete a reading diagnostic test (from NFER) which allows rigorous question level analysis to be carried out to further inform planning. The Salford Reading Test is used to determine pupils' reading ages, enabling teachers to accurately match pupils with reading books that are appropriate for their individual reading level and stage of development. Writing is assessed at the end of each English unit using writing assessment checklists in KS1 and KS2. A fundamentals checklist is used in EYFS and Y1. Writing is moderated in school and at trust level each term to ensure judgements are robust. Summative data uses a combination of test scores and evidence in books.

23. Marking

Books are marked using the Marking policy where live marking is central to helping ensure pupils make the best progress. Green highlighting will show where they have been successful and pink highlighting will show their next steps or errors – these should be responded to in purple pen.

24. Equal Opportunities

All children have equal access to the curriculum regardless of their gender, disability or ability. We are committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation and harassment to achieve their potential. Through teaching for mastery, all pupils should be able to access the content of the lesson: a range of resources, pictures and representations should be used and displayed to support learners while thoughtfully worded questions and step for depth challenges should ensure that very able pupils can deepen their knowledge and understanding.

25. Health and Safety

The school is committed to provide and maintain a safe and healthy working environment for staff and pupils at all times. We aim to ensure that safe working methods are in place and provide safe equipment. We comply with statutory requirements and where possible best practice. We provide effective information, instruction and training to enable staff and pupils to be competent in their roles and in tasks they undertake. We also ensure adequate resources are made available to fulfil our health and safety responsibilities and objectives.

Class Teachers follow the particular health and safety measures to be adopted in their own teaching areas as laid down in the relevant Code of Practice, if issued, and to ensure that they are applied. All accidents, defects and dangerous occurrences are reported to the Headteacher.

Pupils, allowing for their age and aptitude, are expected to exercise personal responsibility for the health and safety of themselves and others. They should observe standards of dress consistent with safety and/or hygiene and observe all the health and safety rules of the school and in particular the instructions of staff given in an emergency. Pupils are expected to use and not wilfully misuse, neglect or interfere with things provided for their health and safety.