



Fladbury
Church of England First School

English Policy

Governor Committee Responsible:	Curriculum and Standards
Status:	Statutory / Non-statutory
Review Cycle:	Every 4 years
Staff Lead:	S Haines
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VISION STATEMENT:

Happy Hearts, Open Minds, Bright Futures

John 10:10, "I came that you may have life and have it to the full."

Every child at Fladbury will know they are loved by God, have a happy heart and be part of a flourishing, well-led school. When they leave Fladbury, they will be well-prepared to meet challenges, confident in their abilities and look forward to their bright future with an open mind.

The English National Curriculum:

English has a pre-eminent place in education and 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.

Introduction

"Let us remember: One book, one pen, one child and one teacher can change the world." – Malala Yousafzi

At Fladbury, our English curriculum will equip children with the necessary literacy skills to have bright futures as competent readers and writers. Through enthusiastic and carefully planned teaching, children will engage with and respond to a variety of quality texts, formulating and developing their communication skills and linguistic knowledge through speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

We aim to ensure that all pupils develop open minds through experiencing a diverse range of writing by authors from different cultures and backgrounds. Our children will have happy hearts through experiencing the joy of reading for pleasure, and writing as a means of self-expression.

Speaking and Listening

At Fladbury First School, we believe that effective speaking and listening is fundamental to pupils' language and social development. Talk underpins all learning and thinking, and so is an essential tool for all areas of the curriculum. Pupils are offered many and varied contexts for talk, but they also need direct teaching in the skills of speaking and listening.

Aims

We aim for our children to:

- Communicate verbally with confidence, clarity, and fluency
- Listen attentively to the opinions, views, and ideas of others
- Articulate their own views and opinions with the appropriate vocabulary and tone
- Take part in discussions and debates on a variety of subjects and in different contexts
- Respond appropriately to questions
- Ask thoughtful and insightful questions
- Recite and retell stories and poems
- Practise empathy by stepping into role as another character

Implementation

At Fladbury, children have the opportunity to practice their speaking and listening skills across the curriculum and in a variety of settings. For example, on a typical day, a child would be required to explain their reasoning during their maths lesson, they might work collaboratively on a research project during topic, and then they might read aloud to one of our volunteer readers that afternoon before listening to a story read aloud by their teacher before going home.

Teachers continually model effective speaking, through using imaginative and varied vocabulary, clear diction, complete sentence structure, and reasoned argument. Teachers often 'think out loud', and use 'I wonder...' questions in order to demonstrate the ways we can interrogate texts in English and in other subject areas. Good listening is also very carefully modeled; teachers endeavor to come down to the child's level when having a conversation, maintain eye contact, and ensure that all children have the opportunity to be heard.

A key component of our classroom teaching is the use of talk partners, for children to share and discuss their ideas. Teachers facilitate this by using non-verbal signals, to reduce children's cognitive load and allow them to focus on what they and their partner are saying. Children are often asked to report back on what their partner said, rather than their own views, to ensure that they build up those listening and

attention skills.

Children regularly have the opportunity to role play, whether in the early years through Continuous Provision, or as part of their reading and character analysis as they move further up the school. We employ many of Pie Corbett's Talk for Writing strategies, which allow children to orally explore and rehearse elements of their writing before committing their ideas to paper.

Children at Fladbury have many opportunities to speak in front of an audience, whether that means sharing their work within their own classrooms, reciting a poem during assembly or worship time, or narrating a story during our larger celebrations at Harvest, Christmas, or Easter at the church. We regularly call on children to talk about their learning in front of parents and carers, ensuring that they gradually build up their confidence and fluency in an environment that is safe and supportive.

Impact

Class teachers assess children's speaking and listening skills informally each term. Children who are identified as having difficulties with an area of speaking and listening may receive interventions within school, or may be referred to the Speech and Language team who independently assess children and make recommendations for how they can be best supported. These children will receive 1:1 or small group interventions to address their specific area of need, with regular assessments both in school and by the Speech and Language team in order to track their progress.

The subject leader monitors speaking and listening through:

- Learning walks/ observations
- Pupil voice surveys
- Subject review by link governor

Reading

At Fladbury, we aim to ignite and encourage a love of reading in children, in order for them to grow into fluent and capable readers. Reading is a fundamental skill that must be learnt in order for children to access the whole curriculum. Through our English curriculum, children engage with high-quality texts from a variety of authors and sources. These texts broaden children's understanding of different cultures, time periods, and lifestyles, and allow children to experience the many benefits of reading to their wellbeing.

Our carefully structured approach to reading is designed to ensure the best results for our children. Pupils will be equipped with the skills to learn more about topics that

interest and excite them, discovering information for themselves and sharing it with others. In an increasingly information-saturated world, they will learn how to find, retrieve, and filter knowledge from a range of sources, and how to use it for their own needs.

Our curriculum is designed around the individual needs of the children in our school, and we use a variety of approaches to engage children and enable them to make progress.

Aims

We aim for our children to become readers who:

- Are excited and inspired by the books they read, both for enjoyment and for information
- Can talk about and choose books that appeal to their interests, and can evaluate and justify their preferences
- Enjoy sharing their reading with parents and carers
- Read fluently, with confidence and understanding, and use a range of strategies to self-monitor and self-correct
- Understand a range of text types and genres
- Use their knowledge of phonics and spelling patterns to read accurately
- Have the opportunity to listen to a wide range of stories, poems, and non-fiction
- Are interested in new words, and use them to expand their vocabulary
- Are able to evaluate and think critically about what they read, particularly when using online sources
- Are able to access reading materials from a variety of sources, including print and online forms

Implementation

At Fladbury, we follow Read, Write, Inc; a systematic synthetic phonics programme. Starting in EYFS, children have daily phonics sessions where they are introduced to sounds in a carefully planned order. Children learn 44 sounds and the corresponding letter/ letter groups, and then begin to read words by blending these sounds together. The programme is intended to build children's phoneme-grapheme knowledge, and then allow them to practise reading only those sounds and words that they have been taught. In this way, they experience success from the very beginning.

Children who have moved beyond the need for daily phonics lessons take part in whole-class guided reading sessions. Teachers select high-quality texts, ensuring

that children are exposed to a wide range of text types and genres, and a rich and increasingly sophisticated vocabulary. Children are taught a range of techniques to explore and interrogate a text, developing their higher-order reading and retrieval skills such as summarising, making predictions, using inference, and discussing the effect of different vocabulary choices.

All children take home at least one reading book in order to practise their reading with an adult outside of school. Children accessing our phonics scheme read books that correspond exactly with the sounds they have been taught, allowing them to become fluent and confident readers. In addition to their Read, Write, Inc storybook, they also take home an additional Book Bag Book; a new story containing the same sounds for them to consolidate. Children who are no longer accessing phonics choose a reading book from our colour-coded book-banded system, which includes a range of fiction and non-fiction texts. These are closely matched to their reading level in order to support their fluency and decoding skills, and build their reading stamina. After this, children are allowed to choose reading material freely from the collection of books in our library, or they can bring in books from home if they prefer.

Children are regularly assessed and regrouped for phonics, so that they are always working at their 'challenge level'. Regular assessments also allow us to identify children who are not making expected progress. These children undertake 1:1 fast track phonics interventions to plug any gaps and ensure that they can keep up with their peers. Children who are no longer on phonics are also regularly assessed to track reading progress. Those who are identified as not making expected progress receive targeted reading interventions, and are closely monitored by class teachers.

All classrooms have an inviting reading area with a good choice of books. Class teachers and TAs hear all children read at least once per week, with some targeted children reading more regularly. We also have a number of volunteers who hear our children read and discuss their books with them. Children are given many opportunities to read aloud outside of English or phonics sessions; for example, during worships, church services and performances, and when researching during topic or science lessons.

At Fladbury we work hard to encourage good reading habits at home, as well as at school. To support parents in helping their children, we:

- Use reading records to keep up a dialogue about children's reading successes and areas where they need further support
- Hold parent information evenings to explain how reading is taught at Fladbury, and to communicate the importance of reading and its impact on children's attainment and wellbeing
- Hold phonics workshops where parents are invited to join their child in their phonics session to learn how it works

- Hold parent information evenings for children in Reception to outline how early reading is taught
- Send out a half-termly reading newsletter detailing recently published fiction and non-fiction books for children, from picture books up to middle-grade
- Respond to parent requests for book recommendations, and give advice to parents who may be unsure of how best to support their child at home
- Award Dojo points for every time a child reads outside of school

Impact:

Reading is regularly monitored by class teachers, who use formative and summative methods to establish whether a child is working towards, at, or beyond the expected standard for their year group. Reading is assessed through:

- Regular Read, Write, Inc. phonics assessments for every child accessing phonics (at least half-termly)
- Year 1 phonics screening (Summer term)
- KS1 SATs (Summer term)
- Half-termly pupil progress meetings with Class teachers and the Head teacher to track every child's progress and highlight any need for interventions
- Termly NFER reading tests in Years 2, 3, and 4

The subject leader monitors reading through:

- Learning walks/ observations
- Reviewing books
- Subject review by link Governor

Writing

At Fladbury, we aim to ensure that all our children learn how to communicate effectively, clearly, and confidently through their writing. They have the opportunity to write every day, whether during Continuous Provision, in phonics sessions, in English lessons, or other curriculum lessons.

Our curriculum builds on prior learning, ensuring a progression of skills, and makes writing relevant to the ages and stages of our children. Pupils are given, and sometimes choose, clear reasons for writing. They write in response to high-quality literature, to communicate their learning, to make requests, and to put forward their ideas. We teach them why certain writing skills are useful, and how to use them for

effect. This means that children develop a wide vocabulary, and learn how to adapt their writing style for a variety of audiences, purposes, and contexts.

Aims

We aim for our children to become writers who:

- Have a positive self-image of themselves as a writer
- Develop a wide range of vocabulary which they use to effect
- Plan, draft, and evaluate their writing
- Develop the stamina to write extended pieces appropriate for their age and stage
- Understand the conventions of writing including grammar, punctuation, and spelling rules
- Are able to identify and use the features of many common text types
- Write with clear and consistent letter formation, joining letters when appropriate
- Take pride in the presentation and content of their writing
- Use models and WAGOLLs to evaluate the success of their own writing
- Are able to edit their own writing both during and after the writing process (at first with support, but with increasing independence).
- Enjoy the benefits of writing as a means of self expression

Implementation

At Fladbury, our writing curriculum encompasses speaking and listening skills, as well as transcription and composition. Teachers select high-quality, language-rich texts as stimuli for teaching and learning, which often link to topics from other curriculum areas (for example, Science, History, or Geography). This enables children to make meaningful connections in their learning. Where possible, children are given a real life audience or purpose for their writing, and they often write about real life experiences that they have had.

In EYFS, opportunities for mark making and emergent writing are carefully planned. Provision includes a wide range of materials and resources to develop fine and gross motor skills, and encourage children to make marks in a variety of ways. In Reception, our Read, Write, Inc phonics programme introduces children to phonemes and the associated graphemes in a systematic way, and they begin

building words using magnetic letters alongside learning the correct formation for each letter.

Where appropriate, teachers use Talk for Writing strategies when planning and delivering a sequence of lessons. Children use role play, talk partners, hot-seating, and story mapping to gain a deep understanding of a model text, before beginning to innovate their own. Teachers use modelled and shared writing to exemplify text features and key vocabulary, and provide scaffolding for children's independent writing.

Where appropriate, teachers will use a 'cold task' at the start of a writing unit to assess children's prior learning and establish the skills that need to be taught. Teachers then plan the steps to success for each unit. Feedback is given during the lesson where possible, and is mostly verbal in Key Stage 1. (See separate marking policy for information on written feedback).

Pupils are supported to write through scaffolding strategies such as Widgit word banks, sound mats, sentence stems, collaborative or shared writing, use of talking postcards where needed, and verbal modelling. Working walls are used to exemplify successful writing, model grammatical features, and as a source of specific and ambitious vocabulary for children to draw from.

Impact:

Writing is regularly monitored by class teachers, who use formative and summative methods to establish whether a child is working towards, at, or beyond the expected standard for their year group. Writing is assessed through:

- EYFS Profile teacher assessments against ELGs
- KS1 teacher assessments of writing (SATs)
- Half-termly pupil progress meetings with Class teachers and the Head teacher to track every child's progress and highlight any need for interventions

The subject leader monitors reading through:

- Learning walks/ observations
- Reviewing books
- Subject review by link Governor

Spelling

At Fladbury, we believe that knowledge of spelling rules is essential in allowing children to communicate successfully. In order for children to become competent writers, they need to have a variety of spelling strategies available to them, so that they feel confident enough to attempt more challenging and ambitious vocabulary. Through consistent and effective teaching, our children are equipped with the skills to attempt spellings independently before asking an adult for help.

Aims

We aim for our children to:

- Have a range of effective spelling strategies to help them spell unfamiliar words
- Know where to find the spellings of common exception (or 'tricky') words
- Have the necessary proofreading skills to edit their own work
- Feel confident to try out ambitious vocabulary in their writing
- Be able to identify spelling patterns and rules
- Understand the morphology and etymology of words
- Where appropriate, understand how to use a dictionary to support their spelling
- Gain an enjoyment of words and an exciting vocabulary

Implementation

Through our Read, Write, Inc. phonics programme, children are taught spelling patterns from the very beginning. Even before they are physically ready to write words, they use magnetic letters to 'build' words and spell them out. As children are introduced to a new grapheme, they are given the opportunity to practise spelling words containing that grapheme during every phonics session, every day. When teaching new sounds, we teach the children the circumstances when that spelling is most commonly used (for example, we don't find the 'igh' spelling at the start of a word). This means that children rapidly build up their knowledge of grapheme-phoneme correspondence ready to use when they write.

Children in Years 2, 3, and 4 receive dedicated spelling lessons using Spelling Shed. These lessons focus on a specific statutory spelling pattern, and use fun and engaging activities to teach the etymology and morphology of words, so that children build up a deeper understanding of where certain spelling rules come from.

We ensure that the language we use around spelling and all of our writing resources are consistent throughout the school, so children always know where to look for help with spellings. Our children are familiar with grammatical terms such as root words, prefixes and suffixes, digraphs and trigraphs, etc, right from Reception.

We use Read, Write, Inc. sound mats in all classrooms, which have visual prompts to help children find the spelling of different phonemes. All classrooms also display the Read, Write Inc. sound chart, which lists all the common spellings for each sound. This means that children have a visual reference when they are trying to spell a word. For example, if they are trying to write the word *frown*, they can look at the chart and decide whether to use the *ow* or *ou* spelling. If children are unsure, we encourage them to write the word with both spellings, and more often than not they are able to deduce the correct spelling by deciding which spelling 'looks right'. We also have lists of common exception words for children to refer to when spelling 'tricky' words.

Impact

Children in Years R – 3 do not receive weekly spelling tests. Instead, spelling is assessed continuously and informally in all writing by the class teacher, and also during phonics sessions by the teacher or TA leading each phonics group. In this way, spelling mistakes can be addressed 'on the spot', so that the correct spelling is reinforced. Where necessary, teachers may ask children to practise spelling specific words or spelling patterns underneath a piece of written work, where an area of weakness is identified (see separate marking policy).

Children in Year 4 have a weekly spelling test, focusing on the spelling patterns they have learned, or on topic words that they can use in their cross-curricular writing.

The subject leader monitors spelling across the school by:

- Reviewing books
- Supporting staff in using Spelling Shed
- Subject review by link Governor

Handwriting

For children to be able to communicate effectively through their writing, it is crucial that they learn to write legibly, fluently, and at a reasonable speed. At Fladbury, we have high expectations of handwriting and presentation, and teach children to write

using a cursive script as soon as they are developmentally ready – often beginning with pre cursive writing from Reception. This means that children are taught the correct formation which will lead to joined writing from the very beginning, rather than having to ‘unlearn’ old handwriting rules and relearn new ones.

Aims

We aim for our children to:

- Be comfortable when writing, so that they can concentrate on communicating their ideas rather than on the mechanics of writing
- Write clearly, so that their work can be read by unfamiliar adults and peers
- Form letters correctly, and use appropriate spaces between words
- Be able to write at a reasonable speed, in order for their writing to reach its full potential
- Take pride in the presentation of their work
- When developmentally appropriate, begin to join letters correctly to improve fluency

Implementation

Children’s pencil grip and fine motor skills are carefully monitored from the very beginning. Continuous provision activities in the EYFS are carefully designed to build finger strength and develop the muscles needed for children to be ready to write. When writing, children are reminded of the importance of posture (sitting up straight with both feet on the floor), as well as how they hold their pencil and the angle of their paper.

Teachers consistently model correct cursive letter formation and – when appropriate - the correct joins. We use Letterjoin resources to support our teaching of handwriting, and our spelling lessons have a focus on correct letter formation. Children undertaking daily Read, Write, Inc phonics lessons have a handwriting focus included in the phonics session. Phonics leaders regularly and consistently remind children of how to form (and, where appropriate, join) letters, and children are given time to practise this every day. We do not use separate handwriting books for practise, as the expectation is that children follow our handwriting procedures in all subjects.

Children who appear uncomfortable when writing, or who struggle with fine motor activities, are given targeted interventions (such as Jimbo Fun) in order to improve fine and gross motor skills, strengthen their muscles, and ensure that they can progress. Some children may also be offered writing slopes to support their

handwriting development.

Impact

Teachers monitor children's handwriting in all writing across the curriculum. Where necessary, teachers will ask children to practise forming specific letters, joins, or whole words when an area of weakness is identified (see separate marking policy).

The subject lead monitors handwriting across the school by:

- Reviewing English books (and other subject books where appropriate)
- Supporting staff in using Letterjoin and RWI resources
- Subject review by link Governor

Review

This policy will be subject to the normal cycle of policy review and will be reviewed and ratified by the governing body every 4 years. Furthermore, there may be occasions where this policy is reviewed outside the normal review cycle, including but not limited to:

- a change in Agreed Syllabus
- a change in legal position framework for English