



THE HERMITAGE SCHOOLS

Inspire, Learn, Achieve

English Policy

Person Responsible:	English Subject Leaders
Date Adopted:	Summer Term 2023
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INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the agreed expectations for the provision of English at The Hermitage Schools.

The English Policy has a central role within the school's curriculum and should be referred to by all members of the school community to ensure consistency.

This policy covers the following areas:

- Spoken Language
- Reading
- Writing
- Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

RATIONALE

English is central to our whole school curriculum and we are dedicated to providing a consistent approach in raising standards in English across the curriculum.

AIMS

We aim to fulfil all of the requirements of the National Curriculum (2014) to ensure that children can:

- Communicate effectively through spoken language.
- Enjoy and appreciate a wide range of literature within a stimulating environment.
- Provide opportunities to develop children's phonological development so children develop the skills to read accurately and fluently.
- Read a range of materials confidently, critically and with understanding.
- Write effectively for a range of audiences and purposes using spelling, punctuation and grammar accurately and confidently.
- Acquire and use a range of vocabulary from across the curriculum.
- Leave the primary school setting meeting the national expectations.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Children's language acquisition and development of speaking and listening skills are vital to development across all areas of school and home life. Therefore we ensure that children have ample opportunity to develop these oracy skills throughout the school day by:

- Using The Oracy Framework to understand the physical, linguistic, cognitive, and social and emotional skills that enable successful discussion, inspiring speech and effective communication.
- Having high expectations of staff to model key vocabulary and oracy.

- Having a focus on partner talk and oracy skills during our Guided Reading (RWI and Destination Reader) sessions.
- Using ‘Language Stems’ to encourage children talk in full sentences.
- Using core text to enable children to discuss and explore through a variety of talk for reading strategies, such as drama and role play
- Providing opportunities for children to perform in front of an audience.

READING EYFS AND KS1

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS:

Within our EYFS we build the foundations for children’s reading through teaching phonological awareness. Phonological awareness is the foundation for reading. It develops children’s ability to be able to recognise and work with the sounds of spoken language. Activities include:

- Picking out words that rhyme
- Counting the number of syllables in a word
- Noticing sound repetition (“Susie sold six salami sandwiches”)
- Being aware of the individual sounds in a word — a skill called phonemic awareness

PHONICS:

We use Read Write Inc. (RWI) Phonics to teach all children their Phonic knowledge and skills. Through RWI, we aim for all children to:

- Reach the expected standard of the phonics screening check.
- Develop reading fluency and read with comprehension.
- Develop co-operative behaviour and articulate their ideas and understanding.
- Spell and write with confidence.

Phonics is taught through daily discrete lessons in Reception, Year 1 and, if required, in Year 2. Children are grouped based on their RWI assessments and 1:1 coaching takes place for any child who needs to catch up.

GUIDED READING

We continue to use RWI Phonics to support children with Guided Reading. The children read a book over 3 days within their Guided Reading lessons as well as having the same book allocated to them at home to read. The children will participate in whole class reads, paired reading and comprehension questions.

In Year 2, children who have completed the RWI Phonics scheme will move to daily reading lessons based on Destination Reader. The key Destination Reader principles are: creating a quality experience; promoting enjoyment; increasing reading mileage; building firm foundations; developing thinking and understanding; making talk more central.

READING – KS2

PHONICS:

Whilst we expect that all children will be able to use phonics to read, we appreciate that there may be some children who need additional attention. There may also be areas of difficulty to focus on for a whole year group. To ensure that we fill any gaps in knowledge we will ensure that:

- RWIinc Phonics is used as an intervention (see Intervention Policy).
- We teach additional phonics knowledge as and when necessary during English lesson starters.
- We hear these pupils read regularly and work with them weekly on phonics.
- Children who did not pass their phonics screening by the time they enter Year 3 will be prioritised for interventions.

DESTINATION READER

Daily whole class reading lessons are based on the key Destination Reader principles are: creating a quality experience; promoting enjoyment; increasing reading mileage; building firm foundations; developing thinking and understanding; making talk more central.

Destination Reading teaches the key reading strategies: predicting, inferring, asking questions, evaluating, clarifying, making connections and summarising. Our reading lessons involve whole class teaching, independent reading and a celebration/evaluation of progress towards developing the reading strategies. Teachers model the key strategy using **Think Aloud** and there is plenty of time for the children to practise the strategy through paired or independent reading.

Throughout the week, children focus on their core text, reading as pairs, applying skills to a variety of texts including unseen texts and completing a written comprehension.

Destination Reader encourages children to be independent with adults facilitating the learning. Clear modelling of the strategy, in addition to partner practice at the beginning of each lesson, supports the children in feeling confident to practise the strategies during the independent sessions.

READING FOR PLEASURE

At both The Hermitage Schools we have dedicated libraries for the children to visit weekly, as well as book areas within all classrooms, so they are able to absorb themselves in books. We strive to encourage children to read for pleasure to benefit not only their Reading attainment and writing ability, but also develop their comprehension and grammar, and their breadth of vocabulary. Studies have shown that positive reading attitudes give children greater self-confidence, general knowledge, a better understanding of other cultures, increase community participation and a greater insight into human nature and decision-making.

ASSESSMENT FOR READING:

Each child, on entering the schools, will be assessed according to their reading ability. Once assessment has been made, children will be allocated an appropriate level banded book. At The Hermitage School, once children are confident and fluent with a reading age of above 12, they then make their own reading choices from the library and class book shelves. At The Oaktree School, children will choose a home reader from the coloured boxes within their classrooms.

All children are expected to read five times a week at home and have this recorded in a reading record book. Parents are actively encouraged to listen to their children read and sign their reading record book at least once a week.

We have a fully stocked library and children are actively encouraged to visit it on a regular basis. The Oaktree School has volunteer librarians who support the children in finding new books and signing them in and out. The Hermitage School's computerised system allows children to sign books in and out independently. Our aim is to nurture children's love of reading.

A key focus for us, as teachers, is to prioritise the bottom 20% of readers. Our aim is to close the gap between those children and their peers. Members of the outside community volunteer each week to hear priority readers as a way of motivating and supporting our children.

WRITING

All children are writers and it is important that they are given a wide variety of opportunities to develop their writing skills. We appreciate that the spelling, grammar and punctuation content of their writing must be of a high standard, but we also ensure that our children are able to write in a variety of genres. It is important for the children at our school to be fully engaged with their writing, so we teach writing through a Core Text approach.

To ensure the best teaching and learning we ask that teachers model writing strategies through whole class modelling, guided writing and one-to-one modelling. Each half-term, teachers plan for a variety of quality writing experiences in both fiction and non-fiction genres. Children will be exposed to a wealth of rich vocabulary, quality texts and different sentence styles (Alan Peat Sentences) to develop themselves as writers.

WRITING – EYFS

The children will have access to range of writing opportunities within their learning environment both inside and outside. Play and active learning are essential parts of a children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own learning which is facilitated and extended by adults and by taking part in 'Drawing Club' which is guided by adults.

WRITING – KS1

HANDWRITING:

The children are taught how to form letters correctly through letter-join whole school handwriting scheme. They take part in daily handwriting lessons, focussing on correct posture and pencil grip. Handwriting starts off with print in Reception and progressively through Year 1 and 2 towards cursive. Please refer to our Handwriting and Presentation Policy for further information.

SPELLING:

Common Exception Words (CEW) have been grouped to form 'streets' which have been further grouped to form 'houses'. There are eight spelling houses in the blue street (Year 1 CEW) and eight spelling houses in the red street (Year 2 CEW). Individual houses are taught depending on the children's stage of learning. The houses are available in the classroom so that children are able to refer to them when writing. Parents and Carers have access to these spellings through Seesaw, topic webs and the school's website.

Once children are secure with their phonics knowledge and skills, children move onto learn different spelling patterns and word endings using the Read Write Inc Spelling programme.

COMPOSITION:

Power of Reading, developed by the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE), is used to support the teaching of children's writing. The children are exposed to a wide variety of high quality text which exposes them to different sentence structures and vocabulary. A range of activities are used to unpick model texts with the teacher, progressing to innovate parts of the text, or create their own piece of writing. As the children develop more automaticity within their handwriting, they are able to focus more on adding their own ideas and evaluating and improving their word choices and grammar.

PUNCTUATION AND GRAMMER:

Punctuation and grammar are taught alongside the CLPE writing sessions through guided and shared writes.

WRITING – KS2

THE WRITING PROCESS:

At The Hermitage School, we teach children that writing is a continually evolving skill. After a long write, children will be encouraged to undertake an editing lesson where key areas for improvement are highlighted by the teacher. Teachers will share excellent work produced by the children to inspire others to emulate their skills. Focus of editing lessons will be appropriate to individual classes and whilst there may be trends across a year, editing will not be identical in each class. The editing lesson is designed for children to experiment with the writing process and feel that they can make changes, take risks and change their mind.

SPELLING:

Spelling is taught daily through the RWInc Spelling programme which teaches the children age related spelling patterns through an exciting and visual teaching programme. Teachers teach through a variety of modelling techniques, after which the children are then able to practise their new spelling knowledge. A high priority is given to spellings within writing and editing lessons.

PUNCTUATION AND GRAMMER:

Punctuation and grammar skills are taught within writing sessions as part of the written process. We believe that it is only through the written process that the application of grammar and punctuation skills can be taught. Our Destination Reader sessions also contribute to the children's understanding of the author's use of language and application of grammar. Skills are consolidated with games and homework (Years 5 and 6). All teaching staff are expected to use the correct terminology to ensure that there is consistency across the school.