Temple Sowerby CE Primary School

ENGLISH POLICY

Approved by	
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Living for learning; learning for life.

Our Vision

At Temple Sowerby CE Primary School, our vision for the school community is rooted in a deep respect for our human, social, and cultural values, expressed in a caring Christian ethos. We aim to provide high academic standards and a wide range of experiences and opportunities. In doing so, we encourage all children to flourish by giving them the skills they need to become good citizens and to discover life in all its fullness (John 10:10).

Policy Statement

This policy reflects the school's aims and objectives in relation to the teaching and learning of English. It sets out a framework within which teaching and non-teaching staff can operate. It gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment. The policy should be read in conjunction with the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and the National Curriculum. These set out the rationale for teaching each area of the English Curriculum and specify the skills that will be developed for the majority of pupils in each year group.

Purpose of study

The National Curriculum (2014) clearly states that teaching the English language is an essential, if not the most essential role of a primary school. At Temple Sowerby CE Primary School we recognise that without effective communication, little achievement can be made. We know that we have a duty to ensure that English teaching is a priority and a constant through-out school life and beyond. It is part of the essential knowledge that is needed in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised (National Curriculum for English).

Aims

The overarching 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

The Approach to the Teaching of English at Temple Sowerby CE Primary School

Temple Sowerby CE Primary School has adopted the National Curriculum programmes of study for English as a basis for our English curriculum. English is taught discretely each day with additional phonics, spelling and guided reading sessions throughout the week. Independent and paired reading sessions are also timetabled. The Nursery and Reception classes follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

Adaptive Teaching & SEND Provision

In our English curriculum, we are committed to delivering inclusive, high-quality adaptive teaching that ensures every child—regardless of their specific learning needs or disabilities—can access, enjoy, and succeed in reading, writing, and spoken language. We scaffold learning dynamically to remove barriers to achievement while maintaining high expectations for all pupils. This includes providing targeted SEND provision such as structured visual supports, assistive technology, multi-sensory resources, adapted text formats, and chunked writing frames. By embedding flexible grouping, pre-teaching key vocabulary, and offering scaffolded models alongside personalized intervention strategies, we empower all learners to develop their communication skills, build confidence, and make meaningful progress at their own pace.

Early Years

At Temple Sowerby CE Primary School, pupils in the Early Years start to learn foundational skills that will enable them to begin to read and write independently. We prioritise quality interactions with adults to develop children's vocabulary, model how to interact with others and listen well. Much of this learning takes place through play and 'real life' situations. The children also have daily synthetic phonics lessons throughout the week. We also have daily storytelling and rhyming basket sessions which begin to expose children to story structure, characterisation and reading for pleasure.

Key Stage One

As pupils move into Key Stage One, learning becomes more formalised. English is delivered as an individual subject but also through cross-curricular themes. In Key Stage 1 discreet synthetic phonics lessons (Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised' programme) are taught daily, with additional English lessons with an emphasis on real texts. Children take part in whole class reading and practice reading sessions and have daily story times to develop a love of reading. Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes and adaptive class teaching and phonic keep-up sessions.

Key Stage Two

In Key Stage 2, children have daily English lessons which incorporate speaking and listening, writing and reading, through fiction (in a variety of genres), non-fiction, poetry, plays, advertisements, magazines, letters, diaries and dictionaries. Reading is central to our teaching and much of our teaching is based upon quality texts, either in the form of a class book (such as using the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education's 'Power of Reading' project) or through online resources (eg Literacy Shed). Provision is made for children who require extra support through intervention programmes and adaptive class teaching.

When planning and teaching the English curriculum, the following elements are considered:

• Adapted to meet the needs of all pupils

• Use of a range of teaching strategies with a balance between audio, visual, and kinaesthetic techniques

• Computing and cross-curricular links are made where appropriate

• High quality and engaging texts

• Marking of work in accordance with the school's marking policy – focusing on in the moment feedback for optimum progress and to address misconceptions

• Using and sharing learning challenges with the children to ensure progress is made

Spoken language

The National Curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers therefore ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills. Pupils are supported to develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They are assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others and teachers ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils are also taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate. All pupils are enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils are supported to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances. The statutory requirements which underpin all aspects of spoken language across key stage 1 and key stage 2 are also reflected and contextualised within the reading and writing domains which follow.

Reading

The National Curriculum programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of two dimensions:

• word reading

• comprehension (both listening and reading).

The teaching at Temple Sowerby CE Primary School focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

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. Phonics is therefore strongly emphasised in the early teaching of reading when children start school.

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 texts. All pupils are encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Reading widely often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious young minds.

Reading at Temple Sowerby CE Primary School is taught through:

1. In Reception and Year 1, Daily Little Wandle phonics sessions and, in addition, three practise sessions each week focussing on decoding, comprehension and prosody. In Years 2 and 3, we continue to teach reading this way for children who still need to practise reading with decodable books.
2. Regular whole class reading that develops comprehension skills, reading styles, listening skills and reading for pleasure. All children are immersed in high-quality literature and with the class teacher they learn to retrieve information, interpret meaning and explore the author's choice of vocabulary or style.
3. Shared reading that immerses children in the pattern of story and features of text types. This happens in English lessons when introducing text and prior to writing. The teacher models as an expert reader and draws out the key elements of the content.
4. Guided reading that targets children's reading skills takes place from Year 2 onwards. In Reception and Year 1, children read a fully decodable book in groups with a teacher or TA 3 times a week.
5. Independent or paired reading time in school is timetabled in Classes 2 and 3 and volunteer readers come in to school each week to support 1 to 1 reading.
6. Links to home reading are promoted. We attend workshops each year at our local library and promote involvement in the Summer Reading Challenge each year. We meet with parents of all new starters to discuss how they can support their children in their reading and spelling. Books are sent home with a reading record or log for communication with parents/carers and we use challenges and competitions to encourage this. Books are changed regularly, with support (if required) by Teaching Assistants.
7. Our school library provide a range of reference and reading materials for children and teachers to provide a love of reading. This is supplemented by book and library themed displays to promote engagement, termly box boxes (for topics or guided reads) from the Cumbria Library Service and we are regularly visited by their Book Bus service.
8. Enrichment activities, such as World Book Day, visiting storytellers, author workshops, library trips or themed days help to promote reading for pleasure.

Reading Books

In Reception and Year 1, children are grouped according to their phonological knowledge and given fully decodable reading books. The children read these books both in school and at home to develop fluency and confidence. They are also provided with books for pleasure to take home - children may not be able to read these books independently, but they offer a wealth of opportunities for talking about the pictures and joining in with the story or information text.

Once children no longer need to practise reading with decodable books, they progress to reading colour-banded library books. These are sorted into book bands to help us monitor the reading progression of our pupils throughout their school life.

Phonics and Early Reading

At Temple Sowerby CE Primary School, we follow the 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised' systematic synthetic programme. Full details of this programme can be found in our Phonics and Early Reading Policy.

Writing

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed similarly to those for reading:

• transcription (spelling and handwriting)

• composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

The teaching at Temple Sowerby CE Primary School develops pupils' competence in these two dimensions. In addition, pupils are taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing are incorporated

into the National Curriculum programmes of study for composition. Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words. Effective composition involves forming, articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar.

Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting. At Temple Sowerby CE Primary School, we are very proud of our pupil's handwriting and take particular care in our handwriting style. We use Letter-join's on-line handwriting resource and Lesson as the basis of our handwriting policy as it covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Writing at Temple Sowerby CE Primary School is taught through:

1. Shared writing that is modelled by the teacher as the expert writer with contributions from the children. This is teacher-led writing with children watching and contributing ideas. The emphasis may be on the generation of ideas, grammatical awareness, spelling and phonics, compositional, transcriptional, presentational and text level skills or other key strategies needed in writing. Not all of these can be modelled in one session, but the teacher as the expert writer leads the cumulative writing process.

2. Opportunities for developmental writing. In the Early Years, children should experience writing in a range of settings. Opportunities for writing should be available through all areas of learning and throughout the learning environment. Children's own attempts at early writing should be celebrated and promoted, alongside the direct teaching of the key skills that will enable the children to progress through the stages of writing development. In the Early Years and KS1, children's writing that needs interpretation must be scribed by a teacher or adult working with the group.

4. Independent writing. Throughout the school, children need opportunities to develop their confidence and practise their writing skills. Editing and redrafting is key part of the writing process and children are encouraged to use dictionaries, thesauruses and ICT resources to ensure that the finished piece is of a high quality.

5. Writing environment - The school environment celebrates quality writing through displays of work in both handwritten and typed form as well as signs and labels. All classrooms should have well-equipped resources for writing that children can access independently and scaffold the children's developing skills.

To ensure that children have the opportunity to write for different purposes and audiences, we have a planned timetable of writing themes to ensure coverage and breadth.

Spelling, Vocabulary, Grammar, Punctuation

The two statutory appendices in the National Curriculum – on spelling and on vocabulary, grammar and punctuation – provide an overview of the specific features that should be included in teaching the programmes of study and inform our teaching at Temple Sowerby CE Primary School.

Opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing. As vocabulary increases, teachers show pupils how to understand the relationships between words, how to understand nuances in meaning, and how to develop their understanding of, and ability to use, figurative language. They also teach pupils how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than one meaning.

Pupils are taught to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English. They are taught to use the elements of spelling, grammar, punctuation and 'language about language' listed in the statutory appendices.

The school follows the definitions provided in the non-statutory glossary in the national curriculum. Throughout the programmes of study, teachers teach pupils the vocabulary they need to discuss their reading, writing and spoken language. Pupils therefore learn the correct grammatical terms in English and these terms are integrated within teaching.

Endpoints

At Temple Sowerby CE Primary School, our vision states that we '*encourage all children to flourish by giving them the skills they need to become good citizens and to discover life in all its fullness'*. To prepare them for life and for the next phase of their education, it is our aim that all pupils are able to read fluently, read for pleasure and can communicate confidently both orally and in writing by the end of their primary education.

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils will have been given the opportunity to develop their reading, writing speaking and listening ability. They will have made progress in reading, from phonetic awareness through to word recognition coupled with blending and segmenting skills. Furthermore, pupils will have been given the tools to start to develop comprehension in reading. Writers will have made progress towards achieving end of Key Stage targets. They will have developed skills in handwriting, grammar, punctuation, grammar and composition, having had opportunities to write in many fiction and non-fiction genres. Children will have started to be able to speak with confidence about their learning and their lives whilst developing an appreciation of what it means to listen, not just to their learning opportunities but also to the views and experiences of each other.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils will have made further progress in their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. This will ideally be to the expected national standard but for those children not meeting the standard by the end of Key Stage 1 we want pupils to have made more than expected progress towards the expected standard at Key Stage 2. Children will have developed a love for reading. They will be developing into confident speakers and will be able to listen to teachers and peers with interest and engagement. Children will know and understand the importance of being able to write in both fiction and non-fiction genres, developing expressive skills and important presentation life skills respectively.

Equal Opportunities

All children have an entitlement to participate fully in English, regardless of gender, race, age or ability, in accordance with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy. Children for whom English is an additional language will receive additional support as appropriate.

We are committed to providing a diverse, inclusive, and rich English curriculum that reflects and celebrates the pluralistic world in which our pupils live. In line with the Equality Act 2010, our selection of texts—ranging from class novels and picture books to poetry and non-fiction—is intentionally curated to represent a broad spectrum of backgrounds, cultures, ethnicities, abilities, family structures, and perspectives. We ensure that all pupils see themselves positively reflected in the literature they read ('mirrors'), while also gaining valuable insight into the experiences and lives of others ('windows'). By actively challenging stereotypes and offering equal access to high-quality literature across all protected characteristics, we foster empathy, respect, and an inclusive reading culture for every child.

Assessment

A range of assessments are used to track the progress of children in English across the year and termly progress meetings and pupil tracking systems allow teaching staff to identify children who may benefit from additional support. This could be in the form of additional reading or intervention activities, such as Reading Intervention programmes, Little Wandle keep-up sessions or the Nuffield Early Language Intervention.

Marking

Marking in English is part of the assessment process. Please refer to the Marking Policy.

The Role of the Subject Leaders

The role of the English Subject Leaders includes the observation and monitoring of teaching across the school, as well as the ordering, costing and allocation of resources to support the teaching of English. A review of resources is carried out periodically which leads to a prioritised list of requirements. This is funded within the school's budget plan for the financial year and additional non-contact time is provided for the subject leaders where necessary.

Reporting to Parents/Carers

Parents receive regular feedback as to their children's progress in English. Each child has a reading record book to record progress in reading at home and school and spelling lists are sent home to practise each term. Parents' evenings take place twice each year, providing the opportunity to meet with teachers to see what children have been learning and to discuss their progress and targets. Parents also receive an annual written report at the end of the school year. Parents are also invited into school to learn how we teach phonics and early reading and how they can support their children at home.

Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to monitor standards and progress, the teachers and headteacher meet termly to discuss progress in reading and writing. Particular attention is paid to children working below age related expectations, children with SEN and disadvantaged children. The English Leaders monitor English through analysis of tracking data, lesson observations and scrutiny of work. Staff also scrutinise and level writing (across the school) as part of internal moderation processes and participate in external moderation with our local Eden Rural Alliance cluster of schools.

SEN pupils will be assessed regularly by the class teacher and the SENCO. Steps are taken to provide additional support where appropriate. The SENCO and English Leaders meet regularly to discuss identified pupils.

Monitoring/Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years.