

Nene Valley Primary School English Guidance

This guidance describes our aims and our practice in the teaching of English: reading, writing, spelling, grammar and spoken language. It is defined by current national guidance on best practice, in-staff training, staff discussion and professional judgement.

Aims for our School:

- To provide a language rich environment that promotes a culture of reading and writing;
- To develop in pupils a love of books and high-quality literature that will not only support their learning across the curriculum, but also extend beyond the classroom environment and enrich their lives;
- To explicitly teach reading skills throughout the school that continually develop children's understanding and enjoyment of texts;
- To teach children the craft of writing in order to develop the confidence and skills to write well for a range of purposes and audiences;
- To teach the basics – spelling, grammar, handwriting and punctuation – well so children have all the necessary tools;
- To foster in pupils the confidence, desire and ability to express their views and opinions both orally and in writing;
- To value and celebrate diversity in culture and language.

Planning – Learning and Teaching Strategies

- Planning is linked directly to the Programmes of Study of National Curriculum 2014 in all year groups. These are Reading Comprehension, Word Reading (phonics), writing comprehension, spelling, vocab and grammar and spoken language. Knowledge, understanding and skills are taught daily within the English lesson.
- Teachers plan 'text-based' English units which work towards a longer writing outcome that is linked to reading, drama and other shorter writing tasks.
- As much as possible, writing is linked to the termly class topic and therefore the wider curriculum. There is a balance between fiction, non-fiction and poetry and an emphasis on whole texts. Within this different text types are covered. E.g. Narrative, discussion, persuasion, report, explanation etc.
- Planning starts with a unit overview which outlines the main themes and ideas. Weekly planning then outlines each lesson in more detail including opportunities for support, scaffolding and adaptive teaching.

Spoken Language

At NVPS, we believe that speaking and listening form the foundations of all learning in English. In formal and informal situations, we create and facilitate opportunities for conversation, discussion and talk around learning.

What does this look like at Nene Valley Primary School?

- Questioning and taking risks with language;
- Presenting in-front of an audience;
- Reciting and reading aloud;
- Re-telling, role-play and drama productions;
- Listening to and participating in stories, poems, rhymes and songs;
- Drama activities to enliven and enrich children's understanding of character;
- Talking the text – opportunities for children to talk about and discuss their reading and writing;
- Debate;
- Collaborative work and reporting back following group work;
- Presentations;
- Productions.

Phonics

- At NVPS we follow Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised. These lessons are taught daily in classes and last approx. 30 mins. Each lesson is supported by a TA who assesses learning during the lesson and catches any children up who need support later that day.
- Little Wandle phonics teaches children to read accurately and fluently with good comprehension. They learn to form each letter, spell correctly, and compose their ideas step-by-step.
- Children learn the English alphabetic code: first they learn one way to read the 40+ sounds and blend these sounds into words, then learn to read the same sounds with alternative graphemes.
- They experience success from the very beginning. Decodable phonic books are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and 'tricky' words and, as children re-read the stories, their fluency increases.

Phonic Assessments

- In EYFS and Phase 1/2 half termly phonics checks are carried out. The results of which determine any gaps in knowledge, these are then addressed through whole class teaching or as phonic interventions.
- These tracking grids follow the children up to the next class as it shows a comprehensive picture of what they have achieved.
- Y1 Termly phonics screening checks are carried out using past papers. The results of which determine the support needed and inform class teaching.
- All children that have not met the expected standard from the Phonics screening test in Year 1 are placed in an intervention to enable them to pass the test when they retake it.

Reading

Our priority is both the teaching of reading skills and the enjoyment of literature, enabling children to become lifelong, confident readers. As children begin to read, we focus on decoding, primarily through phonics in addition to other strategies e.g. whole word recognition, rhyme and context. As children build fluency, comprehension skills become our main area of focus and questioning looks at skills such as re-telling, inference and prediction. We believe that high-quality literature is key to motivating children to read and instilling in children a love of literature. Children throughout the school are read to daily by an adult.

Reading Scheme/ Accelerated Reader

- The children are initially given phonetically decodable books matched to their phonic ability. They take these books home to share with their family. As their fluency and comprehension increases the children complete the exit fluency assessment for Little Wandle.
- They will then access the Accelerated Reader books. Before accessing Accelerated Reader, they will need to take a Star Reading Assessment which will support the identification of an appropriate ZPD (this will determine the colour band of AR books which a child should read).
- The Star Reading Assessment is repeated four times each year (start of September and at the end of each full term).
- The children need to have daily opportunities to take the AR Quizzes (early morning work). The scores from these tests need to be monitored regularly by the class teacher to ensure that the children are reading books at an appropriate level.
- Children should be demonstrating an average of 85% in the quizzes - if they are consistently scoring above this (six or more quizzes) they will need to be moved on.

Guided Reading

- Guided Reading is taught daily from Year 1-6 for approximately 30mins.
- During these sessions, the skills of reading are explicitly taught and every student has a copy of the same text at an instructional level (one that can usually be read with 90-94% accuracy).
- Reading is modelled by the teachers and thought processes verbalised to demonstrate the skills involved.

Guided reading sessions are made up of three parts:

- Before reading discussion
- Independent reading
- After reading discussion

The main goal of guided reading is to help students use reading strategies whilst reading for meaning independently.

During the before reading session the teacher can...

- Activate prior knowledge of the topic
- Encourage student predictions
- Set the scene by briefly summarising the plot
- Demonstrate the kind of questions readers ask about a text
- Identify the pivotal pages in the text that contain the main focus for the session and 'walk' the students through them
- Introduce any new vocabulary and clarify meaning
- Bring to attention relevant text layout, punctuation, chapter, headings, illustrations, index or glossary
- Clearly articulate the learning intention (Which reading skill are they focusing on?)
- Discuss the success criteria

During the reading the teacher can...

- 'listen in' to individual students read – this is their one time in the week they get you 1:1 for a brief time
- Observe reader's behaviour for evidence of strategy use
- Assist a student with problem solving using the sources of information
- Confirm a student's problem-solving attempts and successes, *e.g. well done for using your phonics to work that out, well done for reading on to work out the unfamiliar word*
- Give timely and specific feedback to help students
- Make notes about the strategies individual students use to inform future planning and goal setting

After the reading the teacher can...

- Invite personal responses such as asking students to make connections to themselves, other texts or world knowledge
Using our RIC strategies:
- Return to the text to clarify or identify a decoding teaching opportunity such as work on vocabulary, *e.g. what does the word 'crater' mean? How do we know?*
- Check understanding by asking pupils to sequence, retell or summarise the text.
- Develop an understanding of an author's intent
- Develop insights into character, settings and themes
- Focus on aspects of text organization such as characteristics of a non-fiction text
- Revisit the learning focus and encourage students to reflect on whether they achieved the success criteria

Children will also be given the opportunity to read for pleasure each day, uninterrupted.

Library

- The library is stocked with a mixture of fiction, non-fiction and poetry books, which link to topics.
- They are arranged in cycles so that the books can be easily accessed by the children.
- Classes can timetable slots to use the library to research topics prior to learning or to simply share and enjoy books.

Grammar

- An understanding of how to use grammar correctly, use relevant meta-language and identifying word classes and sentence types is taught both in the context of a piece of writing and explicitly in whole class work.
- Linked to the National Curriculum guidelines for year groups, grammar is taught and planned to fit in with relevant genres of writing and is also taught explicitly in timetabled SPaG lessons.

Spelling

- Understanding how to spell correctly is important in supporting children to organise their thinking around language. Knowing how to apply spelling rules and recognising key words is empowering for children. Spellings plays a significant part of standardised assessment and is taught throughout the school.
- Children complete GL Spelling Assessments Termly and areas for focus are shared with parents during Parent consultations.
- Teachers need to look for common misconceptions or gaps within their class and plan to address these during English lessons.
- Spelling/Vocabulary Journals are kept by the children. Tier 2 vocabulary and topic related words are recorded and referred to regularly during lessons.
- 'Word of the Day' is shared with the children in each class from Y1-6. Etymology of the word and word roots are studied and connections made with similar words. Children are encouraged to find synonyms and antonyms of these words.

Writing

- When appropriate, prior to starting a unit of work, a 'blue' piece of writing should be completed –this writing should inform planning for the unit of work (skills which need to be developed). At the end of the unit, a 'green' piece should be completed–this should demonstrate the progress made during the teaching unit. Line guides should be used as a template to create booklets, newspaper frames etc. as appropriate.
- Literacy planning should be completed on a weekly basis. The plan may include just that week or it may be the 'draft' unit as a whole, which is then adapted in response to the

children's needs as the unit progresses.

- Please refer to the 'English Curriculum Map' which provides guidance on text type coverage on a two-yearly cycle.
- Objectives should follow the National Curriculum- Clear 'WALT' statements and Success Criteria indicated should be learning focused.
- As a school, we encourage the use of a film and high-quality texts to base units of literacy around and where appropriate, meaningful links to the wider curriculum.
- You should ensure that the unit has a purposeful outcome and audience where possible these should be real.
- Teachers provide regular helpful feedback through marking.
- Time is planned into lessons for children to respond to marking and feedback.
- We build stamina for writing by providing opportunities to write for extended periods.
- Children are encouraged to edit their own writing in a red pen, correcting punctuation, spellings and adding additional details.
- Children highlight any tier 2 vocabulary or topic related words with a yellow highlighter pen. They are encouraged to 'Shine a Light' on ambitious word choices.
- Peer marking is encouraged as an additional way for children to respond to writing.
- **Writing Targets** are formed through teacher assessment of extended pieces of (mainly independent) writing. These are then turned into turned into Next Steps within literacy books and written on target cards for the children to refer to.