



Yealand CE Primary School Literacy Policy

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1. Policy Synopsis

The children at Yealand Church of England Primary School follow the guidelines of the National Curriculum 2014 for English. This policy document is written to show how this is implemented in our schools. It gives guidance on planning, teaching strategies and assessment.

2. Philosophy.

The belief that underpins our teaching is that the children in our school need to be skilled in using the tools of communication in order that they may be enabled to communicate, orally and in writing, to the best of their ability. Equally they need to be able to listen to, or read, communications from others, and be able to respond effectively.

"The liberating, enlivening, clarifying power of language is the subject's central concern."
Lancashire County Council Policy Document.

3. Aims and Objectives.

The aims of our teaching are:

- To enable children to speak clearly and audibly in ways which take account of their listeners
- To encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard
- To enable children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands
- To develop children's abilities to reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used
- To enable children to evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama activities
- To enable children to use the skills taught when using their phonic and spellings
- To develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge
- To encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers through contact with challenging and lengthy texts
- To encourage reading for pleasure
- To help children enjoy writing and recognise its value
- To enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction
- To increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.

4. Teaching Guidelines:

The modelling of language permeates the school day, and is of immense importance in developing the child's awareness and knowledge of language. Language development should form an integral part of each and every area of the curriculum.

The specific teaching of English incorporates a variety of teaching and learning styles. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills, and understanding in English. We do this primarily through daily literacy lessons. During these lessons children will experience teaching through a variety of approaches. The lesson will typically include a whole class shared reading or writing activity, a spelling, punctuation or grammar activity, a guided group or independent activity and a whole class session to review progress and learning. The actual structure of the lesson does vary. Word and spelling activities may be taught separately from the literacy lesson, or as part of the literacy lesson. Children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts, both paper-based and electronic, and use a wide range of resources, including dictionaries, thesauruses and personal word banks.

Children are encouraged to use Information Technology where it enhances their work, for example in presenting written work or where skills may effectively be practised on screen. Teaching is also planned to allow children to use and apply their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

There are children of differing abilities in all classes at this school. We recognise this fact and provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task with the ability of the child. We achieve this through a range of strategies. In some lessons we do this through differentiated group work, while in other lessons we ask children to work from the same starting point before moving on to develop their own ideas.

4.1 Planning

Curriculum planning in English is done in three phases:

- Long-term, cross-curricular planning. (Long-term Planning for all subjects).
- Medium-term, i.e. half-termly planning
- Short-term, i.e. weekly and /or daily planning

The medium term plans define the teaching objectives for each half-term, and ensure an appropriate balance across the range of texts used and distribution of work. They also show the balance of text and spelling, punctuation and grammar activities.

Short term plans list the specific learning objectives for each lesson and give an outline of how the lesson will be delivered. They also include details of the tasks each group of children will undertake, and the focus of the plenary session. Individual children's needs may be identified..

4.2 Reading

The ability to read is given high priority at Yealand Church of England Primary School. In line with the EYFS curriculum for communication language and literacy, Reception children are given lessons in reading skills and are taught synthetic phonics in a daily phonics session, at the same time as experiencing structured play opportunities which are designed to enhance their learning of language, and to increase their vocabulary. They have easy access to books in the classroom, and are encouraged to read environmental print. Letters and Sounds is used as a starting point for phonics, and this continues into KS1.

Children are given high frequency words when they enter the school in order to establish a basic sight vocabulary. They then progress to reading books from the reading scheme, which is a mixture of commercial schemes (thus ensuring a wide range of styles). Children take these home, and read to parents, each day, recording their progress in their reading record, along with comments upon their skills, where relevant. Children also take home phonics flash cards and common exception words to practice. In school, teachers, support staff and volunteers listen to younger children individually, until such time as the children are deemed to be reading with ease. This is in addition to the skills which are taught through whole class and group activities, such as guided reading.

In June, year 1 children will have a phonics screening test. The phonics screening check is designed to confirm whether individual children have learnt phonic decoding to an appropriate standard. The results of this screening check will be reported to parents, and children who do not achieve the appropriate standard will receive support from the school to ensure they can improve their phonic decoding skills. These children will then be expected to retake the phonics screening check in year 2.

In KS2 children continue to benefit from focused teaching of reading skills in literacy lessons, as well as continuing to take books home from the reading scheme each day. Once pupils are reading with fluency and confidence they are moved from the reading scheme to choose their own reading books from a range within the library and the classroom. Children are also encouraged to read magazines, newspapers and periodicals, and on-screen writing as well as environmental print.

All children are encouraged and given opportunities to read independently in class. For Key Stage two pupils ERIC sessions are planned for each day, and allow children time to work in a guided group once a week, and complete follow up work, as well as encouraging an enjoyment of reading.

KS2 pupils also maintain a planner, with parents noting progress or problems where appropriate. Books that children take home are monitored each day in school, and exchanged for new books when the previous one is finished. Children are encouraged to change their own reading book, ensuring they have read a range of text types, and taking responsibility for their reading.

4.3 Speaking and Listening

Children learn to speak and to listen within an integrated programme of work. We incorporate activities to improve these skills at all age levels, from Early Years Foundation Stage, where speech and listening are very closely monitored, up to the end of Year 6.

Children not only need to learn to listen to staff in a range of situations, but they need to learn to listen to each other as well. They are taught to listen to instructions and explanations carefully, with increasing concentration, and even how to disagree courteously should the need arise. They are taught the conventions of Standard English, and how to speak and listen in specific situations, for example when calling on the telephone for urgent assistance, or when reading or reciting poetry. They are taught how to express opinions politely, respond appropriately and comment on literature or other people's opinions.

Children who continue to experience difficulty in speaking or in hearing may be referred for the attention of the speech and language specialists, and likewise difficulties in hearing would be discussed with parents and audiology tests recommended.

4.4 Writing.

The teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage work to ensure that children understand the conventions of writing, and have opportunities to experience both chronological and non-chronological writing. They practise writing in role- play situations, using emergent writing, as well as writing in structured activities in lessons. There are opportunities for writing incorporated in all the areas of continuous provision: e.g. clip boards, shaped paper and a variety of writing tools.

In KS1 alongside experimentation, staff help the children to consider audience and purpose when undertaking writing. Children begin emergent writing by writing down the sounds they hear in words. The children then move on to using dictionaries.

In KS2 children are given the chance to write on an increasing range of subjects, for a bigger audience and showing an increased sense of purpose. They are taught correct sentence structure and organisational skills relevant to the final product. The *Key Skills in Writing* document is used to ensure coverage and progression in grammar and composition. Children are given time and opportunity to consider the writing process. Teachers use a variety of strategies to improve writing skills; shared writing takes place regularly, as does guided writing. Specific areas are addressed through sentence and word work, whereas some teaching is done in response to children's mistakes and this may well be addressed through individual support.

4.4.1 Handwriting

Handwriting is very important and time is given to ensuring that children throughout the school form letters correctly and learn the skills of cursive handwriting from Reception.

In the EYFS children are given pre-writing activities, taught how to hold a pencil properly, then taught the correct formation of letters using printing. When digraphs are introduced, these are taught as joins and children are expected to write them as joins. In year one, children are taught to write cursively with the lead in and lead out according to agreed letter style. When digraphs are taught, these are to be taught as joins and children are expected to write them as joins. In year 2, and moving into year 3, children are taught other joins according to agreed letter style. Children are taught to write with clear ascenders and descenders and are expected to write joined up when appropriate.

In KS2 children are taught handwriting through practicing joins, and by writing words learnt in the spelling sessions. Children are taught to visualise the shape of the whole word, both for handwriting and spelling purposes. Clear handwriting gives children a distinct advantage when learning spellings. Staff expect high standards of handwriting and presentation and encourage children to take pride in the finished appearance of their work. Non - negotiables are also reinforced in class. This is a list of non - negotiables that the children are required to produce in all pieces of work produced.

Additional handwriting exercises are used as staff see fit to practise specific skills.

Handwriting for Windows has been purchased and installed for staff to create work sheets, and use a handwriting font when appropriate.

4.4.2 Spelling

Spelling is given high priority in the school. Initially it is more important for children to get their ideas down on paper, or screen, than to worry about getting spellings correct, so we encourage children to have a go and attempt to produce a version which is phonetically plausible. Children are then advised to use a dictionary or personal word-bank, if they are unsure of a spelling.

In EYFS and KS1 spelling is principally taught through phonics. In EYFS nursery children follow phase 1 of letters and sounds. Children in reception begin with phase 1 and move through to phase 4. Children in year 2 are introduced to weekly spelling tests in the summer term in preparation for KS2. In year 1 and 2 children are given spellings in line with phase 5 and 6 of Letters and Sounds, and the National Curriculum for year 2, and have dictation each week. The high frequency list is taught to children in class two and reinforced in class three.

In KS2 a range of materials are used to teach children the objectives from the National Curriculum 2014 for English, including Support for Spelling and Spelling Bank, as well as published resources. In KS2 children have a spelling test each week, which is augmented by words from the medium frequency list, and words linked to science and humanities topics. In all year groups, children are taught the spellings from the National Curriculum spelling list. This will be done through the teaching of spelling rules where appropriate, as well as topic lessons.

4.5 Evaluation/ Marking

As much marking as possible will be done in the presence of the child, and is done with the intention of helping the child to progress further, and with the original brief in mind. Relevant comments are added to written work.

The reading record contains a full record of all school books that the child has read, and may include a record of other reading done at home. Comments on progress in guided reading are entered onto guided reading plans, and skills highlighted on the KLIPs and LAPs documents.

Teachers need also to be aware of the progress that children make in speaking and listening, but it is more difficult to 'mark' this: comments may be recorded in the teacher's diary/mark book. Evaluation gives the teacher information on which to base future planning.

See also the Marking Policy and Assessment policy.

4.6 Presentation

The presentation of written work is considered to be important; children need to learn to discriminate between writing which is done for rough or draft work, and final presentational standard. This may include decoration or artwork. The actual format of any given piece will be totally dependent on the original brief, but should be clearly written at all times. Work should usually be dated and given a title or learning objective, which, in KS2, should be underlined using a ruler.

The use of ICT tools offers children unparalleled opportunities for the revision and modification of work, and produce work of a very high standard.

In all circumstances children are expected and encouraged to take pride in their work.

4.7 Special Needs

At Yealand Church of England Schools we teach English to all children, whatever their ability. It is an essential part of the school's remit to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Teachers provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties. Work in English is differentiated and takes into account targets that may have been set for individual children in an IEP. Teachers target support as necessary and provide help with communication and literacy through

- Using texts that children can read and understand
- Using visual and written materials in differing formats
- Using IT and other technological aids, including taped material
- Using signs and symbols for those with hearing problems
- Adopting strategies such as paired reading, or targeted phonic work
- Use of specific material, such as that provided by the ELS or ALS

Very able children may also need similarly focused teaching strategies, and teachers should be aware of the needs of this group, providing appropriate activities in order to extend the abilities of more able children.

4.8 Use of IT

In addition to the classroom computers and interactive whiteboards in the classrooms, we have dedicated computer equipment, where the use of IT enables children to develop their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. Younger children use IT as a source of information and as a way of enabling them to present their completed work effectively. Talking tins are used to record children's ideas in EYFS. Older children also use the internet when searching for information about authors, for example, or when using desktop publishing facilities to design a newspaper or articles. We are able to put children's work onto the school website.

Certain programs give practise in spelling or in grammar teaching. Children are shown how to use spelling and grammar checking tools on the computers. We encourage all children to see IT as a resource for learning.

IT skills lessons enable the children to develop their IT capability and become independent learners when using the computer to produce pieces of writing sometimes, enhanced with graphics.

4.9 Homework

All children receive reading homework and are expected to read, either with parents or carer or sibling, etc, or independently each day when fluent and able.

Children are given spellings to learn each week, the amount and complexity being at the teacher's discretion.

In KS2 exercises such as reading comprehension are sometimes given as homework.

In Yr6, Booster classes may give rise to some extra homework, in preparation for the SATS.

In all classes children are often asked to research some topic at home, or bring information in from home, thus employing both reading and writing skills.

See Homework Policy

5. Record Keeping and Assessment

Teachers make assessments of children's work regularly. Short term assessments, from written work or spelling tests, for example, help teachers to adjust daily planning, having taken account of the level of understanding against set objectives for each lesson. Records of these assessments are kept by the individual teacher in their planner / mark-book, at their discretion.

Medium term assessments measure progress against the objectives for that half-term and help teachers plan for the next half-term. These may be made by formal or informal methods and teachers may record this similarly in their mark-book. The *Key Learning Indicators of Performance* documents in reading and writing are completed termly. The *Learning and Progression Steps* document for reading may be completed as an ongoing assessment in guided reading sessions.

Teacher assessment is recorded for the Head teacher on a half termly basis in reading and writing and this is used for monitoring purposes.

Teachers make long-term assessments towards the end of the school year, and they use this information to measure pupil's progress making comparisons with the child's previous progress, school and national standards. This information will also be available for the next teacher on transfer to another class, to be used for planning and grouping purposes. Records of these assessments will be

maintained in the child's file, centrally. This information may also be used to inform the target setting process.

These assessments are

- Baseline (on entry to school at age 4 and in June)
- Early Years Foundation stage profiles
- Year 1 phonics check
- KS1 SATs
- KS2 SATs

Teachers make judgements based on the level descriptors found in *Key Learning Indicators of Performance in Reading and Writing*.

See Assessment Policy

6. Multicultural and Gender Issues

Language teaching at Yealand Church of England Primary Schools should be a relevant and worthwhile experience for all children irrespective of age, gender, religion or colour. However it should be noted that for children for whom English is not their first language, special provision may need to be made to give help with language skills in order that they have as full access to all areas of the curriculum as possible. Initially this is provided by the classroom teacher and the teaching assistant, where possible, but help is available through the EMA team.

In all other respects, everyone has similar opportunity to fulfil his/her potential in communication and language skills.

7. Resources

A stock of big books for teaching purposes is kept in the library. These are suitable for use by children in that particular class.

The reading scheme in all classes is a mixture of commercial reading schemes, thus providing a range of styles and vocabulary, and contains both fiction and non-fiction material.

The reading books reflect the phonic phases and are carefully chosen to enable each child to progress at their own individual pace.

The Early Years Foundation Stage/KS1 class children have a range of reading matter, of all types, available in their own classrooms, as do the KS2 children.

There is a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books in the school library as well as a selection of magazines for use by KS1 and KS2. This is monitored and refreshed, sometimes by donations of good quality books that children have finished with at home.

Non-fiction is classified according to the Dewey system,

Each classroom has a supply of books and periodicals.

The guided reading scheme is kept in the classrooms.

Dictionaries and thesauruses are available in KS2 with some simpler dictionaries kept in KS1.

Staff resources are kept in the classroom.

Tapes/CDS, video/DVDS and teaching notes are available.

There are a wide range of phonics resources available in EYFS and KS1.

8. Parental Involvement

Parents are informed of the schools expectations in regard to written work through meet the teacher events and parent/teacher consultation. End of year expectations are also provided on a leaflet produced Lancashire County Council, expressly for each year group in this school.

See also the Home /School Agreement.

9. Review Procedure

This policy will be reviewed every two years or as appropriate, should circumstances change.

November 2017

K.Beswetherick

Appendix A

Cursive Handwriting

Advantages

- Traditionally, children have learnt to print letters when they first start writing, then they have to learn a new style of handwriting when the time comes to move on to joined writing. If cursive writing is taught from the start, only one style is needed.
- Letters are produced in a flowing movement, which helps the development of a physical memory of how each letter is written.
- Letters all start in the same place and flow from left to right, which reduces the likelihood of reversal mix-ups such as b/d and p/q.
- Because of the smooth flow, writing soon becomes quicker and easier.
- There is no messy transition stage when children move from print to a joined style.
- A cursive style of handwriting is recommended by the [British Dyslexia Association](#).

Disadvantages

- Letters written in cursive style can look quite different from printed letters in books.
- In the early stages, writing can look messy as the movements are slightly more complex than print-style letters.

(Taken from www.cursivewriting.org)

Year group	Handwriting
R	Children in reception will be taught letter formation initially. When digraphs are introduced, these will be taught as joins and children will be expected to write them as joins.
1	Children will be taught to write cursively with the lead in and lead out according to agreed letter style. When digraphs are taught, these will be taught as joins and children will be expected to write them as joins.
2	Children will be taught other joins according to agreed letter style and scheme.
3	Children will be taught to write with clear ascenders and descenders and will be expected to write joined up when appropriate.
4	Children will be expected to write in joined up when appropriate. Handwriting practice will continue and will be reinforced through spelling work.
5	Children will maintain a cursive style, and will write joined up when appropriate.
6	Children will maintain a cursive style and will use different styles of writing for different purposes.

Handwriting for Windows has been purchased and installed for staff to create work sheets, and use a handwriting font when appropriate.