

**English and Literacy Policy**

**Introduction**

It is our belief that it is every child’s right to develop an appreciation of the English language; through the spoken and written word. Literacy and language are an integral part of all aspects of the curriculum. The skills that our children develop are intended to prepare them for their future lives, enabling them to achieve social, emotional and economic well-being.

Mastery over language empowers children to communicate creatively and imaginatively, as well as allowing them to engage with the world at large.

**Aims**

At Yorkmead we have a rich culture, with many children having English as an additional language. This diversity is welcomed and encouraged. We aim to develop children’s skills through integrating Speaking and Listening activities into a broad and balanced curriculum, through which Literacy skills are actively taught and reinforced.

We strive for the success of all children and aim:

* For all children to develop literacy skills, through reading, writing and speaking & listening that prepare them for life.
* To give children the skills to read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding; whilst having access to a range of strategies for self-monitoring.
* For all children to develop a love and appreciation of books.
* For all children to develop an interest in words and their meanings.
* To give children the skills to speak with confidence and in an informed way, considering their audience.
* To develop a bank of suitable technical vocabulary that enables them to access all areas of the curriculum.
* To enable children to develop their powers of imagination, inventiveness and creative thinking.

**Provision**

**Early Years**

In Nursery and Reception, teaching and learning follows the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage in Communication, Language and Literacy. This is taught both discretely and across the curriculum, including Language for Communication and Thinking, Linking Sounds and Letters, Reading and Writing.

**Provision (continued)**

Phonics is taught daily in a discrete session, and includes the teaching of reading and spelling strategies.

Writing is taught across the curriculum; both guided, shared and emergent writing opportunities are included in planning. In Reception, reading is also taught during a daily ERIC time (Everyone Reading In Class), following lunch.

**Key Stage One**

In year one, teaching and learning follow the National Curriculum and the Primary Framework Objectives for Literacy. The subject is taught in five daily lessons and an additional spelling and handwriting lesson.

In addition to this phonics is taught in daily sessions of 20 minutes each (approximately). These are taught during morning and afternoon sessions, with the afternoon session reinforcing the previous learning.

In year two, teaching and learning follow the National Curriculum and the Primary Framework Objectives for Literacy. The subject is taught in five daily lessons and an additional spelling and handwriting lesson.

In addition to this phonics is taught daily for 20 minutes; this may be divided over two shorter sessions if appropriate.

**Key Stage Two**

In year three to five, teaching and learning follow the National Curriculum and the Primary Framework Objectives for Literacy. The subject is taught in five daily lessons and an additional spelling and handwriting lesson. In year three and four, literacy is taught in classes and differentiated for ability. In year five, the subject can be taught in two ability sets across the year group, depending on the needs and maturity of the children.

In year six, teaching and learning follow the National Curriculum and the Primary Framework Objectives for Literacy. The subject is taught in four daily lessons, in addition to, one spelling and grammar session and one discrete handwriting lesson. Literacy is taught in three ability sets across the year group.

In addition to literacy lessons, **Guided Reading** (ERIC) sessions take place in all classes for 20 – 30 minutes before or after morning break. During this time groups work on specific reading activities, such as non-fiction research, comprehension and Reading Journal activities. Reading Records include a focused objective and are used to record progress and next steps.

**Teaching Methods**

At Yorkmead we strive to develop an ethos of creative and inspirational teaching in Literacy, which remains relevant to our pupils’ experience and ability.

The teaching of Literacy covers a range of styles, methods and stimulus, which include:

* Whole class, paired and group work
* Shared Reading, including text marking and annotating
* Shared Writing, including whole class and group work
* Guided Writing to address specific needs of children
* Modelling of good practice in Reading and Writing
* Role-play and Drama opportunities.

**Teaching Methods (continued)**

* Speaking and Listening opportunities, including effective questioning, discussion and debate
* A range of stimulus, including classic and contemporary text, on-line and audio texts
* Visual Literacy
* Balance of written and practical activities to engage all Learning Styles

**Literacy Planning**

Early Years

In Nursery and Reception, planning and learning objectives are taken from the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage. Planning is completed on a standardised format and includes the following:

* Learning Objectives
* Success Criteria
* Introduction / Stimulus
* Main Activities
* Supporting Activities
* Differentiation
* Role of Adults
* Learning Styles
* Curriculum Links
* AfL
* Vocabulary and Questioning

Planning for Phonics follows the school’s own adapted plans from Letters and Sounds, supported by Phonics Play.co.uk.

**Key Stage One and Two**

Across the key stages, planning follows the Primary Framework Objectives and units of work. The units are taught in order and alternate between fiction, non-fiction and poetry, in order to give a balanced coverage throughout the academic year.

Learning Objectives are taken from the framework and activities planned from these.

Weekly plans are presented on a standardised format, across the school and include the following:

* Learning Objectives (These are also included on all pieces of Literacy work).
* Success Criteria
* Introduction / Shared Work
* Main Activities
* Guided Group Work
* Differentiation
* Role of Adults
* Speaking and Listening Opportunities
* Curriculum Links
* AfL
* Vocabulary and Questioning

**Monitoring of Planning**

Planning is monitored on a fortnightly basis by pairs of members of the SMT.

Details can be found in the Monitoring and Evaluating Schedule.

Written feedback is given.

**Phonics**

At Yorkmead Synthetic Phonics is taught in line with the Letters and Sounds document. This has been adapted to form our own weekly plans for years Nursery to Year two. The teaching of phonics is supported by the Jolly Phonics scheme of work, Phonics Play and the Education City ICT program.

Current guidelines recommend that phonics should be taught for twenty minutes daily, in Nursery, Reception, Year one and two. This can be taught in one or two sessions each day.

The teaching of phonics should give equal bearing to the learning of both phonemes (letter sound) and graphemes (letter formation). Teaching encompasses a range of learning styles, including auditory, visual and kinaesthetic.

Half term assessments are built into the schools plans and include letter sounds, names and high frequency words.

Since 2011, Year one children take the Phonics Screening Test during the summer term. They are prepared for this by learning to de-code both real and ‘alien’ words.

**Handwriting**

The teaching of handwriting follows the Nelson Handwriting scheme of work and is in the cursive style.

In Reception and Year one, pupils have individual workbooks that are used to support the teaching of individual letter formation and early join formation. In Years two to six, work is completed in literacy books, using Nelson Handwriting books in differentiated levels. The scheme is supported by interactive materials, photo-copiable resources and font type.

Handwriting is taught in a discrete session and is reinforced across the curriculum.

In Nursery, the teaching of handwriting is kinaesthetic, focussing on children’s understanding of movement and shape, and follows the Write Dance scheme of work.

**Spelling**

In Reception and Key Stage One, spelling is taught following Letters and Sounds guidance and the school’s adapted plans. Weekly spelling tests are introduced in year one and continue throughout the school. In Key Stage One, spellings are taken from the Letters and Sounds document and include phonic pattern words and high frequency words. In addition to this, topic and key vocabulary words are included in

spelling tests.

**Spelling (continued)**

Key Stage One pupils are guided in using the ‘Look, Cover, Spell, Check!’ approach to learning spelling words.

In Key Stage Two, spellings are taken from the Support for Spelling scheme for each year group, again supported by the inclusion of topic and key vocabulary words.

Spelling words are given on a weekly basis, contained in a Home Spelling Book, and are tested the following week. A record of test results is kept in each class, and scores sent home for parents.

The number of spelling words given to individual children is at the teacher’s discretion and should be appropriate to pupils’ ability and needs.

**Punctuation and Grammar**

Punctuation and grammar is taught within Literacy lessons, following the school’s own Learning Objectives. APP guidance is used to support the focussed teaching of punctuation and grammar, with individual pupil targets set. Word and Sentence level work and skills are taught on a daily basis, in a fun and interactive way.

SPAG Bug: The school uses Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar Bug to support the Teaching and Learning of Grammar. This includes objectives, interactive activities for teaching sessions and assessment materials.

VCOP: Teachers are encouraged to display VCOP in classrooms, including examples of Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation. Children should be made aware of the appropriate VCOP for each National Curriculum Level.

Since 2012, Year six pupils sit the Grammar Test. They are prepared for this with high quality teaching, assessment and limited test practice.

**Cross Curriculum Links**

Literacy is at the core of all that we do and as such skills are supported and reinforced across the curriculum. Where appropriate, links are made with non-core subjects and skills developed through these. Literacy objectives, writing opportunities and Speaking and Listening are included on Creative Curriculum planning.

**Assessment**

Assessment is a continuous process and is carried out by each practitioner. Information for assessment is gathered through observation, discussion, marking, reading records, pupil targets, formal testing and APP (Assessing Pupil Progress).

Assessment for Learning: Assessment data is used to inform planning and teaching.

Self and Peer Assessment are included in planning.

Learning Objective labels are included on all work and include opportunities for self and peer assessment. In key stage one this uses the Traffic Light system. In key stage two this is further developed to include the Triangle system and ‘I think … My teacher thinks …’ labels.

Moderation of writing assessment is carried out within phase groups on a termly basis.

Individual pupil targets are used for Writing and Reading, these are shared with pupils and parents; and are highlighted to show progress and next steps.

**Role of the Subject Leader**

The subject leader is responsible for

* Ensuring continuity and progression within school to raise levels of achievement; this includes monitoring of planning, lesson observations and scrutiny of work.
* Identifying INSET needs.
* Advising and supporting colleagues in the implementation of Literacy.
* Monitoring resources, including ordering and relevant staff training.
* Analysing data to monitor the progress of different groups.
* Supporting under-performing groups, where appropriate.
* Keeping staff and governors up to date with local and national issues affecting Literacy.

**Role of the Class Teacher**

The class teacher is responsible for raising levels of achievement by

* Following the school’s Literacy Policy.
* Planning for and effectively delivering Literacy with Year Group Partners, Teaching Assistants and Learning Support Assistants.
* Ensuring planning and learning is accessible to children of all abilities, backgrounds and learning styles.
* Setting challenging targets and monitoring progress through effective assessment and use of tracking data.
* Using assessment data to inform planning and set individual targets.
* Informing pupils of their progress and next steps targets.
* Informing parents of pupils’ progress and targets through discussion at Parents’ Evening and the pupils’ end of year report.

**Parental Involvement**

Parental involvement is actively encouraged by:

* Open and honest dialogue with parents.
* Sharing homework with parents and giving them the opportunity to respond in pupil’s home diaries.
* Inviting parents to discuss their child’s progress and targets at Parent’s Evening.
* Inviting parents to attend INSPIRE Literacy workshops.
* Welcoming parents to reception Open Mornings
* Attending meetings to discuss I.E.P. targets and progress.
* Sharing and discussing end of year reports.
* Inviting Parents to attend educational visits.

**Involvement of the Governing Body**

The governors of the school are kept fully informed of changes and progress in Literacy. Written and verbal presentations are made during Governing Body Meetings.

Governors are welcome to visit school and observe literacy teaching, with prior notice.

**Special Educational Needs**

At Yorkmead work is differentiated for all ability groups and to cater for the needs of individuals. Adult support is timetabled across year groups and phases to enable the individual targets of S.E.N pupils to be met. Children with S.E.N are supported in working on their personal I.E.P (individual education plan) targets during Literacy lessons, throughout the curriculum and where appropriate in targeted interventions, including phonics and Rapid Readers schemes.

**Inclusion and Equal Opportunities**

It is the right of all children to have access to a broad and balanced Literacy Curriculum regardless of gender, race, cultural background or any physical or sensory disability. We recognise that each child is unique in terms of ability, interests, background, motivation and learning needs. We aim to ensure that this diversity is embraced and that all children have complete access to the Literacy curriculum and the opportunity to influence it.

Performance throughout the school is monitored to track the attainment of different groups.

**Other Policies**

This policy needs to be in line with other policies and as such should be read in conjunction with the following:

* Teaching and Learning Policy
* Assessment and Record Keeping Policy
* Marking and Presentation Policy
* Non-Core Subject Policies
* Special Educational Needs Policy
* Equal Opportunities Policy

This policy was written by Andie Crane (Literacy Subject Leader) November 2009.

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