EXE VALLEY FEDERATION
Whimple Primary School
English Curriculum Statement

Subject Vision: "*The English language is a work in progress, have fun with it." Jonathan Culver*

The Exe Valley Federation believes that English is at the heart of all children's learning. Reading, writing, speaking and listening enable children to communicate purposely and creatively. English is central to children's emotional, social and intellectual development and is crucial in underpinning life skills and all aspects of the curriculum. We believe that reading is a life skill that every child should be entitled to. We want to inspire children through books, promoting a love of reading and empowering our children to become lifelong readers. We believe that teaching a high-quality English curriculum will enable our children to communicate effectively throughout their lives, accessing information and sustaining personal and professional lives with fulfilment.

Statement of Intent:

The Exe Valley Federation schools believe that a quality English curriculum should develop children's love of reading, writing and discussion. We aim to inspire an appreciation for our rich, varied literary heritage and a passion for reading widely and often. We recognise the importance of nurturing a culture where children take pride in their writing, can write clearly and accurately, often adapting their language and style for a range of contexts. We want to empower children to be effective interpreters and communicators throughout every aspect of their lives. Teaching with high quality texts facilitates discussion, expression of opinions or emotions and analytical thinking. This encourages each child to make reflective, thoughtful decisions as a member of society. We aim to encourage a love of English that is life-long and enables children to further their own learning. In our school, we believe that a strong English Curriculum enables access to all other subjects, resulting in progress throughout a child's whole educational journey. We endeavour to adapt learning to the needs of each individual, believing that effective communicators will have more fulfilled lives.

The EVF has chosen a knowledge-engaged curriculum. This means following a skills-progression curriculum model with knowledge underpinning the application of skills. The 2002 Education Act requires schools to provide a 'balanced and broadly-based curriculum' that promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of children at our schools. This prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. We intend to deliver **the 2014 National Curriculum in a purposeful, engaging and creative** way by providing a **broad** curriculum that ensures that there are enough subjects on the timetable and a **balanced** curriculum that ensures that each subject is given sufficient space on the timetable to deliver its distinct contribution. The school curriculum is broader than the National Curriculum and our intention is to give children a rich and deeper experience.

Statement of Implementation:

The 2014 National Curriculum aims are embedded across our English lessons and the wider curriculum.

Developing Writing

From the very start of school, children are taught in discrete and rigorous phonics lessons, following Little Wandle Letters and Sounds - a systematic, synthetic programme. Each half term , a variety of books are selected to focus upon for story times. The top five texts include a range of genres such as traditional stories, non-fiction, diversity texts and rhyming texts. These texts are revisited over the course of the half term in a variety of ways so the pupils become familiar with them, retell parts and can talk about aspects of them. In early readings of the texts, the children are encouraged to listen to the stories. Later readings include question and answer activities and encourage children to join in, with pupils anticipating certain phrases from the story. Adults model prosody and children imitate this. In addition, two Book Bud texts are shared with pupils and these are used to develop vocabulary, generate and capture ideas, teach early writing skills and build towards a simple outcome. There is also a strong focus in EYFS on developing pupils' pre-writing and mark making skills, then staff teach letter formation and key foundational skills so that our Reception pupils gain the stamina and ability to write simple phrases and sentences.

Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, the curriculum provides many purposeful opportunities for reading, writing and discussion. We follow a two-year writing rolling programme using 'BookWrite' teaching sequences. Each mixed age rolling programme has been sequenced progressively, using high quality texts. To support children in moving towards independent writing, we provide a wide range of activities including use of film and imagery, modelled, shared and guided writing, peer editing and discussion. We encourage pupils to express themselves, exchange ideas and to develop more sophisticated vocabulary. Vocabulary-rich environments in combination with direct teaching of vocabulary develop and extend pupils' spoken and written language. We encourage pupils to see themselves as authors and promote the status of written work by providing opportunities for children's writing to be published and read by real audiences.

Spelling

In EYFS and Year 1 we follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress:

- Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.
- Children in Year 1 review Phase 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

In Year 2, pupils move on to follow the Spelling Shed programme of study which begins with a review of Phase 5 phonics and then continues the journey from phonics to spelling.

In Year 3 to 6 we follow the Spelling Shed programme of study as a rolling programme to cover the mixed aged split in the classes. There are at least two discrete lessons per week and older pupils can practise their spellings in other short sessions across the week.

Handwriting

In EYFS, children learn letter formation as part of their Little Wandle phonics sessions. Once all 26 lower case letters are taught in Reception, a printed style of handwriting is taught in letter families. Then a print to cursive style of letter formation is taught, before a cursive handwriting is taught through the Letter Join programme. Class teachers, using the appropriate modules from Letter Join, teach discrete handwriting lessons. Later on, in upper key stage 2, teachers adapt the modules as appropriate to their classes, but also ensure that application activities have meaningful contexts, linked directly to learning in other curriculum subjects and to spelling objectives (from Spelling Shed).

Reading

We encourage a love of reading by enabling our readers to access a range of appropriate books (through the phonics programme), as well as promoting reading for pleasure. This could be when pupils read by themselves or to an adult, or have books read to them by others. Making time and space for children to explore texts in greater depth, sharing their favourites, making recommendations and talking spontaneously about their reading is a priority in our schools. Working alongside the children's parents promotes the idea that reading can be enjoyed, discussed and associated with care and affection. Children are given guidance to ensure they have a varied reading diet, becoming gradually more independent in controlling their own reading and exercising their rights as readers. Our school aims to build reciprocal and interactive communities of readers through regular book events; these are supported by local bookshops and local libraries.

Phonics and Early Reading

At Whimple Primary School, we follow Little Wandle Letters and Sounds, a validated synthetic, systematic phonics scheme, supported by Big Cat for Letters and Sounds decodable reading books.

Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

- We teach phonics for 30 minutes each day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible.
- Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.
- We aim for children to make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in week 2 of the autumn term.
- We follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress:
    - Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.
    - Children in Year 1 review Phase 3 and 4. Then they are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs, with fluency and accuracy.

Daily Keep-up lessons and Rapid Catch Up Programme to ensure every child learns to read

- Any child who needs additional practice has daily 'keep-up' support, taught by a trained adult. 'Keep-up' sessions use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition, so that every child secures their learning.
- In Year 2 and above, pupils who are not fully fluent at reading or did not pass the Phonics Screening Check, follow the Little Wandle Rapid Catch Up Programme. The Rapid Catch Up programme identifies gaps in these pupils' knowledge and staff teach to these using the rapid catch up resources – at pace. Once the pupils are secure at Phase 5 and reading with 90% accuracy, they move to book banded books and the number sequenced books.
- For those children in Year 3 to 6 who have gaps in their phonic knowledge, we plan phonics 'catch-up' sessions which teach specific information and fill gaps.

Teaching reading in EYFS and KS1:

Reading practice sessions three times a week

- We teach children to read via reading practice sessions three times a week.
    - These are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of children.
    - Staff use books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge, using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments and book matching grids on pages 11–20 of 'Application of phonics to reading'.
    - Each child reads in a reading group with a trained adult.

- Each reading practice session has a clear focus, so that the demands of the session do not overload the children's working memory. The reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills:
    - Decoding
    - Prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression, while taking note of punctuation
    - Comprehension: teaching children to understand the text

- In Reception, these reading sessions start in Week 4. Children who are not yet decoding have daily additional blending practice in small groups, so that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books.
- In Year 2, we continue to teach reading in this way, especially during the first term and for children who still need to practise reading with decodable books.

Home reading

- The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.
    - 'Reading for pleasure' books also go home for parents to share and read to children.
    - We use the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised parents' resources to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and through workshops.

Ensuring consistency and pace of progress

- Every teacher in our school has been trained to teach reading, so we have the same expectations of progress. We all use the same language, routines and resources to teach children to read so that we lower children's cognitive load.
- Weekly content grids map each element of new learning to each day, week and term for the duration of the programme.
- Lesson templates, prompt cards and 'how to' videos ensure teachers all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.

Teaching reading beyond phonics

When children are assessed as having secure knowledge of phonics, children are provided with a suitable reading book. We have a range of texts to bridge the gap between decodable readers and early free reader books, and to promote fluency When children are assessed as being 'free readers' we have a wide selection of high-quality reading for pleasure texts, both on class bookshelves and in the school library.

In KS2, children participate in a variety of reading activities as a whole class and in small groups. Disadvantaged pupils are listened to read daily, either individually or within small groups or whole class reads. Across KS2, teachers plan their reading sessions based around high quality book talk to facilitate and promote discussion, enjoyment and analytical thinking. Whole class and small group reading sessions include echo reading, where the teacher models high quality fluency and prosody for the children to repeat, choral and paired reading for the children to practise and embed these skills. Book talk sessions also focus on discussions, which draw on a variety of strategies to enable children to comprehend a text. In addition to this, teachers use a diverse range of high-quality texts to read aloud to their class. Teachers read aloud to their classes every day. Class read aloud text choices include modern and classic fiction, poetry and non-fiction. These texts are recorded on the school's reading spine. All children have access to library books. KS2 pupils learn how to use the library and understand the organisation of the books within it. The library is open during lunchtimes and one session after school.

Statement of Impact:

As a result, our school has a community of enthusiastic readers and writers. They learn to enjoy displaying their developing knowledge and skills in English lessons. They are confident to take risks in their reading and writing, and willingly discuss and share their ideas. Evidence of this is in outcomes in English books and in written work across the curriculum; cross-curricular writing opportunities enable children to write across a range of forms and adapt their writing successfully, considering the purpose. This is also evident when talking to the children; in the high quality of work in their books; in the end of learning sequence assessment tasks and in their attainment at the end of Key Stages.

Assessment

Phonics

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support.

- Assessment for learning is used:
  - daily, within class, to identify children needing 'keep-up' support
  - weekly, within phonics, in the review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.
- Summative assessment is used:
  - every six weeks to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Keep-up support that they need.
  - by SLT and scrutinised through the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessment tracker, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.

Reading

- In Reception, there is ongoing teacher assessment and then an overall judgement is made in the summer term, using the Early Learning Goals via statements in Reading Comprehension and Word Reading (linked to phonics)
- In the summer term of yr 1 there is a reading fluency assessment and that determines if pupils stay on Little Wandle books or are ready to move on to progressive early free reader shelves in the library
- Throughout yr2 there is ongoing assessment in reading sessions, including running records, and NFER Reading papers in spring term and non-statutory SATs papers, alongside teacher assessment.
- Throughout yr3, yr4 and yr5 there is ongoing assessment in reading sessions and NFER Reading papers are completed by pupils in the spring and summer terms to check on progress toward end points and establish current attainment.
- Throughout yr6 there is ongoing assessment in reading sessions and NFER Reading papers in spring and SATs papers in the summer term are completed by pupils and analysed.

Writing

- In Reception, there is ongoing teacher assessment of pupils' writing and then an overall judgement is made, using the Early Learning Goals statements.
- In year 1 to 6, end of unit pieces of writing are assessed using the Evidence Gathering Grid (EGG) sheets and a summative judgement is made in the summer term as to whether a pupil is working at WTS, EXS or GDS. During writing units, pupils receive ongoing verbal feedback, alongside some written feedback about aspects of their writing that are going well and those that need to be improved.