

Schools of Woolton Hill

English Policy

Across the Schools of Woolton Hill, we believe that English and communication are key life skills. Through the English curriculum, we will help children develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to communicate effectively and creatively through spoken and written language and equip them with the skills to become lifelong learners. We want children to enjoy and appreciate a variety of written texts and authors.

Intent

The Schools of Woolton Hill believe that the English curriculum should develop children's love of reading, writing and discussion. We aim to inspire an appreciation of our rich and varied literacy heritage and develop a habit of reading widely and often. We recognise the importance of nurturing a culture where children take pride in their writing, can write clearly and accurately and are able to adapt their language and style for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences. We want pupils to acquire a wide vocabulary, a solid understanding of grammar and be able to spell new words by effectively applying their knowledge of spelling rules and patterns.

We believe that all good writers refine and edit their writing over time, so we want children to develop independence in being able to identify their own areas for improvement. We want to inspire children to be confident in the art of speaking and listening and who can use discussion to communicate and further their learning.

We believe that children need to develop a secure foundation of English skills, which follow a clear progression as they advance through the primary curriculum. We believe that a secure basis in literacy skills is crucial to a high quality education and will give our children the tools they need to participate fully as a member of society.

Implementation

These aims are embedding across our English lessons and the wider curriculum. We have a rigorous and well organised English curriculum and framework, which follows the three-part model. This allows children to become engaged and inspired by the rich texts through creative lessons, which follow on to embedding key grammar skills within a given topic. Ending with a final piece of writing which is edited and finally published in various forms. Throughout these lessons, teacher ensure pupils are provided with purposeful opportunities for reading, writing and discussion, using rich and varied texts and resources motivate and support children.

The Schools of Woolton Hill identify children who need additional support with their reading and writing and therefore tailor interventions to suit the child and their needs. We ensure our lowest readers and pupil premium are read to additionally within school. We also run phonic interventions for those children who did not pass the phonic screening by

the end of Year 2, where we screen the children to target their gaps and effectively and efficiently teach them phonics.

We have introduced the three-part model for writing which outlines the learning journey for writing. All teachers begin a unit of writing by completing a learning journey which outlines the objectives to be covered during the unit. Teachers then plan and differentiate the learning to support all children within their classes to ensure their needs are met. We help each child maximise their potential by providing help and support where necessary whilst striving to make children independent workers once we have helped equip them with the skills and confidence that they need.

Reading is celebrated in classrooms around the schools through reading corners, book recommendations and sharing class novels together.

We have renovated our school libraries so that the children have a place where they can visit to share books and enjoy reading.

Impact

The impact on our children is clear; progress, sustained learning and transferable skills. With the implementation of the writing journey being well established and taught thoroughly in both key stages, children are becoming more confident writers and by the time they are in Upper Key Stage 2, most genres of writing are familiar with the children. Therefore, we can focus on creativity, writer's craft and sustained writing and manipulation of grammar and punctuation skills.

Assessment shows that most children at The Schools of Woolton Hill are achieving age-related expectation within English. Each year we have children achieving Greater Depth at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in both reading and writing.

All aspects of English are an integral part of the curriculum, cross-curricular writing standards have also improved and skills taught in English lessons are therefore transferred into other subjects, showing a consolidation of skills and a deeper understanding of how and when to use specific grammar and punctuation.

Teaching and Learning

Much of our English work will be text based, with children enjoyed a wide and diverse range of text and genres. Key skills in reading, writing and speaking and listening will be developed and consolidated, before children are then stretched and challenged through a range of exciting learning opportunities.

Planning

Planning reflects a learning journey through a unit of work, like all journeys, the plan should have a specific outcome and journey time. Throughout this learning journey, there may be

hold-ups or opportunities for acceleration which arise from continued Assessment for Learning.

Teachers develop a medium term plan (learning journey) which follows a three-part model where children are introduced to a rich text and complete a range of activities which teach the key skills and inspire writing. The learning journeys will be planned around a specific text which can be narrative, non-narrative or poetry based. This feeds into teachers weekly plans which demonstrate key vocabulary that will be shared with the children as well as the key skills they need to support their writing. During their learning journey, links may also be made with other areas of the curriculum, as teachers often link their writing units to topics which are currently being taught.

For more information about our English planning and our long-term maps please visit the Schools website - <https://www.schoolsofwooltonhill.co.uk/subjects/english>

Classroom Environment

We aim for our classrooms to be stimulating learning environments, through the effective use of working walls and resources. We recognise the importance of our working walls which not only showcase the children's fantastic writing but also supports their learning through each stage of the writing process. Every classroom should display the cursive handwriting poster, along with grammar, spelling and vocabulary appropriate to the year group. Our working walls in English will also follow the three-part model that is used when planning a writing unit (stimulate and generate, capture, sift and sort, create, refine, evaluate).

All children should have access to appropriate and effective learning resources which they can use to support and scaffold their learning. This will be tailored by each class teacher depending on what the children are learning and what is appropriate for each individual child.

Each classroom should also have their own class library which a small display linked to reading for pleasure which can be used to promote new authors or books or for children and adults to make reading recommendations.

Reading

We aim to develop children's love of reading and encourage children to read a wide range of books both at home and school. We believe that reading is an essential life skill and at The Schools of Woolton Hill, we want every child to leave school as a competent reader with a love of books. All children have access to a class library where they can read and share books, but children also have access to our wonderful school library which they

are able to use to extend their independent reading, as a research tool or to share and enjoy a good story with their peers.

Whole Class Reading

Children are given opportunities to listen to, read and comment on a variety of rich texts during whole class sessions. This is teacher lead and the children interact and respond to differentiated questions, often during English lessons but also across the curriculum. Within these lessons, teachers will focus on teaching key skills of reading to support children becoming fluent readers with expression and being able to understand the text through the use of inference and deduction.

Reading for Pleasure

At the Schools of Woolton Hill we want to promote reading for pleasure, therefore we have timetabled sessions throughout the week which promotes reading for pleasure. During these sessions, children can choose a book to read independently, share a book with a friend within the class or the class teacher shares of book with the class. This supports children recommending books to each other and exposing children to a wider range of books.

Home School Reading

Home school links are vital in reading and within KS1 and KS2 children take home books regularly from our extensive resources in school. Reading books are matched to individual children's reading abilities, through book bands, each child will move through the book band colours at the class teacher's discretion. Children are heard reading frequently especially in KS1 until their confidence, fluency and understanding has been developed. Children share these books with parents/carers at home and also teaching assistants and teachers in school. Any comments made during these sessions by either part can be recorded in the children's reading diaries therefore it is very much a two-way process.

As the children move into Upper KS2, children are encourage to fill in their reading diaries with thoughts about what they have read. As pupils improve, the frequency they are heard read will reduce until the point where the class teachers feels that they no longer need the 'home readers' and children become 'free readers'. This means that children are encouraged to use the school library, bring books in from home or choose from a range of class novels that we have in school. We actively encourage parents to share a good book with their children.

Writing

We understand that writing in a fundamental skill for children to learn therefore we aim for all children to become confident, fluent writers which is creative and imaginative. We have adopted the HIAS three-part model for writing (stimulate and generate, capture, sift and

sort, create, refine and evaluate). During the '*stimulate*' and '*generate*' process, it allows the teachers to fully immerse the children within a genre or topic which they will be writing about. It also allows teachers to have important discussions with the children regarding content and vocabulary choices. The capture, sift and sort process links in grammar teaching, which again in immersing the children into the genre or topic of their writing. This is discrete teaching of grammatical skills which the children will need when they come to writing their final piece of work. Finally, the children move onto the '*create*', refine and evaluate process, where they plan, write and edit their final piece of writing using the elements that they learnt.

Reception

We believe that communication and language, with opportunities to explore reading and writing, underpins the future learning of our children. Within our reception class, children have access to planned whole class or group writing activities but also many opportunities for child-initiated writing activities.

These may include the following:

- Opportunities to develop and experience speaking and listening skills
- Experiences that develop fine and gross motor skills through play and mark making activities.
- Sharing and enjoying a range of rhymes, songs, stories and books.
- Immersion in a print rich environment with opportunities for oral language and written communication.
- Whole class shared text activities
- ICT opportunities on PCs, iPads and the IWB.
- A focus literacy session in the morning with different activities that teach children early communication language and literacy skills.
- A daily phonics session which provides opportunities for children to practise the cursive script. Literacy integrated throughout the Early Years curriculum.

KS1

Clear assessment from the early years teacher allows for a smooth transition into key stage one where children continue to develop their love of writing.

- Explicitly taught and planned English sessions following the guidance and objectives of the statutory English curriculum.
- Use the HIAS three stage approach to plan learning that engages the children and aids their learning.
- Extended opportunities for discussion of writing, e.g. role play, paired talk, drama and hot seating to prepare children for the writing process.
- Modelled, shared and guided writing examples
- Opportunities for children to write for and share their writing with different audiences.
- Songs, rhymes and games to develop English skills.

- Text level work using a range of genres and texts which will develop comprehension skills and understanding and enjoyment of books, helping to promote a love of writing.
- ICT work that complements and supports work in English, helping children to develop skills learnt through quality first teaching.
- Immersion in a print rich environment that promotes a reading culture and develops children's oral and written communication. Where possible using examples of the cursive handwriting style which is used in school.

KS2

- Explicitly taught and planned sessions following the guidance and objectives of the statutory English curriculum
- Use the HIAS three stage approach to plan learning that engages the children and aids their learning.
- Experience of a wide range of genres used in reading and writing.
- Grammar, spelling and punctuation work led by quality texts to develop grammatical awareness and key punctuation skills building on and deepening key skills across different year groups.
- Text level work reading a range of genres to develop comprehension skills and support writing. Also making cross curricular links where possible to help promote sustained composition.
- Spelling and grammar games and activities to familiarise children with key skills.
- Extended independent writing opportunities to apply the skills learnt when writing within different genres. Also the opportunity for children to draft, edit and refine their own work alongside that of others.
- Immersion in a print rich environment that promotes a reading culture. Where possible this should be linked to the cursive style used in school.
- Extended opportunities for discussion of writing, e.g. role play, pair talk, drama and hot seating to prepare children for the writing process.
- Modelled, shared and guided writing takes place in the classroom.
- Opportunities for children to write for and share their writing with different audiences.
- ICT work that complements and supports work in literacy, helping children to develop skills learnt through quality first teaching.

Phonics/Spelling

Within EYFS and KS1, the children will receive discrete teaching of phonics following the Floppy Phonics scheme. These are planned and taught in small groups frequently throughout the week. By the end of Year 1, all children will complete a Phonic Screening Check. If a child does not pass the phonic check, they will continue with their phonic teaching as they progress into Year 2. Moving into Year 2, the children will continue to practise their phonics skills while moving onto learning spelling rules. The teaching and

learning of spelling rules continues with the children as they move from Year 3 to Year 6, and where necessary, small phonic intervention will take place for those children who have not reached the pass level of the phonic check.

To teach spelling from Year 2 onwards, we use the scheme Spelling Shed. This provides a clear and robust teaching of spelling rules which allow the children to put their learning into different contexts and apply their spelling rules to a range of activities. We teach spelling across two weeks which allows the children to embed their learning into their written work and therefore allow them consolidate the spelling rule. Through the use of Spelling Shed, children are also able to access this online, allowing them to practice their spellings at home.

For more detail please see our separate phonics policy.

Handwriting

At The Schools of Woolton Hill, we follow a cursive style of handwriting which is discretely taught throughout the week and linked to spelling practice. This is detailed within the handwriting policy.